

From the Chair...

My year as Chapter Chair ended earlier this month. At the beginning of this year I described several resolutions that I hoped to accomplish during the year. I resolved to enjoy my time as Chair and I did. I resolved to learn something new and I learned so much through the CE opportunities throughout the year and from my interactions with Chapter members. My last resolution was to work with the board to make this a productive year and I believe it was. (If you are interested in a re-cap of the year see the 2001/2002 annual report on the Chapter's Web site at <pmhslibraries.org/pghmla>.

As I reflect on this past year I can't help but see a Chapter struggling to survive. Membership has been steadily declining with 36 current members; a few years ago members numbered closer to fifty. Interest in CE opportunities has also declined and attendance at some was low. It is becoming difficult to fill board member positions. It requires membership to both the local and national MLA and many who are eligible have already given their talents and time to the Chapter in the past.

In the coming year, I will work with Amy Haugh, next year's Chair, and Chapter board members to explore ways to strengthen our ranks and increase interest in the Chapter. My thanks to Susan Walko and Linda Hartman for their time and energy as Treasurer and Past Chair, respectively. I hope all the readers of this column resolve to provide input and time into Chapter activities this coming year!

Nancy Tannery

We Have a Pulse

After a long hiatus, the *Pittsburgh Pulse* is back in production. I'm pleased that several members of the Chapter have requested its return and I am more than willing to resume my role as editor.

The key issue currently facing the *Pulse* is the need for participation. I recognize that we are all faced with many complex issues like juggling additional responsibilities, making do with limited resources, and beginning new projects. In this environment it's difficult to take part in any Chapter activities, let alone to devote the time and effort needed to write an article for the *Pulse*. However, I ask you to stop and consider the benefits of submitting an article to the *Pulse*:

- You can contribute to our profession without leaving your office.
- You have the opportunity to share information about your successes with your colleagues.
- The *Pulse* provides you with a forum to express your ideas.
- You receive credit toward your AHIP application for article bylines in chapter newsletters.

It's good to see that the Pittsburgh Chapter once again has a *Pulse*. If it's going to remain strong, we need your help. See the editor's note on page 5 to learn more about how you can contribute.

David Nolfi

TECHLINE: Are you protected?

By Bruno J. Mastroianni, Director of IT, Gumberg Library at Duquesne University

Your PC is more susceptible to being attacked today than ever before.

If your computer is connected to the Internet either at work or home, you are at risk. The risk you are taking is either the spread of a virus or the attack of a worm. The most recent attack covered by the media was the CODE RED virus. Reporters warned us to protect our computers but didn't provide all the details. One key point they failed to mention is that this virus did not attack personal computers – it attacked Web servers. So, there was no real danger to your personal computer.

The viruses you need to be concerned about are the ones that can delete files, change things on your computer, or even send email to people in your address book. You may recall viruses such as "Melissa" and "Love-Letter," which caused many unwanted email messages to be sent to other users listed in address books. These are the types of dangers you should be concerned about. Due to the increasing frequency of rapidly spreading destructive viruses, it is important to protect your computers and files. There are currently two types of products that you should use: virus protection and personal firewall software.

Virus Protection

Virus protection prevents viruses transmitted by email messages, floppy disks, or files downloaded from the Internet from infecting a computer. All computer users should protect themselves against these attacks with virus protection software. Using antivirus software will prevent viruses from spreading to your computers and to each other's. Installing this software will also protect your valuable data. Once you have the software installed you will also need to keep it current. Vendors like Symantec have the ability to download updates from the Internet directly to your computer creating and minimizing the possibility of getting a virus on your computer or spreading to others on the net. New viruses are introduced daily and will not be found unless you keep your software up to date.

For more information on viruses or worms visit:

Symantec Virus Protection -
<www.symantec.com/avcenter/refa.html#glossary>

Personal Firewall

Protecting yourself from viruses is only part of the battle. You also need to protect your computer from its network connection. Operating Systems like Windows 95, 98, and "Me" do not have the protection to keep out unwanted users when a computer is connected to the Internet. You should investigate personal firewall software, which will prevent users from gaining access to your computer and your files. There are many versions of personal firewalls available for your system – some are available free of charge and others for a fee. As with virus protection, you must always keep your software current.

For additional information on firewalls visit:

MacWorld review -

<www.macworld.com/2002/02/reviews/whosthere.html>

ZDNet - <www.zdnet.com/zdhelp/stories/main/0,5594,2610905,00.html> (defines a firewall and provides two reviews.)

Symantec Norton Personal Firewall -

<www.symantec.com/product/home-is.html>

ZoneLabs Zone Alarm - <www.zonealarm.com>

Conclusion

Installing virus protection and personal firewall software are great first steps in protecting your computer from attacks from hackers, viruses, worms, etc. You will need to keep your software current and stay informed of new changes in information technology. You should also backup important files onto floppy disks, CD-ROMs, or other removable storage devices. A backup ensures that there is at least a possibility of getting some of your work back. You could also have problems with either the hardware or software that is installed on your computer that could make your files unusable.

Organizations should implement automated virus updates that run daily in order to ensure maximum currency. A firewall should also be installed to prevent unauthorized access to computer systems. For your own systems, protect your important files by installing virus protection and firewall software today and remember to make backup copies of your files – just in case.

Stethoscope

Submitted by Cindy Robertson, Heritage Valley Health System

◆ *Is There Life After Libraries? Part I*

A resounding yes comes from **BARBARA BROOKS**, formerly of West Penn Hospital Medical Library. She is happily working at home part time for Behavioral Measurement Database Service, creators of the Health and Psychosocial Instruments (HaPI) database. Barbara is enjoying semi-retirement so much that she plans to continue her part time paid position as well as her volunteer work for the Center for American Music at Pitt. Barbara and her sister recently purchased a modest cottage in Thousand Island Park, NY and are spending what spare time, energy, and cash they have decorating the cottage in preparation for summer rentals. All our best to Barbara in her "new life" and a plea for her to remain in contact with her friends and colleagues.

◆ *Is There Life After Libraries? Part II*

An email received on April 2, 2002 from **BETH BUTCHER**, librarian at Sharon Regional Health System, brought lots of laughs. Beth's wonderful sense of humor, combined with the very close proximity to April Fool's Day, had us believing this was a great April Fool's joke. As it turns out,

Beth had the last laugh and we couldn't be happier for her. Beth has resigned her position at Sharon Regional, is getting married and moving to Wooster, England. Her fiancée, who lives and works in England, has lured our Beth "across the pond." She is unsure of what type of work she will look for once settled in Wooster but our sincerest hope is that she will keep in touch and keep us posted on her adventures.



Four Easy Ways to Get Your Information into Next Issue's Stethoscope

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: crobertson@hvhs.org

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

◆ **DAVID BRENNAN** has accepted the position of Electronic Services Librarian at the Clifford E. Barbour Library in the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. David, formerly the medical librarian at St. Francis Medical Center, brings many years of experience and skills to his new job and we wish him all the best.

◆ **SUE MCKINNEY** has joined St. Francis Medical Center as the part-time medical librarian. Sue worked at St. Margaret's hospital for several years before taking time off to raise her family. We welcome Sue back and look forward to seeing her at upcoming chapter events.

Searching the Web

Submitted by David Nolfi, Duquesne University

Since the dot com meltdown, the Web has been changing in new ways. Search engines, directories, portals, and other types of websites have begun developing new business plans that impact all Internet users.

Maintaining currency can be a daunting task for any searcher. I believe the sites described below do a particularly good job of pointing you to up-to-date information that will help you do a better job searching the Web or teaching others how to search the Web.



Search Engine Showdown <www.searchengineshowdown.com>

This site is maintained by Greg Notess, a reference librarian at Montana State University. Notess is a regular contributor to *Online*, *Econtent*, and several IT professional publications. He's also the author of several books about the Internet.

What sets apart Search Engine Showdown from similar sites is that Notess employs quantitative comparisons of search engines. For example, he regularly examines the "freshness" of search engines. In his most recent freshness studies, he found search engine results ranging from 51-286 days behind the sites they index. Notess also looks at search engine overlap, unique hits, and dead links. He systematically compares search engine databases, features, ranking methods, and more.

Search Engine Showdown is full of information about the most commonly used search engines. It's a must read for any body who searches the Internet or teaches searching.

Virtual Acquisitions Shelf & News Desk <resourceshelf.freepint.com>

George Washington University reference librarian Gary Price maintains this site. Price writes and speaks extensively about the Internet and the Invisible Web. If you review this site, you'll find yourself wondering how Price finds the time to do anything but surf the Web. The site is updated daily and is likely to be the first place that you'll find news about the Internet. He also provides links to new sources of full text information, online research results, new government publications, and more.

Price also produces the Direct Search <gwu.edu/~gprice/direct.htm>, which attempts to serve as a gateway to information on the Invisible Web (i.e., information found on "search interfaces of resources that contain data not easily or entirely searchable/accessible from general search tools"). "Price's List of Lists" <gwis2.circ.gwu.edu/~gprice/listof.htm> is another interesting source of information. It contains links to information like U.S. Census data, HCFA rankings, professional association lists, and much more.

If you don't have the time to read Virtual Acquisitions Shelf & News Desk on a daily basis, Price offers a weekly email newsletter that provides a summary of the key developments in the past week. The text-based newsletter is easy to scan, allowing you to quickly find news of interest to you.

Other Sites of Interest:

Library News Daily (news)
<www.lights.com/scott>

Library Stuff (news)
<www.librarystuff.net>

Invisible Web (directory)
<www.invisibleweb.com/>

Editor's Note

One of the difficult questions I face in producing a newsletter in an era of ubiquitous email is, "Why should we have a newsletter when we can post to a listserv?" Another can ask the question, "What's unique about a newsletter that a listserv doesn't provide?" I don't have the definitive answer to either question but I can say that both listservs and newsletters are thriving.

I think part of the reason newsletters continue to thrive is that they are recognizable commodities. If you are familiar with a newsletter or its sponsoring organization you generally have some reasonable expectation about its content before you open the cover.

Thanks to the efforts of longtime contributor David Brennan, you know that the *Pulse* will contain TechLine's easy to understand, practical advice for any computer user. Thanks to Cindy Robertson's many years of service (she's been a part of the newsletter longer than me), you know that you'll find a Stethoscope in each issue. For many Chapter members in one-person libraries, Stethoscope is the only way we can learn what's happening in our colleagues' lives and careers.

As important as these two columns are, they aren't enough to make a viable newsletter. We need your input to write new columns, report about interesting projects you are working on, and make suggestions for new features. I encourage you to make your unique contribution to this newsletter. Both the *Pulse* and the Chapter will be the better for it.

Please note that I hope to release the next issue by August 15. If you would like to submit an article the deadline is July 15.

If you're reading this and think that you would like to participate but you're not sure how to begin, please write or give me a call. I look forward to hearing your ideas.

Have a great spring!

d a v i d



New Chapter Website <pmhslibraries.org/pghmla>

If you haven't had the opportunity yet, check out the Pittsburgh Chapter's new website.

Website Editor David Brennan has done a great job updating the site and making it easier to find key information. Also, thanks to the Brady Library at Mercy Hospital for agreeing to host the new site.



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Editor..... David Nolfi
Technology Editor David Brennan
Stethoscope Editor.... Cindy Robertson
Proofreader..... Sandee Collins

Next Issue

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July 15.....	August 15

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

David Nolfi, AHIP
Health Sciences Librarian
The Gumberg Library
Duquesne University
Pittsburgh, PA 15282
Phone: 412-396-4931, Fax: 412-396-5350
Email: nolfi@library.duq.edu