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Colorado Association of Libraries report  
January 2004

The Colorado Association of Libraries Executive Board met December 5, 2003, at the Arapahoe Library District Support Services Building, Englewood, Colorado, its first post-Conference meeting. In addition to hearing reports from a very successful Annual Conference, the Board:

- Approved the creation of a Circulation Interest Group;
- Agreed to change the pricing structure for non-membership subscriptions to Colorado Libraries;
- Accepted positive evaluations of the CAL staff;
- Approved a form to be used during the CAL-athon campaign for contacting legislators;
- Created a Development Committee to address issues of dwindling membership.

The CAL 2004 Conference Planning Committee reported that it was to meet with the conference staff of the Marriott, Denver Tech Center, in December.

The issue of primary concern to all libraries in Colorado continues to be our budgetary situation. Results of a fall, 2003 survey by the Library Research Service of the Colorado State Library indicate that 78% of academic libraries and 67% of public libraries reported budget cuts since July 2002. Total cuts approach \$11 million. For the complete report, see [http://www.lrs.org/documents/fastfacts/202\\_budget\\_cuts.pdf](http://www.lrs.org/documents/fastfacts/202_budget_cuts.pdf)

The state's Regional Library Service Systems, which provide services such as a heavily used courier service and state purchasing discounts, have been heavily affected by the budgetary cuts. In fact, funding for state library programs was reduced by 79% in FY 03-04. As a result, two of the seven Regional Systems have closed and/or combined with other systems. All have laid off staff. The State Library reports that:

Local Needs Grants and Statewide Leadership Project applications will not be offered in FY03-04. Due to the 79% reduction in state funding for library programs in the state, the State Library and its advisory committees recommended using LSTA funds to support ongoing library services that used to operate with state funds. This decision will be re-examined next year. If the fiscal picture has improved for libraries, the State Library may issue grant applications beginning in October of 2004.

On a more positive front, the Ask Colorado virtual reference program is becoming more and more popular. After a slow start, usage was reported to have nearly doubled in November!

A book challenge at the Weld Library District in Greeley received statewide publicity in December. The Board voted to retain "It's Perfectly Normal: A Book About Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex and Sexual Health," by Robie H. Harris, but moved it from the children's to the young adult section. Evans resident Jeannie McAllister had objected to the cartoon-like

illustrations of nude adults used to illustrate various biological changes and reproductive issues, as well as the author's references to sexual orientation.

Finally, CAL Past-President Donna Jones-Morris is leaving to become the State Librarian in Utah. She will be sorely missed, but the library community of Colorado is thrilled that she has such a wonderful opportunity. Colorado's loss is definitely Utah's gain!