

# newsletter

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new series  
Fall 2001

*Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations*

## IFLA Pre-Conference Spectacular

by Marilyn Kramer, University at Buffalo Libraries

The IFLA pre-conference, "Technology Globalization & Multicultural Services in Libraries" was held August 14-16 in Buffalo, New York, U.S.A. Organized under the auspices of the Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations, the program featured speakers from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and the United States and was attended by 76 participants.

The speakers were outstanding. The participants were enthusiastic about learning of others' experiences and sharing their own. The weather was perfect for the Spirit of Buffalo Reception, which was held on the terrace of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society Museum overlooking Delaware Park. The Park, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, was the site of the 1901 Pan American Exposition that celebrated the emerging electric age and was spectacularly lighted by electricity generated by Niagara Falls. Interestingly, the 1901 Exposition offered elaborate displays of cultures from around the world, being a "multicultural" event, though in the vernacular of its own time.

The first day keynote session featured a presentation by **Dr. Jorge Reina Schement**, Pennsylvania State University, U.S.A. Dr. Reina Schement spoke on "New Demographics and the Digital Divide." His presentation, although primarily based on U.S. statistics, portrayed an uneven distribution of digital resources according to age, level of education, ethnicity, and economic status, raising issues of access that are relevant to any multicultural society. The second day keynote speaker was **Dr. Derrick de Kerckhove**, University of Toronto, Canada. Dr. de Kerckhove, an associate of Marshall McLuhan, spoke very eruditely about the connection and interaction between media and culture.

Other speakers included **Gary Strong**, Director of the Queens Borough Public Library, U.S.A., who spoke on "Technology and Multicultural Library Services: A Vision for the Future". The Queens Borough Public Library serves New York City's most ethnically diverse borough where one in three residents comes from another country and nearly half of the borough's residents speak a language other than English at home. The QBPL aggressively serves this diverse population, and Mr. Strong conveyed his passion and excitement at his library's mission.

**Dr. Clara Chu**, University of California at Los Angeles, U.S.A., discussed "Multiculturalism, Technology and Globalization in Latin America: Libraries as Sites of Information Access." Dr. Chu's own experiences as a member of the immigrant community in South America informed her view of multiculturalism as a construct of national identity. She spoke about the extent of Internet connectivity and access in Latin America and concluded with a discussion of the role of Latin American libraries in addressing the needs of multicultural communities.

**Kristina Virtanen**, of the Helsinki City Library, Finland, spoke on "Internet Services Supporting the Library Services to Multicultural Populations in the Nordic Countries." Using new technology and the Internet, library service to multicultural populations has

been expanded and improved.

Unfortunately, Kirsten Leth Nielsen, Oslo Public Library, Norway, who had been scheduled to co-present with Ms. Virtanen, was unable to participate because of illness.

**Benedikte Kragh-Schwarz**, Head, Danish Central Library for Immigrant Literature, Denmark, described Finfo, a net guide to information on Danish society and a global link index and gateway to more than 50 countries and ethnic and linguistic groups. Finfo is the result of collaboration among more than 30 Danish libraries, providing information in eleven languages.

**Andrew Cunningham**, State Library of Victoria, Australia, and **Larry Stillman**, State Library of Victoria and the Monash University, Australia, presented "The Open Road...Enabling E-diversity Locally and Globally." Their talk focused on strategies and technologies for providing multilingual public Internet access in all Victorian public libraries. Unicode was highlighted as a powerful tool for vernacular access to materials.

**Dr. Yuri Quintana**, University of Western Ontario, Canada, brought a unique perspective outlined in "Delivering Multicultural Health Information Using Internet and Digital Storytelling." He discussed issues such as choice of language and storytelling style appropriate for various communities. In this sensitive area, one size does not fit all.

In a final breakout session, Stan Skrzyszewski, President of ASM

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TECHNOLOGY  
GLOBALIZATION  
MULTICULTURAL  
SERVICES an IFLA pre-conference



AUG  
14-16  
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## Chair's Comments

Dear IFLA Friends and Colleagues,

October 1st started a new four-year term for the Standing Committee on Library Services to Multicultural Populations. There is a great deal of work to be done during the new term for the 18 member Standing Committee which includes a new Information Officer, Co-Editor, Secretary/Treasurer and Chair. I would like to especially welcome the newly elected members.

As the new Chair, I would like to thank everyone who attended the Standing Committee meetings in Boston. It was a great success with 99% of the Section's members attending the meetings and with many observers too. This shows great promise for the future and especially for the work of the next four years. I would like to thank both Barbara von Wahlde and Jane Pyper for volunteering as our new Information Officer and Co-Information Officer respectively. They have done

excellent work in producing this first issue of the Section's *Newsletter*. Also, a thank you to Donna Serafin who has worked very hard doing this excellent layout. Furthermore, I am grateful to all of you who have given me the opportunity to become the Chair of the Section. I am looking forward to working with you.

Kindest regards,  
Jane Dreisig

newsletter  
Library Services to Multicultural Populations

no. 1, new series, Fall 2001

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The *Newsletter* is mailed to all Section members as a benefit of membership. Issues are also available online at the Section's Web site at <http://ifla.inist.fr/VII/s32/slsm.htm>.

Articles for publication and or requests for information should be sent to Barbara von Wahlde at [bv@buffalo.edu](mailto:bv@buffalo.edu) or Jane Pyper at [jpyper@tpl.toronto.on.ca](mailto:jpyper@tpl.toronto.on.ca)

**Barbara von Wahlde**  
EDITOR

**Jane Pyper**  
CO-EDITOR

**Donna Serafin**  
DESIGN AND LAYOUT



## Merci, Merci!

On behalf of the Standing Committee, I would like to express our thanks and gratitude to Souad Hubert, Chef de Service Relations Internationales of the Bibliotheque Publique d'Information at the Pompidou Center for all the work she has done for the Section in the last few years. Souad served as Section Chair ending her term in 2001 at the Boston IFLA Conference, and prior to that served as editor of the newsletter. I don't know of any other person having so many connections and good friends all over the world. Her position in the B. P. I. brought her into contact with many and resulted in visits to many national and important public libraries in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres of the Americas and other countries worldwide. Her knowledge of other libraries and their programs have been invaluable to the committee and made our work increasingly successful.

During her time on the committee, not only did Souad show leadership as the Chair, but also she produced newsletters for the section and instituted revised *Guidelines* for the Library Services to Multicultural Populations Section in several official IFLA languages. She brought dedication, knowledge and experience to the Section . . . and in a French style. We will miss her hard work and guidance, but we have gained her as a special advisor beginning in 2002 so we don't need to say *au revoir* yet. — Jane Dreisig

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Consultants, London, Ont., Canada, led conference participants in crystallizing the important issues and strategies raised by the presentations and discussions. The participants made several recommendations:

1. information should be given to ethnic populations in their mother tongue
2. global forums for multicultural services should be developed
3. training opportunities for librarians in developing countries with multicultural populations should be created
4. quick and easy communication enabling librarians to share ideas,

methods and tools is needed

5. consumer health information should be a component of multicultural activities
6. library work forces should include staff with multicultural backgrounds.

I came away from the conference feeling great pride at being a member of a profession in which the ethos of service to individuals and to the community, defined locally, regionally and globally, is so strong. Goodwill and dedication to the betterment of all people shone clearly through each of the presentations and discussions. □

# Boston Conference Workshop a Success

by Jane Pyper, Toronto Public Library

At the IFLA conference held in Boston this summer, the Section presented an interesting day-long workshop, *Library Services and Resources for Multicultural Populations*, on Thursday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Lucille Thomas, Trustee at the Brooklyn Public Library, USA, organized the session and thanks go to her for assembling such diverse and knowledgeable speakers. Highlights from the session included:

**Lourina K. de Voogd**, Netherlands, spoke about a research study she had conducted in the Lumbok neighborhood of Utrecht. She examined the language attitudes and reading strategies of 12 immigrant families through in-depth interviews and a questionnaire. Her findings were that these families attached great importance to acquiring proficiency in the Dutch language and most had received language instruction fairly quickly after arrival. However, the public library was not identified as an important resource by these families in acquiring language or computer skills or as a source of information for daily living. The local library used these findings to translate research into action and set up "Lumbok Mondial" with computer resources, courses, and collection of specific interest to immigrants.

**Adriana Tandler**, Head, New Americans Program, Queens Borough Public Library, U.S.A. provided an overview of how her library has made a significant commitment to serving immigrants in the very diverse Queens Borough. The New Americans program was funded as a pilot in 1977 and made a permanent part of the Library's operating budget in 1982. There are now 7 full time staff and a collections budget of \$400,000 for other language materials. Adriana outlined the range of services provided including:

- collections in many languages
- a Mail-A-Book Service

- programming in 28 languages on a wide range of topics such as immigration law, starting a small business, or health issues

- WorldLinQ™ (<http://www.worldlinq.org>), a Web site created by the Library to provide access to electronic information resources in native languages. It was developed partially with funding from the AT&T Corporation.

- Directory of immigrant-serving agencies.

**Fred Gitner**, Assistant Head, New Americans Program, Queens Borough Public Library, U.S.A. discussed how the Library approaches and encourages partnerships in providing service to multicultural communities. He described how they find community partners (through attendance at community fairs, ethnic media, personal contacts, etc.) and the nature of the partnerships. The Library has partnerships in the areas of collections, coping skills programming, and cultural programming. The benefits are the increased awareness of library service among ethnic communities, increased library use, and greater participation and contribution to the community for new immigrants.

**Barbo Ejendal**, Stockholm Public Library, Sweden described the new International Library in Stockholm. This library, situated in the city centre of Stockholm, opened one year ago and has 200,000 books in 120 languages. The three levels of government finance the Library: City (42%), Regional (31%), and State (26%) with a total budget of \$1.4 million US. There are 25 staff and the Library is open 58 hours a week. The goals of the International Library are to develop a media collection in various immigrant languages, supply public libraries in Sweden with media collections and skills, arrange workshops, seminars and conferences, and encourage children's love of reading. As an example of the last goal, the Library purchased the ever-popular Harry Potter

books in 40 languages and provided teachers with guides on the book to use with their classes. The International Library also cooperates in joint projects with other Nordic countries in the acquisition and cataloguing of multilingual material.

**Martin Gomez**, Executive Director, Brooklyn Public Library, U.S.A. also spoke on strategies for meeting the multilingual needs of public library users. The Library established the Multilingual Center in 1997 with private sponsorship. There are 13 full and part-time staff, most of who are fluent in two or more languages. The Multilingual Center functions as a gateway to library resources, a touchstone to home culture and language, and key to social services and a vehicle to system-wide world language service. They have a budget of \$700,000US, which is spent by the Center for all the branches. Since establishing the Center, the Library has expanded multilingual collections by 120,000 items, held over 150 programs, established an e-resource service with links to Internet sites in many languages, established conversation round tables to assist immigrants in building language skills, held health awareness projects, and established extensive community contacts. Future goals include enhancing their Internet directory, expanding their collections and extending community links and services.

**Joyce Ray**, Director, Office of Library Services, Institute of Museum and Library Services, U.S.A. outlined the function of the Institute of Museum and Library Services which is a grant-making agency fostering leadership, innovation and lifetime learning through the support of museums and libraries. She highlighted some of the grant support that has supported libraries in multicultural or multilingual service initiatives, such as funding to the University of Arizona's Knowledge River institute which is designed to attract Native Americans and Hispanics to library training. ■

## Nordic Cooperation Links Libraries Online

by Benedikte Kragh-Schwarz, Danish Central Library of Immigrant Literature

The four Nordic countries, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark, have a long tradition of cooperation in the field of library services to ethnic minorities.

The scope and basic principles for the services are quite similar in each country and so also is the organization of the work. In all four countries it is the responsibility of the local public library to serve the local

communities of foreign origin. Likewise in each country, a central library, which is financed by the state, is a resource centre having the national responsibility to support the local libraries through the acquisition of books and other media in the languages of the ethnic minorities. The central library also plays an advisory role in recommending subscriptions to foreign newspapers and magazines and provides timely information about the content, political or religious orientation, the reading level and target groups of particular foreign newspapers and

magazines as well as subscriptions costs and suppliers.

For the past several years, the four central libraries cooperated in establishing a database of foreign newspapers and magazines which was part of the Finnish Web site, Multicultural Libraries. In 2000, the Helsinki Public Library decided not to maintain their portion of the database. At the same time, the Danish Central Library for Immigrant Literature was planning a new portal for news media and invited the three other national

## Serving Ethnic Minorities in New York State

by Brigid Calahan, The New York Public Library

Libraries in New York State do an impressive job serving ethnic minorities. Many librarians strive to respond to changing populations, and happily make efforts to adapt collections and services to meet changing needs. In addition, there has been help available from colleagues. I have been asked to write about one of the sources of that help, the Ethnic Services Round Table of the New York Library Association.

Let's go back, to a point in time 23 years ago, when David Cohen was teaching a pioneering course in multicultural librarianship at Queens College of the City University of New York. Professor Cohen saw the need for a focus on ethnic services in libraries throughout New York State and called upon libraries to develop collections to meet the needs of the diverse populations in their communities. Realizing that practicing librarians may need assistance to meet this challenge, he launched the Ethnic Services Task Force within the New York Library Association, which is the state-level professional association for librarians. Since its value was obvious, the task force soon became a permanent part of the organizational structure of the association as the Ethnic Services Round Table (ESRT). Since its founding in 1982, ESRT has aimed to motivate, educate and assist librarians

working with the full range of ethnic groups.

First, some background on the potpourri of people living in the state. . .

Sixteen of every hundred people in New York State were born in another country, and one or both parents of one-fifth of New York's U.S.-born population was born in other countries. New York City, of course, has been a first home to new immigrants for hundreds of years, and a home for many blacks who moved north in the early and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century for social and economic reasons. This ethnic mix helps to make New York City a dynamic and culturally-rich place to live. The rest of the state, from Niagara Falls in the western part of the state, along the Canadian border to the north, and throughout the rolling hills of central New York, has been populated by mostly those of European descent who have deep roots in this country. And there are many Native Americans (American Indians), with even deeper roots, and groups like French Canadians that we don't see as often in New York City. The "Great Migration" of African-Americans to the north brought more diversity, particularly to New York's great cities such as Albany, Buffalo, Rochester and Syracuse. In recent decades, Puerto Ricans (who are U.S. citizens), migrant workers, often from Mexico and Central America, and refugees from around

the globe have altered the racial and ethnic composition of the state as a whole.

Descendants of immigrants from long-established ethnic groups such as Dutch, Irish, German and Italian express interest in their own ethnic heritage, especially when they see celebration of cultures of other, more recently-arrived, groups.

Librarians can help one another respond to the needs and desires of the full range of their patrons. The Ethnic Services Round Table's purpose is to: ". . .share information on ethnic services through a cooperative network; develop and promote collections; design services for ethnic groups; and provide up-to-date funding information . . ." (ESRT Bylaws, Article II). How do they accomplish this?

**Programs:** At the New York Library Association's annual fall conference, ESRT has sponsored over 30 programs on topics such as:

- How to present library programs to celebrate various cultures
- How to develop and enhance collections in other languages and for ESL students
- Funding sources for multicultural services
- Experiences of librarians from other countries working in the U.S.

**Meetings:** Between three and five meetings each year bring members together

centres to participate in establishing and maintaining a Nordic database of annotated newspapers and magazines.

With the valuable participation of our Nordic colleagues, a prototype of the database was developed in 2001 and will be tested within the next few months with a small number of sample records. Tentative plans call for the database to become available on the Internet by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002.

The Nordic aspect of the portal means that it will be possible for each country to create its own national interface in the national language and that fields such as

subject/keywords, language, and country will be searchable in all four languages and English. The records are linked together so that searches done in any language will present all records regardless of language. The content description of each title will also be multilingual.

The news media portal will include a circulation service of more specialized periodicals for the Danish public libraries. A small number of libraries can “share” a subscription and the service will facilitate the circulation of the issues between the libraries. It will also include an electronic

mail function which automatically informs registered users when a new issue is available in the local library. Another service for the ethnic minorities is a directory to the collections of newspapers and magazines in all Danish libraries. This directory enables users to easily locate their preferred newspapers. ■



## Around the World

to share and plan throughout the year. Several of these have been held in locations with ESRT-related interest and have incorporated a tour and/or lecture. For instance, recent meetings have been at the Institute of Indian Culture, N.Y.C.; Irish American Heritage Museum Office, Buffalo; Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, N.Y.C.; and several Native American sites including the Seneca Nation Library and the Iroquois Indian Museum near Albany.

**Multicultural Award:** Each year the round table chooses a member who has demonstrated “outstanding achievement, advocacy and leadership in serving the community in the areas of collection development, outreach services and developing creative multicultural materials and programs.” The award, which is given at the annual NYLA conference, consists of a citation and a generous gift certificate contributed by Routledge, Inc.—Taylor & Francis Group Publishers.

**Publications:** The newsletter, *Expand Your World*, issued twice a year, keeps members up to date on all official round table business, introduces award winners and other movers and shakers in ESRT’s world, provides a forum for self-expression and gives background on many subjects of interest to ESRT members. Recent issues have included articles on the 2001 IFLA Satellite Conference on Technology, Globalization and Technology, the Pura

Belpre Award (given for an outstanding Latino-themed children’s book), elements of a good translation, international book fairs, and the Sister Library program.

Over 20 **bibliographies**, some of which are technically filmographies or webliographies, to aid in collection development, have been compiled by ESRT members. These have included books written in a wide range of languages (Bengali, Russian, Haitian Creole, etc.); books written in English (*Native American Art*; *Multicultural Literature: A Selection of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Writings*; and *Books by Caribbean Authors*) and films in other languages with English subtitles. Several of these are available through ESRT’s Web site (see below).

ESRT’s most ambitious publication to date, the book *Bridging Cultures: Ethnic Services in the Libraries of New York State*, was published by NYLA/ESRT in October 2001. It features 36 essays written by librarians who describe ethnic library programs and collections throughout the state.

**Special Events:** In 1999, ESRT wanted to do something special at the annual conference in Buffalo. Homa Naficy, our president that year, was able to secure foundation funding which allowed us to rent space in the exhibit hall to present an exciting two-day “Multicultural Expo.” On

the first day, ESRT members demonstrated games from around the world, and played them with anyone who cared to try! (The Games session is described in the book *Bridging Cultures*, if you want more information.) The second day, poster sessions gave librarians from throughout the state the opportunity to share successful ethnic program information and handouts. Over 100 ESRT members participated in the Expo in various ways.

**The most important part:** Of course, our **members** are key to the smooth functioning of ESRT and the reason we exist. We know that a strong membership base is how we can achieve our purpose of increasing and enhancing ethnic library services. A focus has been placed on attracting new members to increase energy, broaden results, and bring as wide as possible a range of experiences and voices. Colleagues from all parts of the state have met with us and contributed in so many ways. This is what provides the wind under ESRT’s wings!

I hope these reflections on ESRT’s history and activities have been useful to you, and that they might encourage you as a professional in some way. The enthusiastic teamwork of those associated with the round table has made it a pleasure for me to work with this group for the last several years. If you would like more information about ESRT, take a look at our Web page at [www.nyla.org/esrt](http://www.nyla.org/esrt). ■



## Partnerships and Collaborations:

### *the Toronto Public Library Experience*

by Chrissy Mylopoulos, the Toronto Public Library

The Toronto Public Library has been long involved in partnerships with community based organizations, immigrant serving organizations, school boards and other institutions which share its vision, mission and philosophy regarding services to newcomers and immigrants. Partnerships have been recognized as a value and have been pursued in this area of service in various ways. While recognizing partnership as a new value takes time, the experience and the benefits from such an involvement are very encouraging and can be summarized in the following few points:

- sharing and exchanging knowledge
- filling gaps in service
- expanding the scope of service
- having greater impact
- developing single point access
- promoting services
- avoiding duplication of services
- accessing community resources

During difficult budget years, collaboration and partnerships can help address shrinking resources while at the same time maximizing the benefits to the community.

Within the multicultural library services area, the Toronto Public Library is involved in partnerships which focus on:

- immigrant settlement services
- language training
- support services
- facilitating access to information related to newcomer and immigrant needs

One of the most recent and successful partnership was in the area of immigrant settlement services. Funded by Citizenship Immigration Canada, the program, Settlement and Education Partnerships in Toronto (SEPT), takes place in the libraries during July and August. The Toronto Public Library sponsors the program and offers its facilities in 15 library locations to the settlement agencies which provide

consultation, information and referral in the immigrant's home language for a few days each week. In a recent evaluation report, the project coordinator wrote that "the libraries were the ideal location for providing this service to newcomers."

The library's collaboration with school boards to provide the space and English as a Secondary Language (ESL) learning resources to the growing community of ESL learners has been established, recognized and promoted by both institutions for many years. Citizenship preparation classes for new Canadians are also provided on a collaborative basis at many locations. At present, the Toronto Public Library has forty ESL and citizenship classes located throughout the libraries.

Social orientation for newcomers and facilitating their participation in the diverse community of Toronto while practicing their English skills has also been another area where the library is developing a partnership with a non-profit organization. The English Conversation Circle (ECC) is a "befriending program that facilitates friendship between individual newcomers and volunteers from the host community". The group is dedicated to assisting newcomers in their adaptation and adjustment period. It is now offered at four library locations.

The "Community Information Database" was another successful project that was based on collaborative efforts of many organizations and the public library. It is a computerized directory available online and accessible through the Toronto Public Libraries' Web site. It provides quick access to information, resources and services in the city of Toronto. It profiles health and social agencies, non-profit and government sponsored public agencies, recreational, cultural and immigrant serving organizations. The database is searchable by organization name, by subject and by keyword. Recently there have been changes and new developments in the maintenance of this database but the fact remains that the database initially was a collaborative product of community information agencies and the library.

## Around the World

The challenge of looking for opportunities to be involved in collaborations and partnerships has been rewarding. It remains an ongoing endeavor of the Toronto Public Library. □

## Multicultural Bridge

### *Library Information in your Language*

Robert Pestell, Director of the Public Libraries Division of the State Library of Queensland announced the new multilingual web site that is under development at the State Library. The site, called **Multicultural Bridge: Library Information in your Language**, is available at the following URL: <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/bridge/HomeFlash/HomeFlash.htm>.

The Bridge Web site is designed for Queensland public library staff to assist with the marketing of services to the community. The Web site is still very much in 'development' phase, and Robert reports that library staff have received valuable feedback from the community regarding problems with some of the translations. This is currently being addressed.

Another addition to the web site, based on feedback, will be an 'about' page to explain the purpose and possible uses of the Web site.

If you have the opportunity to provide any feedback or information regarding similar Web sites, please e-mail them to Janet Worden, Community Services Consultant, Public Libraries Division, at [j.worden@slq.qld.gov.au](mailto:j.worden@slq.qld.gov.au).

## News & Notes

Adriana Tandler and Souad Hubert, former committee members, are now serving as Special Advisors. Marie Zielinski, former special advisor, has been given Honorary Member status for her untiring years of service and commitment to multicultural issues.

## Editor's Note

The 2000 United States Census describes how diversity and ethnic groups have grown in the States since the last census. Articles on issues related to race, ethnicity and integration appear regularly in major newspapers. For example, Queens, New York has a population now that is 40% foreign born; this is the highest number since World War I. Recent articles in the *Buffalo News* describe how ethnic groups wanting to move to Canada, tax the social services of Buffalo while they are on their way to crossing the border. Similar experiences are happening in other countries with political and economic refugees.

It is a fact of life that unless a country restricts immigration and services significantly there will be more seeking sanctuary, for a variety of reasons, in developed countries that offer freedom, economic prosperity and a better life.

Libraries, since the 19th century, have served as educators for those who want to advance, assimilate or maintain their own culture and beliefs while experiencing a level of prosperity and freedom unknown in their home countries. The United States public library movement in the 19th century developed to help educate the working man and to provide for learning and advancement generally not made easy in society at that time.

The 20th century movement is linked to similar factors (political asylum, religious freedom, education, a better life for children) but magnified by the impact of technology and a society inundated by information in our time. Globalization of the economy, technology and a population that moves more than ever before, both within a country and between countries, create circumstances that require awareness, sensitivity, cultural and social support, and services that can adapt to needs. Libraries can provide services, technology instruction, education advice and traditional knowledge in the form of books, magazines and newspapers, but

can also introduce the 'new American' to become information savvy in a time when many citizens, who may only know rudimentary English, can gain information only via the Internet. Libraries are a safe haven for many and an active leader in introducing newcomers how to live, educate and better themselves through a wide variety of information resources and services.

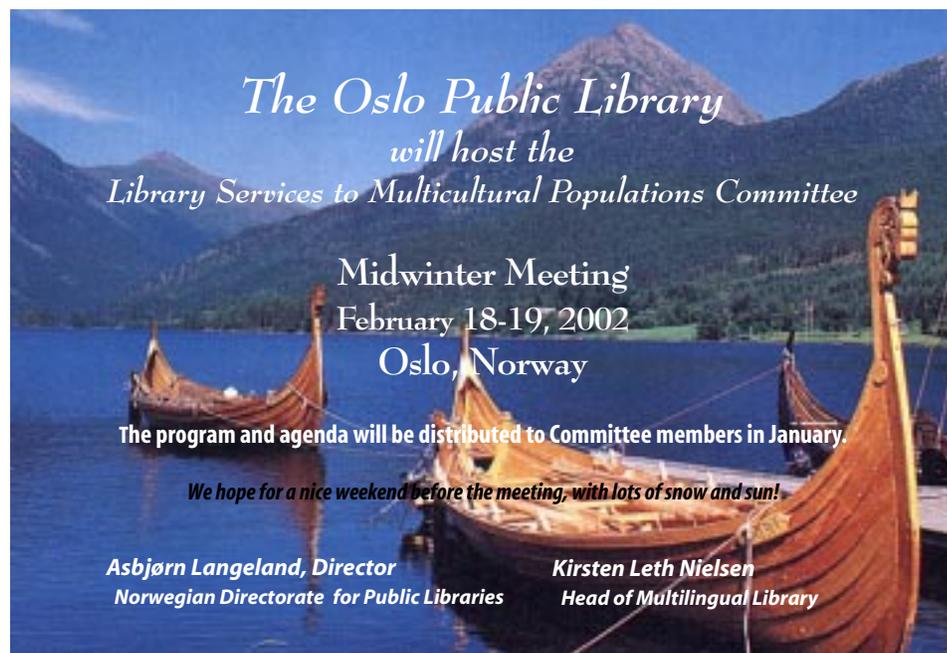
Transnational immigrants may want to assimilate but also retain a cultural and religious heritage and language as well. This places a burden on society to welcome them, to integrate them and to respect their cultural backgrounds. As the digital divide is a buzzword in the United States, it is applicable as well in other developed countries. Libraries around the globe have shown leadership since the last century in helping immigrants adapt and understand their circumstances yet retain links to their cultural heritage. If we want useful and productive new citizens as well as "guest workers" in our countries, libraries make very valuable contributions to the socialization of newcomers. The libraries that offer such programs improve their communities and shorten the familiarization time for waves of potential new citizens. In our time, technology can be harnessed to help in this assimilation and to provide support and

information to those eager for knowledge and help. Librarians, with competent technology skills and sensitivity to the needs of an international population, can offer well defined programs geared to multicultural services. The contributions of libraries to the society of the future should not be underrated.

The above thoughts were written before September 11 and in reflection, I realize that as an American, our individual and collective achievements have been tested, yet remain firmly in place. We must gain strength in the knowledge that our fundamental values are still firmly in place. America's libraries are a vital component of this unbreachable foundation. We promote freedom and tolerance by providing access to and preserving information, knowledge and culture. We strive to create multicultural awareness and experiences that enrich and strengthen our communities.

We read and hear many languages in our libraries, and we become acquainted with worldwide cultural traditions that foster a respect for humankind that transcends all borders. Together we strive for the spirit and the humanity to continue our mission and to reaffirm our values to serve all peoples.

—Barbara von Wahlde



*The Oslo Public Library*  
will host the  
*Library Services to Multicultural Populations Committee*  
Midwinter Meeting  
February 18-19, 2002  
Oslo, Norway

The program and agenda will be distributed to Committee members in January.

*We hope for a nice weekend before the meeting, with lots of snow and sun!*

**Asbjørn Langeland, Director**  
Norwegian Directorate for Public Libraries

**Kirsten Leth Nielsen**  
Head of Multilingual Library



## Meet the Officers

**Jane Dreisig**  
Chair

Jane is Head of the Lending Department at Elsinore Public Library in Denmark, a position she has held for the past 19 years. She also served as chair of the Danish Library Committee from 1992-1998. Through her work at the library and at the Danish Library Committee, Jane has focused on working methods and working environments. Jane's special interests include resource sharing and education in the field of librarianship. An active member of IFLA, Jane served on the Danish IFLA 1997 Executive Committee and has served as Secretary/Treasurer of the Section on Library Services to Multi-cultural Populations from 1999 to 2001. Jane begins her four year term as Chair of the Section.



**Kirsten Leth Nielsen**  
Secretary/Treasurer

Kirsten is Librarian and Head of the Multilingual Library Branch of the Oslo Public Library. Born in Denmark, Kirsten became a Norwegian citizen in 1976 and was educated as a librarian in Oslo in 1977. Before her position as Head of the Multilingual Library, Kirsten worked for several years as a school librarian. An active member of IFLA's Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations since 1999, Kirsten presented workshops at the IFLA satellite conference in Aarhus, Denmark and participated in the Boston IFLA conference. Kirsten is also a member of the Nordic Librarians Association.



**Barbara von Wahlde**  
Information Coordinator

Barbara has served as Associate Vice President for University Libraries at the University at Buffalo since January 1986. She worked from 1980-1985 at the University of Michigan as Associate Director for Technical Services.

She has been active in the American Library Association (ALA) and New York State library groups and served on the IFLA Standing Committee on Library Services to Multicultural

Populations since 1995. With the help of her committee, colleagues and other regional librarians, she organized the 2001 IFLA satellite meeting in Buffalo on *Technology, Globalization and Multicultural Services in Libraries*. Barbara's special interests include personnel, staff development, library administration, and diversity and multicultural services.



**Jane Pyper**  
Co-Editor

Jane is Director, Service Planning and Support at the Toronto Public Library. Her current portfolio includes planning, collections, electronic services, and specialized services such as the adult literacy program and home library service. Previously she was Director of Information Technology and Bibliographic Services at the North York Public Library. In addition to membership in IFLA, Jane is a member of the Canadian Library Association, the American Library Association, and is a Council member on the Faculty of Information Studies at the University of Toronto.

Jane holds a Masters in Library Science from the University of Western Ontario, Canada and is currently pursuing her Diploma in Public Administration.



## The Bookshelf

### **Bridging Cultures: Ethnic Services in the Libraries of New York State.**

Editors Irma Kuharets, Brigid Cahalan, Fred Gitner  
(Albany, NY, 2001, ca. 160 p., ill.) \$24.95 USD  
ISBN 0-931658-48-9

A collection of thirty-six essays written by librarians focusing on the topic of multicultural services. Authors share their first-hand experiences in serving African-Americans, Native Americans, as well as Spanish-speaking, Chinese, Khmer, Russian, and other communities in our state. Written in various styles, from warmly personal to more formal, these essays describe library programs and services to children, young adults and adults, as well as achievements in information technology and outreach services. The articles, some of which give fascinating historical perspectives, can inspire and guide library staff in serving ethnic populations. This publication is appropriate for professional collections, library schools, and any conscientious librarian seeking to improve library services to multicultural communities.

Order information is available at the New York Library Association's Web site at [www.nyla.org/office/pub.html](http://www.nyla.org/office/pub.html).

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August 18<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>, 2002

GLASGOW 2002

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an updated and more informative Web site. Visit the site for Section news and information at <http://ifla.inist.fr/VII/s32/slsmpt.htm>



# Section on Library Services to Multicultural Populations

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## Multicultural Health *web resources*

**DiversityRx** at <http://www.diversityrx.org/html/eswel.htm>. This site is a clearinghouse of information on how to meet the language and cultural needs of immigrants, minorities, refugees and other diverse populations seeking health care. Highlights why language and culture are important in the provision of health care.

**EQUIP Electronic Quality Information for Patients** at <http://www.equip.nhs.uk/index.html#top>. This gateway includes quality information for United Kingdom patients, their families and caregivers. The section "Information in languages other than English" provides information on a variety of diseases and their symptoms, risks and treatment options.

**EthnoMed** at <http://ethnomed.org/>. The site contains information about cultural beliefs and medical issues pertinent to the health care of recent immigrants many of whom are refugees fleeing war-torn parts of the world. Created by the University of Washington.

**Multicultural Health Clearinghouse** at <http://www.mckinley.uiuc.edu/multiculturalhealth/>. Created by the University of Illinois, this site has been developed to provide helpful health and wellness information and links to a variety of health resources.

**HealthFinder in Spanish** at <http://www.healthfinder.gov/espanol/>. This American site has information on many health topics in Spanish.

**Center for Multicultural and Multilingual Mental Health Services** at <http://www.mc-mlmhs.org/>. The Center was created to assist mental health workers in meeting the needs of clients who have a culture and/or language barrier to treatment. The Center is dedicated to bridging the gap between diverse client populations and mainstream mental health provider organizations.

**Transcultural and Multicultural Health Links** at <http://www.iun.edu/~libemb/trannurs/trannurs.htm>. An award-winning site offering a compilation of Web sources related to general resources, religious groups, ethnic groups, and special populations.

**World Health Organization** at <http://www.who.int/m/healthtopics-a-z/en/index.html>. This site has fact sheets on many health topics in English, Spanish and French.

**NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service** at <http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au>. An Australian Government site giving information written by doctors on a wide range of health topics in a large number of languages to assist health professionals to communicate with non-English speaking communities throughout New South Wales. There are over 400 publications on health in a wide range of languages.

**Multicultural Health Resources** at <http://www.library.kent.edu/~bschloma/hivaid/culture.htm>. A list of general ethnic health resources including specialized African-American, Hispanic and Asian sites compiled by the Editors of the Online Journal of Issues in Nursing.

**Queensland Health - Cultural Diversity in Health** at <http://www.diversityinhealth.com/links/index.htm>. An excellent resource comprising three components: Cultural Diversity (Community Profiles), Guidelines to Practice, and Checklists for Cultural Assessment.

—**Cultural Diversity: A Guide for Health Professionals** at <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/hssb/cultdiv/cultdiv/home.htm>. A starting point to an understanding of cultural and health issues for ethnic communities in a multicultural Queensland.

—**Guidelines to Practice: Providing Care to Patients from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds** at <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/hssb/cultdiv/guidel/home.htm>. A guide to identifying and responding to cross-cultural issues in health care delivery.

—**Checklists for Cultural Assessment: Providing Care to Patients from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds** at <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/hssb/cultdiv/check/home.htm>. A resource to assist health care professionals improve communication with patients from various cultural backgrounds and to incorporate cultural issues into individualized health care planning.