



International Federation of Library  
Associations and Institutions



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## ***The Information Point***

### ***(The Government Libraries Section Newsletter)***

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## Note from the Editor

This is the official newsletter of the Government Libraries Section of IFLA. It is published twice yearly.

The newsletter may be reproduced and printed in electronic formats without permission, provided acknowledgement is made.

Views expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the Section Officers or the Editor.

We would like to see more representation from all the continents and would welcome a volunteer from each continent to supply a continental update to the newsletter—if you are interested then please contact the Editor.

Copy can be submitted to the Editor [Patrick.Ryan893@mod.uk](mailto:Patrick.Ryan893@mod.uk) in plain ASCII text format, MS Word format or in the body of an email message. Accompanying photographs are welcome.

### FEEDBACK

We welcome your feedback to the newsletter editor at [Patrick.Ryan893@mod.uk](mailto:Patrick.Ryan893@mod.uk)

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## Chair's Column

### Québec Conference News

The 2008 annual conference is fast approaching and the Section has been busy making preparations for a memorable and educational conference. Our Section's paper presentations will be delivered on Thursday, August 14 from 10:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. where we will have five presenters speaking on our theme – "Conquering Barriers – The Politics of Information: Communication, Collaboration and Content". This will be preceded by a session for which Government Libraries is one of the four co-sponsors. On August 14 from 8:30 am - 10:30 a.m., the IFLA Sections for Law, Library and Research Services for Parliaments, Government Libraries and Government Information and Official Publications will present "The Seal of Approval: Official and Authentic Law in Digital Form" with four scheduled speakers.

During the Québec conference we will also be brainstorming for our Section theme to complement the overall theme of the 2009 Milan conference – "Libraries Create Futures: Building on Cultural Heritage." In addition, we will be putting together a team to produce our 2008-2009 Strategic Plan and working on a ideas to increase Section membership.

### New Corresponding Member

I am happy to report that in May we added our fourth corresponding member, Ms. Mika Lawler of the National Diet Library of Japan. It is our hope that for

the 2009 round of elections that all four of our corresponding members may be elected to full member status.

### Information Coordinator Update

Finally, it is with great thanks and fondness that I report that our Information Coordinator, Patrick Ryan (UK), will be unable to continue beyond this issue. It was Patrick who conceived and produced our first electronic newsletter and has subsequently prepared several issues. As Information Coordinator he has been our liaison to the IFLA webmaster for content changes to our posted material on the website. He has also provided yeoman service more than once in the preparation of meeting minutes and in the selection and editing of conference papers. That said, we will be seeking a volunteer to serve as Information Coordinator for the 2008-2009 period.

### *Guidelines for Libraries of Government Departments*

I am very pleased to report that after nearly three years of planning, talking, writing, and editing, the *Guidelines for Libraries of Government Departments* was completed in May and sent to IFLA HQ to be published. The *Guidelines* were published as part of the IFLA Publication Series and are available from K.G. Saur Verlag at [www.ifla.org/VII/s9/nd1/Profrep106.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/VII/s9/nd1/Profrep106.pdf). Many thanks are due to previous Section chair, Nancy Bolt, for her ideas, the teamwork, and the perseverance to see this project through to completion. Many people have "touched" the *Guidelines* and have added their creative spirit and practicality to the professional writing and the editing. We are grateful to all of these people. We do hope that the published *Guidelines* will serve as a model and an inspiration to many libraries and librarians for years to come. We also hope to hear of success stories that arise as a result of an idea or a procedure followed in the *Guidelines*.

During the Québec conference we will have a small social affair on Thursday evening, August 14 to celebrate the hard work and the "birth" of the *Guidelines*.

On a related note, the chair was asked by the editor of *Biblos*, a quarterly publication of the National Diet Library of Japan, to write a brief history of the development of the *Guidelines* and to address the issues discussed in the completed publication. The particular issue of *Biblos* will be published on October 2008 to coincide with the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Diet Library.



### Notes for the conference

We are really looking forward to Quebec, and just need to make sure that you have the following information on the Government Libraries Section meetings & session:

[Government Libraries Conference session](#) is on: Thursday 14 August 2008 10.45-12.45

the order of the presentations are:

- Moving towards a new information specialist profile DANIEL J. CARON (Library and Archives Canada, Gatineau, Canada)
- The Documentation Centre of the Catalan Data Protection Authority: implementing information policies to obtain a successful library service MIGUEL NAVAS (Catalan Data Protection Agency, Barcelona, Spain)
- Ethical, legal and political dimensions of managing personal information: a discussion paper ERIC DAVIES (Loughborough University, Loughborough, UK)



### American Library Association Sister Library Program Helps Libraries Get Partners. By Nancy Bolt

Since 2000, the American Library Association's International Relations Round Table has sponsored a Sister Libraries Program. Its purpose is to facilitate partnerships between libraries in different countries. While most of the partnerships are between an American library and a library in another country, these connections do not have to always include a US library. Over time a database has been created and kept up-to-date by the Committee.

The current wiki includes the following information:

- Success stories with ideas of how libraries formed their partnerships, an indication of some partner activities, and a contact name for the partnership
- Reasons why you might want to be a Sister Library
- An advance planning checklist to help you get started
- Suggestions on how to find a Sister Library
- A directory of libraries seeking a Sister Library and how to submit your request to be a Sister Library
- Suggested activities and a list of resources

This year, the Sister Libraries Committee conducted research to determine where there are large populations of immigrants from the same country in US cities. They hope to encourage partnerships between those American libraries and a library in the immigrant's host country.

Currently, there are no Sister Libraries between Government Libraries in the ALA program. However, such partnerships would be welcome. Some examples of

current Sister Library projects include: The Crandall Public Library in Glens Falls, New York, USA., has had a Sister Library relationship with the Municipal Library in Saga City, Japan, since 1995. Crandall Public Library has established a permanent exhibit of fine arts and local crafts from the Saga City area. In 1996, the director of the Crandall Public Library traveled with a Sister City delegation to Saga City to celebrate the opening of a new 238,000 square foot public library.

On August 8, 1996, the two libraries signed a treaty of cooperation as Sister Libraries. The residents of both communities have developed an appreciation of each other's culture and an understanding of each other as people. The Des Plaines Public Library, Des Plaines, Illinois, USA has a Sister Library relationship with the Biblioteca Benjamin Franklin in Guadalajara, Mexico. Thus far the major event has been hosting a librarian from the Biblioteca Benjamin Franklin for one week. The visiting Mexican librarian observed public service desks, attended meetings, and acquired a small taste of Chicago and American public libraries to take back to Guadalajara.

In exchange, one of the Des Plaines librarians will spend one week in Guadalajara in Spring 2008 learning how their unique public library operates and experiencing Mexican culture. The Sister Library relationship is a catalyst for cultural exchanges (exchanges of staff, books, artwork) that ultimately will bring greater numbers of the local Mexican community into the library. Future plans include a book exchange and a children's artwork exchange.

The Sister Libraries Committee sponsored a Poster Session at the recent ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim, California, USA. This poster will also travel to IFLA in Quebec where it will be part of the IFLA Poster Sessions. It will also displayed at

poster sessions at library conferences in Lusaka, Zambia, Africa and Sofia, Bulgaria and at the Sister City conference in Kansas City, Missouri, USA.

Additional information can be found at [http://wikis.ala.org/sisterlibraries/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://wikis.ala.org/sisterlibraries/index.php/Main_Page)



**Report from the 97<sup>th</sup>  
Annual German Librarians  
Congress. Mannheim,  
June 2008**

**By**

**Christine Wellems and Maria Goeckeritz**

During the German "*Bibliothekartag 2008*", the annual conference for German librarians and information professionals, the German Section of Parliamentary and Government Libraries met to discuss topics of current/ongoing interest.

Two programs are of interest to government and parliamentary libraries:

*Is catalogue enrichment useful for parliamentary librarians and how can it be used?*

In the political environment cataloguing by users is not as popular as it is in university or public libraries. But links to the table of contents, summaries or reviews may add value to the catalogue data for the users from parliament, a political group or a department. Some libraries include these texts in the catalogue (so that it is searchable) or integrate links to this information. Nevertheless, it is highly recommended to control and verify that reviews and abstracts are politically "neutral" and that there is no text included in the catalogue of a parliamentary or government library that might be politically incorrect.

*How to use Web 2.0 in government and parliamentary libraries (RSS-Feeds, Wikis, Blogs)*

Examples from university libraries look interesting but there is still the question as how the parliamentary and political user might use these Web 2.0 possibilities. A few examples showed that RSS-Feeds are used for finding new books and articles. For staff in small government libraries, blogs may be very useful for exchanging experiences with colleagues who were unable to travel to a conference.

One of the main topics of the conference was the discussion on "library laws" in the German Laender since culture is, according to the German constitution, the Basic Law under the responsibility of the 16 Laender. Thuringia, one of the five new Laender from the former East Germany, was the first Land to establish a legislative procedure for a "library law" in which, among other subjects, the financing of public libraries ( a cultural benefit) is compulsory. The Thuringian Library Law is expected to pass the legislature by the end of 2008 and it will serve as a signal for the other 15 Laender to follow with their own library legislation.

For the next German library conference in Erfurt 2009 the section plans a session on *standards, guidelines, auditing and quality management in parliamentary and government libraries*.

The *Guidelines for Libraries of Government Departments* prepared by the IFLA Government Libraries and the Government Information and Official Publications Sections will also be discussed at conference as well as standards developed by the sections of museum and government libraries in Germany.



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