

library newsletter

February

BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

1984

Library Skills Update

The revised seventh edition of the textbook for Library Skills I is now in use. Twenty three worksheets accompany the new edition. Library Skills I is the one credit course taught by the reference department to approximately 115 students. (See related report below).

Production of both the library skills text and worksheets has drastically changed. We hired a student assistant, Sharon Sorensen, to input the revised textbook into BSU's mainframe IBM computer. The final copy was printed on their laser printer. The BSU print shop then produced 350 copies of the textbook from the laser printed master.

Five of the 23 library skills tasks have also been produced using the IBM computer. Steve Maloney set up a system to produce library skills task sheets. Working with him, Kathey Ultican and Roni Gehring, Holly Tucker and Keith Hayes, reference department student assistants, input 115 sets of variables for fifteen questions to make up five drastically revised worksheets. This spring we will continue to input and revise the remaining 18 worksheets and their thousands of variables.

The reference department is working hard to change from manual to automated production of the library skills text and worksheets. It should pay off in the future, however, when we will be able to make changes very simply and easily at the IBM terminal.

We have also changed the content of the library skills course by generally updating everything in the textbook and tasks and by adding an expanded version of the glossary of library terms to the back of the book. The following titles have also been added to the course: to the chapter on almanacs: Statistical Abstract of the United States; to a new section on literary study aids: Masterplots, Survey of Contemporary Literature, Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century, Shipley's Encyclopedia of Literature, Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, Critical Survey of Short Fiction, Dictionary of Literary Biography, Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, Home Book of Quotations, Classical and Modern, Evans' Dictionary of Quotations; and to a new section titled general bibliographies: Books in Print, Ulrich's International Periodical Directory, and Ayer's Directory of Publications.

It is a good feeling to start the new semester with a revised and improved library skills course. A copy of the library skills textbook is in a folder in the reference department file drawer where the current library skills folders are kept. In the same drawer is a folder for "Additions, Corrections and Suggestions." If you notice any changes or improvements that could be made in either text or tasks, please note them there. Thanks for your help in teaching and improving the library skills course.

Anne Matjeka

1983 Statesman Index in Process

In an Herculean eleventh-hour effort, Lois Cummins completed typing the 1983 Statesman Index prior to her retirement January 20th. The index has been proofed during the past two weeks, and the final copy retired to await corrections before reproduction and distribution. Due to the current shortage of staff in the Reference Department, in addition to the unusually high demand for service at the beginning of this semester, it is anticipated that the final edition will not be available for many weeks. The 1983 Statesman Index continues to be available to BSU patrons in "looseleaf" form on the newspaper index shelves.

Library Skills Goes High Tech, Retains High Demand

Once again, the Reference Department's Basic Library Skills class has proven very popular with BSU students. We gave 16 tours during the first month of this semester, to a total of 127 students -- as compared with 17 tours during which we reached 106 people last fall. It's difficult to account for the increase, but many people reacted favorably to Anne Matjeka's imaginative signs that fluttered from every pillar and post. (However, one student, upon reading the sign that admonished: "Don't wander aimlessly around the library building..." reported to the Circulation desk to have someone retrieve his books for him; apparently he was only following orders)! LS 102 is now closed with 115 students, and an unusual number are well into their packet of tasks.

Carrollton, WLN, and BSU

Although we have not yet received official notification from WLN, indications are that WLN and Carrollton are in the final negotiation stages of the RECON agreement. This will mean that WLN will send members "MISS" tapes to Carrollton where the items will be matched against the REMARC database. We expect to have approximately 95% of our monograph collection represented. The matching is unofficially scheduled for March.

Canadian Documents

Boise State University Library has been designated by the Canadian Government as selective depository of Canadian National Government Publications. New publications are selected by means of a weekly checklist of serials and monographs. Most monographs published by the Canadian National Government are acquired by selection from the weekly checklist while serials are started by selection from a basic serials list. New or old serial subscriptions are begun by sending a letter requesting addition to the serials subscription. A list of publications is sent on an irregular schedule from which monographs or single issues of serials may be purchased after they have been offered for selection previously.

BSU Library Government Publication Department is planning to create a shelf list organized by agency and a paper list through computer-assisted word processing arranged by agency, title, and subject. Currently not enough publications have been received to organize them. Once serial selection is completed, the collection should begin growing at a more rapid rate.

Task Force on Computer Applications

Tim Brown has appointed members to three task forces to develop documentation needed for a Request for Proposal (RFP). The task forces on circulation, online catalog, and serials are composed of librarians and classified staff members. Task force memberships are: Circulation - Librarians Strong, Madden, Ribner, and Baldwin; Staff members Pass and Pierce. Online Catalog - Librarians Ostrander, Crane, Haacke, Taylor, and Matjeka; Staff members Clemens and Caylor. Serials - Librarians Miller, Huskey, Strong, Crane, and Ostrander; Staff members Collins and Cardinale. RFP components prepared by the task forces will be compiled by the Committee on Computer Applications and submitted to Tim Brown by the end of August. The appointment of task forces is the initial step in the preparation of specifications and prospectus for an integrated library automation system.

Potpourri from here, there & everywhere

The United States Government Printing Office has, in the last five years, made a major shift in its publication format. In 1978, 11% of the GPO publications mailed to depositories were in microfiche. By 1983, microfiche format represented well over 65% of GPO's distribution. Of course, this switch has significant implications for libraries where the plea will no longer be for more shelf space but for fiche readers and storage cabinets...Another trend in the publication world is the increasing number of short runs of newly published titles. Because of financial considerations, especially a change in the tax assessment of books stored in publishers warehouses, there has been a noticable decrease in first printings. The result, if you don't get your order in early you may not get your book. So far in this budget year the Library has had 329 orders cancelled because the book is out-of-print. One hundred and eleven of these cancellations were received in January 1984. The 300+ cancellations is about 4% of our orders for new books placed in the last six months. We have no comparable figures for previous years but will watch this trend henceforth...

February 29th is a special day since it comes but once every four years. It will be a special day in the Library since it has been declared a fine free day. All overdue books returned on that day will not be assessed fines. It is hoped that by offering this incentive, books long overdue will find their way back to the Library. Notice of this event will be sent to The Statesman in order to spur Special Borrowers to take advantage of this offer...During the intersession a house cleaning project, including a shelving inventory, brought order to a little known store room on the 4th floor. Containing bits and pieces of left-over shelving, made by various manufacturers, the room also served as an attic for useless "things" that no one wanted to toss out. Now it contains only shelving parts compatible with existing library shelving. Should anyone remove some of the pieces that remain, please inform Janet Strong so that she can adjust the inventory...

Because of a modestly enhanced materials budget we have been able to mount an effort to enhance our serials collection. This budget year over two hundred new, or restored, serial titles have been ordered. In order to bring these new titles to the attention of the university community a portion of the Fastcat shelving area has been given over to slanted periodical shelving and designated as a display area for new serials...The Archives has undertaken a project to prepare an index of Statesman articles on BSU topics using the IBM-PC. Should this pilot project prove successful consideration will be given to using the PC for indexing the Statesman for topics of Idaho interest.

In case you haven't noticed, the PC's have had some impact on library functions in the few short months that they have been available. Public Services monthly statistics are now entered into the PC. Also prepared on the PC are an author and title list of browsing books, new titles in Reference, the Collection Development Policy statement, a Canadian desiderata list, and more. At long last the dawn of the computer age has reached beyond WLN and into the far corners of the Library...

New staff: John Aldape is the new half-time Records Clerk in the Circulation Department. A graduate of Boise Junior College and the University of Idaho, John brings to this position a wide range of experience. He has been a real estate agent, a rancher and while in the Air Force, a medical administrative technician. John will be pursuing certification as an elementary teacher while working at the Library. Cindy McLeod is rejoining the Serials section as a temporary part-time employee.

EMS has three new faces in its quarters but only two of these people work for EMS. The odd man out is Bill Sohl, a microcomputer technician, employed by Data Processing who is using the fine repair facilities of EMS to carry out his work. New to EMS are Ellen Jones, booking clerk, and Stephanie Frasier, rewind clerk.

Welcome to all our new associates.

* * * * *

What a sad want I am in of libraries,
of books to gather facts from!
Why is there not a Majesty's library
in every country town?
There is a Majesty's gaol and gallows
in every one.

Thomas Carlyle

Contributors to this issue: Anne Matjeka,
Beverly Miller, Gloria Ostrander, Darryl
Huskey, Dave Baldwin, Ralph Hansen.
Typist - Sylvia Burr