

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS: THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IFLA SECTION OF BIOLOGICAL AND MEDICAL SCIENCES LIBRARIES

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Summer in Boston!

The coming of summer means the 67th IFLA General Conference will soon be here. The meeting will be held at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston, USA, from August 16-25, 2001. Scheduled for the Section of Biological and Medical Sciences Section are two splendid programs, two Section business meetings, and a tour of the newly renovated Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. In addition, a wide variety of plenary sessions, section programs, exhibits, and tours are available to all who attend.

Section Programs

The Section programs include a panel discussion and a workshop. The panel topic is *TeleHealth: Information Technology Advancing World Health* and will be held from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m., Wednesday August 22. The panel will discuss the use of telemedicine technologies in promoting health services to rural and underserved areas of the world, including information dissemination.

Featured speakers will include Michael Kienzle, M.D., National Center for the Study of Rural Telemedicine, University of Iowa, USA; James McGee, Nuffield Department of Clinical Medicine, University of Oxford, United Kingdom; Mary Moore, Ph.D., Associate Program Coordinator, National Library of Medicine, USA; and Sherrilynne Fuller, Ph.D., Head of Informatics and Health Sciences Library and Information Center, University of Washington, USA. This is a joint program with the Information Technology Section and is sponsored by the National Library of Medicine.

The workshop, *Consumer Health Information: A Comprehensive Web-based Resource and a Consumer Health Center*, is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 12 noon Thursday, August 23 at Beth Israel Medical Center. Included will be a session on *MEDLINE Plus*, the comprehensive web-based health information resource by Erica Burnham, the Consumer Health Information Coordinator of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Middle Atlantic Region, New York, and a tour of the extensive consumer health center by Henrietta Green, Librarian of Beth Israel Hospital. This program is jointly sponsored by the Libraries Serving Disadvantaged Persons Section.

Business Meetings

Business meeting of the Standing Committee are scheduled for Saturday, August 18 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and for Friday, August 24 from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Reception at the Countway

An invitation to all health sciences librarians at IFLA to attend a reception has been issued by the Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Judith Messerle, Director, will welcome guests from 3-5 p.m. on Thursday August 23, at the Library located at 10 Shattuck Street, Boston. The Library is a short subway ride outbound from Copley Square to the Brigham Circle stop on the Green E Line.

Visitors will enjoy refreshments and have the opportunity to tour the newly renovated Library. Upon entering, visitors will see the new staircase leading to the second floor. Before ascending the staircase, there is much to see. On the first floor is the Russell Reading Room for current journals. The reader will find the newest issues displayed on open shelves and easy to locate. Tables, looking out over the campus, are all wired for laptops, and comfortable lounge chairs make this a good place for relaxing and reading. Computers and photocopy machines are available.

Two handsome paintings on the first floor depict major events in medicine. The first operation under ether on October 16, 1846 at the Massachusetts General Hospital is the famous painting by Robert C. Hinckley. The first successful kidney transplant on December 23, 1954 at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital was the scene painted by Joel Babb. The Circulation Desk and Document Delivery Services are located on the first floor.

The Reference Desk and Collection and the Electronic Classrooms

The staircase leads the visitor to the second floor with the Reference Desk and collection. Featured on this level are the electronic classrooms as well as computer stations for users, group study rooms, and reading tables. The Library's choicest portrait, the Nicholas Boylston painted by John Singleton Copley, is hung on the second floor. Reference Librarians will be on hand to greet you and show the classrooms and describe the Library's classes.

Journal Collections and Rare Books and Special Collections

Lower Level One holds a variety of resources. Here are the journals published since 1986 along with the Library's browsing reading collection. A collection of exquisite apothecary jars adds to the visual pleasure of this browsing area.

Journals published before 1986 are housed on Lower Level Two as is the Rare Books and Special Collections Department. The Rare Books reading room is a beautiful room in the

manner of traditional reading rooms—but with tables wired for laptops and computers for access to resources. An exhibit displaying the works and artifacts of three Boston plastic surgeons, all pioneers in that field, will be of interest as will the portraits that are hung in this lobby.

Book Collections

The third and fourth floors hold the book collections, the third floor contains books published since 1960 and the fourth those published earlier. The fourth floor also houses the offices of the Resource Management Department. Both floors have study carrels and rooms for group study.

Gallery and Museum

The fifth floor is the location of the Library's Administrative Offices and also the Countway Gallery with many portraits of renowned physicians. The notable Warren Museum of Harvard Medical School is now under the aegis of the Library and highlights from the collection are on display on the fifth floor.

We hope you will join us at the Countway!

Award Honors Chair Ysabel Bertolucci!

The Nursing and Allied Health Resource Section (NAHRS) Award for Professional Excellence for 2001 was presented to our Section Chair Ysabel Bertolucci during the Medical Library Association annual meeting in Orlando, Florida in May. She is the Health Sciences Librarian at Kaiser Permanente Medical Centers in Oakland and Richmond, California and has been an effective advocate of services to nursing and allied health personnel locally, nationally, and globally. She is a distinguished member of the Academy of Health Information Professionals of MLA.

Virtual Health Library Meeting

The II Meeting of the Virtual Health Library Initiative in Latin America and the Caribbean was held May 23-24, 2001 at the Palacio de las Convenciones de la Habana in Cuba. This meeting brought together representatives from countries in Latin America and the Caribbean who are involved in building a virtual health library for the region. Caribbean colleagues from the Bahamas, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts, and Trinidad and Tobago were present.

V Congress on Health Sciences Information

Immediately following this meeting, more than 800 colleagues in the field of health information gathered in the same venue from April 25-27, 2001 for the fifth Congreso Regional de Informacion sobre las Ciencias de la Salud (CRICS V). The Congress on the theme, *Information and Knowledge for Health Equity*, was opened by Sir George

Alleyne, Director of the Pan American Health Organisation. This regional Congress on Health Sciences Information is a much anticipated event among health information and education professionals in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Pierre Levy, Professor at the University of Quebec in Canada, provided an exposition on cyberdemocracy and collective intelligence. An interesting aspect of his treatise was the concept of “unexpected communism” arising out of the total democratisation of cyberspace in the new knowledge society that he envisions. Themes such as knowledge leading to empowerment, the internalisation of the power of knowledge for equity and transformation resonated through many of the presentations.

The Digital Divide

Given the theme, *Equity in Health*, there was much discussion about the unavailability of Internet access and consequently, online health information to many of the region’s citizens. Participants were apprised of initiatives aimed at closing the digital divide and making consumer health information more widely available. Alejandro R. Jadad, University of Toronto, engendered much enthusiasm and commitment with his address on using the Internet and other information technology to ensure equitable access to knowledge. Dr. Jadad is the Director, Program in eHealth Innovation, University Health Network, Faculty of Medicine and Rose Family Chair in Supportive Care, University of Toronto. Participants also heard about the collaboration between BIREME/PAHO and the Cochrane collaboration, which is being effected through the Centro Cochrane Iberoamericano, Spain. Dissemination of information about the Cochrane collaboration, evidence-based medicine, and the use of information for decision making in Latin America and the Caribbean should be well served through this partnership.

Scientific Electronic Library Online

Abel Packer, Director of BIREME, reviewed the SciELO project that aims at the dissemination and distribution of the locally generated scientific information in Latin America and the Caribbean. To the extent that regional journals are not included in the traditional indexing sources, indicators such as impact factors are not available. This cooperative electronic publishing initiative incorporates procedures for citation analysis, to measure usage and to generate impact factors. It also provides higher visibility and access to these journals for persons outside the region. Access to the Scientific Electronic Library Online project is available on the Internet <http://www.scielo.org>. Other useful sites are the Portal to the Virtual Health Library at <http://www.bireme.br/> the Mission, objectives and organisational structure of BIREME at <http://www.bireme.br/bvs/bireme/1/homepage.htm>, and the list of bibliographic databases at <http://www.bireme.br/bvs/1/ibd.htm>.

Social Events

Cuban colleagues joined us for the conference and the social events that ranged from local cultural performances to a wonderful Gala of the National Ballet of Cuba, under the direction of Cuban Prima Ballerina, Alicia Alonso. It was a pleasure to meet old and new international colleagues such as Maria Musoke of Uganda, Laxmi Mansingh, Jamaica, Lenny Rhine, United States, who with Avril Reid of Trinidad and Tobago, is involved in

a programme of assistance to a health library in Antigua, Jonathan Eldredge of the United States, and Tony McSean, United Kingdom.

Guadalajara, Mexico in 2003

Members of the organising committees such as Jeremias Hernandez Ojito and Pedro Urra Gonzalez of Cuba, as well as Elenice de Castro of BIREME and all members of their teams were justifiably proud of the success of the Congress. In closing the Congress, Antonio Casas of PAHO/WHO invited participants to sustain the momentum until the next CRICS at Guadalajara, Mexico in 2003. We were also reminded of the 9ICML to be held in Sao Paulo, Brazil in 2005. At the end of the meetings, participants agreed to the Declaration of Havana Towards Equitable Access to Health Information.

Further information on the Declaration is found at
<http://www.bireme.br/crics5/1/declara.htm>

Thanks to Ernesta Greenidge, Head of the Medical Sciences Library, the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, for this splendid report.

Final Words

Chair Ysabel Bertolucci extends her welcome to all health sciences librarians:

Professional meetings enrich the lives of all that attend. It is not simply the knowledge imparted from speaker to attendee but the interaction of professionals discussing similar issues. One may think that different types of libraries have different issues, but I have found the opposite to be true. My first IFLA Conference was Copenhagen in 1997. The first activity I attended was a reception at the Copenhagen Public Library for new IFLA delegates. I met a Danish public librarian and spent the evening discussing Internet training methods. She was training children and I was developing sessions for health professionals. We taught each other much that evening, and have continued an email friendship and professional bond ever since. I am constantly amazed at the relevant sessions I attend each year sponsored by sections I would never have thought could be useful. Our profession is based on the need to share resources, experiences and knowledge. What better way to do so than at an IFLA Conference.

I want to encourage you to attend the IFLA Conference so you, too, may experience sharing with our international colleagues.

Editor's Note

Please send your news, comments about the Conference in Boston, and announcements to
Lucretia McClure, Editor
Librarian Emerita
Edward G. Miner Library
University of Rochester Medical Center
164 Elmore Road

Rochester, New York 14618-3651
Phone: 716.244.8703
E-Mail: lucretiaru@earthlink.net