



Editor's Keyboard

Gregg Sapp

Dear LAMA member:

Not to be overdramatic or anything, but I hope that when you opened the electronic file containing the Winter 2007 issue of *LA&M*, you paused to consider that you were participating in an historical moment. With this issue, LAMA's official journal becomes the first of ALA's divisional journals to be published in an electronic-only format for its members. Okay, in terms of landmark events in the history of human communications, it may rank somewhere behind publication of the first Gutenberg Bible and the sequencing of the human genome, but it is nonetheless something in which LAMA can take distinct pride.

At the same time, I also realize that not all of you will regard this as a singularly propitious event. Trust me: I feel your pain. On the shelves behind me in my office, I have every print *LA&M* back to 1990. It does distress me to know that I'll never add another issue to this collection. I know that many of you colleagues feel the same melancholy. Still, I beseech you at this time to turn the page (pun intended) and, how can I put it politely . . . ?

Get over it!

My opinion is that the entire library profession has been much slower than it should be in adapting to electronic publishing and access models for its own literature, despite the fact that we so often pontificate to others that they must do no less. Who knows better than librarians the difficult economic factors involved in journal publishing and how they can be mitigated by going electronic? Who is always at the leading edge of advocating open access via electronic means? And yet, we have been too slow to practice what we preach. I hope that this begins to change, a little bit, with the publication of this very issue.

To the naysayers, all of you have spoken to me at conferences and other venues, about the creature comforts of print publishing—of being able to read *LA&M* on buses, of curling up with it and a cup of cocoa (or scotch) at night, and even of taking it into the bathroom on Sunday mornings (yes, I've heard this said), I can only respond . . . have you never heard of the “print” button?

This is my first issue as editor of *LA&M*, and although I must admit that it is mostly chance that places me in this position at this time, I feel that it is my job to speak to you,

the LAMA membership, loudly and clearly, that it is **about time** that we went electronic, and that it is up to us to prove that it not only can work, but that it is better. We're one up on every other ALA division in this regard.

I am equally proud and pleased of this issue because of its excellent content. I like to think that the features contain something for everybody. In her profile of Lotsee Patterson, Twila Camp provides an inspirational overview of the career of a true “ChangeMaster.” Congratulations to Elizabeth Nelson, whose no-holds-barred critique of the HAPLR public library rankings inventory won the YBP Corporation's award for student writing. Jennifer Weil Arns and Carol Price review data gathered by the LAMA Education Committee regarding the managerial competencies needed by new library supervisors. Marsha Iverson and Judith Gibbons provide an insightful, behind-the-scenes look into the deliberations of the John Cotton Dana Library PR Awards Committee. These days, with mergers becoming commonplace in businesses of all types, it should be no surprise that joint academic/public library management enterprises are being implemented, and Kirsten Marie looks at the two major examples of these partnerships in the United States. In a new series of *LA&M* management case studies, Elizabeth Kocevar-Weidinger, Virginia Kinman, and Sharon McCaslin look at how a combination of luck and shrewd planning started a chain of events that led to the creation of an information commons at Longwood College. Finally, let's give it up for the *LA&M* cadre of regular columnists: John Lubans, Julie Todaro, Bob Moran, and Bonnie Osif all contribute new insights, as only they can.

Also, as an added bonus, at no extra charge for electronic readers only, please enjoy the exclusive photos of Library Interior Design Award winners, in glorious HTML.

So, I invite you to pause from your daily travail to consider the historical significance of this moment. Better yet, LAMA members, share this experience with your non-LAMA member colleagues, and don't forget to forward a membership application as you extol LAMA's pioneering virtues to them!

Gregg Sapp (gsapp@uamail.albany.edu) is Head of the Science Library, SUNY Albany.