



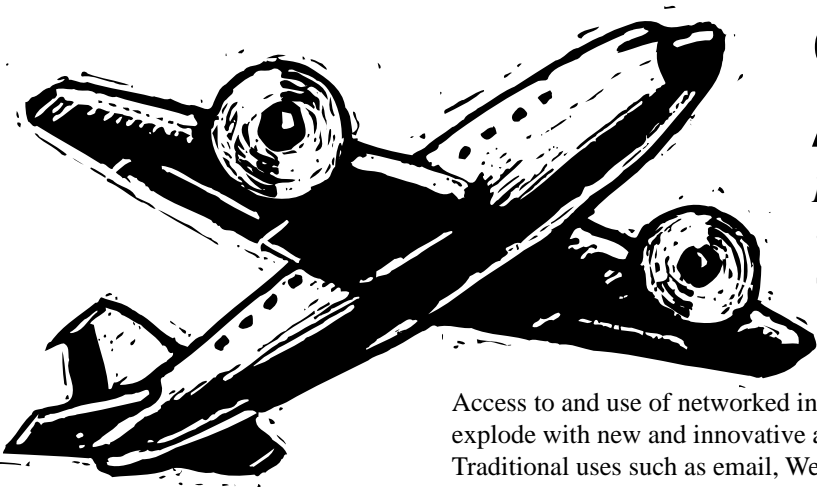
oasis

Observations of the American Society for Information Science

Los Angeles Chapter

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Coming to Pasadena: ASIS Mid-Year

Pasadena Hilton Hotel, May 24-26, 1999

“Evaluating and Using Networked Information Resources and Services” is the theme of this year’s meeting. The following description of the conference theme is from the ASIS Web site, <http://www.asis.org/>

Access to and use of networked information resources and services over the Internet continues to explode with new and innovative applications as well as in new and unforeseen applications. Traditional uses such as email, Web searching, and uploading/downloading files also continues to grow. Commercial applications and uses of the network also are growing and as the “digital economy” expands, impacts on society are also likely to occur.

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In the last three years the number of domain names has increased by 600%. Government agencies continue to provide Web-based services, in some cases exclusively in electronic format. Entire network-based communities have been created to provide information and services, and to develop social spaces unbounded by geography. Indeed, the networked environment creates opportunities for service innovation, provision, distribution, and capabilities well beyond traditional means.

The development and provision of these innovative services is hindered by our limited knowledge of users and uses of networks, as well as by the lack of ongoing evaluation and assessment of networked resources. To a large degree, there is limited knowledge about users and uses of the network, nor is there much ongoing evaluation and assessment of networked information services and resources. Thus, the primary goals of the conference are to:

- Identify what we know and don't know about use and evaluation of networked resources and services.
- Propose strategies to improve our knowledge about use and evaluation of networked resources and services.
- Provide a forum for attendees to share their knowledge, offer viewpoints, and debate different opinions regarding the use and evaluation of networked resources and services.

Together, the increased use and provision of networks and networked information services, creates the need for understanding the dimensions of electronic networks and the information services provided over such networks. This conference concentrates on exploring the various aspects of electronic network and networked information services to begin to develop the means through which to measure, assess, and classify electronic networking activities.

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OASIS Contributors

Marianne Afifi
Dudee Chiang
Roberta Horowitz
Karen Howell
Dorothy McGarry
Linda McCann
Linda Rudell-Betts
Louisa Toot
Dorothy Fue Wong

OASIS Editorial Board

Editor
Jason Binford

Advertising
Delia Blanquart

Graphic Design & Type
Tanya Novak

Writer
Dorothy Fue Wong

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All communications, including manuscripts, comments, and letters to the editor, should be addressed to:

Jason Binford
3165 S. Sepulveda Blvd.
Suite 101
Los Angeles, CA 90034
binford@mindspring.com

Submissions for the spring issue should be received by March 15, 1999.

LACASIS Executive Board 1998-99

Chair *Linda McCann*
(213) 740-8382
USC Doheny Library
Fax: (213) 749-1221
lmccann@usc.edu

Chair-Elect & Program Chair
Marianne Afifi
(213) 740-8817
USC Leavey Library
Fax: (213) 740-7713
afifi@usc.edu

Past-Chair & Award Chair
Dudee Chiang
(805) 447-3164
AMGEN
Fax: (805) 447-1322
dchiang@amgen.com

Secretary *Louisa Toot*
(626) 395-3408
Caltech
louisa@library.caltech.edu

Treasurer *Luci Barry*
(213) 229-7161
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP
Fax: (213) 229-6161
lbarry@gdclaw.com

LACASIS Advisory Council 1998-99

Archivist *Claude Zachary*
(213) 743-2435
USC
Fax: (213) 740-2343
czachary@usc.edu

Hospitality *Sally McCoy*
(949) 499-4084
Fax: (949) 499-3505
smccoy@earhtlink.net

Marketing Database *Barbara Busch*
(619) 553-7008
Defense Tech. Info. Center
Fax: (619) 553-7053
bbusch@dticam.dtic.mil

Member at Large *Linda Adams*
(213) 625-4477
Boston Consulting
Fax: (213) 687-4175
lladams@ix.netcom.com

Membership Records
Dorothy McGarry
(310) 825-3438
UCLA Science & Engineering Library
Fax: (310) 206-3908
dmcgarry@library.ucla.edu

Membership Recruitment
John Dobbins
(323) 259-2833
Fax: (323) 341-4991
dobbins@promail.com

Membership Retention
Holly Ying
Interactive Search
holly_ying@hotmail.com

Nomination *Linda Rudell-Betts*
rudellbetts@mediaone.net

Publications Committee
OASIS Editor
Jason Binford
(310) 397-8484
Binford Barnes Inc.
Fax: (310) 397-0509
binford@mindspring.com

OASIS Advertising
Delia Blanquart
(626) 683-9674

OASIS Graphic Design & Type
Tanya Novak
(626) 577-5011
emtea@mindspring.com

OASIS Writer
Dorothy Fue Wong
(213) 294-9848
Electronic Solutions
Fax: (213) 294-4056
dfue@2cowherd.net

Publicity *Amy Buse*
(909) 607-7957
Libraries of Claremont Colleges
Fax: (909) 621-8681
amybuse@rocky.claremont.edu

Special Project: Manual Revision
Vivian Hay
(213) 237-4758
Los Angeles Times
vivian.hay@latimes.com

Special Project: Member Survey
Karen Howell
USC
khowell@usc.edu

Student Chapter Coordinator
Bo-Gay Tong Salvador
(310) 206-9776
UCLA Library Info Systems
Fax: (310) 206-5337
bgts@library.ucla.edu

Web Administrator *Eileen Flick*
(213) 740-5731
USC Doheny Library
Fax: (213) 740-4631
flick@usc.edu

Student Chapter Advisors

UCLA *Gregory Leazer*
(310) 446-9968
Fax: (310) 206-4460
gleazer@ucla.edu

University of Hawaii *Dr. Diane Nahl*
(808) 956-7321
nahl@hawaii.edu

University of Technology, Sydney
Merolyn Coombs
002-330-5258
mcoomb@kgispys.ccsd.uts.edu.au

Other Resources

ASIS Headquarters
8720 Georgia Avenue, Suite 501
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 495-0900
Fax: (301) 495-0810
<http://www.asis.org/>
Richard Hill, Executive Director

LACASIS Web Site
<http://www.usc.edu/isd/friends/orgs/lacasis/>

What Do You Recommend?

Web Sites Suggested by LACASIS Board Members

For this issue of OASIS we approached some professionals active on the chapter's executive board and advisory council, asking the question: What Web site would you recommend to colleagues?

Builder.com

<http://www.builder.com/>

This resource from new-media company CNET calls itself "the site for site builders." As a Web builder herself, Eileen needs to regularly learn new skills and keep current with changing Web technologies. She says, "I check out Builder.com a lot, for tips on cool HTML tricks. They offer interactive tutorials, good links for more info, and recommended downloads." And that's not even mentioning the Web-related news, predictions, commentary, and gossip, all of which change regularly.

EILEEN FLICK
LACASIS Web Administrator
flick@usc.edu

InterNIC

<http://www.internic.net/>

Want to see if you can lay claim to YourNameHere.com? InterNIC is the organization that handles registration and record-keeping for names in the top level domains .com, .net, .org, and .edu. The free "Whois" search on the page checks whether a particular name is registered. Luci explains that she uses this feature as a research tool: "It's the best way to verify that a company exists and to get some contact info on them, especially newly formed and service based companies which may take up to a year to get into print sources."

LUCI BARRY
LACASIS Treasurer
lbarry@gdclaw.com

The SGML/XML Web Page

<http://www.oasis-open.org/cover/sgml-xml.html>

Just when you finally remember what HTML stands for, you discover the much larger universe of SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language). This site can help you find your way in the new territory. The focus here is on SGML and XML (Extensible Markup Language), with additional information on related markup standards. Links to tutorials, news stories, FAQ's, and more are clearly organized. (And no, the "oasis" in

the domain name of this site has nothing to do with a certain similarly-named newsletter.)

CLAUDE ZACHARY
LACASIS Archivist
czachary@usc.edu

OneLook Dictionaries

<http://www.onelook.com/>

This meta-search engine gives access to over 400 online dictionaries, thesauri, glossaries and the like. Indexed sources range from the general (Merriam-Webster's WWWebster Dictionary) to the ultra-specific (Glossary of Molluscan Terminology). Holly says she uses the site on her job developing controlled vocabularies, "This is a source I use a lot when attempting to locate a definition for a term or phrase, or am interested in learning about the different interpretations of a word."

HOLLY YING
LACASIS Membership Retention Chair
holly_ying@hotmail.com

CIA World Factbook

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>

No spy reports here, of course. Instead, you'll find authoritative information on the world's nations. Included are maps, geographical facts, economic data, brief political analysis, and more. Some random facts from the Factbook: Andorra has 0% unemployment, U.S. residents owned an estimated 540 million radios in 1992, Zimbabwe is slightly larger than Montana. Says Amy of this resource, "It's not really information science, but it is cool!"

AMY BUSE
LACASIS Publicity Chair
amybuse@rocky.claremont.edu

From the Chair's Desktop

By Linda McCann

Our awards program in November, in honor of Seymour Lubetsky, and our joint holiday program with SLA/SCC in December were both great successes. Each program highlighted for me the importance of library and information science in bringing us together and the impact we can have through our work and professional meetings on new developments in our field.

As I read predictions for the coming years about proposed mergers between telecommunications companies, smart computer appliances, and electronic commerce, I am struck with how easily I can discuss these trends with friends and acquaintances who work in other jobs. However, when I try to explain what it means to be chapter chair of an organization for information science professionals, I frequently am met with puzzled looks, as if I stepped out of an episode of the *X-Files*. I wonder how many of us, when faced with describing information science to those outside the field, find it is easier to describe

where we work, rather than what we do, to avoid further obfuscation?

For some of us, it is a time of uncertainty and transition in workplaces. Organizational changes may mean we are no longer sure we can describe our job, our organizational structure, or know where we will work next once our jobs are no longer there. What we can count on is that we know where to find out what we need to make a transition, once we determine what it is that challenges us. We can also count on a well developed professional network of librarians and information professionals, who know how to evaluate what we do and how well we do it. In the coming year, I look forward to more local programs and the ASIS mid-year in Pasadena this May as one way for us to stay informed, and I will continue to work on how to communicate the essence of information science to a larger audience.

Happy New Year!

Members in the News

Pamela Cibbarelli is the Program Chair for IOLS'99, to be held in New York City, May 19-20. **Beverly P. Lynch** wrote "The Development of the Academic Library in American Higher Education and the Role of the Academic Librarian" in *Leadership and Academic Librarians* edited by T. F. Mech and G.B. McCabe. (Greenwood Press, 1998.) Beverly P. Lynch has been appointed to a four-year term on the Committee on Accreditation (COA) of the American Library Association. Professor **Don Schauder** organized the Australian Library Schools' Forum in Canberra, Australia, last October.

New LACASIS Members

July - October 1998

Frederick Allen
Student
University of Hawaii GSLIS

Amy K. Fein
Student
University of Hawaii

David Johnson
Student
UCLA

Eileen Pritchard
California Polytechnic State
University

Audrey Aronson
Civil Recovery Services

Hayley Garcia
Student
Moreno Valley, CA

Songqiao Liu
J. Paul Getty Trust

Judy Sherman
Student
California Endowment

Hong Cheng
Art Institute of Los Angeles

Richard Jackson
Buena Park, CA

Jane Polley
Student
Honolulu, Hawaii

Jeff Williams
Student
Los Angeles, CA

Interviews

As mentioned in the fall 1998 issue of OASIS, the Los Angeles Chapter and its members won several juried awards presented at the ASIS Annual Meeting last October. The chapter was the co-winner (along with New England) of the Chapter of the Year Award, and this newsletter received the Chapter Publication of the Year Award. The student chapter at the University of Hawaii, which is affiliated with LACASIS, was voted 1998 Student Chapter of the Year, and Dr. Marcia Bates of UCLA received the 1998 Award for Research in Information Science.

University of Hawaii Student Chapter 1998 Student Chapter of the Year

Dr. Diane Nahl, of the UH Library and Information Science Program, has been faculty advisor of the student chapter since 1993. Joseph Yue was chair of the group in 1997-1998, while a graduate student in the MLIS program. They communicated with OASIS from Hawaii, via email.

Q As an alumnus of the program at Hawaii myself, I've often found that non-librarians outside the state are surprised to learn that the University of Hawaii has a vibrant, well-respected graduate program in library and information science. Diane, could you give a bit of background on the program and its students?

A **Nahl:** In 1997 the School of Library and Information Studies was reorganized as the Library and Information Science Program, located in the Department of Information and Computer Sciences in the College of Natural Sciences. Because of this merger, the ICS department now has two Ph.D. degree programs, two Master's programs, two Bachelor's programs and has the largest number of undergraduate and graduate students in one department in the University. There are currently 120 graduate students in the LIS program primarily from Hawaii, the Pacific, Asia, and the Western States.

Our LIS faculty include Peter Jacso (online searching, database design and evaluation), Larry Osborne (cataloging, systems analysis, automation), Violet Harada, LIS Program Chair (school library services, information literacy), Rebecca Knuth (information policy, children's and young adult literature, international librarianship), donna Bair-Mundy (information storage and retrieval), and Diane Nahl (human-system interaction, reference, user instruction).

Q I know the program is physically located at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, which is in Honolulu's Manoa Valley. Are there still LIS students on the other Hawaiian islands who take courses by interactive television and periodic trips to Manoa?

A **Nahl:** We have a number of students on the neighbor islands of Maui, Kauai, Hawaii, Lanai, and Molokai who take our courses via the live, Hawaii Interactive Video System (HITS). The largest group is on Maui, where the supercomputer is located, and several of these students constitute our ASIS satellite student chapter.

Q The 1998 ASIS Handbook lists 28 other student chapters, so you had plenty of competition for this award. I imagine that you sponsored some successful events for students. Joseph, could you give us a rundown of chapter activities during the year?

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Marcia Bates

1998 Award for Research in Information Science

Dr. Marcia Bates is Professor in the Department of Library and Information Science at UCLA. Her interview with OASIS was in December 1998, via email.

Q I'd like to start out with a couple of questions about your personal path in research. You earned your BA from Pomona College and your MLS and PhD from UC Berkeley. At what point in your education did you decide to pursue an academic career of research and teaching? Are there experiences you can point to that steered you in this direction?

A You have to realize times were different then. As a rule, women got no career guidance to do anything substantial. It was like the educational world ended for women when college ended—after that it was marriage. When I came back to Berkeley from teaching English in the Peace Corps in Thailand, all I knew was I didn't want to teach school, i.e., up through high school, which was essentially the only place where women could teach then. So I took vocational tests and got the first serious career advice I had ever received in my life. The counselor said: "With your *cum laude* bachelor's degree from a highly selective college, as a woman, you can type or teach." And she was right. At that time, the University of California required its secretaries to have bachelor's degrees. That's what women could do with a bachelor's degree. Anyway, I didn't want either option. She said I needed to get more education if I wanted to do something more. The trouble was, I didn't feel like going to school then. So I went to the vocational counseling office and picked out the shortest master's degree I could find—an MLS—I could get out in a year.

ASIS Winners

by Jason Binford

So then I went to Berkeley to get the MLS. While I was there I worked as a research assistant and Junior Specialist at the Institute for Library Research. It had branches at both UCLA and Berkeley and was run by Bob Hayes. The man I worked for at Berkeley was named Ralph Shoffner. I worked on several research projects and was really fascinated by it. One day, Ralph said, "So when are you applying for the doctoral program?" So that's how I got into it.

Q Regarding past and present career options for women, I know that for many years most professional librarians have been women. And I would guess that a majority of ASIS members are female. But looking at a list of previous recipients of the ASIS research award in the 1990s, I see there have been six men and just two women prior to you. The Award of Merit, which ASIS calls its highest honor, has had even a lower proportion of women recipients. What do you make of this?

A There are a lot more men in ASIS relative to women than is the case in ALA. However, I think it is also true that not as many women have received either award as might or should. There is a whole mix of problems here. Women aren't recognized sufficiently for the research they produce, neither financially nor in award-type recognition. At the same time women produce less overall due to a number of causes—we're given more introductory teaching, while men get to teach more of their specialty courses closer to their research interests, women still do more than half the housework and childrearing, etc., etc.

There is one other powerful influence I have noticed. In this field, at least, when women reach a certain age, where they might move into a position of being a senior, recognized professor, they are instead shunted into being deans and directors of programs. Academia is the one place where men prefer to be workers (professors) rather than bosses (deans) on the whole—especially of small, underfunded schools like library schools. (It's a different matter with medical schools.) So women get little support for their professorial activities and are encouraged to be administrators. I have had

Continued on page 10

Calendar

Some help for planning your future

February 5-7 Joint Meeting of the Northern California and Nevada Medical Library Group (NCNMLG) and the Medical Library Group of Southern California and Arizona (MLGSCA). Fairmont Hotel, San Jose.
<http://www-ncnmlg.stanford.edu:5000/jtmtg/>

February 6 LACASIS Board Meeting, open to all members. St. Alban's Church, 580 Hilgard Ave., Westwood. Contact Linda McCann, lmccann@usc.edu

February 12 Online Northwest 99. Portland, OR. Sponsored by the Interinstitutional Library Council Online Coordinators Committee of the Oregon University System.
<http://www.sou.edu/library/onlinenw/>

February 21-24 1999 National Federation of Abstracting & Information Services (NFAIS) Annual Conference. "Strategic Imperatives." Philadelphia.
<http://www.pa.utulsa.edu/nfais.html>

March 6 LACASIS Board Meeting, open to all members. St. Alban's Church, 580 Hilgard Ave., Westwood. Contact Linda McCann, lmccann@usc.edu

March 7-11 Computers in Libraries '99. Arlington, VA.
<http://www.infotoday.com/>

April 10 LACASIS Board Meeting, open to all members. St. Alban's Church, 580 Hilgard Ave., Westwood. Contact Linda McCann, lmccann@usc.edu

April 11-17 National Library Week
<http://www.ala.org/celebrating/index.html>

April 26-28 Intranets '99. "Strategies and Practices for Content Management." Hyatt Regency San Francisco.
<http://www.onlineinc.com/>

April 28 - May 1 Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals (SCIP) Annual International Conference. "Global Competitive Intelligence: Taking on the World." Montreal, Canada. <http://www.scip.org/>

May 1 LACASIS Board Meeting, open to all members. St. Alban's Church, 580 Hilgard Ave., Westwood. Contact Linda McCann, lmccann@usc.edu

May 14-20 Medical Library Association Annual Meeting. Chicago. <http://www.mlanet.org/>

May 18-20 National Online Meeting & IOLS '99. New York City. <http://www.infotoday.com/>

May 23-26 Third International Conference on Concepts in Library and Information Science (CoLIS 3). "Digital Libraries: Interdisciplinary Concepts, Challenges and Opportunities." Dubrovnik, Croatia. <http://www.colis3.hr/>

May 24-26 ASIS Mid-Year Conference. "Evaluating and Using Networked Information Resources and Services." Pasadena Hilton Hotel. <http://www.asis.org/>

June 5-10 Special Libraries Association Annual Conference. "Knowledge Leaders for the New Millennium." Minneapolis.
<http://www.sla.org/>

June 9-11 27th Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Information Science. "Information Science: Where Has it Been, Where is it Going?" Sherbrooke, Quebec.
<http://tornado.ere.umontreal.ca/~turner/english/cais1999.html>

June 9-13 American Society of Indexers Annual Meeting. "Racing into the Millennium." Indianapolis.
<http://www.asindexing.org/mtgs.htm>

June 24-July 1 American Library Association Annual Conference. New Orleans. <http://www.ala.org/>

August 2-6 "Museums, Libraries, and Archives: Summer Institute for Knowledge Sharing." The Getty Center and UCLA. Contact: Cynthia Scott, cscott@getty.edu.
<http://www.gii.getty.edu/newpress/summer.html>

August 11-14 Digital Libraries '99. Fourth Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) Conference on Digital Libraries. Berkeley. <http://fox.cs.vt.edu/DL99>

August 15-19 SIGIR '99. ACM Special Interest Group on Information Retrieval (SIGIR) Conference on Research and Development in Information Retrieval. Berkeley.
<http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/conferences/sigir99/>

October 26-29 EDUCAUSE '99. "Celebrating New Beginnings." Long Beach, CA.
<http://www.educause.edu/>

November 1-4 ASIS Annual Conference. "Knowledge: Creation, Organization, Use." Washington, DC.
<http://www.asis.org/>

November 13-16 California Library Association Annual Conference. "Imagine!" Palm Springs.
<http://www.cla-net.org/>

Educom 98:

A Report on the Conference Held in Orlando, October 1998

by Marianne Afifi

Together with several colleagues from the University of Southern California, I attended the 1998 Educom Conference hosted by the University of Central Florida in the Orlando Convention Center. This was my first and also my last Educom conference, since Educom and CAUSE, two organizations concerned with different aspects of technology in higher education, have now merged under the new name of EDUCAUSE (<http://www.educause.edu/>) and will only organize one annual conference. This conference was a three-day event with a day of pre-conferences and seminars as well as a half-day of post-conferences.

I began the conference with an all-day seminar entitled “Theoretical Foundations of Multimedia.” The seminar was taught by Robert S. Tannenbaum, Director of Academic Computing Services, University of Kentucky, who authored the book that was used in the seminar. Since the book covers the subject exhaustively in 600 plus pages, the author concentrated on just the essence of a few of the chapters. I enjoyed the seminar; however, I think the book will come in handy as multimedia become more and more part of my professional life.

Each day featured a general session. The opening speaker was James Burke, a well-known television personality and writer, followed the next day by Alan Kay, Vice President of Research and Development at Walt Disney Imagineering. Ending the conference was Ben Shneiderman, one of my most favorite speakers. I attended both the opening and closing general sessions and enjoyed both speakers. James Burke’s talk was amusing and interesting, examining technology in the context of history and science. Ben Shneiderman’s talk, with the appropriate title “Educational Aspirins for Web Fever: Relate—Create—Donate,” reminded us that there needs to be more communication among teachers, students, and technologists and between them and their creations on the Web.

The rest of the conference was organized around six major and three minor tracks, although the tracks were sometimes not distinctive enough to make a difference in my selection of sessions. Among the most interesting sessions I attended were one in which a panel of experts from the University of Phoenix talked about their online curriculum as well as the services, issues, and problems associated with this effort. In another session the development of an innovative interlibrary loan service called ILIAD at Virginia Tech was presented and discussed.

I served as a facilitator for two sessions, both very stimulating. One was about the University of Iowa’s efforts to expand their Web-based information services beyond their award-winning Information Arcade. The other was about the creation and successful operation of a helpdesk at Carthage College, an institution where the library and academic computing were merged. I attended quite a few more sessions including the poster sessions that were cleverly placed near the extensive vendor exhibits.

I thoroughly enjoyed this conference for its content, vendor presence, facilities, and social activities (such as a reception in the Orlando Science Center) and would recommend attending it for anyone who is involved with technology in higher education. For more information about the conference, go to <http://www.educause.edu/conference/e98/>. Two of the keynote speeches are available there in RealAudio and some of the conference presentations are also up on the site.

Mark your calendars for this year’s conference EDUCAUSE ’99 “Celebrating New Beginnings” right here in Long Beach, California from October 26-29, 1999.

Katlove ad

A: Yue: In 1997-1998, we held eight “brown bags” in addition to membership meetings at both the Manoa campus and Maui. For the brown bags, we invited speakers to talk during lunch, including speakers outside of traditional library and information science boundaries. We tried to include at least one speaker who was not a librarian or professor, somebody who worked in the field and could bring in a different perspective of information science. We tried to video record most of our brown bags so that students on Maui and those who could not attend because of other commitments could benefit from our activities.

In addition to encouraging students and professionals to participate in our events, we tried to provide information with regard to scholarships and other information of interest to our members through our electronic newsletter, on our Web site and in person.

Q: What were the topics of some of the best-attended talks during the year?

A: Yue: “Nationalism, Globalism and Information Flow in Complex Emergencies” (like Rwanda and Somalia) by Dr. Rebecca Knuth of the LIS program. “Multimedia with Java: Educational Challenges, Praxis, and Applications” by Dr. Jan Stelovsky on the faculty of the Department of Information and Computer Sciences. And “What You Always Wanted to Know about Refereed Journals but ...” by Dr. Peter Jacso of our department.

Q: The LACASIS board knows that graduate students are busy with school, work, and family; we’re regularly trying to find ways to get students involved in LACASIS programs, but sometimes feel disappointed with the results. Has it been difficult for the two of you to inspire students to participate in the chapter, and if so, have you developed any good strategies?

A: Yue: Since we have many students who work full-time, we tried to schedule events that accommodate both full-time and part-time students. Our early evening events are usually attended by part-time students and lunch time events usually by full-time students.

At times, it might seem impossible to attract students to participate, yet it usually helped us to talk to students in person as well as make announcements in class or through professors on why a particular event was relevant to the class they were currently taking.

Nahl: We have found that membership meetings and personal conversations with new students, as well as email messages to all students outlining the benefits of participating in student chapters of national organizations have been effective. It’s not easy for students busy with work, classes, and family responsibilities, but they manage to make room for these career development activities because of their dedication to the LIS field

to self-consciously push back against that expectation, and it is not easy. It is as though there is one last glass ceiling before full recognition, and I don’t feel I’ve broken through it yet, though the ASIS award, for which I am very grateful, was a possible harbinger of broader recognition.

That has happened over and over again with women professors in our field. Look around the library schools—how many senior full professor women are there who are productive scholars? I don’t think women LIS professors all would have chosen the routes they took if they had had more recognition and more genuine support for their research.

Please don’t misunderstand me here. I don’t think men are doing this to women in some activist sexist way. I do think that men have had less incentive to change than women—white men had a pretty good deal in the 50’s and 60’s and have not been keen to let go of that. But the most important point here is that BOTH men and women, who are adults now, were raised in a culture in which Daddy’s work was much more important than Mommy’s. Mommy took the day off from work to take junior to the doctor, not Daddy. Mommy always filled in the cracks, and did the scut work. So it’s not surprising that both men and women, when they become adults, fall into that pattern unconsciously. A library school is the size of a big family. Women feel guilty when they put their own agenda ahead of the needs of the family. Whereas men are taught that it is their job to pursue their agenda before anything else—that is THEIR job.

So when a woman says, I don’t want to teach that required course, she feels guilty and the men feel she’s a slacker. After all, the men think, “I’ve got to teach my seminar this quarter, so I can’t teach the required course.” So the pressure, from within both sexes, is on the woman to make it easy for the men.

I think this pattern has largely been conquered at UCLA in recent years, but I’ve taught at three library schools, under both male and female deans, and this pattern has been true at all of them at one time or another. I don’t think anyone intends this to happen, but it grows out of our childhood conditioning. It took me many years to see what was going on. By that time, I had lost some of my most productive years to too much administrative work and too much teaching of large classes.

I’m in a transitional generation—the women before me were totally kept out of university teaching, but for the occasional exception that proved the rule, and the women after me take it for granted. But my generation was the first one to come into academia in large numbers, and we’ve had to pay in resistance to our presence, and a vacuum of support—interspersed with occasional wonderful positive support—at every step of our careers.

Continued on page 14

Chapter Award Dinner

Reported by Jason Binford

Professor Seymour Lubetzky was the honoree at the annual LACASIS award dinner, held last November 10th at the UCLA Faculty Center. The chapter honored Lubetzky, now Professor Emeritus at UCLA, with the Contributions to Information Science Award in recognition of his work in the field of cataloging. The 100-year old Lubetzky attended, looking courtly and scholarly with his suit, reading glasses, and shock of white hair.

Dr. Michele Cloonan, chair of the UCLA Department of Library and Information Science, spoke of Lubetzky's legacy in her talk at the program, "From Fiber to Cyber and Back." She noted that the spring 1999 issue of *Library Quarterly* was to carry an article by Lubetzky, forty years after the appearance of his first piece there. Because of Lubetzky's focus on the underlying theories for organizing information, Cloonan pointed out that his work of decades ago—developing descriptive cataloging rules for the

Library of Congress, for example—has relevance today in the chaotic cyberspace of the World Wide Web.

In addition to Professor Lubetzky, several LACASIS members received recognition at the dinner. Holly Ying, winner of the 1998 McKinley Scholarship to attend the ASIS Annual Conference, spoke of her experiences at the Pittsburgh meeting the previous month and thanked the chapter for the award. Louisa Toot and Tanya Novak each received the chapter's Outstanding Service Award for their work in chapter activities. Amy Buse received the Outstanding Member Award for her contributions to the chapter.

Nominations for the 1999 Contributions to Information Science Award can be made to Dudee Chiang, LACASIS Award Chair, at dchiang@amgen.com.

Meet the Board

LACASIS board meetings are open to any member who wishes to attend. Meetings are usually on the first Saturday of each month in the lower lounge of St. Alban's Church, 580 Hilgard Avenue, Westwood.

MEETING DATES

March 06
April 10
May 01
June 05
July 10

For more information contact Linda McCann at lmccann@usc.edu

Impressions of the ASIS Annual Conference

by Marianne Afifi

This year's conference, entitled "Information Access in the Global Information Economy," took place at the Pittsburgh Hilton, October 24-29.

Although all the sessions I attended, including the plenaries by Herbert Simon and Hal Varian, were interesting, I would like to single out three sessions that I found particularly useful. "Designing Discipline-Oriented Information Systems" was a 2-part program. The first program was about the Agriculture Network Information Center (AgNIC). The speakers presented different aspects of the project, which is to develop a distributed information system for an alliance of organizations to improve and enhance access to agricultural information. Although this project faces many challenges, managerially and technically, it was interesting to hear about how so many participants were pulled into this project and how they plan to collaborate as equal partners. More information about the project can be obtained at <http://www.agnic.org>

In the second part of the program, several projects at the University of Iowa (UI) were presented. One was the Center for Electronic Resources in African Studies (CERAS) that is designed to house a "virtual resource space" for students, faculty, and researchers both at UI and around the world. The Center is based on a collaborative effort between the Libraries and the African Studies Department. There are approximately six projects under way now including the African Peace Information Locator (which was also presented in this session), and an electronic journal. Other institutions and scholars are invited to contribute to make CERAS a truly globally shared resource. For more information contact the site at <http://sdrc.lib.uiowa.edu/african-studies>

The third session dealt with issues of the maintenance and access to research and scholarship in the face of increasing costs. The panel consisted of a professor, two publishing representatives—one from a commercial and one from an association publisher—and Clifford Lynch acting as the libraries' representative. The discussion was quite lively as each constituency stressed what its main goals were and how these were often not achievable because of unavoidable constraints such as increases in volume of publishing, multiple formats, copyright issues, and cost. A thorough description of this session warrants its own article, but suffice it to say that the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) has formed a working group on Issues of Journal Pricing, Publishing, and Copyright and is currently seeking input on these issues. More information can be obtained on the web site at <http://www.nclis.gov>

Committee Meetings, the annual Business Meeting, SIG Planning meetings and networking activities took up most of the rest of my time. On a social note, the annual LACASIS dinner drew about 12 members who went to a nearby restaurant in what was a pretty deserted downtown Pittsburgh on a Sunday evening and had a splendid time- despite the food definitely lacking in sophistication.

Two important ASIS meetings are coming in 1999: the Mid-Year Meeting in Pasadena, May 24-26, and the next Annual Conference in Washington, DC from November 1-4.

Op amp

1998 ASIS Annual Meeting

Notes from Two Sessions by Dudee Chiang

Chapter Assembly

The Chapter Assembly is the forum where chapter officers meet to discuss topics of interest common among ASIS chapters. This is also one of the ways to communicate decisions by the ASIS Board of Directors to the entire membership. A couple of messages from the Board: the Board of Directors meeting is open to all members, except when it goes into executive session. This is especially timely to know, since the 1999 Mid-Year Meeting will be held in Pasadena, which means any of our LACASIS member can sit in and observe the Board's meeting next May. ASIS is also looking into alternatives in offering services besides having meetings, maybe using technologies to offer virtual programs. Stay tuned for developments in this area.

After a couple years' of discussion and drafting, the Chapter Assembly finally passed two motions: 1) to establish a new award, called the Best Chapter Electronic Publication Award, and 2) to rename the current Best Chapter Publication Award to Best Chapter Print Publication Award. The motions are forwarded to the Awards and Honors Committee, then to the Board of Directors. LACASIS shall be able to nominate both our fantastic Web site and OASIS soon.

Leadership Development Workshop

This is one of the least known events at the Annual and Mid-Year Meetings, but it is a good opportunity for all those who would like to know more about the society and the behind the scenes work. Organized by the Leadership Development Committee, this workshop usually takes place on Sunday afternoon, before the welcoming reception. This year's workshop had a panel of leaders from the Society to share their experiences and insights in organizing activities for a voluntary organization such as ASIS. Among the gems shared by the speakers are: "Ask! Ask people to volunteer for specific activities," "Give recognition," "One person one role," and "Plan ahead." These are all practical tips valuable to our daily activities as well.

There is no separate registration fee for attending the workshop for anyone who registers for the whole meeting, so take note and sign up for it when Mid-Year Meeting comes to Pasadena in May.

December Program Highlights

by Linda Rudell-Betts

This year's LACASIS/SLA holiday dinner at Caltech's Athenaeum was yet another must-have experience. I saw many friendships being renewed at the social hour as well as new business contacts being cultivated. The appearance of several retired LACASIS members made the party extra special. The evening's speaker, Sandra Tsing Loh, was available for book signings and conversation. Our capacity crowd enjoyed grilled sea bass or vegetarian ravioli – and the Athenaeum still has the best coffee, decaf or not, that is made on a large scale.

For the evening's presentation, Sandra Tsing Loh read a seasonal story, "The Sugar Plum Fairy," originally published in her collection *Aliens in America*. The story concerns the adventures of two sisters as they tackle the annual "Nutcracker Suite" ballet. We were treated to a tale that had many laughing at furtive sibling competition and the indignities of performance anxiety.

I was able to release the anguish of not having ballet lessons as a girl with some measure of relief because of this story.

Following the reading, Ms. Loh graciously and humorously answered questions ranging from her opinion on the state of performance art (the term is outdated) to whether or not the San Fernando Valley should secede from Los Angeles (no, she likes the Valley being part of L.A). She also talked about her work on radio, "The Loh Life" and her contributions to "This American Life."

"The Loh Life", Sandra Tsing Loh's monologues, may be heard on KCRW 89.9 FM on Tuesdays at 6:59 p.m. or Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m. An archive is available on the Web through <http://kcrw.org/>

For all that, I still can't imagine doing anything else.

Q: My sense is that much of your published work has dealt with understanding the way people search for information and then using this understanding to design better information retrieval systems. Could you expand on (or correct!) these descriptions of your research interests? Have these interests changed over the years you've been in this discipline?

A: Yes, that's a very good description of my interests. I was the first person to take what was then known as "user studies" as a doctoral exam area for my qualifying exams. I worked informally with Bill Paisley at Stanford who also taught a course on user studies at Berkeley. When I first met him I had a 45-minute talk with him that set my interests for life. I really resonated with the way he thought and knew I'd found my metier. Of all the people I worked with, he was my mentor, even though I was not at Stanford. Prior to that I had begun studying systems analysis and "intellectual access" with Bill Maron. I switched to Vic Rosenberg, who had done user studies, as my Berkeley advisor (and later to Ray Swank when Vic left UC) but took as my designated two doctoral exam areas user studies and intellectual access. Those two have really remained my interests ever since. And it has proved to be a very fruitful combination. Each informs the other and give me lots of ideas. I went on to found courses in user studies/information seeking at the University of Maryland, University of Washington, and here at UCLA.

Q: In terms of user-centered design, how do you feel about the way the Internet is evolving?

A: It would take a whole course to answer that one! You and other readers are encouraged to take my "User-Centered Design of Information Systems" course, which I'll be giving in the spring, and which will include Internet systems, by concurrent enrollment at UCLA Extension.

Q: How can practitioners in the field make best use of the findings of information science research? In your recent paper in the *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* ("Indexing and Access for Digital Libraries and the Internet: Human, Database, and Domain Factors", *JASIS* 49(13):1185-1205, 1998), you highlight several findings from research that are under-used in practice. In the same article you mention a few information retrieval projects—including some you've worked on—which have made use of existing research, showing that it can be done. Any tips for practitioners?

A: I was once asked to speak on this at an ALA conference. And it actually happens that user studies can shed some light on this question. There is a built-in difference between researchers and practitioners that comes from their activities and educational experiences. The research is more formal and abstract, and the

PhD training people get does change how they think. (We don't do nothing for those five years of additional education!) It really is hard sometimes for researchers to make practical application of their work, and for practitioners to make sense of and apply this work to the real world. There's a real cultural and intellectual barrier there. It's not laziness or indifference on either side. The practitioner often doesn't have time to explore and adapt this literature either, so that's another barrier.

So what to do about it? I can think of two main methods: Find people who are good at having a foot in both camps—practitioners who love research and follow it, or researchers who are so-called "boundary spanners" and who can speak to practice, and work with them, ask them to speak at conferences, etc.

The other option is to apply research to practice a little more formally, and I think LIS doesn't do enough of this. In other fields there are journals whose purpose is, in effect, to translate research into practice. *American Libraries*, *Library Journal*, and the ALA conference all do this some, but I think not enough. I have long wanted to write a regular column in some library journal and call it "Research into Practice" or some such. But--another barrier--universities don't give professors much credit for this. (And I've got lots of original research I want to do.) It's considered a "service" publication, and that and a dollar will get you a cup of coffee. Maybe when I retire.

library assoc,

LACASIS Online Survey | *Members' Technology Access*

The LACASIS Board is seeking to understand its membership better as it plans this year's activities. Among other topics, we would like to learn more about members' ideas for program topics, formats, and venues.

We are planning a series of short and focused online surveys that can be answered in two minutes or less. To help us understand what kind of technology LACASIS members can use to answer an online survey, we are sending the following questions to all LACASIS members for whom we have an email address.

If you receive our email message, please respond by filling out a Web form at <http://www.usc.edu/isd/friends/orgs/lacasis/survey.html>. If you are unable to answer the survey online, please fill in the form below and mail it to:

Karen Howell
5205-1/2 Village Green
Los Angeles, CA 90016

Please tell us about the technology you can use to communicate with LACASIS online.

1. Are you able to use the Web to fill out a future online survey?

(Circle one)

Yes

No

2. Are you able to use email to answer a future online survey?

(Circle one)

Yes

No

3. How fast is your connection to the Internet? *(Circle one)*

28.8 Kbps modem

T1 or other higher-speed network connection

56 Kbps modem

None

ISDN modem

Other _____

Cable modem

4. What computer platform do you use? *(Circle one)*

PC

Mac

Other

5. What Web browser do you use?

Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0

Netscape 4.0 or higher

Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher

None

Netscape 2.0 or earlier version

Other _____

Netscape 3.0

If you think LACASIS does not have your current email address, please write it in here so we can update our records:

**Dorothy McGarry
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Los Angeles, CA 90093-1119**

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