



Synapse

ALABAMA HEALTH LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

Vol. 1, No. 2

February 1981

Why Synapse?

“sin’aps: the point at which an impulse passes from one neuron to another.”

Webster’s definition of synapse inspired the title of the ALHeLA newsletter. The newsletter is a vital communications link between all members of ALHeLA. It is a vehicle for the exchange of information and ideas.

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ALHELA To Hold First Annual Meeting

The Alabama Health Libraries Association will hold its first annual meeting on April 10, 1981, at the headquarters of the Medical Association of the State of Alabama in Montgomery. The steering committee of ALHELA has been working long hours to provide an informative and useful program, as well as to provide an excellent opportunity for all those involved or interested in health libraries to meet and discuss those issues and problems that we all face.

A tentative schedule of events for the day is as follows:

- 8:00 - 9:00 Coffee and registration
- 9:00 - 11:00 Business meeting (to include a brief history of ALHELA and an up-date of its progress, a discussion of a constitution and bylaws, and a review of future plans.)
- 11:30 - 1:00 Box lunch, catered by Varon’s; “get-acquainted” time!
- 1:00 - 5:00 Program

The selected topic for the program is a review of the Joint Commission on Accreditation for Hospitals (JCAH) and a discussion of how libraries can give aid to hospitals in preparing for JCAH surveys. The survey taken from the membership forms indicated that this was of primary interest to many members. Plans include a presentation by a JCAH surveyor followed by a discussion session giving those attending the opportunity to voice their questions, ideas, and opinions.

Finalized schedules, expenses, and program notes as well as registration forms will be sent to members in the near future.

Make plans to join us for this informative program! This is a wonderful opportunity to pick up

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Focus On Alabama Health Libraries: The Medical Library of The College of Community Health Sciences

by Lynn Fortney—Head Medical Librarian

The College of Community Health Sciences in Tuscaloosa was established in 1971 by the state legislature in response to the concern many Alabamians expressed regarding a serious shortage of primary care physicians in many areas of the state. The college is charged with providing the last two years of clinical training for a portion of the medical students enrolled at The University of Alabama School of Medicine, and is responsible for operating the Family Practice Residency Program and the Preventive Medicine Residency, based in Tuscaloosa.

Since the major objective of the College is to improve health care in Alabama with particular emphasis on smaller towns and rural areas, it is actively involved, first of all in training and recruiting physicians to practice in the state. The College also provides follow-up services to Alabama physicians to help them make their practice of the highest quality, as well as intellectually and emotionally rewarding.

Among the College's services most helpful to physicians in isolated rural areas are those offered by the College's Health Sciences Library. These Library services include awarding circulation privileges, photocopying of articles or book material, arranging interlibrary loans, loaning audiovisuals, preparing bibliographies, and computer searching of MEDLARS (Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System) data bases at the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda.

The Health Sciences Library was established in 1973, in "temporary" quarters in the Amelia Gayle Gorgas (Main) Library on the University's central campus. The original focus of the Health Sciences Library was to obtain health related materials for other university disciplines. Thus the Library accumulated a broad base of medical knowledge, and established an interdisciplinary nucleus from which the College of Community Health Sciences could draw information. Although the

library also supports programs in nursing, social work, community medicine, behavioral science, pharmacy, and health care management, for the past five years the focus of collection development has been on clinical medicine. The collection now includes more than 8,000 monographs and 425 journal subscriptions, with many of the latter including the issues of the past 30 to 50 years. Newsletters, bulletins, pamphlets, clippings, and selected U.S. government publications are also available. The reference collection contains 150 volumes, including directories, dictionaries, handbooks, statistical sources, selected textbooks, and bibliographies. Among these are indexes including the *Index Medicus*, various clinical sections of *Excerpta Medica*, the *Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature*, and 22 subject indexes, i.e., *Nutrition Abstracts and Reviews*, *Hospital Literature Index*, *Endocrinology Index*, etc.

The library maintains a collection of approximately 2,000 audiovisual programs in a variety of formats, such as slides, videocassettes, audiocassettes, and slide-tape programs. Some of these were purchased by a grant from the Veteran's Administration. Program subjects include surgical techniques, emergency medical procedures, interviewing, legal medicine, and aspects of health care management. A catalog of these materials is available as a computer print-out. The library's closed-circuit television system displays videocassette programs for groups or individuals in the Educational Tower at Druid City Hospital.

After five years in temporary quarters in the main library building, in November, 1978, the Health Sciences Library moved to 7,000 square feet on the main floor of the new Educational Tower at Druid City Hospital. This new location better meets the needs of busy medical students and residents and has the further advantage of making current medical information more conveniently accessible to the medical staff of Druid

City Hospital. All health professionals and all students of the health professions in western Alabama have library privileges.

The library is open 86 hours a week and has a staff of 22, including three full-time professional librarians certified by the Medical Library Association. Betsy Pertzog is Circulation/Audiovisuals Librarian and supervises 10-12 student assistants, as well as cataloging and classifying all audiovisual software. Barbara Doughty is Medical Reference Librarian and supervises four graduate assistants. She has responsibility, as well, for photocopy and interlibrary loan services, bibliographic research services, and MEDLINE and MEDLARS data base services. Lynn Fortney is Head Medical Librarian. She administers programs of the Health Sciences Library, oversees collection development, and develops policies and procedures.

When preparing for a conference, writing for publication, or treating a difficult patient problem, many physicians contact the Health Sciences Library for a literature search on the subjects involved. The reference staff uses manual bibliographic techniques combined with computer searching to prepare an individualized bibliography of journal articles, book material, and, if requested specifically, audiovisual materials. The patron may elect to have photocopies made of one or more of the articles cited on the bibliography.

The Health Sciences Library of the College of Community Health Sciences is committed to improving the quality of primary medical care to the people of Alabama. It seeks to satisfy this commitment by providing the most current and complete information possible to health care providers in West Alabama. Thus the Health Sciences Library plays an important part in extending the services of The University of Alabama School of Medicine to rural Alabama.

ALHELA Steering Committee Meets

The Steering Committee of the Alabama Health Libraries Association met at 2:00 p.m. Friday, September 26, 1980, in room 203 at the Best Western Motel at the Birmingham Airport Terminal. Those present included Dick Fredericksen, Lynn Fortney, Kathy Dexter, Anne Toll, Mary Ann Donnell and Bobby Powell.

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and approved after one correction.

Anne Toll gave a report on the meeting dates of the Alabama Hospital Association and the Alabama Library Association. The Alabama Hospital Association meeting is June 17-19, 1981, at the Hyatt House in Birmingham. The Alabama Library Association meeting will be April 1-3, 1981, at the Municipal Auditorium in Mobile with the Health Science Roundtable meeting scheduled for April 2 from 11:30 to 12:30 p.m.

Mary Ann Donnell told the group about her experience with the state organization of libraries in Oregon. The state Hospital Association in Oregon verbally supported them. She also told of ways and means used to get Administrators interested in the meetings. They conducted workshops with institutional representatives plus other personnel. At one workshop three administrators attended, one stayed all day.

Anne Toll is to contact the President of the Alabama Hospital Association and ask if it is o.k. to have a concurrent meeting or brief postconference for probably 40-50 people at the most. Dick remarked that at the SLA meeting with 55 members in Alabama, only 23 attended the largest function including complimentary guests. The first meeting will probably draw a large number of people especially if meeting is held in Birmingham, possibly 75 at the most. There were several suggested alternatives if the meeting doesn't work out with the Alabama Hospital Association. The possibility of meeting concurrently with the Medical Association of the State of Alabama was discussed. Dick knows Dr. George Oetting and will talk to him. If we could do this, maybe we could get Dr. Norman Stearns to speak at one of our meetings.

Discussion followed of how many people are actually in Medical Records and in the Medical Library. It was concluded that there are probably not as many as people believe. Other departments are involved such as Secretaries in Medical Education acting as librarians, also personnel in Medical Staff Affairs acting as Librarians.

Mary Ann mentioned that when they organized the Oregon state organization, they felt the need would be at the interlibrary loan level. A Portland area group was already organized and meeting monthly. These people were in the talking stage for about one year before they started thinking about grants. The group started with about 25 members. Since it was felt that large groups of people from one institution could out-vote others, all memberships were institutional with each institution having one vote. The association applied for and received a grant, published a couple of newsletters and had quarterly meetings. They also divided the state into service areas along existing Health Systems Agency lines. The Oregon Health Sciences Libraries Association now meets every other month.

Lynn had received correspondence from several people regarding their state organizations and copies of their bylaws. These included letter from Miriam Libbey and the Georgia Health Science Libraries Association, the Florida Medical Library Association and the Tennessee Library Association. The Tennessee Library Association is connected with the Tennessee Hospital Association. Some of the groups meet twice a year and sponsor CE courses, publish newsletters, registry of consultants, etc.

Dick mentioned he had a copy of the Canadian Health Association bylaws. Also mentioned was the publication of a Library Directory with hours libraries open. Dick mentioned that he had talked with a legal representative and there is no problem starting an organization. You must apply for tax exempt status within 15 months. Writing bylaws is not necessary until after the membership campaign.

(Continued on page 7. . .)



From left to right: Anne Toll, Bobby Powell, Ann Smallwood, Lynn Fortney, Rachel Jones, and Dick Fredericksen.

Southeast Chapter of the Medical Library Association Elects Officers

The 1980-1981 Officers of the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association are: Marcia Davidoff, Naval Training Equipment Center, Orlando, FL - Chairman; William D. Postell, Jr., Tulane Medical School, New Orleans, LA - Vice-Chairman; Laura (Huff) Koch, SERMLP, Emory Medical School, Atlanta, GA - Secretary-Treasurer; and Miriam H. Libbey, Emory Medical School, Atlanta, GA - Candidate for National MLA Nominating Committee.

Because of the change in the MLA By-Laws, the group also elected a Chapter Representative and an alternate to the MLA Council. Ted Srygley, University of Florida at Gainesville is the Representative and Martha Jane Zachert, University of South Carolina at Columbia is the alternate.

The newly appointed Regional Employment Clearinghouse Coordinator of the SRG/MLA is Beverly E. Allen, School of Medicine at Morehouse College, 830 Westview Drive, Atlanta, GA 30314. Please send copies of appropriate vacancies to her.

Anyone wishing to serve on Committees or who have any suggestions or "gripes", please contact one of the above.

POSITION OPEN

CIRCULATION/AUDIO-VISUALS LIBRARIAN: Administers circulation procedure and manages audio-visual services. Supervises ten part-time circulation assistants and a full time audio-visuals technician. Catalogs audio-visual software using NLM classification and does some floor reference work. Located at Druid City Hospital in Tuscaloosa, the Health Sciences Library is affiliated with the University of Alabama College of Community Health Sciences, a branch program of the University of Alabama School of Medicine. The staff consists of two other professional librarians, 4 clerical/technical, and 14 part-time positions. This position requires an MLS from an ALA accredited library school; MLA Certification is preferred, provisional certification at minimum is required, 1-2 years professional experience is desirable. Salary \$13,500; benefits: 22 vacation days, 15 paid holidays, TIAA-CREF, paid health insurance. Send resume to Lynn M. Fortney, Chief Medical Librarian, Health Sciences Library, University, Alabama 35486, by April 15, 1981. The University of Alabama is an equal opportunity employer.

ONLINE SERVICES INTRODUCED AT SAMC

MEDLINE, TOXLINE, HEALTH. . . Physicians and staff at the Southeast Alabama Medical Center in Dothan were introduced to these and other data bases in the National Library of Medicine's computerized MEDLARS system on November 3, 1980. Free demonstration searches were offered all day. The approximately 45 individuals who viewed the system in operation were unanimous in proclaiming it a "modern miracle" and a "great time-saver." Medical library director Kathy Dexter says that usage of the system has been good and is expected to increase in the future. "Online services are relatively new in our part of Alabama," Ms. Dexter states, "and as word spreads about the uses and benefits of the system, we expect to see more online centers come into being in other health institutions."

SAMC offers literature searches to institutions and individuals not affiliated with the medical center. For a modest fee, the requestor receives a complete bibliography (list of references), generated by computer.

Ms. Dexter is interested in hearing from other hospital online centers in Alabama and would like to share experiences. Other institutions interested in becoming online centers should contact the Southeast Regional Library Program at the A. W. Calhoun Library at Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, 30322.



(Continued from page 1.)

some new ideas and meet some of your colleagues. See you there!

Rachel Jones
ALHELA Program Chairman
MSHS Librarian
Jacksonville State Univ. Library
Jacksonville, AL 36265
435-9820, ext. 225

ALABAMA HEALTH LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

1981

NAME _____ DATE _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

BUSINESS ADDRESS _____

JOB TITLE _____

PREFERRED MAILING ADDRESS (CHECK ONE) HOME BUSINESS

PHONE NUMBER: HOME _____ BUSINESS _____

DUES: \$10 PER YEAR

SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER (MAKE PAYABLE TO ALHELA) TO:

Ms. BOBBY POWELL
MEDICAL LIBRARY
CARRAWAY METHODIST MEDICAL CENTER
1615 NORTH 25TH STREET
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35234

PLEASE RATE YOUR TOP THREE PREFERENCES FOR PROGRAM TOPICS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ROLE OF THE HEALTH LIBRARY | <input type="checkbox"/> COPYRIGHT LAWS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HEALTH INFORMATION RESOURCES | <input type="checkbox"/> JCAH STANDARDS FOR LIBRARIES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PROMOTING THE LIBRARY TO THE HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATOR | <input type="checkbox"/> INTERLIBRARY LOAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BASIC LIBRARY TRAINING WORKSHOP | <input type="checkbox"/> NLM GRANT PROGRAM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NETWORKING AND UNION LISTS | <input type="checkbox"/> STATEWIDE COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____ | |

ALHELA SYNAPSE
FORM FOR SUBMISSION OF COPY

1. NAME OF INDIVIDUAL/LIBRARY REPORTING (GIVE MAILING ADDRESS):

2. PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, ACTIVITIES, ETC.:

3. NOTABLE LIBRARY NEWS, NEW PROGRAMS, ACQUISITIONS, GRANTS, ETC.

4. WORKSHOPS, CONTINUING EDUCATION ACTIVITIES IN YOUR AREA:

5. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ARTICLE YOU ARE WRITING FOR FUTURE SUBMISSION (GIVE ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE):

SUBMIT TO: KATHY DEXTER
DIRECTOR - MEDICAL LIBRARY
SOUTHEAST ALABAMA MEDICAL CENTER
P.O. DRAWER 6987
DOTHAN, AL 36302

Introducing AIHeLA . . .

What is AIHeLA?

AIHeLA is the Alabama Health Libraries Association.

Who can join AIHeLA?

Anyone involved or interested in health libraries may join AIHeLA.

What is a health library?

A health library is a library primarily involved in providing information on any aspect of health. Such libraries may be found in hospitals, mental health facilities, medical or allied health schools, or other types of institutions.

What is the purpose of AIHeLA?

AIHeLA seeks to improve communications among personnel in health libraries in Alabama. A complete statement of AIHeLA goals and objectives can be found on page 3.

How much does it cost to join?

One year's membership costs \$10.00. This amount is tax-deductible.

What benefits are gained by membership in AIHeLA?

Each member will receive a subscription to *Synapse*. In addition, members may attend workshops and meetings sponsored by AIHeLA. And, members will be kept up to date on all activities related to health libraries in the state of Alabama and will have the opportunity to get to know other health library personnel in the state.

How do I join?

Fill out the membership form included in this issue and send it, along with your check or money order, to the address indicated.

Then what?

Sit back and enjoy the information, enlightenment, education and news that will be coming your way with each issue of *Synapse*. And plan to get together with your fellow health librarians at AIHeLA meetings. Details will be forthcoming! Watch for them!

DON'T MISS THE FIRST ANNUAL

ALHELA MEETING!

See you April 10th in

MONTGOMERY

ALHELA Steering Committee Meets

(Continued from page 3. . .)



Steering Committee members discuss upcoming annual meeting.

Kathy presented material regarding the newsletter. She showed samples of the paper that would be used, layout of the newsletter and proposed name: *Synapse*. Also two logos were presented for AIHeLA. A vote was taken on the title *Synapse* and was approved and a logo was chosen. Several variations of printing procedures were shown. She explained the printing can be done in a matter of days. It was decided the first issue would be printed in November.

Membership application insert will be included in the first issue of the newsletter. This will contain: name, business address, preferred mailing address, title and telephone number.

Dues of AIHeLA were set at \$10 per year. Membership will be on a yearly basis. The Membership application will have notice to return dues to Bobby Powell.

Discussed were ideas for upcoming programs to be put in the newsletter. Lynn and Rachel will present subjects with the possibility of members rating the programs according to preference.

Kathy mentioned some of the things to be in the newsletter such as a President's column, new positions, a featured library, people notes, invited contributions, etc. The newsletter and membership application will be mailed more than one time to a library as followup if there is no response the first time.

The first issue of *Synapse* will be in November and in January, 1981. It will be published on a quarterly basis. The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be in January.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:14 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Bobby H. Powell
Secretary/Treasurer
AIHeLA.



Editor's Notes

By
Kathy Dexter

Now that we have all survived another hectic holiday season, let's turn our thoughts to *communication*. Included on the reverse side of the membership form this month is a form to use for submitting materials to *Synapse*. We are eager to have news of happenings in the state of Alabama. Members and non-members are invited to submit items for publication. Let us hear from you! This is *your* newsletter!

It is important for any new organization that its members show their support. Please help us spread the word about AIHeLA. If you have a friend or colleague who might be interested in our organization and who would like to receive a copy of *Synapse*, send their name and address to me so that I can add it to our mailing list. This is possibly the last issue that will be sent to non-members. We have extra copies available, however.

Until next time . . .

LETTERS

WE GET LETTERS!

For anyone preparing for JCAH review we have found the following 1980 publications especially helpful:

COPING WITH THE JOINT COMMISSION-

MEDICAL STAFF. \$10.00
NURSING STAFF. 10.00
QUALITY ASSURANCE. 7.00

Address for these is:

DALLAS-FORT WORTH HOSPITAL COUNCIL
2608 Inwood Road
Dallas, Texas 75235

Mary Ann Donnell
Providence Hospital
Mobile, AL

Some thoughts on audiovisuals. . . .
We have found three companies in one town that have duplications of programs in their catalogs and variations in prices. Delivery of materials ordered is extremely slow, 6 to 8 weeks. Has anyone else had problems of this sort? We are interested in hearing from you.

Susan Birch
Providence Hospital
Mobile, Alabama



SOUTHEAST ALABAMA
MEDICAL CENTER
P.O. Drawer 6987
Dothan, Alabama 36302
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