

## From the Chair...

### Budgets and the Art of Promotion

As I read how public libraries will be impacted with incredible budget cuts and as I prepare my budget, appreciating an organization which values knowledge and learning, it seems to me again that one of the most important responsibilities of professional librarianship is promotion. To provide senior management with an understanding of who uses the services and what value they get for a relatively small investment seems to be a “no-brainer” and yet we get caught up in the doing and forget that role to continuously educate.

I have been happy to be aligned with the “education departments” of the hospital because they do understand the intangible benefits that a library and library staff can provide. I do encourage promotion of the library as we approach National Library Week in April and again in October as we mark National Medical Librarians Month.

### Time Flies...

Thanks to all for an interesting year! There was so much to do and so little time! If you get a call to serve the Pittsburgh Medical Library Association board as an officer, I hope you will consider! You get to work with very talented people for a very worthwhile cause! It is time well-spent in learning more about MLA!

**Amy Haugh**  
**Chapter Chair**

## Chapter Plans CE on Systematic Reviews with Ann McKibbon

Submitted by  
**Barbara Folb, Program Chair**

Several years ago I had the pleasure of attending an evidence-based medicine talk given by Ann McKibbon in Pittsburgh. I recall it was a very informative session and very well attended. Ann is now a doctoral student in Biomedical Informatics at the University of Pittsburgh. She has a gift for teaching, and even makes statistics understandable. On May 16, 2003 she will present a continuing education course for the Pittsburgh Chapter of MLA titled Systematic Reviews and the Librarian.

Members and SIS students have the opportunity of attending the morning only, or the whole day event. Because of the hands on work involved in the afternoon portion, registration is limited to 15 for the whole day. We can accommodate an additional 20 attendees for the morning only.

Complete information on the course and a registration form is available on the Chapter website at  
<<http://pmhslibraries.org/pghtml/>>.

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## TechLine: Automation – Systems Migration, Part 1

Submitted by David Brennan, Barbour Library, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Spring is in the air, and with the end of winter, I can finally see the end of our system migration. We have been working on the actual migration for about 18 months. Work on the system is never really done but the major task of moving the data from one system to another is complete.

As someone who automated a library from scratch and now migrated from one system to another, I can say that migration is much, much more difficult and much more time-consuming. Moving from one system to another is a good deal more complex than it appears on the surface, and the literature that evaluates systems does not look too closely at the actual mechanics of migration or the timing issues involved.

In this column and the next I'll talk about some of the issues involved in a migration – what to look out for and what to expect. Part 1 is a general list of things to be aware of and Part 2 will be some of the specific tools and tips for actually manipulating your data once you are in the migration process. Problems arise when changing systems even when keeping the same vendor because every library makes local modifications that preclude one-to-one moves of data.

In order to cover the most ground, I am presenting a list of migration “DOs and DON'Ts.”

**DO a needs assessment to determine if you really need a new system.** Some issues are decided *for* you, especially with a first-generation system, for example, the hardware will not support additional functions or is out of storage space. That was the situation at my library – our VAX could not be expanded. Mostly, functional needs drive the switch, such as a Web-integrated OPAC with full text management capabilities that your present system is not capable of.

**DO evaluate replacements.** This process is laborious because it requires “buy in” throughout the organization. Everyone wants a part of it: management, technical services, public services, acquisitions, and IS, and everyone has their own set of criteria for evaluating a new system. In some cases they will drag their feet since they have a vested interest in sticking with

the existing system. If you are lucky, all concerned will *want* a new system and you will have the resources to pay for it. You will also have to arrange demos from vendors after narrowing your list. Site visits to current users of your top choices are also very important. Finally, scan listservs devoted to the systems you are considering so that you can see problems pointed out by other users. In our case, the decision on a new system was made before I arrived.

***DON'T have an overly optimistic schedule for completion of a system migration.*** I've spoken with several other libraries (larger and smaller) since our migration was underway, and most of them think that the process will be faster and easier than it really is. Particularly in an academic environment, the timing of a new system rollout relies on a lot of things coming together: the back end of the system, infrastructure improvements, and the front end considerations as diverse as handouts for users, updates to student handbooks, websites, etc. Not only that, you really don't want to switch systems in the middle of an academic year.

***Similarly, DON'T try to implement all of the system at once.*** Unless your staff is so large that each module will only be used by a discrete group, you can't expect everyone to learn all of each module's functions in a short time. In our case, we got cataloging and circulation up first to meet the start of the academic year, and phased in serials and acquisitions later. That way, the staff and the library's clients could get used to the new

*Continued on Page 3*



## TECHLINE—Continued

system. You also won't be able to have all of the advanced features of any system fully operational at once. The same logic applies – the staff and clientele can't become familiar with everything at once either.

**DO find all of your existing system documentation.** Particularly if you've been using your system for a number of years, you'll need every bit of documentation you can get your hands on. What did we use this field in circulation for? Unless it was documented, who knows? If you're lucky, the person who *made* the decision will still be there but don't count on it.

**DO pay very close attention to the contracts from both your existing and new vendors.** Particularly if you've contracted with your old system vendor for extraction, you'll need to make sure that the contract provides sufficient services for your migration.

**DON'T rush anything!** Although it sounds the same as what I said above, I am emphasizing *don't hurry to finish*. As we migrated acquisitions I was tempted, and we were behind schedule anyway. Consequently, I was not careful enough and we had problems with the last load of order records. Fortunately, we were able to fix the file before the load but it was close. I learned a valuable lesson.

**DON'T expect everything to migrate.** It won't. Since every system is composed of many proprietary file formats and codes, manipulating the data to fit into new and equally proprietary formats is a lot of work (more next time). However, at the moment, think about what you absolutely need and what you can live without. As an aside, make sure that you have a way to archive the data from your old system. Particularly in the first year, you will need to run reports from the old data to do cleanup work. Plan to burn some CDs with your extract files.

**DO make sure that your staff members are all fully engaged.** Nothing helped our migration more than the teamwork and, of course, no one person is capable of doing this alone. I needed every bit of help I could get from the technical and public services staff.

Next time, I'll talk about the nitty-gritty of working with the data.

### **Technology Review: Tablet PC: the "Write" Device**

**By Bruno Mastroianni  
Director of Information Technology  
Gumberg Library at Duquesne University**

No longer do you have to go to a meeting and feel out of place with an open laptop, distracting others with the cacophony of clicking coming from your so called silent keyboard. Microsoft Corporation released its next generation of Windows XP with Ink technology on November 21, 2002.

When I first saw the device I thought it looked like a large Personal Digital Assistant (PDA). After watching the demonstration I realized it's a laptop you can use without the keyboard. The only similarity between the Tablet PC and the PDA is that both require you to use a pen or stylus to write. The Tablet PC offers the convenience of a PDA with the benefits of the standard ports found on laptops.



While attending a trade show I was able to see a handful of these devices including one from a newcomer to the PC industry, Motion Computing. Impressed with the device yet somewhat skeptical, I requested a demo from Motion Computing. To my surprise a unit arrived in just two weeks! It was well designed and I found the capability to dock either horizontally or vertically to be particularly useful.

Once powered on I configured XP just as I did on any other Windows XP system. The only real difference is an add-on that allows you to use the handwriting input for any



Windows application and the new Journal software designed for supporting the new pen input. In my experience it was very easy to navigate using the pen in place of a mouse. I found the new Journal and started testing and the device recognized my handwriting instantly.

**Continued on Page 7**

## Stethoscope

Submitted by Cindy Robertson, Heritage Valley Health System

- ◆ Congratulations to **MARCY BROWN** of Forbes Regional Hospital as the recipient of an MLA/MIS 2003 Career Development Grant. The award provides \$1,500 toward a professional development activity in medical informatics. Marcy will be taking a distance education course in public health informatics through the University of Illinois at Chicago. Way to go Marcy!!
- ◆ Kudos to **MARK VRABEL** of the Oncology Nursing Society. Mark also received a \$1,500 MLA/MIS Career Development Grant. Mark will use his award toward developing the Society's Evidence-Based Practice Resources Center  
<<http://onsopcontent.ons.org/toolkits/ebp/index.htm>>. Also, his poster "Assisting the Oncology APN in Fostering Evidence-Based Practice: The Role of the Librarian" has been accepted for presentation at this year's annual meeting in San Diego.
- ◆ Up in the sky... It's a bird... It's a plane... No, it's **BILL SUVAK**! Last August Bill took his first sky dive in celebration of his 55th birthday. The 4,500 foot descent took about six minutes and fulfilled a long-time ambition for Bill. As if this was not thrill enough for one day, Bill proceeded to Wendy's where he received his first senior citizen discount. Welcome to the club Bill (senior citizens, not skydivers!).

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

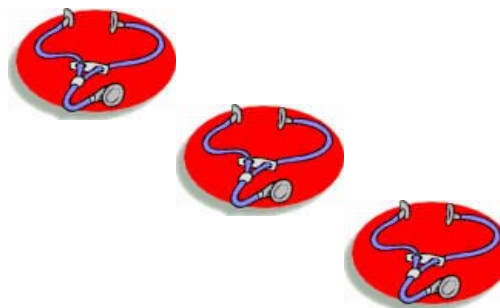
**Mail:** Cindy Robertson  
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**Be sure to include your name, business address, and telephone number.**



### Chapter CE and 2002 Annual Meeting Held

By Barbara Folb, Health Sciences Library System, University of Pittsburgh

Despite the snowy winter weather, 27 brave MLA devotees turned out for the Chapter's annual meeting and an excellent continuing education presentation, held at Shadyside Hospital December 5, 2002. Charles Wessel of the Health Sciences Library System, University of Pittsburgh presented "Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM): Information Resources for Choices in Healing." Charles' expertise on the topic was readily apparent. He created The Alternative Medicine HomePage <[www.pitt.edu/~cbw/altm.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~cbw/altm.html)> in 1994 and continues to maintain and update the site.

The extensive supplemental materials were mailed out to the registered members kept home by the weather. Hopefully their disappointment in missing the meeting was diminished by the quality of the materials.

Special thanks are due to the library staff of Shadyside Hospital, Michele Klein-Fedyshin, Michelle Burda, and Deborah Downey for all their help with the meeting arrangements, and to the chapter board members who helped with all aspects of planning the event.

## Chapter Sharing Roundtables at MLA 2003

The theme for this year's annual meeting – "Catch the Wave" – aptly depicts the purpose of one of its premier events: Chapter Council Presents Sharing Roundtables. The Roundtables are an opportunity for all participants to meet with colleagues, share experiences, and discuss mutual professional concerns – in other words, to catch the latest wave in health sciences librarianship.

The Roundtables provide an opportunity for librarians with similar interests to talk about a topic while enjoying lunch. Discussions are free flowing, and typically include both those who are interested in the subject, but have little experience as well as librarians who are more knowledgeable. Roundtable participants come from diverse settings: from one-person hospital libraries to major academic medical centers, and from rural states to major metropolitan areas. These different perspectives broaden and enhance the conversation.

Those of you familiar with the Roundtables may have noticed a slight name change. Over the years, this event has evolved from a lunch time get together for those interested in chapter activities to an opportunity for all conference attendees to explore new ideas or discuss solutions to common problems. This year, there are 30 different topics, more than one-third new. Although the name has changed to reflect our broader mission, we have continued to include tables related to chapter activities and business.

Join us on Sunday, May 4, from noon to 2:00 pm as we surf through strategic planning, investigate "breaking" technology issues, and more. Volunteers are also needed to serve as facilitators and recorders. While it is helpful if facilitators have a basic knowledge of the topic, the main criteria are a willingness to listen and to help the group initiate discussion and stay focused. Recorders are asked to provide a brief

report highlighting the main points covered. Please contact Sarah Morley at [smorley@salud.unm.edu](mailto:smorley@salud.unm.edu) if you are interested in serving in either capacity.

This year's roundtable topics are:

- ◆ Archives-Traditional and Electronic
- ◆ Benchmarking
- ◆ Bioterrorism-Library Issues (New)
- ◆ Chairs and Incoming Chairs
- ◆ Consortia Purchasing for Hospitals (New)
- ◆ Consumer Health
- ◆ Copyright Issues with Ejournals and Ebooks (New)
- ◆ Distance Education
- ◆ Electronic Fund Transfer System (New)
- ◆ Electronic Document Delivery (New)
- ◆ Electronic Journals
- ◆ Evidence-Based Medicine
- ◆ Finance and Treasurers
- ◆ Governmental Relations
- ◆ Health Literacy (New)
- ◆ Informationists
- ◆ License Negotiation
- ◆ PubMed LinkOut Program (New)
- ◆ Marketing and Public Relations
- ◆ Mentoring
- ◆ One-Person and One-Librarian Libraries
- ◆ PDAs-Beginning Users
- ◆ PDAs-Experienced Users
- ◆ Recruiting for the Profession
- ◆ Retirement Planning (New)
- ◆ Salaries (New)
- ◆ Strategic Planning (New)
- ◆ Technology Issues for Hospital Librarians (New)
- ◆ Virtual Reference Services
- ◆ Web Managers

Please join us at the Chapter Sharing Roundtables and "Catch the Wave!"

### University of Pittsburgh / MLA Reunion in San Diego Submitted by Ellen Detlefsen, School of Information Sciences

The reunion will take place Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-6:30 at the Annual Meeting. The Medical Library Education Section organizes this event each year, and your alma mater is always a happy participant!

I will have greetings from our new Dean, Ron Larsen, and news of the first-ever distance

education program in medical librarianship via the SIS FastTrack enterprise! There will be light refreshments plus a cash bar.

Please come and bring friends and colleagues to make it a great event. It's always wonderful to see you at MLA!

## Five Chapters, One Meeting

Submitted by Nancy Tannery, Health Sciences Library System, University of Pittsburgh

Walk in Benjamin Franklin's footsteps and plan on attending *Collaborations, Partnerships, and Solutions: The QuintEssential Conference* in Philadelphia next fall. On October 26-28, 2003, a joint annual meeting of four MLA chapters and one SLA chapter will be held. The five Chapters include The Mid-Atlantic, New York-New Jersey, Philadelphia Regional, and Pittsburgh Regional Chapters of MLA and the Philadelphia Chapter of SLA. This "quint"-chapter meeting will be a unique and historic opportunity to meet and network with colleagues.

Join your colleagues at the Sheraton Society Hill Hotel located in a historic Philadelphia neighborhood close to the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall.

Upon entering the area of Philadelphia in which the Sheraton Society Hill Hotel is located, you will feel as if you have been transported back in time. The streets are made of cobblestone and horse-drawn carriages can be seen meandering up and down the streets.

The keynote speaker for this event will be Robert S. Martin, PhD, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The Institute of Museum and Library Services is an independent federal grant-making agency that supports the nation's libraries and museums. Dr. Martin is a librarian, archivist, administrator, and educator.

The benefits of humor in the workplace will be the discussion subject of the dinner speaker, Dr. John Morreall. Dr. Morreall describes increased productivity, reduced stress, and employee connection as direct derivatives of the inclusion of humor in the workplace. John Morreall, PhD, is a professor of religion at the College of William and Mary in Virginia and review editor for the *International Journal of Humor Research*

Save the dates of **October 26-28, 2003**. I look forward to seeing you.

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## Call for Posters

The 2003 Program Committee invites you to participate in the *The QuintEssential Conference* by submitting a proposal for a poster presentation. We encourage you to take this opportunity to highlight your experiences with collaborations, partnerships and solutions or other creative innovations, techniques, or experiences that you would like to share with your colleagues. Both presenters and attendees will benefit from this informal exchange of ideas.

### Submission Process

Submit two copies of abstract text of not more than 250 words describing the poster and its purpose. Include all authors and institutional affiliations with the first copy of the abstract. The second copy will be used in a blind review process and should not include any specific information identifying authors or institutions.

### Deadlines

Send submissions via email to Beverly Murphy, Poster Session Coordinator, at [murph005@mc.duke.edu](mailto:murph005@mc.duke.edu). Abstracts must be

submitted by June 10, 2003. Submitting authors will be notified of acceptance by email during the week of July 14, 2003. There will be a limit of twenty posters accepted for presentation.

### Poster Session

At least one author will need to be present to staff their display during the Poster Session on Monday, October 27, 2003. Additional information (i.e. time, location, setup instructions, etc.) will be sent with acceptance notification.

Poster boards and easels will not be provided so displays must be self-standing. Each presenter's area will be provided with a six-foot skirted table, but the presenter must furnish all other equipment. Electricity and phone lines will not be available.

If you have any questions, please contact Beverly Murphy at [murph005@mc.duke.edu](mailto:murph005@mc.duke.edu) or 919-660-1127.

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## Tablet PC: the “Write” Device – Continued

At first, I was thinking this might be too good to be true. I did some of the same tests they did at the kick off and found the software was intelligent enough to separate handwriting from pictures. I could choose to tell the software to translate or leave it in my original handwriting. I was able to do all of this without learning special handwriting recognition software like Graffiti (used on Palm systems).

I decided to save all my documents in the original format since I saw the demo of a search that automatically retrieves documents just as with Word. I took the device to several meetings and my first impressions were correct.

As I went from meeting to meeting, I found myself using it more than I would a laptop. I also found it was much less distracting for others in meetings. Now my minutes were stored in the

appropriate folders and I was able to search and find anything I had written.

So the remaining question you still must have is – how good is it really? My handwriting is poor and the Tablet PC did a great job converting all of the documents into the correct words. The exceptions were when my writing was unclear. The software can interpret a mark that resembles a letter but not a nondescript line that I want to be a letter. Nonetheless, the software was very good at completing words I didn't write correctly.

This device is great. The technology works and I want one.

For additional information on Tablet PCs visit: <[www.microsoft.com/tabletpc/](http://www.microsoft.com/tabletpc/)> or <[www.motioncomputing.com/](http://www.motioncomputing.com/)>.

**Celebrate National Library Week!**  
**April 6-12, 2003**



**The Pittsburgh Pulse**  
**Newsletter of the**  
**Pittsburgh Regional Chapter**  
**Medical Library Association**  
**Volume 17, Issue 1**  
**April 2003**

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<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Next Issue</u>	<u>Publish Date</u>
June 19.....		July 7

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

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