



Synapse

ALABAMA HEALTH LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

VOL. II, No. 3

JULY 1982

ALHELA
Fall
Conference

November 12th

(Not November 5th!)

at the

Montgomery Sheraton

PLAN TO ATTEND !

NOTE CHANGE OF DATE!!!



Thoughts
From
Your
President

Rachel E. Jones,
ALHELA President

By Rachel Jones

The two words 'information' and 'communication' are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.

Sydney J. Harris, Reader's Digest, March 1972.

It has long been my habit to clip and store quotations to be used as 'food for thought'. This practice has recently expanded into employing these ideas as starting points for writing. I came across the item above during the week following the ALHELA meeting in Jacksonville. It struck me as uncannily apropos because my thoughts at the time were dwelling on the idea of communication and its importance to all of us.

We often hear or see it stated that, as librarians, we are in the information business. And a big business it is. Particularly in fields like health where knowledge expands and changes rapidly, the quantity of facts and ideas makes storage and retrieval of information challenging. Librarians deal with this structure every day and, at the risk of boasting, I think we have become good at it. But for all our expertise in finding just the right items in the variety available, we don't necessarily satisfy the requestor's needs. I

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SAMC Library Receives Gift

One of the late Dothan physician Dr. George Johnson's prized possessions has been given to the Medical Library at the Southeast Alabama Medical Center in Dothan to be used as an educational exhibit and teaching aid.

Given by his widow, Mrs. Hilda B. Johnson, it is the human skull which Dr. Johnson used in his private practice of otolaryngology (ear, nose, and throat). Dr. Johnson, who died April 11, 1981, retired in December of 1976. Dr. Johnson's personal library also has been given to the Medical Library.

'It was one of his most cherished possessions,' Mrs. Johnson said of her newest gift to SAMC. 'I hoped it could be preserved and dedicated to useful and productive purposes as George had done. Naturally I thought of the Medical Center because he loved it so.'

She explained that Dr. Johnson used the skull to help his patients understand some of the problems they were having when they would come to him.

Lisa Rains, Medical Library Director, described it as a 'work of art' and a truly scientific specimen.

Not only has it been preserved in protective coatings, but many of its features have been reconstructed by an artist. Included are such components as vessels and nerves. One can unlatch and open a small door and peer inside its sinus cavities.

Teaching aids like this usually are made of plastic, according to Ms. Rains. Doctors who have seen it since its arrival in the library had marveled at its quality and clarity, she said. The Johnson gift is already being requested by in-service instructors.

Born at Tennesse, Alabama, Dr. Johnson attended the University of Alabama. He earned his MD at the University of Chicago. By 1941 he had done post-graduate studies in otolaryngology and had interned at Charity Hospital in New Orleans.

The United States was at war, so the residency had to wait.

'George lived his practice,' Mrs. Johnson said, 'and he loved his country.'

From 1941 to 1945, Dr. Johnson served in the Army Medical Corps and rose to the rank of Lieutenant colonel.

In 1945 while Dr. Johnson was a major and flight surgeon with the 11th Air Force, an aircraft crashed near Ft. Randall, Alaska, in a crater called Cathedral Valley. Several men lay injured and in need of medical treatment. Johnson and two privates volunteered to parachute into the frozen wilderness and take care of the injured until all could be rescued. It was the first time George Johnson had ever used a parachute.

For that deed the U.S. Air Corps presented him the Air Medal and a citation that praised him for taking a 'voluntary unselfish risk' that caused him to spend three days 'under the most rigorous and trying conditions in frigid peratures giving medical aid and comfort' to the injured.

After his military service, Dr. Johnson was in private medical practice at Auburn from 1945-1947. He was a resident in otolaryngology at University Hospital in Birmingham (1948-50) after which he began his practice in Dothan.

He was a member of the SAMC medical staff and involved with many clubs and societies related to his field of professional interests.

THOUGHTS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

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believe that if we have fallen short anywhere, it has been in communication with our users. We have given out the information, but it has not gotten through. Communication is not always easy. It takes real time and effort from the parties involved, but the attempt is worthwhile.

Communication is necessary not only in the librarian-patron situation, but even more so among librarians. Facilitating communication was considered important enough to be included by the AIHeLA founders as an objective of the organization. What better function can an organization have than to serve as a forum for its members, not only for sharing information, but ideas, opinions, needs, strategies, failures and successes. I believe the conferences currently being held in cities throughout the state are a tremendous step toward meeting this objective. If other conferences go as well as ours in Jacksonville, I know we are opening many channels for future communicating. The conferences, however, are only a beginning. Communication, to be most effective, must be ongoing and continuous. This is what we must now strive for -- building on what we have begun. It is a challenge to all of us and one I feel confident we can and will meet.

field of professional interests.



L-R: Ms. Rains, Assistant Administrator Bill Cassels, Mrs. Johnson.

NOTABLES

Lynn Fortney, formerly Chief Medical Librarian at the University of Alabama Health Sciences Library, has been appointed Associate Director for Public Services at the Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences at the University of Alabama in Birmingham.

Cunningham Wilson Library St. Vincent's Hospital Birmingham Alabama

By Joyce Sims

On February 13-14, 1982, the two separate medical and nursing libraries at St. Vincent's were moved into a new facility. The library occupies the first floor of the hospital's east wing, an area formerly used for Physical Therapy and EEG services. The library retains the name of St. Vincent's first chief of staff and first chief of surgery, Dr. Cunningham Wilson. The Cunningham Wilson Library serves the needs of 200 nursing students and faculty as well as the hospital and medical staff.

The library encompasses an area of approximately 3,000 square feet and includes a separate office, work room, and copy room. Two sound-proof audio-visual rooms are available for library users, and slide, filmstrip, and audio-tape equipment is provided. Because many of the hospital's donors specified that their donation be used for the library, all the shelving and furniture is newly purchased. There are eleven circular tables with chairs, five two-seater couches, and ten large study carrels as well as every librarian's dream, a storage closet. Light oak shelves will accommodate 1014 linear feet of books and journals. One of the most striking items is the Grandfather Clock which graces the front of the library. The clock is approximately sixty years old and was in the lobby of the school. Nursing School alumni fondly remember the time they had to be in from their dates before the clock struck the hour.

One of the advantages to the new facility is its excellent location. The library is just inside the physician's entrance to the hospital as well as the corridor to the professional office building. For the students' benefit, the library is on the first floor of the hospital wing which houses Nursing School classrooms on floors three, four, and five.

Library use by all members of St. Vincent's staff and school has greatly increased. Ease in locating materials is enhanced with the floor lay-out and with the capabi-



Joyce Sims, Librarian



A 60-year-old grandfather clock is one 'striking' feature of the Cunningham Wilson Library.

lity for growth and expansion. There has been a good deal of cross-use. Items in the nursing collection are frequently requested by Administration and the Nursing Staff, and items in the medical collection are being read by students. The heavier use of materials makes it easier to justify their large expense in purchase.

In the future, the Cunningham Wilson Library hopes to offer MEDLINE and an adaptation of a Medical/Nursing LATCH program. At present, we are still cross-eyed from placing 220 boxes of journals and books on the shelves, but we do want to extend an invitation to each of you to visit a facility of which we are very proud.



A panoramic view of the new library.

MLA Southern Chapter To Meet

The 32nd Annual Meeting of the Southern Chapter of the Medical Library Association will be held October 14-16, 1982, at the Mills House Hotel, Charleston, South Carolina. For more information, contact A. Kabler, Convention Chairman, M.U.S.C. Library, 171 Ashley Avenue, Charleston, SC 29425. (803) 792-2374.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETS

The Executive Council of the Alabama Health Libraries Association met at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, April 2, 1982, at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Montgomery, Alabama. Attending 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 a current balance of \$868.81. There were a total of 31 paid members.

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

The next issue of the Synapse would be printed in late April. A list of current members would be included.

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

The fall annual meeting will be held in Montgomery on November 5, 1982. (Ed. Note: This date was later changed to November 12, 1982.)

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 proposed 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 the same.

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.

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.

Mary Ann Donnell reported on plans being made for the fall conference to be held in Montgomery in November. 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.



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