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# Synapse

ALABAMA HEALTH LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

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## ALHELA vs HSLRT: WHY ALABAMA NEEDS BOTH

Does Alabama need two health library groups? A resounding YES, says ALHELA President Rachel Jones. Here's why:

On April 7, 1977, a number of interested members of the Alabama Library Association met for the first time to discuss organizational needs of health librarians in the state. An excerpt from the minutes of that meeting reveals the thoughts of that group:

The meeting opened with a discussion concerning the interest and/or need for forming some type of group for those librarians involved in the medical field. The participants agreed that there was definitely a need because such an organization does not exist at the present time. If such a group could be formed under existing Alabama Library Association structure, medical librarians could have a stronger voice in Association affairs and a focal point on the state level for their interest, thereby presenting a means by which to justify attending the annual convention.

The name given the new organization was the Health Science Librarians Roundtable (HSLRT) and in the bylaws, the purposes of the group were defined as follows:

- 1) To help individual members to orient themselves to their profession and to encourage their membership and participation in its organizations, national, state, and local.
- 2) To promote a great feeling of responsibility for the development of library service and health science librarianship.
- 3) To seek to improve health science library service through cooperative efforts and expanded facilities.
- 4) To assist the development of appropriate programs in continuing education for health science librarians.

Any member of the Alabama Library Association with an interest in health science libraries was eligible to join the new roundtable. The bylaws went so far as to explain that 'members need not be employed in libraries serving the health sciences profession nor hold certification as medical librarians'.

Since that time, programs during each annual convention have been both educational and timely. Projects are developing which should prove useful to any interested individual as well as health librarians. The organization has been active and viable within the Alabama Library Association structure.

Then in April 1980, a survey of one hundred fifty-one libraries and librarians was conducted to determine the feasibility of establishing an Alabama Health Libraries Association (ALHeLA). After receiving one hundred and ten responses, ninety-six of which were favorable, a steering committee was organized to serve as an interim executive committee of the association.

At the first ALHeLA steering committee meeting, the following goals and objectives were established:

**GOAL:** To improve health care for the people of Alabama by the development of an organization which will increase the total information resources available, strengthen existing health libraries, encourage the formation of new libraries, and, through joint effort, utilize more effectively the resources of individual libraries.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) To promote the sharing of information resources.
- 2) To upgrade information resources and services provided by health libraries.
- 3) To encourage the development of health libraries by making information about the availability of library consulting services more widely known.
- 4) To provide workshops and educational programs for health library personnel.
- 5) To facilitate communication among health library personnel, especially those in smaller health libraries, by providing a newsletter, publications, and program meetings.

The organizational meeting of the Association was held on April 10, 1981. Bylaws were passed and membership was opened to anyone involved or interested in health libraries in Alabama. A subsequent fall conference held in November 1981 was highly successful. ALHeLA is proving to be both productive and informative to Alabama health librarians.

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To begin with, I feel it necessary as a university librarian in this state to be active in the state library association. By attending conventions and receiving the association journal, I feel that I remain informed concerning current topics of interest to librarians in general and that I make contacts which are valuable to me in my work. I know of no better way to keep up with my chosen field than professional organizations. I am not just interested in health libraries in particular, but in what is happening in the library world at large. We as librarians/specialists cannot live in a vacuum, but must remain cognizant of general trends and patterns in the field as well. It is helpful however, for me to have a special interest group within the Association to deal with topics more specifically oriented toward my work as a health librarian. In addition, there are individuals in the association who have needs which could and should be met by such a group. For example, HSLRT is presently studying the topic of junior college nursing programs and their librarians who could possibly use consultations with a health librarian in making selection choices, etc. It seems to me that these are the types of assistance which can be given by HSLRT within the Alabama Library Association.

Whereas junior college librarians are likely to be members of the Alabama Library Association, many hospital librarians are not. State library conventions are often much too general in nature to meet their very specific and unusual needs. We can all agree that health libraries make up a unique segment of the library world with aspects found no where else in the field. Also, many hospital librarians in particular have no reason to be interested in the general library scheme. They are more oriented toward their special situations. Their needs call for solutions which can be handled by an organization specializing in their specific field. By providing conferences and workshops dealing specifically with the needs of these hospital librarians, AIHeLA is supplying the necessary assistance. I feel compelled to be a part of this undertaking, for in my work I deal with many hospital librarians. Being aware of their situations and being prepared to meet their needs means I am doing my job better.

Where do we stand today? We have two organizations. They are organized to meet established needs. The goals of the two groups are comparable and inter-related. There has already been talk of joint meetings, so there seems to be a cooperative spirit which may lead to working together in the future. And, at present, each is serving a purpose. Both are meeting needs, but different types of needs and for different groups of people. To me, that is the most valid reason for both to continue to function. HSLRT within the Alabama Library Association and AIHeLA independent of it together have the potential of being of more service to a greater number of people than either could if it were alone. If they both continue, the people to gain the most from their successes will be those interested in Alabama health libraries.

So, choices must be made. I will be the first to admit that membership in both of these organizations is not for everyone. For some it will be a matter of choosing the group that best meets their needs. But for others, two memberships could be the best choice.

All of this has been background information necessary to bring me to the reason for this article. Since the conception of the idea for AIHeLA, much discussion has followed concerning the need for two health librarian organizations within the state. Legitimate arguments with pros and cons on both sides have been heard and noted. Opinions have been widespread and varied. Because I (1) Was a charter member of HSLRT and a steering committee member of AIHeLA; and 2) Have re-

mained active in both since their inception; and 3) Am at present the chief executive officer of both, I am now taking the opportunity to publicly state my feelings on the matter.

It seems to me that people have considered membership in these organizations as an 'either/or' proposition, thus indicating that a choice must be made. This is not the way I see the issue. For me, they each meet specific needs that I have as far as my professional development and commitment are concerned.

# ALHELA

## Fall

### Conference

## November 5th

### at the

## Montgomery Sheraton

### PLAN TO ATTEND !

## NOTABLES

Richard B. Fredericksen, director of the Lister Hill Library at UAB, has been reappointed to the Consulting Editors Panel of the 'Bulletin of the Medical Library Association.' In addition, he has been asked to write a chapter for the new 'Handbook of Medical Librarianship' on library building planning.

Susan Laing has been appointed Coordinator of Media Services of the Multi-Media Health Library. Efforts will be made to increase the MMHL outreach program, especially to physicians throughout the state.

## MLA DUES INCREASE PROPOSED

In these days of gloomy economic news, price increases are commonplace, and the Medical Library Association is no exception. Ponder these figures:

- MLA has had no dues increase for FIVE years. In this same time period, inflation has eroded the dollar by 60 per cent.
- Continuing education requires 8 per cent of MLA's available funds.
- Certification expenses gobble up 14 per cent of member dues.

MLA members will be asked to vote on a dues increase in August. The alternatives to a dues increase are to cut or reduce vital programs, raise fees on some programs such as certification and continuing education courses, or to shift a greater amount of the association's operations onto member volunteers and institutions.

It would appear that some changes must be made to keep the MLA moving forward. An appeal is being made by the MLA for members to support the dues increase. Gertrude Lamb, Immediate Past President of the MLA, puts it this way: 'The major effect of operating the Association under increasing financial stringency is that no funds can be made available to revamp and improve MLA programs nor is there any seed money to undertake proposed new activities.'

## INTER-CONSORTIA WORKSHOP HELD

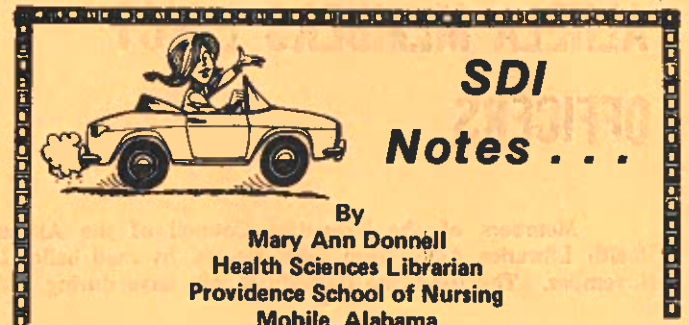
The Tampa Bay Medical Library Network sponsored an Inter-Consortia Cooperation Workshop on February 3-4 in Tampa. Mary Ann Donnell, AIHeLA Vice President, Attended and brings us this report:

In addition to being stimulating, workshops also provide an opportunity to make some objective observations, away from the daily routine. Attendees were primarily from Florida, but speakers from Illinois and Georgia outlined other consortia development. Frances Johnson of MLM's Extramural Program offered insights into the changing picture of federal funding for such projects.

In comparing consortia, it became evident that there are obvious states in development. Consortia completely isolated from each other will be undergoing these changes simultaneously. The internal organization may vary, and the funding may or may not use federal grants, but these efforts frequently begin with the need for information beyond the individual institutions' collection and/or budget.

There was a consensus that a diversity of types of institutions within the consortium provides the best opportunity for sharing more equably the responsibilities of cooperation.

Workshop speakers also included a local physician, who outlined his role in the development of the consortium, and a clinical psychologist, who provided guidelines for interpersonal relationships.



Quality Assurance and its importance cannot be underestimated, but finding good resources for the department can be frustrating. This month's column includes some items which might be a little hard to locate, so addresses for those publishers are included.

'Discharge planning necessary for appropriate utilization review' Hospital Peer Review 6(12): 155-6 December 1981.

Graham, Nancy O. 'Quality assurance in hospital: strategies for assessment and implementation.' Rockville, Maryland: Aspen, 1982.

Skillicorn, Stanley A. 'Quality and accountability; a new era in American hospitals. 655 Sutter Street, San Francisco Editorial Consultants, Inc. 1980.

'Drug use monitoring criteria: Total parenteral nutrition --evaluation criteria and process protocol for adult parenteral hyperalimentation.' Chicago: Interqual, 1980.

Thompson, Richard E. 'Next steps in implementing quality appraisal/action plans in hospitals.' 1010 Jorrie, Oak Brook, Illinois Thompson, Mohr and Associates, Inc., 1980.

NOTE: This last publication is especially note-worthy as the author takes time to make distinctions in realistic terms and outlines specific functions for the Quality Assurance Program (e.g. quality appraisal for quality assurance; liability control for risk management, etc.)

## POSITION AVAILABLE

**CHIEF MEDICAL LIBRARIAN.** The Health Sciences Library is a division of the University of Alabama's College of Community Health Sciences, a clinical campus of the University of Alabama School of Medicine. The Chief Medical Librarian designs and administers the library's programs and policies, supervises one professional librarian, four full-time staff members, and ten part-time student assistants, and is responsible for the budget, book selection and acquisitions, and other duties associated with the position of a university department head. Requirements<sup>3</sup> Masters degree from an ALA accredited library school, a minimum of three years professional experience in a health sciences library, evidence of strong administrative skills including excellent oral and written communication skills, ability to develop innovative library programs, and ability to effectively interact with library users and staff. MLA certification is desirable. This is a tenure earning position and carries faculty rank. Salary and level of appointment commensurate with training and experience. The University of Alabama is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Write, listing at least three references, to: Harry J. Knopke, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Community Health Sciences, P.O. Box 6291, University, AL 35486. Position is available July 1, 1982. Deadline for applications is June 20.

# ALHELA MEMBERS ELECT OFFICERS

Members of the Executive Council of the Alabama Health Libraries Association were elected by mail ballot last November. The following individuals will serve during 1982:

**RACHEL JONES**, president, is the Math/Science-Health Science Librarian at Jacksonville State University. She is the current moderator of the Health Science Librarians Roundtable (HSLRT) of the Alabama Library Association. Rachel received her MLS from the University of Alabama and her BA in Natural Science from Judson College.

**MARY ANN DONNELL**, vice-president/president-elect, is a graduate of the University of Denver Library School ('62), spent one year as head of reference of Occidental College in Los Angeles. After ten years as a wife and mother, she returned to librarianship, discovering the excitement and stimulation of hospital librarianship. Mary Ann says, 'Even as a high schooler working in suburban St. Louis, I was ignorant of the potential and so came to librarianship through the 'back door' as an English teacher.' Five years managing libraries for two 100-bed hospitals in Oregon was a good preparation for developing the health science concept for a nursing library which was ready to broaden and serve the entire 350-bed hospital, which sums up her present position as Health Sciences Librarian at the Providence School of Nursing in Mobile.

**LYNN FORTNEY**, Immediate Past President, earned a Master's degree in Librarianship from Emory University in 1973. In September of that year, she was appointed Reference Librarian at the College of Community Health Sciences Library, The University of Alabama. In 1975, she became the Chief Medical Librarian. This May, Lynn will become the Associate Director for Public Services at Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences, University of Alabama in Birmingham. Lynn chaired the Steering Committee that organized and established the Alabama Health Libraries Association and became its first president during the period 1980 - 1981. She is also active in the Health Sciences Librarians Round Table of the Alabama Library Association, the Medical Library Association, and Southern Chapter/MLA.



*Rachel E. Jones,*  
*ALHELA President*



*Lynn M. Fortney,*  
*Immediate Past President*

**MARY CLAIRE BRITT**, secretary/treasurer, was appointed History of Medicine/Reference Librarian at UAB's Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences in May of 1980. As such, she is the Librarian for the Reynolds Historical Library and Curator of the Alabama Museum of the Health Sciences. Mary Claire also participates in the services provided by the Reference Department of Lister Hill Library.

As an undergraduate student at Auburn University, she majored in history. Following the completion of a B.S., she taught school in Lanett, Alabama, and continued her studies by earning an M.S. in Educational Media at Auburn. Mary Claire took her Masters Degree in Library Service at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa where she served as a Graduate Reference Assistant in the college of Community Health Sciences Library.

**PATRICIA M. RODGERS** (Pat), member-at-large, is the Coordinator of Technical Services and Acquisitions Librarian at the Biomedical Library of the University of South Alabama. Formerly, she was the Cataloging Librarian at the same institution. Pat received her B.A. from Clemson University and her M.L.S. from the University of South Carolina.

**MALTA JONES**, member-at-large, is a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, but now claims Opelika as home. She is employed as the library manager of the James C. Thoroughman Library at East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika. In addition to her ALHELA membership, Malta is a member of the Alabama Hospital Association.



*Lisa Rains, member-at large*

**LISA RAINS**, member-at-large, is a native of Ozark, Alabama. She received her B.S. in School Librarianship from the University of Alabama in August of 1977 and her M.L.S. in May of 1979. While in Graduate School at Alabama, she worked from October 1977 to December 1978 as a Graduate Assistant Reference Librarian in the Health Sciences Library. Lisa is currently the Director of the Medical Library at the Southeast Alabama Medical Center in Dothan. She was previously the Research Assistant in the Department of Health Services at UAB from January 1979 to July 1981. Lisa is a member of the Medical Library Association. She has also served as treasurer and president of the Jefferson County Hospital Librarian's Association. In April, she will begin serving as moderator of the HSLRT.

Lisa's hobbies and interests include reading, needlepoint, and Alabama football.

## EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETS

## 1982 MEMBERSHIP LIST

The Executive Council of the Alabama Health Libraries Association met at 1:30 p.m., Friday, April 2, 1982, at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Montgomery. Attending the meeting were: Mary Claire Britt Mary Ann Donnell, Lynn Fortney, Malta Jones, Rachel Jones, and Pat Rodgers.

The minutes of the January 29 meeting were reviewed and approved. The Treasurer reported that the current balance in the treasury was \$868.81. There were a total of 31 paid members for 1982.

The Secretary announced that she has received prices for printing stationery through the UAB Print Shop. A sample was presented to the Council for its approval. With the consent of the Council, the stationery will be ordered shortly.

The following dates were placed on the calendar for Executive Council meetings: July 23, 1982 and September 17, 1982.

The Newsletter Editor announced that the next issue of the Synapse would be printed in April. A list of current members will be included in this issue.

Reports of various regional miniconferences were presented. The Dothan region will hold a one-day conference on May 13. Subjects selected for discussion included the selection of library materials for hospitals and interlibrary loan.

The Jacksonville region will hold its conference on May 21. Rachel Jones reported that it will take the form of a round-table discussion of the conference theme 'Where do you go when you don't have it?'

On June 4th the Mobile region will hold its conference. Mary Ann Donnell reported that learning centers on all of the proposal topics are being planned for conference attendees. She also intends to use an evaluation form for the conference and suggested that the other regions do likewise.

Lynn Fortney reported that the Tuscaloosa-Jasper-Birmingham region will hold its conference in Jasper with a tentative date set for August 6. An alternate date is August 20. Surveys of interest will be sent out within the region shortly.

Malta Jones reported that plans are still being formulated for the Montgomery region. She and Mara Wilhelm hope to have a MEDLINE demonstration at their regional conference which will be held in July.

New business included a report from Mary Ann Donnell on the Fall Conference, to be held in Montgomery on November 5, 1982. It was decided to reserve the Sheraton for the one-day convention. A short business meeting which will include reports of the mini-conferences will be held. One suggested theme for the conference is 'Library Uses for Mini-Computers.' Since a similar theme is being used by the Alabama Library Association at its April meeting, a final decision was tabled until after that meeting.

The following individuals have paid their 1982 membership dues:

Mary Claire Britt  
Melba H. Burgess  
Geneva L. Bush  
Nancy F. Calkins  
Nancy W. Clemmons  
Kathy H. Dexter  
Mary Ann Donnell  
Robert M. Donnell  
Barbara Doughty  
Ruth E. Fenske  
Rick Forsman  
Lynn M. Fortney  
Richard B. Fredericksen  
Hilda G. Harris  
Atha Louise Henley  
Kathy Jones  
Malta Jones  
Rachel E. Jones  
Judy F. Johnston  
Philip D. Lawrence, Jr.  
Linda S. Little  
Ruth Sparks McGuire  
Barbara J. Moore  
Beth Carolyn Owens  
Pamela R. Pate  
Bobby H. Powell  
Lisa Rains  
Patricia M. Rodgers  
Ina R. Sims  
Joyce W. Sims  
Ruth C. Steffen  
E. Hugh Thomas, Jr.  
Mara R. Wilhelm  
Judy B. Willmon



## Editor's Notes

By  
Kathy Dexter

Does Alabama need two organizations involved with health libraries? This month's Synapse features Rachel Jones, AIHeLA president and HSLRT moderator, who examines the

needs of our state and provides important background information on the two groups.

Alabama is not unique in having both AIHeLA and the Alabama Library Association's Health Science Librarian Round Table. Indeed, on the national level, we have the Medical Library Association and the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) within the American Library Association. In addition, the Special Libraries Association is also involved with health libraries as a part of its function. In our state as well as on the national level, the various organizations complement each other and provide a means of communication to other types of libraries in our state.

Now, on to other news from around the state: Plans are being made at this moment for regional workshops on various topics to be held around the state within the next few months. In northeast Alabama, a workshop entitled, 'Where to go when you don't have it' will be held in Jacksonville on May 21. In the southeast part of the state, 'Books: Choosing, buying and borrowing' will be held at the Southeast Alabama Medical Center in Dothan on May 13. Additional information will be forthcoming in your area, so watch for it, and try to attend!

Send articles and news of interest to: Synapse, c/o Medical Library, Southeast Alabama Medical Center, P.O. Drawer 6987, Dothan, AL 36302.

Until next time, ENJOY SPRING!



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