



Editor's Keyboard

Gregg Sapp

Editorial Musings on Globalization and the Blogosphere (Or Is It the Globosphere and Blogalization?)

I need a new computer. Early this morning, anxious for a fresh start on a productive new day, I attempted to log on, only to receive an error message "Application Failed to Initialize Properly—error number 0x0000135. Retry or Cancel." Now, this was not the first time that I've encountered this particular problem. My computer is often cranky in the morning. (Why is it that so many of our machines fail to perform their most essential functions? Copy machines *always* get paper jams. Dollar bill changers won't accept anything less than mint-perfect bills. Computers are reluctant to do the least of what every person must do—wake up in the morning.) Anyway, usually after I click on "retry" a couple of times, the beast will finally rouse itself. Today, though, perhaps because it is Monday, it refused to respond. After multiple attempts, I became frustrated enough to call the help line. The courteous and knowledgeable woman guided me through a successful troubleshooting procedure. All the while, though, I had to ask her to repeat herself, because she spoke with a dense, unidentifiable accent. In closing, I thanked her and, out of curiosity, asked her where she was. "Sri Lanka," she replied.

Sri Lanka? As memory of fifth-grade geography serves, that is an island in the Indian Ocean. Therefore, by my calculations, that was the longest long-distance call that I've ever made in my life. Probably, there were hundred of equally skilled people who could have helped me with my difficulty within five square miles of my home, and yet, there I was, conducting this transaction with an employee of an American computer company half a world away. It is not only a small world—it can fit entirely between your ears.

This point brings me around to the special theme of this issue of *LA&M*: "International Perspectives on Library Management." If I can turn to a friendly Sri Lankan for help fixing my computer, just imagine how much we all stand to gain by sharing our advice, wisdom, and experiences with our global neighbor librarians.

There are four pertinent articles presented for your consideration. The first is an interview with the eminent

library educator and researcher from Simmons College, Ching-chih Chen, on international digital library initiatives, especially Global Memory Net. Following that is Syed Haider's survey of the state of libraries in his native country of Pakistan. It is a bleak picture, but the country's efforts are inspiring. Furthermore, his call to send more native Pakistani librarians to the West for training demonstrates how global cooperation can work. Next is a piece by Claudine Lieber, which is a translated adaptation of an article originally appearing in the French journal *Bibliothèques*. Because it is a French librarian presenting her impressions on American libraries to French librarian readers, it represents an insider's look at how they view us, and what they find both impressive and curious. Finally, while American librarians have been sensitive to the stereotyping of our profession for several years (decades, even), it may come as a revelation that, as Shu-hsien Tsen and Pei-Yu Lu discovered, aspects of that same stereotype also are evident among Taiwanese librarians.

As I assembled the material for this issue, I began to wonder how many, if any, non-United States librarians are members of LAMA. I'm guessing very few, and of those, I'd expect most to be from Canada. So, I posted a query to that effect on the *LA&M* editor's blog. I will report back to readers in the next issue, but if you really want to know, go to the blog source at <http://blogs.ala.org/LAandM.php> and see for yourself.

And, while I am on that subject, I must say that as of this point in time, the editor's blog has carried less chatter than a black hole. To be honest, I personally am not much of a blogger. It is all that I can do just to delete the more than one hundred spam e-mails that I get every day. (Please, spare me the lecture about needing to invoke e-mail security measures. My spam filter is so flawed that at its minimum setting it allows multiple postings from a company that sells a product called "horny goatweed." At its maximum setting, it won't permit a Blue Mountain birthday card from my mother. There is no middle setting). So, my point is that in order for this blog to become a useful vehicle for communication and idea sharing, *you* must

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are aggressively pursuing initiatives for serving members who wish to become leaders, whether they plan to be managers or not. This emphasis has led many to question whether our name adequately describes us. The name "Library Administration and Management Association" connotes for many a division aimed at library directors or others whose career paths are heading in that direction. When then-president Andrea Lapsley and I met with several dozen Spectrum Scholars at the Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., we were struck by the fact that the majority of these new librarians had that perception of LAMA. Therefore it has been suggested we consider incorporating the word "leadership" into our name. If the membership likes the idea, we could consider adding the word, inserting it in place of another word, or even starting from scratch. I am pleased that Ernie DiMattia will chair a task force, consisting of past-executive direc-

tor Lorraine Olley, Maureen Sullivan, and Paul Anderson, that will manage a process for members to consider and discuss this possibility. Should there appear to be sufficient interest, we could develop a name change resolution to be brought to a vote. Please respond to the task force's invitations with your ideas and suggestions so we can assess the level of member interest.

Let me close by thanking everyone who volunteered to serve in some LAMA capacity this year. If you volunteered but did not get appointed, please continue to let us know of your interest and we will do the best we can to get you involved in LAMA affairs. I also would like to express my appreciation to past-president Andrea Lapsley for doing such a wonderful job on our behalf, and to Fred Reuland in the LAMA office for doing all he could to keep the division afloat during the half year we were without an executive director. Now on to the next fifty years!

contribute. I will monitor it and place queries on your behalf, but unless you, dear readers, take ownership of the blog, it will become a void.

Finally, let me call your attention to the other contributors in this issue: Darren Sweeper's installment of our own ChangeMasters feature looks at the career of Howard McGinn; Taecock Kim and Paula Pompa present a practi-

cal case study on the operation of an automated retrieval system; and our columnists—John Lubans, Bonnie Osif, and Julie Todaro—do their usual superb job.

Now, I'm ready to log off my computer, and if something goes awry, I wouldn't mind chatting again with my new friend in Sri Lanka.