

# CASLIS TORONTO NEWS

**CASLIS**

Canadian Association of Special Libraries & Information Services, A Division of CLA, Canadian Library Association

## From Our President

**G**reetings CASLIS Members.

Isn't it amazing that the CASLIS 2002/03 program year has come to an end? I started the year off silently crossing my fingers that the year would go by quickly and painlessly and it looks like it worked. The quick part is out of our control but the painless part is in credit to this year's executive. I would like to acknowledge each of them for taking time out of their schedules to volunteer. Each of these people made a significant contribution to our organization this year and despite some changes to the roster, their loyalty to CASLIS and this membership is always encouraging!

Our programming year kicked off with something fresh and new- Guinevere's turn at the table: An evening of Roundtable Discussions. We tried a wine and cheese kick-off for a change and it was a success! We had a great turn out and we learned some valuable lessons for doing an even better roundtable next year. This format seemed to really solicit lots of discussion – something we don't get to do often enough!

We carried on with hot topics such as Privacy, Copyright, News on the Net, and Professional Liability as an Information Provider back at the Toronto Reference Library. Our ever popular joint event with SLA, OALT-ABO and THLA was a success at holiday time- we are in the process of working with the executives of those organizations to ensure that the workload is evenly meted out between the four organizations.

Our attendance in general at each of our programs this year really knocked my socks off at every turn. We had attendance in the

50's and 60's for EVERY single program as opposed to our usual 20's or 30s. I'm not sure if we just hit the right buttons this year or if it was the new menu that brought so many of you out to our events but thank you for attending, for asking questions and for letting us know what's interesting to you!

Our membership had reached 276 members- including both personal and institutional members by March of this year. And we have over 100 people on our CASLIS Toronto Listserv born of Yahoo groups just this year.

That being said, the highlights of the year include not just the programs.

As a chapter, we were tightly linked in to the formation of the CASLIS Strategic Plan and we held a focus group for the new CASLIS Strategic plan. Through that we heard lots of great ideas for the organization as a whole.

We have also been involved in getting ready for the huuuuge ALA/CLA conference here in Toronto in June. I think the whole city is now aware that there are 25,000+ librarians descending upon them in June thanks to the SARS publicity. Robyn Stockand is putting together a 'rough guide' or 'Toronto on the Cheap' guide for delegates. The guide will be

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available online and it will cover everything newcomers to Toronto need to know about our fair city. A lot of effort has gone into the guide by a number of people in the executive and across the organization to ensure that it would be a useful guide to our lovely city- on the cheap.

Our final event of the year will be the AGM at the conference itself. Sunday June 22 from 4-6:30 there will be a light reception and the Toronto Chapter AGM followed by the CASLIS National AGM. Please join us- not only will you have an opportunity to see the Chapter AGM but you'll get some added insights into the National Executive. This event is FREE- even if you are not registered for the conference you may attend. We'll be in the Humber Room at the Crowne Plaza at 225 Front Street West. Finally- I must welcome the incoming Executive for 2003-04. And here they are....!

President	Robyn Stockand
VP	TBD
Past President	Jennifer McCready
Secretary	Michel-Adrien Sheppard
Treasurer	Jennifer McCready
Publicity	Astrid Lange
Newsletter	Michel-Adrien Sheppard
Website administrator	Astrid Lange
Membership	Sandra Blocki
FIS Student Liaison	Rani Pooran
Facilities/Catering	Peggy Cameron
Registration	Vicky Ly
Meeting Director	Yasmin Khan
Meeting Director	Laura Knapp
Meeting Director	Margaret Williams
Meeting Director	TBD
Meeting Director	TBD
Member at Large	Barbara Fingerote

See those TBD's?? That means next year's executive needs you!! Don't be shy- come join us on the executive. If you're interested in knowing more please feel free to contact me ([jennifer.mccready@hbc.com](mailto:jennifer.mccready@hbc.com)) or Robyn Stockand [robyn.stockand@nbfinancial.com](mailto:robyn.stockand@nbfinancial.com) We'd be glad to get you more interested!

Congratulations to this year's executive- we pulled it off! And all the best for the conference, and beyond to all!

Jennifer McCready  
CASLIS Toronto President, 2002-2003  
[jennifer.mccready@hbc.com](mailto:jennifer.mccready@hbc.com)

## April Program Review

### ***What Happened at Our Recent Meeting?***

### ***Professional Responsibility and Liability***

***Speaker: John N. Davis, Law Librarian, York University***

***Date: April 2, 2003***

***Report by Yasmin Khan***

This session was highly anticipated and heavily attended by many librarians and information professionals who work for large organizations as well as freelancers and consultants. The session highlighted cases that involved liability among accountants, lawyers and other information professionals, but specific instances of professional responsibility and liability with the library and information science profession was quite rare in Canada, although scattered cases of this nature did appear in the United States. Our speaker, John N. Davis, from York University Law Library, has a law degree as well as a library and information science degree, reflected that the reason for this is that librarians don't cause a lot of alarm for various populations in terms of liability issues, especially because our services do not involve large amounts of financial transactions, as lawyers and accountants may have. There

is a duty of care that librarians do owe their clients, yet a legal yardstick has yet to be established, as there are yet to be any cases within the Canadian jurisdiction that establishes “fiduciary duty” or legal duty of care, as this is commonly referred to.

Professional responsibility and liability could be minimized in terms of having clear communication with your clients or various user groups as to the services you provide. However, do establish boundaries as to what you are unable to do for your clients, so that you can decrease the amount of unrealistic expectations. Another good caveat that one of my colleagues wisely told me is the following: “under-promise and over-deliver.”

If you want information on case law discussed in this session, please contact Yasmin Khan at [ykhan@justice.gc.ca](mailto:ykhan@justice.gc.ca) and a handout of the case citations will be delivered via e-mail on request.

## May Program Review

### ***Repeating the Errors of History : Educating our Leaders***

***Speaker: Dr. Elaine Fantham, Professor Emeritus at Princeton University***

***Date: May 8, 2003***

Caslis members who attended this event enjoyed a delicious dinner and an interesting and entertaining after dinner talk by our guest speaker. Dr. Elaine Fantham discussed ancient civilizations and put ours in context. She made reference to modern leaders and the need to learn from ancient times and experiences. It was a very enjoyable evening.

See the CASLIS website for pictures!

## WEB WATCH

### **Library blogs – the serious and the weird**

By Michel-Adrien Sheppard

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The French have coined a term for people like me: we are called **infovores** – we eat up information of all kinds, insatiably. But if I have to read one more impenetrably dense, jargon-filled article about “customer-centric ROI metrics” or “standards-based XML-compliant electronic content management systems”, I will scream.

Where are the personality, the irreverence, the edginess, the anger, the spirit of fun in the LIS lit? For that, you have to turn to blogs, many of them published by lone librarians without much institutional support. This is where you are going to find highly individual, often quirky commentary to help you figure out issues and learn about trends in opinion. Or to make you laugh out loud. And in some cases, here is where you’ll find just plain weirdness, shameless self-promotion, caffeine-addled rants, venting, personal anecdotes, obsessive thoughts as well as trivia. The interesting stuff in other words.

With the rise of the blog phenomenon, there has been an explosion of library-related publishing. If you don’t already know, blogs are “regularly updated web pages, consisting of an online journal of news, interesting links, opinions and nuggets of information”<sup>1</sup>.

CASLIS members may already be using some of the more prominent and serious of these publications for current awareness purposes: for instance, Gary Price’s ResourceShelf (<http://resourceshelf.freepint.com/>), AcqWeblog ([http://acqweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/acqweb/ms\\_acqs.html](http://acqweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/acqweb/ms_acqs.html)) for acquisitions and collection development librarians, Bloug (<http://louisrosenfeld.com/home/>) for fans of Louis Rosenfeld, co-author of a bestselling text on information architecture, or Library Stuff (<http://librarystuff.net>), an interesting and

wide-ranging blog produced by Steven M. Cohen, a law librarian in New York.

There are blogs for everybody: blogs for veterinary medicine librarians, cataloguing librarians, systems librarians, academic librarians, you name it.

Just check out Peter Scott's directory of library-related Weblogs (<http://www.libdex.com/weblogs.html>). He even has a Canadian section!.

Among the more opinionated (and entertaining) blogs.

- **Ex-Libris** (<http://marylaine.com/exlibris/index.html>) by Marylaine Block way out in the middle of Iowa, who people might know as the creator of "NEAT NEW STUFF I FOUND THIS WEEK", an early Web-based current awareness service.
- **Librarian.net** (<http://www.librarian.net/>), one of the oldest librarian "zines" or blogs, published by Jessamyn West who is highly entertaining when she gets angry. She was recently elected to the Council of ALA, prompting her to quip: "you can tell it's the new me because I'm trying very hard not to swear or 'blaspheme'!"
- **Cites & Insights** (<http://cites.boisestate.edu/>), "a Web-based print zine providing annotated citations (cites) and commentary (insights) on a range of topics related to the intersections and interactions of libraries, messages, people, media, and technology." This is written by the extremely knowledgeable and argumentative Walt Crawford at RLG

(formerly at UC Berkeley). Some of the regular sections of his publication are called "disContent", "Censorware Currents", "The Good Stuff", "Bibs and Blather", and "Cheap Shots". As he explains, "sometimes articles and events cry out for a gun, a barrel, and fish. Irony may be dead, but cheap sarcasm lives on."

- For the more political among you, there is **Library Juice** (<http://libr.org/Juice/>) put out by Rory Litwin in Sacramento and which is about "librarianship as the servant and protector of the public sphere". It wears its left-leaning politics on its sleeve. It has articles with titles such as "Revolution is not an AOL Keyword". Opinionated and angry but well-informed.
- The **Shifted Librarian** (<http://www.theshiftedlibrarian.com/>), a creation of Jenny Levine out in Illinois suburbia, that explores how the proliferation of electronic gadgets is changing how people receive information and thus changing your job

Then you get into the really offbeat or strange ones: **The Hipster Librarian** (by a high school librarian struggling to keep up with the teenagers), **The Indie Rock Librarian** (a Philadelphia-based medical librarian who is a serious music geek), **L.A.C.K.** (Librarians Are Corrupting Kids – an anti-censorship, anti-Patriot Act site), **The Zen Librarian** ("The Zen Librarian searched for nothing on AltaVista and received 27,987,384 hits."), **The Leather Librarian** ("for the surly vixen within"), **The Anarchist Librarians Web** dedicated to getting together "to put on protests, raise

awareness, or simply drink beers", **usr/info/lib**, a collaborative forum/blog for the more outspoken techie geeks in the profession (articles have titles like "Server-side fascism and the Javascript Resistance"), the deadpan and self-mocking **Diary of A Mad Cataloger** full of musings about why in the world anyone would want to end up going to library school and becoming a librarian, **The Modified Librarian** dedicated to librarians with tattoos and body piercings of various sorts, **The Ska Librarian** (aka "The Librarian That Looks Like A Big Skinhead Who Will Eat My Child"), **The Dead Librarians Society**, a site created by librarians who are heavily into the music of the Grateful Dead. As you may have guessed, their list of Web resources devoted to their favourite band is entitled: "Dead Links"....

When you read some of these blogs, you understand what prompted Michael Moore, author of the bestseller "Stupid White Men" and director of the Oscar Award-winning documentary "Bowling for Columbine", to say of librarians: "They are subversive. You think they're just sitting there at the desk, all quiet and everything. They're like plotting the revolution, man. I wouldn't mess with them." (interview in the alternative news web publication *Buzzflash*, March 13, 2002)

<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Harder and Randy Reichardt, "Throw Another Blog on the Wire: Libraries and the Weblogging Phenomena", *Feliciter* 49(2), 2003, 85-88

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 Michel-Adrien Sheppard ([michel-adrien.sheppard@workopolis.com](mailto:michel-adrien.sheppard@workopolis.com)) works as a Web Content Producer and editor of the Ask an Advisor e-mail service at workopolis.com, Canada's largest Internet recruitment services site. Every week, he scans current awareness services for fascinating odds and ends to share with his always amazed non-librarian colleagues.

**CASLIS Toronto Needs You**  
***Join the CASLIS Toronto Executive Team***  
***2003/2004!!***

CASLIS Toronto is still looking for a few folks to volunteer for the Executive.

Why join??

- Looks great on a resume!
- Meet lots of new people in your field
- Have fun with us!!
- Make a difference in your profession and your association!
- Get connected!!

We are looking to fill the following positions

- Vice President
- Meeting Directors X 2

If you would like more information about specific positions available this year, or would like to nominate yourself or someone else, please contact one of the following:

Tracey Palmer

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Jennifer McCready

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Robyn Stockand

[Stockand@NBFinancial.com](mailto:Stockand@NBFinancial.com)

### CASLIS Toronto Listserv

Members are encouraged to subscribe to the Toronto Chapter's unmoderated discussion group. The list provides a forum for discussion topics of interest to Canadian information professionals working in special libraries.

The listserv is hosted by Yahoo! Groups.

**TO SUBSCRIBE:** Send a message to [caslistoronto-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:caslistoronto-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

After subscribing, you may receive a message saying that your e-mail address has been rejected. Do not fear! Yahoo Groups will only accept invited members to join their groups. Astrid Lange will review your e-mail and sign you up.

For more information, see the CASLIS website at :  
<http://www.caslistoronto.on.ca/Listserv5.html>

#### CASLIS Toronto Electronically

Stay on top of what's happening with CASLIS Toronto. Get advance notice of meetings and news of last minute changes.

See our Web site, [www.caslistoronto.on.ca](http://www.caslistoronto.on.ca).

**Get an electronic copy of the newsletter either on the Web site or by sending an email to Michel-Adrien Sheppard ([adrien.Sheppard@workopolis.com](mailto:adrien.Sheppard@workopolis.com))**

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