

The Confluence

Newsletter of the Special Libraries Association - Pittsburgh Chapter

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December 2010 - January 2011

Confessions of a President-Elect Drama Queen- Haley Hodum

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I'm not going to lie. When Denise Callihan sent me an email in November 2009 asking me to consider the position of President-Elect, I had absolutely no idea what I was getting myself into. But I found that I didn't even think twice about whether or not to accept—I just did. (In retrospect, I think I was blinded by her signature use of ellipses and exclamation points. So future recipients of similar emails, beware.)

My first thought last January: *What. Was. I. Thinking.* I had never been to a chapter meeting. I didn't know anyone by their first name. I hadn't used "Parli Pro" since high school student council. And that is approximately when the panic set in.

But just like Denise in her email, the rest of the leadership in our chapter stepped up to support me in my new role. Whether they sensed my emotional instability (just kidding-sort of) or that I was one program away from developing an eye-twitch, I confess that I could not have served as President-Elect without their guidance, advice, and quick response to panicked emails.

My year as President-Elect has been filled with so many instances where members and leaders within our chapter have surprised me or supported me or taught me something (this happened frequently). For this

reason, in my term as President, I want to focus on creating similar opportunities that I've had for all of our members. I want to make sure each of our members has an opportunity to meet Denise or Amy or even my fantastic President-Elect Brian. I want our membership to feel engaged so that together we can increase membership through promotion and marketing and so that members want to join committees or write for the newsletter. I want our membership to know what we as a board have been doing all year.

So how do I plan to do this? I'm going to delegate all of this to Brian (kidding, again). I plan to address these "wants" through: an Engagement Survey, Goal-Setting, and Transparency.

Engagement Survey

It's been a while since we've heard from our members, and I'm sure you have a lot of important things to say! This engagement survey will hopefully provide you with not only that opportunity, but provide leadership with some feedback on where we are successful and where we aren't. Specifically I want to know how engaged you feel as a member and how likely you are to recommend membership in our chapter to a friend or colleague in the profession—two very important measurements of our success as a chapter. I am also

hoping that this survey will shed some light on our membership process—Do we need to increase touch points with new members? How effective is our chapter discussion list?

With this comes a plea from me: when you receive this email in your inbox, asking you to complete an engagement survey, don't delete it or save it for later. PLEASE TAKE IT, TAKE IT, TAKE IT. I want to know what you have to say, and what you have to say will only make us a better chapter.

Goal-Setting

Some of you may not know that at the end of each year, our chapter is required to submit an annual report to headquarters. A lot happens in a year. Programs. Conferences. Board meetings. How do we keep track of all of it? How do we measure our success?

Using our results from the Engagement Survey (again, please TAKE IT), I plan to set goals with our leadership at the first board meeting in February. These goals will set the pace for 2011 and allow us to measure how successful we have been at achieving them at the end of the year. Some of the goals will probably be administrative, like solicit funds from two sponsors, while I expect others will be

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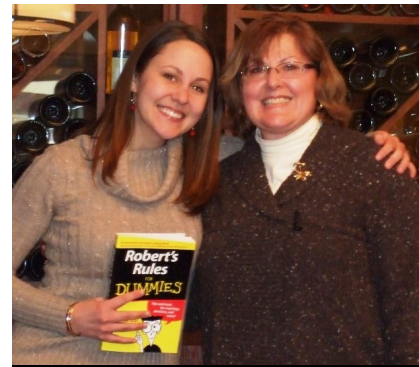
Outgoing President's Reflection ~ Suzan Dolfi

My Incoming President's Speech began with the words "Time is so fleeting..." I had no idea back then just how fleeting being the 2010 Chapter President would be. For me this year has passed in the blink of an eye, and as the position of Chapter President passes into the capable and eager hands of Haley Hodum, I'd like to say just a few words.

As most of you know, I did not come into my position on the chapter board in the traditional manner. I sort of got here through an initiation of fire, and had to take off running. Prior to becoming President Elect I had never held any other position in the chapter, and had not even been on a committee. But that being said, I would like to thank all of the people in our chapter who have supported, mentored, and cheered me along over this past year. I'd like to especially thank two people in particular, our

Past President, Donna Beck, who told me to "just take it one day at a time," and that she would always be there if I needed her, and Amy Watson, who wears many hats for our chapter. Amy was always ready with answers to my questions, offered advice and encouragement, and kept me on track, or as I like to say, "She was always watching my back." Without them I don't think I would have been able to carry it off.

Although I wouldn't want the job of president again anytime soon, (kudos to you Brian), I would like to stay active in our chapter, in a less public, less stressful capacity where I can learn the ins and outs of the chapter from the bottom up. And who knows, maybe one day, many years from now, I could try this president gig again, bringing lots of experience and new and innovative ideas with me.



L-R: 2011 President Haley Hodum poses with 2010 President Suzan Dolfi.

I'm looking forward to the coming year as Past President, and hope to continue working with many of you. I believe that the most valuable lesson I've learned from this experience so far is that when you commit yourself to something bigger than yourself, you come away a better person. I'd like to think that I'm a better person than when this journey began, and it's not over yet.

President-Elect's Message Continued ~ Haley

Continued from Page 1

more membership specific, like increase committee involvement by 5%. I look forward to communicating these goals to you and hope that you too will feel invested in them.

Transparency

Underlying my vision for the chapter is the idea of transparency. What good is an engagement survey if we don't communicate the results? How useful are goals if you don't know what we want to accomplish? There are so many communication vehicles available to us today, and yet I feel that as a chapter we can be more transparent in our operations, engaging our members more.

I would like to incorporate transparency in three ways: increase communication among board members, identify the most effective vehicles for communicating to our membership,

and provide a method of continual feedback and recognition. These are areas where I see significant improvement and significant impact to our members.

2011

That initial communication from Denise has had a lasting impact on not only my commitment to SLA, but to my understanding of my profession, and as a result, myself. I don't think that's something you can expect from just any chapter or professional organization, which only solidifies my loyalty to our group of members and our exceptional leaders. I hope that you are as excited as I am about 2011. I am just as excited today as I was at the Awards meeting in December, even without the three Mountain Dews and cup of coffee. So here's to 2011, a year focused on what makes the Pittsburgh chapter stand-out: our membership.

Upcoming Programs at the Downtown & Business Branch of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Thursday Noontime Business Program Series

12:15 - 1:00 PM

- * Advice for Veterans Seeking VA Pension Benefits for Long-Term Care - January 20th
- * "Is Your Job Making You Fat?" - January 27th
- * How to File Your Taxes Online Using an IRS E-File Provider - February 3rd
- * Federal Tax Credits - Which Ones Can You Claim? - February 10th
 - * What is "Strategic" Networking? - February 17th
- * Tapped - a Documentary on the Bottled Water Industry - February 24th

New Board Members Elected

The following nominees were officially voted into office at the Annual Business Meeting, December 11th, 2010.

Thank you to our newly elected board members. Volunteers like you are what make our Chapter a success!

Office: President-Elect Brian Steinmetz

Brian obtained his Master of Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh in 2000.

He is currently employed as a Competitive Intelligence Librarian at Reed Smith LLC. Previously, Brian was employed as a Research Associate at the University of Cincinnati, working in the Chemistry/Biology Library and at the Equistar R&D Library through the University's Corporate Services program. Until recently joining Reed Smith, he was employed as an Information Specialist at NOVA Chemicals, managing a corporate library and an R&D library.

Brian joined SLA in 1999 and has served as Pittsburgh Chapter President (2003-2004), once before, as well as recently serving as Treasurer (2008-2009). Brian is also active with the Competitive Intelligence Division.

His personal interests include landscaping, World War II history, and rock climbing.

Office: Secretary Deb Martin

Deb completed her Master of Library and Information Science, at the University of Pittsburgh in 2009. She joined SLA as a student in 2008.

She is currently employed as Library Assistant, at the Pine-Richland high school library, but is also seeking a professional position! In addition to her position at the high school, she volunteers at her local parish library and had two student internships at Animal Friends and the Reformed Presbyterian Seminary.

Prior to joining the library field, Deb was employed as Account Manager in

the employee benefits industry. In that career she obtained a CEBS designation from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

She holds a Bachelor of Science, Industrial Psychology with focus in Human Factors from the University of California, Hayward.

Office: Director Mary Strife

Mary has been in the profession for over 28 years and a member of SLA for over 24 years. From 1986-1995 she was an active member of the Upstate NY Chapter, serving as Local Area Meeting Chair, Treasurer, VP, and President. She joined the Pittsburgh Chapter in 1996 and served a term as membership chair about 7-10 years ago. She comes to meetings as often as her commute allows (often as the Chapter member who has travelled the farthest) and contributes to the newsletter.

Mary's career focus has been sciences and engineering. Currently she is director of the Evansdale Library at WVU and the Engineering Librarian. She has also worked at Cornell, University of Rochester, Syracuse University and SUNY Utica/Rome. She is a member of ALA, ACRL, and most recently joined the Engineering Library Division of the American Society of Engineering Education.

Mary's family is from Northern New York State (east of Lake Ontario and west of the Adirondacks).



At the December Chapter event, the past and current presidents of the chapter posed for a photo. L-R Seated: Donna Beck (2009), Denise Callihan (2000), and Lynn Berard (1994)

L-R Standing: Amy Watson (2008), Haley Hodum (2011), Kim Gregory (2001), Brian Steinmetz (2003 & 2012), Suzan Dolfi (2010), Bob Sullivan (1996), and Rachel Callison (2007).

Implementing a Student Internship Program - Casey Sirochman

Over the past year and a half, I have had twenty-one interns in the areas of Library Science, Information Technology, English/Writing, and Marketing aiding at least two other departments at the school with several projects beyond the library. As such, I advocate implementing an internship program beyond library science students and would like to share some tips and tricks that I have picked up along the way to creating a successful internship program.

First, take a closer look at your library's strategic goals and objectives and make a list of all the possible departments that your library would benefit from collaborating with. For example, one of my goals was to participate in open house activities at the school and provide potential students with library promotional pieces. Since we don't have a marketing/communications department at our school, I worked with an undergraduate marketing student intern to help me create a marketing plan for the library and promotional pieces to hand out during tours. After looking over your own strategic goals, create a list of strategies for achieving them and align internship goals with each one.

Second, do an informal audit of your library. Ask several key questions:

- * Will your organizational culture support an internship program?
- * What human resources do you have to support an intern?
- * What physical resources do you have to support an intern?
- * What financial resources do you have, if any?

Third, define and prioritize your projects to reach each goal. For instance, will the entire project take a significant amount of time or could it be done in one semester? Could at least one phase be completed in a semester time frame? Define what resources are available by the start of the internship and the importance of the project to the goal and overarching

organization. Make sure to consider if the project will be overly challenging for an intern and if they will have to learn new skills.

Fourth, don't forget to describe the benefits of the internship. Some possible benefits include:

- * Gain real work experience
- * Build resume
- * Learn new skills
- * Make new connections/networks
- * Test-drive new organization/industry

Fifth, make sure to create a position description for each internship position available. Make sure to include information about your library, scope of the work, ideal candidate skills, and number of hours per week, academic credit or compensation. I would also suggest including what the intern will get from the experience in the description such as: professional development opportunities, building their portfolio, and building professional references that will speak highly of their work.

Next, after doing a lot of thinking and creating, it is time to spread the word and let everyone know about the internships you have available at your library. Some possible ways to make connections and recruit potential interns include:

- * College Career Service departments
- * College Career Services department internship coordinators
- * Email specific degree list-serves
- * Post fliers around campus
- * Contact each department's internship advisor for the degree you are looking to hire
- * Post on the Regional Internship Center's website <http://www.theregionalinternshipcenter.org/> (a nominal annual fee)

Finally, after you have some interested students, make sure to formally interview them, ask tough questions, and define projects and expectations well. For instance, inform all potential interns of the type of internship you offer, will it be a shadowing experience or independent learning and working

opportunity. After you have decided on the right student intern fit, make sure to create an internship orientation complete with a commitments pledge, tour, goals for the internship, and assessment or check in schedule on their progress. Upon the completion of the internship, conduct an exit interview, ask them to revise the position description based on what they actually completed, and if possible, have them train the new intern for the following semester.

Overall, implanting a successful internship program can be rewarding for both the student and library especially if supervisors are open-minded and flexible. Personally, the interns that I have managed have been instrumental to creating and maintaining my goals and objectives for the library and beyond. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at casey.sirochman@gmail.com.

Chapter Member News

New chapter member **Jody Larkin** has accepted the position of Reference and Consulting Librarian with RAND's Pittsburgh office. Jody is a University of Pittsburgh graduate, where she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing as well as her MLIS. While at Pitt she also completed a Health Sciences Library/Bioinformatics traineeship funded by the National Library of Medicine. Prior to joining RAND she worked at the ECRI Institute as well as within the Health Sciences Library System at Pitt. Welcome to the Chapter Jody, and congrats!

News from the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh - Esther Nathanson

TAX TIP

In preparing your tax return, if you sold stock in 2010 and need to know what you paid for it originally, you can check Yahoo Finance - if the company's stock is still traded. Otherwise, just call the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Downtown and Business Branch at 412-281-7141. They have DAILY stock price records back to the late 1960's for companies on the three major exchanges.

NO NEED TO BUY THOSE E-BOOKS; CHECK THEM OUT FOR FREE...

E-Book readers were in the top ten wished-for gift items last year. If you received one - or already own one - you'll be happy to know that the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh has a selection of over 1000+ eBooks available to be downloaded to many e-readers for FREE.

Go to the Carnegie Library website, www.carnegielibrary.org. Click on Books, Downloads and More. Under "More Than Books", click on eCLP. Choose Overdrive. Overdrive eBooks are compatible with Sony Readers and Barnes and Noble's Nooks among

others. (For the most current list of compatible operating systems and devices, visit the [OverDrive Device Resource Center](#).) Click on Digital Media to search for particular eBooks.

eBooks obtained through OverDrive are protected using **Adobe® Digital Rights Management (DRM)**.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY OF PITTSBURGH -- FINANCIAL STATUS UPDATE

We are happy to report that last month, at its December 13th meeting, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to keep all branches open, officially repealing the portion of the 2009 Action Plan relating to branch closings proposed for 2010. The board also approved a \$23,956,000 operating budget for 2011, cautioning that without stable funding in place, the Library will not be able to sustain its current system long-term.

At that same meeting, Dr. Barbara K. Mistick, President and Director of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, informed the Library's Board of Trustees that she will be leaving her position when her existing agreement

with the Library expires on May 31, 2011. A search for her successor will be launched.

READY, SET, READ!

This **Winter Read-a-Thon** will help raise money for Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Between January 8 and February 19, 2011, get pledges, track your reading time, and support your library. For details, check out <http://www.carnegielibrary.org/books/readathon/> or register at your local branch.

Welcome New Chapter Members!

August 2010

Alice Doolittle

September 2010

Courtney Loder
Eden Orelove

October 2010

Michael Widdersheim

November 2010

Jody Larkin

December 2010

Maria Almaguer-Marino
Natalie Sandretto

- * **Are you a member of the Pittsburgh Chapter of SLA?**
- * **Have you joined the Chapter discussion list?**
- * **Do you want an early look at local job listings before they are posted on the public website?**

If you haven't yet joined our discussion list, please take a minute to sign up. You can join our Chapter list by clicking on this link and scrolling down to the subscription instructions for our chapter. <http://www.sla.org/content/community/lists/chapterlists.cfm>

One of the benefits of signing up for the discussion list is that you get the chance to review local job postings before they are published on the Chapter's website. If there are any new jobs available, an email will be sent to the listserv every Friday afternoon. Jobs will then be posted to the chapter's Web site on the first and 15th of each month.

We attempt to include library, archives and information science jobs that fall within 4 hours of Pittsburgh. However, please remember that while we do attempt to check the validity and accuracy of job listings, we do not and cannot guarantee that openings will still exist, as posted, at the time of inquiry.

Please do not hesitate to contact Karen Liljequist (kli@the-institute.org) with questions or to submit an announcement for posting.

SAVE THE DATE!

Wednesday March 16th, 2011
Professional Development
Event
Copyright Clearance
More information to be
announced!

September Event Recap: Doha, Qatar: Through the Lens of a “Roving Reference Librarian” ~ Lynn Berard

In mid-May my desire to be a “*roving reference librarian*” partially came true – my husband Alan and I secured the opportunity to serve our university overseas at our campus in Doha, Qatar in the Middle East. Alan to teach two courses during a six-week summer semester and I to be seconded to the CMU Qatar Library, working with my colleague, Bijan Esfahani. It was an adventure that shall always be treasured.

Through the lens of my camera I shared an unforgettable learning experience with my fellow Pittsburgh Chapter members in early September. It was a journey of both professional and personal growth. My talk covered a lot of ground but below I list the essence of what I hoped to share:

A land of intense sunshine and sand – a unique environment; home for 5,000 years to a Bedouin culture until the 1950's discovery of oil and gas catapulted a society towards major change....and the building of 88 high rises....

Riches beyond imagination from fantasy architecture to fast cars....

Being a part of Education City in the delivery of higher education for both men and women of the region...

First-hand observation of the tension between the old and the new, the differing aspects of eastern and western culture and the realities of living and working in a Muslim culture, as well as...

...the fun of going deep-sea fishing, off-roading in the desert, petting the Emir's horses and camels, and watching children ice skating in 120 degree weather.....

Thank you to the nearly 30 members who joined me in September and listened to my experience.



The chapter members who attended Lynn's presentation were treated to a series of stunning images of her time in Qatar.

Top Row L-R: A young Arab jockey, Doha at night

Second Row L-R: The Museum of Islamic Art, The Islamic Cultural Center

Third Row: Part of the CMU Campus in Qatar

Fourth Row: A scene from a souk.

October Professional Development Event Recap: "Battling Information Overload" ~ Denise Callihan

keep a master waiting
list of what's owed to
you

A Professional Development (PD) meeting event was hosted by Denise Callihan at PPG Industries Monroeville Chemical Center on October 27, 2010. The topic of the meeting, "Battling Information Overload", was a replay of a 2-part ClickU Seminar offered earlier in the year by Sarah Houghton-Jan ([The Librarian in Black](#)). Sarah's presentations were reviewed and discussed in this PD Forum. Eleven of our chapter members and one student attended the event.

The main objective of these PD sessions is to learn something new that may positively impact your responsibilities and allow discussion and exchange of ideas in an open forum. The ClickU seminars are robust with information and available to you as part of your membership. However, what a number of members revealed is that when you view a ClickU seminar solely on your own, as either a live event or a replay, you may not get the full diversity of experience from our members because it's hard to share information easily in this format. So, viewing ClickU seminars as a group, allows us to hear that others might be struggling with similar issues, exchange information and experiences and learn from each other without fear or judgment.

The group started by discussing what Information Overload meant to them.

Some discussed their inbox clutter; others discussed not having enough time to deal with all of the information, personally as well as professionally. Controlling the influx of information was a focus of the session.

Sarah's presentations are well-thought out and rich in content. The first presentation provided a good foundation and

overview on the topic, as well as provided some good detail as to how you might manage stress and better use your time. The second part

appointments, but to also think ahead of what you may need to work on. Block off time to prepare a presentation, or to be reminded of something that you used to try to remember on your own. Get it out of your head and write it down...this allows you to "unclutter" your mind. Let technology work for you!

Door prizes for this event were generously provided by Pursuits, a handbag and accessories boutique in Shadyside, and were won by Ange Pollis and Sharon Palchak.

For a solid overview on the topic of information overload, see the article by Sarah Houghton-Jan, *Being Wired or Being Tired: 10 Ways to Cope with Information Overload*, at <http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue56/houghton-jan/>

The ClickU replays, including the two on Information Overload can be found at: <http://www.sla.org/content/learn/members/webinars/webreplays/index.cfm>

If you have an idea, tool, or service you'd like to learn more about, or if you are interested in hosting a viewing of a ClickU seminar, please contact Denise

Callihan, Chair of the Professional Development (PD) Committee, to explore possibilities for the next PD event.

Pick what works for you.

Only do what you realistically will
follow up on.

outlined specific tips and techniques to cope with information overload. As occasionally happens with technology, the 2 webinars had some technical difficulty and glitches with the sound dropping out at times, but are definitely worth your time to watch.

One of the tips I found most relevant is to keep a master waiting list of what's owed to you. This allows you to not have to worry about keeping it all straight in your head! I also provided a helpful tip that my husband shared with me: Use your Email Calendar to schedule not only upcoming

set up a quick consistent
way to note to yourself
urgent issues for work
(while at home)...
like a notepad labeled
"STUFF I GOTTA WORRY
ABOUT LATER"

SLA-CPIT
Special Libraries
Association-
Pittsburgh Chapter

[http://www.sla.org/
chapter/cpit/
index.html](http://www.sla.org/chapter/cpit/index.html)

The Confluence is the newsletter of the *Special Libraries Association - Pittsburgh Chapter*. The next issue will be published in April 2011. Article submission deadline will be announced via the chapter discussion list in March 2011. Please contact Amy Watson, editor, with any submissions, or issues or concerns relating to the newsletter.



December Event Recap - Annual Business Meeting & Awards Program

On the afternoon of Saturday, December 11th chapter members came together at Mitchells in the Waterfront for a lovely luncheon, as well as our annual business meeting, awards program and holiday celebration.

A brief business meeting was held, presided by President Suzan Dolfi. Each of the officers and committee chairs present provided updates on their accomplishments during 2010. Full coverage of the meeting will be made available by the official minutes, which will be published on the chapter website. As part of new business, Denise Callihan, Nominations Committee Chair, presented the slate of nominees for 2011. As there were no additional nominees for President-Elect, Secretary or Director, the membership voted in Brian Steinmetz, Deb Martin, and Mary Strife, respectively. More information on the slate, as well as the incoming President's message, from Haley Hodum, can be found in this issue.

Awards chair Ange Pollis then presided over the recognition portion of the afternoon, along with the awards committee, Donna Beck and Marge Rhodes. The three awards presented were the Chapter Leadership, Lifetime Achievement, and the "Retread Award."

The first award presented was the Lifetime Achievement Award, to Lynn Berard. Lynn has been a friend and mentor to many members of the chapter, and proving that, Ange, Denise Callihan and Bob Sullivan all took part in the award presentation. Lynn has served SLA at the chapter and division level, as well as being named a fellow of the international association in 2003. During the presentation, Ange quoted Lynn, "I believe that people should have as much fun as possible, even when they are working," and that quote fits Lynn to a T. While this award recognizes a "lifetime" of accomplishments, the chapter can agree that Lynn will have tricks (and fun) up her sleeve for many years to come.

The second award presented was the "Retread" award, which recognizes a member of the chapter who has stepped up and taken on a leadership role a second time. This year the chapter is extremely

fortunate that the 2003 president, Brian Steinmetz, has agreed to serve as the 2012 president as well.

The Chapter Leadership award was the final award of the afternoon, and went to the "face of our chapter" for their continued leadership. Rachel Callison is a past president of the chapter, but continues to serve the board in multiple leadership roles, including web manager and communications chair. During her presentation, Donna Beck specifically mentioned that Rachel "engages the membership, and continues to be active in the development and leadership of our chapter."

Congratulations to our awardees, and to the rest of the chapter, thanks for another great year!



The chapter's three Lifetime Achievement Award Winners, L-R: Lynn Berard (2010), Ange Pollis (2008) and Bob Sullivan (2007).

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