

# THE PITTSBURGH PULSE

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

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## From the Chair...

Hard to believe Spring is here. For many, April and May signal the end of an academic or fiscal year. Just as my daughter will move up to the toddler room at day care, I will move on to Past Chair of our chapter. I would like to say thanks to each of you for all you do to make the field of information a great profession. Your creativity and flexibility are important traits for today's librarian. Daily changes in technology, products, and work practices provide opportunities for us to use our expertise. Keep up the good work!

Congratulations to our new officers Amy Haugh – Chapter Chair-Elect/Program Chair, William Suvak – Secretary and Terrie Wheeler – Chapter Council Alternate! THANK YOU Amy, Bill and Terrie for taking on leadership roles and serving the Greater Pittsburgh Chapter of the Medical Library Association. THANK YOU Colleen Lako, Cindy Robertson and Karen Zundel for your work as Past Chair/Nominating Chair, Secretary and Chapter Council Representative, respectively.

One of the perks of parenting a small child is you get to act like a kid again. Spring is the perfect time of year to do this with the flowers and trees blooming. If you do not have a toddler to chase after, go for a fifteen-minute walk at lunchtime or park a little further from the store or work. Take some well-deserved rest and enjoy what the nature has to offer. Enjoy!!!

**Linda M. Hartman**  
**Chair**

## CE Funds Available Though Commonwealth Libraries of PA

### Submitted by Barbara Palso Uniontown Hospital

Could you use an extra \$600.00 a year for continuing education?

Have you had to "sacrifice" your continuing education funds in order to meet budgetary constraints? Increasingly, many of us have been asked to forfeit whatever educational appropriation we may have had. We know, however, that continuing education is vital to our professional growth and the success of our organizations.

There's hope!

The Commonwealth Libraries of Pennsylvania, through the Library Development Office, offers continuing education scholarships to librarians. These stipends of up to \$600.00 a calendar year are available to full time librarians in any setting.

They're provided on a first-come-first-served basis. According to Betsy Fordon, administrator of the initiative, MLA and NLM sponsored courses are all appropriate for reimbursement under the guidelines of the Commonwealth Libraries' scholarship program. Commercial training courses are also eligible. However, the funds MAY NOT be used for hotel or travel expenses or to pay registration fees.

It's easy to apply for a stipend. The application form is short and uncomplicated. The applicant receives reimbursement after submitting a written evaluation of the program. I received a stipend to attend a two-day computer

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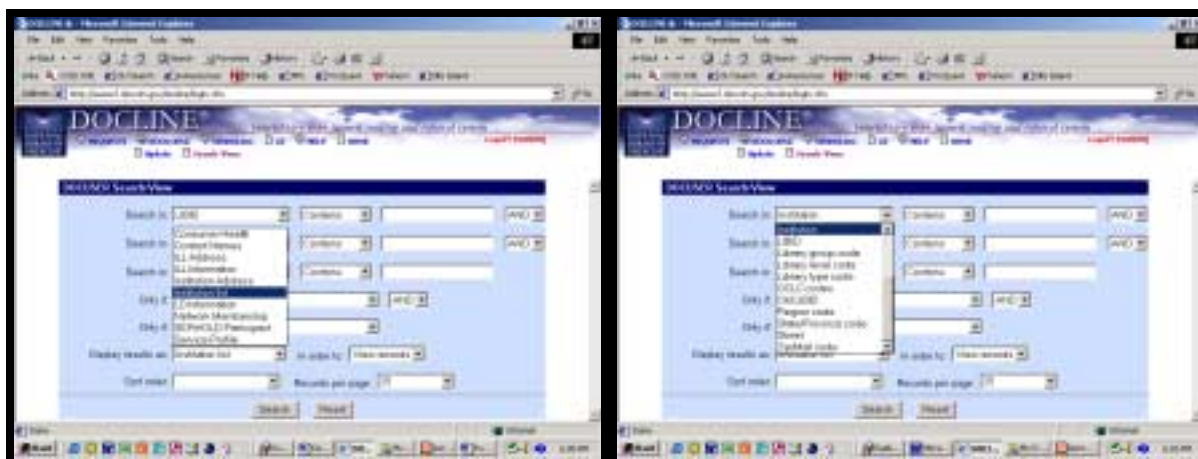
## TECHLINE: Tips n' tricks Part II

### Submitted by David Brennan, St. Francis Medical Center

One of the consistent themes of this column over the years has been how to make the technology work *for* you, not you working *for* the technology, and I continue that theme with another batch of tips/project ideas that I've used to solve some daily problems.

#### You've got all the libraries memorized, right?

While we've all had our share of gripes with the new DOCLINE, and are (im)patiently waiting for the new QuickDOC to be ready so we can get back to the 21st century, the new DOCLINE does have a few nice features. One of those that I found while trying to answer a reference question is the ability to run reports on libraries in specific ways. Under DOCUSER, the search screen has many options for setting up your report.



The question I was trying to answer was to get a list of the medical libraries in the region. Ordinarily, this would be fairly impossible, since each of us would appear on some lists (i.e. PBHSL, MLA Chapter members, UCMP or EFTS), but there was no list with everyone. The one that has the most complete coverage is DOCLINE participants.

On the search screen, you can see that searches can be run with a variety of criteria. I chose ZIP/Mail Code = either 15\* or 16\* and State=PA, sorted the report by institution name and ran the report. There's the list, which can be saved as a text file. You can also run a list showing addresses, which is convenient to paste into mailing labels. The best use I have for this feature (aside from answering the odd reference question) is for preparing statistics, since no one can remember all of the consortium affiliations for every library that they deal with (and QD Lend reports don't show this yet). If you have QD Lend, run your lend report sorted by library, then run a report from DOCUSER for BHSL and Region and run through your list and flag the BHSL libraries. You can do the same for the FreeShare ones or any other grouping you want. This process is *much* faster than looking up a dozen individual libraries that you may not remember the affiliation of.

Another neat item, well hidden, will be helpful to CINAHL users. CINAHL still uses the old SERLINE number, which doesn't make things easy if you have a batch of items to enter into DOCLINE. However, the SERLINE number is in the NLM cataloging record, available using Locator Plus. Choose Advanced Search, then enter your SERLINE number and choose "Record Number" as

the index. Up pops the NLM record and you can then copy the UID to the clipboard and paste right back into the DOCLINE search screen. ISSN also works but the SERLINE method is a bit more specific.

### What do we have, and what's missing?

Even though we have many resources in electronic formats, we still maintain physical collections, and must have some way of keeping track of them – right? With an automation system, inventory is a far cry from the old days of wading through the shelf list cards one by one, but it can still be tedious unless you do some preparation, and your collection is barcoded. The idea behind an automated inventory is to scan each item on the shelf and then have the system run a cross-check subtracting the items that are circulating, to come up with a list of discrepancies. The big question is how to physically get all those bar codes scanned in the most efficient manner. There are three ways to do this: 1) take a cartful at a time to a workstation that has a bar code reader; 2) hook a bar code reader to a laptop, throw it on a cart and wheel it around; or 3) buy or borrow a portable data collection terminal (PDT). The easiest method is to use a PDT. You can see these devices in use at supermarkets and department stores. A PDT is a small computer with an integrated bar code reader (either laser or wand), the sole purpose of which is to scan and store bar codes for inventory. The downside is that PDTs are very pricey for small library use (running from \$900 - \$2000 each new), but the upside is that they are regularly seen on E-Bay as surplus for a fraction of that amount. (In fact we got ours for \$40). You may also be able to borrow one from another department that may have it (like pharmacy or Central Supply), or if you know anyone in retail, perhaps make arrangements to borrow one. After all, you'll only be using it once a year.



Each PDT, like any computer, has different features but most communicate with a PC via a serial connection, and upload data as a text file. We've had the most luck with the generic terminal connection program within Windows, capturing the data as a text file, and simply continuing to append to it as the data builds up.

Check the documentation of your automation system and the specs of the PDT you are considering to see if you need to tweak anything. For example, our PDT outputs data in three sets: the bar code data itself, an internal serial number for each data element, and the bar code type: 000000006810 103109 { Code 39. I pull the captured data into Excel, strip off the two extra columns, and save back as a text file that the automation system will accept.

This is a prime example of taking a few hours of work at the front end to save literally hundreds of hours at the back end, and PDTs are one of the few computers that don't go out of date, being single-purpose and very simple. Plus, it is easy to train a volunteer to do the scanning, and accuracy is much improved over the old eyeball method.

### How do you know where this printout came from?

One of the nicer things about printing from the Web is the header/footer that appears on each page that gives you a notion of what the site is and the URL. But did you know that this is a function of your browser and can be changed to anything that you want? For example, I've set up a default header/footer that puts the copyright notice at the top of each page. In Internet Explorer, select File and then Page Setup – note the current settings in case you want to go back to them. Then just enter the text you want to appear as the header or footer. This would be particularly useful for literature searches or full-text articles that you print for your users. Some advanced copiers also have this feature, and, when combined with memory settings for double-sided and stapled, can save many hours of labor throughout the year.

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## Stethoscoop

Submitted by Cindy Robertson, Heritage Valley Health System

- ◆ **BRAD LONG**, senior information services librarian at Scott Memorial Library, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, was named the Editorial Review Group Chair for Library and Information Science at Doody Publishing. Brad recently recruited interested Pittsburgh Chapter members as book reviewers. While neither Brad nor other reviewers are paid, reviewers do receive a free copy of any book they review. Brad says that the response from chapter members was very impressive. Sounds like fun!
- ◆ Change is a part of life and we like to note those changes in this column. **JOAN FRASIER** and her husband Bob moved to Bridgehampton, NY in November 2000. In a recent e-mail message, Joan relayed her goodbyes to the Pittsburgh library community and sent a thank you for all the support she received while working in various libraries/CME programs, including Harmarville Rehabilitation, Washington Hospital/School of Nursing, and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. Joan especially thanks **ELLEN DETLEFSEN, BETTE REMBERT, ALICE KULLER, MARY LEIF, NANCY SPEARS AND DAVID NOLFI**. She is currently active in fundraising for the local public library, Literacy Volunteers of America and (her favorite activity) grandmothering. Joan's email address is [jhfrasier@aol.com](mailto:jhfrasier@aol.com) and she would love to hear from any/all of her former colleagues. We know how much she loves Bridgehampton and what a joy it is for her to be living there full time. All our best to Joan and Bob as they embark on this leg of their life's journey.
- ◆ **AMY HAUGH** became the Director, Medical Library Services at UPMC St. Margaret in December. Most recently she served as Librarian and Medical Services Coordinator at Forbes Regional. Prior to entering medical librarianship, she was the Manager of Investment Research Information Services at Federated Investors and an Information Specialist at Westinghouse Electric Corp. In her spare time, she works with her church youth group and is looking forward to spending lots of time with MLA. Congratulations to Amy in her new job and we all look forward to seeing her at Chapter events.
- ◆ We extend a warm chapter welcome to **MARCY BROWN** who recently accepted the part-time position of medical librarian at Forbes Regional Hospital. Marcy, who grew up in Louisville, KY, received her MLS from the University of Maryland. She has worked as a corporate librarian, a legal librarian and as a freelance indexer and abstractor. Marcy continues to do a bit of journal indexing and recently was hired by MDConsult to convert back-of-book index terms to MeSH for their online textbooks. With all of this going on, she also cares for her son Avery, born April 2000, enjoys fitness walking and needlepoint, and is a huge college basketball fan so March Madness is her favorite time of year. We look forward to seeing Marcy at future chapter events and working with her on upcoming activities. Marcy can be reached at [mbrown1@wpahs.org](mailto:mbrown1@wpahs.org) or 412-858-2422.

### Four Easy Ways to Get Your Information into Next Issue's Stethoscoop:

Mail: Cindy Robertson Library/CME Manager Heritage Valley Health System 1000 Dutch Ridge Road Beaver, PA 15009	Phone: 724-773-1940
	Fax: 724-728-7429
	Email: <a href="mailto:crobertson@hvhs.org">crobertson@hvhs.org</a>

Be sure to include your name, business address, and telephone number.

**CE Funds Available  
(continued)**

course a few years ago and found the entire process to be "painless" as well as an excellent opportunity. Please contact me if you'd like to know more about my experience.

Commonwealth Libraries is eager to work with special librarians. For more information and a scholarship application, please contact:

Dr. Elizabeth Fordon  
Advisor for Continuing Education  
Commonwealth Libraries of Pennsylvania  
Library Development Office  
P.O. Box 1601  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-1601  
Phone: 717-783-5731  
FAX: 717-783-5723  
Email: emf@stlib.state.pa.us

**Barbara Palso**  
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lib@uh1.com

**ALA "Talking Points" for Promoting  
Libraries and Librarians <www.ala.org>:**

"In a world of information overload, librarians are information navigators – clearing a path, pointing you toward the information you need."

"In a world where knowledge is power, libraries open doors to knowledge and bring power to any who enter."

"Today's library technology means that information from around the world is just a few clicks away. Miles are meaningless!"

***The Pittsburgh Pulse***

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<u>Publication Date</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
July 7 .....	June 7
October 7.....	September 7
January 7.....	December 7
March 7 .....	April 7

*Please send your comments, story suggestions, or questions to the Editor:*

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**MLA 2001: The *Pulse* Needs You!**

If you plan to present a CE program, poster, or even just attend MLA 2001 in Orlando, please send email to let me know your plans. I think it is important for the *Pulse* to record the contributions of the members of the Pittsburgh medical library community in this important annual event.

I will not be attending MLA this year. So, if you are taking a camera (digital or analog), please send copies of your favorite photographs to be published in the *Pulse*. Those of us who cannot attend would love to see the sights of the conference as well as our colleagues in action.

Please note that I will return all photographs sent to me – unless you would really rather not have them back...

**d a v i d**