

# THE PITTSBURGH PULSE

Volume 14, Issue 3, October 2000

NEWSLETTER OF THE PITTSBURGH REGIONAL CHAPTER, MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, INC.

## From the Chair...

In my last message, I discussed my daughter, her growth and the similarities to MLA membership. Two of our Chapter members are going through new stages in their lives. Brad Long is starting a new position with Thomas Jefferson University in the Philadelphia area and Lindy Fetkovich is retiring from UPMC Shadyside. Big thank yous to Brad and Lindy for their service to the Greater Pittsburgh Regional Chapter. We hope they keep in touch and we see them at future MLA events.

Corinne is now pulling herself up and walking along the edge of the furniture. She is also babbling, although it is still hard to figure out what she wants. Sometimes it is hard to figure out what our patrons need even though they speak in full sentences. Our reference interviewing skills are put to the test.

At the end of August, several of our Chapter members joined folks from the Special Libraries Association, the Western Pennsylvania Law Librarians Association, and the Association for Information Management Professionals for refreshments and socializing. It was a nice way to bring the summer to an end and to catch up on what everyone has been doing the past few months. (Of course baby pictures were passed around the many parents in the group.) The president or chair of each organization gave a quick summary of its mission and local activities. Thank you to those who attended and to those who organized an enjoyable time.

Our Annual Meeting is coming up October 13. Kate Corcoran from MLA will be here to discuss benchmarking, an initiative of national MLA. Benchmarking allows us to compare services we provide and to align ourselves with our colleagues in similar institutions. This is similar to a visit to the pediatrician's office for a nine months check up. Corinne is weighed and measured to see how long she is. Then the doctor looks at the American Academy of Pediatricians growth chart to see if any adjustments are needed in her feeding schedule. When we go through the benchmarking process, we can see what adjustments we can make to provide better service.

We will also hear a quick update from Kate of what is going on within MLA, and I'll give an update on the Chapter at our Business Meeting. Please plan on joining us for a fun and informative afternoon.

Linda Hartman, Chair  
Pittsburgh Chapter

## Opportunity for Minority Students

Submitted by Michel Atlas

University of Louisville

The Medical Library Association, MLA, as the professional association dedicated to improving the quality and leadership of health information professionals, has since 1976 annually awarded a scholarship to a library school student from a minority group. This year the scholarship is up to \$5000. The MLA Scholarship for Minority Students is intended to encourage candidates who show excellence in scholarship and potential for leadership to pursue a career in health sciences librarianship and join that special cadre of librarians at the leading edge of information management.

To be eligible for the MLA Scholarship for Minority Students, applicants must be entering an ALA-accredited graduate library program or must have completed no more than half of his/her graduate library program at the time of the award announcement (February). Applicants must be members of a minority group; this is defined as African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, or Pacific Islander. Finally, applicants must also be citizens of or have permanent residence status in the United States or Canada.

In addition to the scholarship, the recipient of the MLA Scholarship for Minority Students also receives a one-year student membership in MLA and free, inclusive registration at the association's annual meeting, to be held in Orlando, Florida, May 25-31, 2001.

The deadline for applications is December 1, 2000. For application information please contact MLA. The online application form is available at <[www.mlanet.org/awards/apply.html](http://www.mlanet.org/awards/apply.html)>.

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## National Medical Librarians Month Submitted by Tomi Gunn, MLA

The Medical Library Association (MLA) proudly celebrates October 2000 as its fourth annual National Medical Librarians Month (NMLM). MLA created the event to salute the more than 5,000 health sciences information professionals around the world and the contributions they have made to improving patient care. By supplying the health care community and the public with the most accurate and current health information available, medical librarians have a major and direct impact on the care patients receive. The services medical librarians provide have been shown to reduce the number of diagnostic procedures, hospital admissions, and surgeries, resulting in a higher quality of health care and cost savings for hospitals and patients. The theme of this year's celebration—"On site, on line, on top of the latest information,"—embodies the work and the expertise of these professionals.

"Advances in technology and availability of knowledge at the desktop make today the best time in history to be a health sciences librarian. Never before have health sciences librarians had the ability to acquire, organize and retrieve the medical evidence necessary for informed health care decisions so effectively and efficiently," stated MLA President J. Michael Homan. Medical librarians not only provide health information, but also serve their institutions as website developers and managers, Internet navigators, and teachers of informatics skills. The NMLM celebration gives health sciences librarians the opportunity to promote their valuable contributions and their libraries' services in their own institutions.

During the month of October, medical librarians across the country will sponsor various promotions and special events to create a greater awareness of their services. In honor of NMLM, MLA will once again sponsor the Creative Promotion Award contest. The award will be given to the MLA member or member institution who designs the most creative event or promotional idea to celebrate NMLM. The winner of the award will be highlighted in an MLA press release, on MLANET, in MLA News, and at the MLA 2001 Swap and Shop exhibit, as well as receive \$100 applicable toward MLA publications, fees, dues, or meetings. For more information about NMLM, visit the NMLM page at

[www.mlanet.org/press/nml-month/index.html](http://www.mlanet.org/press/nml-month/index.html)

or contact Tomi Gunn at the headquarters office at 312-419-9094 extension 11.

## ISI/Frank Bradway Rogers Information Advancement Award

The Medical Library Association Awards Committee is seeking nominations for the 2001 ISI/Frank Bradway Rogers Information Advancement Award. The Rogers Award is presented annually in recognition of outstanding contributions for the application of technology to the delivery of health science information, to the science of information, or to the facilitation of the delivery of health science information. The Institute for Scientific Information sponsors the award.

Nominations must be in writing and must contain at least the following elements:

- A. A precise description of the nominee's achievements.
- B. A current resume or curriculum vitae.
- C. Any further information which would assist the jury in the evaluation of the nomination and selection of the recipient.

Self-nominations are encouraged and accepted. Entries will be judged on the following criteria: pioneering nature of the contribution, impact of the contribution, and the extent to which the nominee has disseminated information on the effort. Nomination forms are available now from the MLA Professional Development. PDF versions of the forms are available on MLANET

<http://www.mlanet.org/awards/apply.html>.

Six copies of the nomination and all accompanying documentation must be submitted by November 1, 2000 to: Professional Development Department, Medical Library Association, 65 East Wacker Place, Suite 1900, Chicago, IL 60601-7298. Voice: 312-419-9094 ext. 28, fax: 312-419-8950, or e-mail: [mlapd2@mlahq.org](mailto:mlapd2@mlahq.org).



### Janet Doe Lecturer Nominations

Nominations are sought for the Medical Library Association's Janet Doe Lecturer for the year 2002. This distinguished award goes to an individual who will present his or her unique perspective on the history or philosophy of medical librarianship in a lecture to be given at the Association's Annual Meeting, and published in the *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association*. Nominees should have a broad perspective of medical librarianship, be able to express ideas and experiences clearly, and be regular members of the Association.

Letters of nomination should be submitted in writing to the address below and received no later than November 1, 2000. They should include a brief summary of the nominee's career, a description of his or her contributions to medical librarianship, a current curriculum vitae, and any other evidence or information supporting the nomination.

If you have specific questions about this award, please feel free to contact Sheldon Kotzin, at National Library of Medicine a <kotzin@nlm.nih.gov> or FAX 301-496-0822. Send nominations to Anne Greenspan @MLA Professional Development <mlapd2@mlahq.org>, or 312-419-9094.

### Lois Ann Colaianni Award for Excellence and Achievement in Hospital Librarianship

The Lois Ann Colaianni Award for Excellence and Achievement in Hospital Librarianship was established in 1989 to recognize a hospital librarian who demonstrates excellence and leadership in the broad range of activities that this field encompasses. The Lois Ann Colaianni Award is the highest honor in Hospital Librarianship.

Nominees may have produced a significant publication, shown exceptional leadership or contributed to the profession through teaching, research, or the use of innovative technology. Nominees must have worked in a hospital library for at least five years and it is preferred that they be members of MLA. The recipient receives a cash award of \$500 and a certificate of accomplishment.

For nomination forms, please contact Anne Greenspan @MLA Professional Development <mlapd2@mlahq.org>, or 312-419-9094. Submit nominations no later than November 1, 1999 to Janet Minnerath, Chair of Awards Committee (Janet-Minnerath@ouhsc.edu OR University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center - Tulsa, 2808 South Sheridan Rd., Tulsa, OK 74129).

### Louise Darling Medal for Distinguished Achievement in Collection Development in the Health Sciences

The Louise Darling Medal is presented annually by the Medical Library Association in recognition of distinguished achievement in collection development in the health sciences. The medal honors Louise Darling's significant accomplishment in this professional specialty. The Louise Darling Medal was established in 1987 by Baleen Booksellers International, Inc., and is now sponsored by Blackwell North America, Inc. The recipient receives an engraved medal, a certificate, and a \$1,000.00 cash award.

Nominations may be individuals, institutions, or groups of individuals. It is preferred that nominee be a member of MLA. Nominations may be made for overall distinction or leadership within collection development, production of a definitive publication related to collection development, teaching of collection development, for the development of an extraordinary national information resource or collection in any format (e.g. printed materials, audiovisuals, electronic files, etc.) or for any other collection development activity deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors, the Awards Committee, and the Darling Medal Jury. Nominations are accepted from the MLA membership at large and from members of the Louise

Darling Medal Jury. Nominations must be in writing and contain at least the following elements:

- A. A precise description of the nominee's achievement in collection development for which the nomination is being made.
- B. A current resume' or curriculum vitae for individuals and appropriate background information for institutions.
- C. Any further information which may assist the Jury in the evaluation of the nomination and the selection of the recipient.

For nomination forms, Contact Anne Greenspan, Professional Development Department, Medical Library Association, 65 E. Wacker Place, Suite 1900, Chicago, IL 60601-7298. Voice: 312/419-9094, ext 28; fax: 312/419-8950; <mlapd2@mlahq.org>.

Please submit six copies of the completed nomination by November 1, 2000 to: Anne Greenspan, Professional Development Department, Medical Library Association, 65 E. Wacker Place, Suite 1900, Chicago, IL

## TechLine: The Electronic Frontier—Firewalls

Submitted by Geoffrey Gerriets, Technology Coordinator, NN/LM New England Region

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Most institutions with a permanent connection to the Internet are now surrounded by some kind of firewall. In some cases, this doesn't visibly impact what we in the libraries are trying to do. In other cases, it does, and sometimes subtly. This article will attempt to describe how firewalls are constructed, and how firewalls might affect your operations.

In a very general sense, most networks look very much like Figure 1. A bunch of local machines get to the Internet by sending traffic through a gateway machine. The gateway machine is plugged into a high-capacity network line that leads off into the Internet. Usually this line is a T1 line, or an ISDN line, or a DS line, or some similar high-bandwidth technology.

The idea of the firewall is to make use of this natural bottleneck to prevent unauthorized access to the machines on the local network. A firewall could be envisioned as some kind of Checkpoint Charlie that sits between the Internet and the gateway machine (see Figure 2).

Different institutions implement the firewall in different ways. The one common factor is that the machine that does the actual firewalling must physically stand between the local network and the Internet. Sometimes the machine will act as a gateway for local machines, performing some routing functions between the local network and the Internet, and sometimes it will do nothing else besides firewalling.

The actual "firewall" is formed by denying connection requests coming in from the network. Usually, when an attacker is trying to invade a system, the attacker must open some kind of connection to the system. Once the attacker can make a connection, he or she can gain access to other parts of the system. The attacker often needs a certain type of connection in order to take advantage of security holes in the machine's software — a telnet connection, for example, or an FTP connection. A firewall aims to limit the number and variety of connections available for the potential attacker to exploit.

In other words, a firewall sorts through incoming connection requests, and blocks unauthorized connections. The person who configures the firewall determines which connections are authorized and which are not. Usually, whole classes of connections are denied, effectively blocking access to network services on the local LAN. Additional types of blocking are employed, also — sometimes specific sites will be denied any access to the local network at all, and sometimes the firewall will be configured to allow access to network services only on certain secure machines.

The problems that arise from this sort of setup usually aren't immediately obvious. Most things — web browsing, outbound telnet, email, most FTP — work just fine. Sometimes, though, FTP won't work right. And anyone who uses IRC, ICQ, or AOL's Instant Messenger will also see some occasional problems — file transfers won't work properly, chat sessions aren't available, and other glitches may appear. These services — and some FTP servers — require the ability to establish a connection with your machine. Most firewalls are not configured permissively enough to allow this unless you specifically request it and demonstrate a need.

An additional problem is more likely to surface for casual users. One of the services network administrators frequently deny to the outside world is DNS, the domain name system service. The domain name system is the collection of protocols used to map IP addresses to hostnames and vice versa. It's what allows you to type `www.yahoo.com` instead of `204.71.200.67`. Frequently, IT personnel will provide DNS service to the local network, but will not inform the Internet as a whole about the names of the machines on the local network.

In most cases, this doesn't cause any trouble at all. Most of the things casual users will want to do won't require that the host's name be visible to reverse DNS. Two cases that I'm aware of do require that access, though. Several secure sites that include cryptographic or secure software (such as Netscape) require a DNS record to verify that your machine is actually located in the US or in Canada. Additionally, many sites employ a software package called "TCP Wrappers" to provide firewall-like control over access to the services they provide. This package, checks to ensure that hostname and IP address match, to prevent attackers from gaining access under an assumed name.

At heightened levels of security, additional inconveniences are possible, if not necessarily likely. Like much in life, firewalling requires some tradeoffs — these days, we trade some minor inconveniences for additional security. Compared to the earliest firewalling solutions, where access to the outside world was very nearly impossible,



Figure 1

Figure 2

# Stethoscoop

Submitted by **Cindy Robertson, Heritage Valley Health System**

- ◆ **BRAD LONG** has accepted a position as senior information services librarian at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, PA. Brad was most recently with Ohio Valley Medical Center, Wheeling, WV and with St. Francis Medical Center, Pittsburgh, before that. We wish Brad the best in his new position. His new email address is <bradley.long@mail.tju.edu> and we know he would love to hear from Pittsburgh folks reminding him of his Western PA roots.
- ◆ **DAVID NOLFI** received an adjunct faculty appointment at the Penn State McKeesport campus in order to teach "Learning Strategies for the Information Age." This freshman honors course combines learning research methods with learning to work collaboratively. Students are required to purchase laptop computers in order to conduct research, present findings, and communicate with each other. In addition to traditional class sessions, the course includes an asynchronous component using FirstClass.
- ◆ **HLSL** welcomes **GRETCHEN HIGGINBOTTOM** and **TAMAR SMITH** as health sciences library and informatics trainees for 2000-2001. This training program, which is funded by the National Library of Medicine, prepares librarians for leadership roles in managing libraries and information systems in complex health care settings. Gretchen and Tamar both received their MLIS degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. We share their excitement at this wonderful opportunity.
- ◆ **MICHELLE BURDA** has accepted the position of consumer health librarian at UPMC-Shadyside. Michelle was at UPMC-St. Margaret's for three years, serving most recently as director of medical library services. In her spare time, Michelle is a health and wellness counselor and fitness trainer for the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging, Lutheran Services Society, in Bellevue. Michelle will begin her new position at UPMC-Shadyside on September 25, 2000. Congratulations to Michelle on her new position and to UPMC-Shadyside for getting such a fine professional.
- ◆ **HLSL** will host **CARMEN DEE HARRIS** as a second year associate fellow of the National Library of Medicine. Carmen spent the past year at NLM and will spend the coming year at HLSL expanding her library experience through participation in a variety of activities and programs. We welcome Carmen to our city and wish her well.

*The Health Sciences Library System (HSLs), University of Pittsburgh, announces the following:*

- ◆ **AMMON RIPPLE** has been appointed to the position of document delivery librarian and administrative coordinator for reference services. Formerly, Ammon was reference/public services librarian in the Information Sciences Library at the University of Pittsburgh. Ammon received his MLS from Pitt. Congratulations to Ammon and we hope to see him at future chapter events.

**FOUR EASY WAYS TO GET YOUR INFORMA-**

**Mail:** Cindy Robertson, Manager  
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Heritage Valley Health System  
Dutch Ridge Road  
Beaver, PA 15009

**Phone:** 724-773-1940

**Fax:** 724-728-7429

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Be sure to include your name, business address, and telephone number with the news you are submitting

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