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Colorado Association of Libraries Report
MPLA Board Meeting, November 5, 2003
Submitted by Suzanne Taylor, CAL Representative to MPLA

The Second Annual Colorado Association of Libraries Conference was held October 16-19 at Keystone, Colorado. The conference was a great success and had around 950 attendees who all enjoyed beautiful fall weather in the Colorado Rockies. The 2004 Conference, to be held jointly with MPLA, will take place October 20-24, at the Denver Marriott Tech Center.

Paul Paladino of the Montrose Library District took over as President of CAL at the Conference. Recently elected officers of CAL include:

Ellen Greenblatt, President-Elect
Gayle Abrahamson, Chair of the Colorado Academic Library Association (CoALA)
Dave Sanger, President of the Colorado Association of School Libraries (CASL)
Michele Seipp, President of the Colorado Public Library Association (CoPLA)

MADCAL (The Colorado Association of Libraries Management and Administration Division) launched in October, "It's All About You - A Survey of Colorado Library Personnel." The study is intended for all Colorado library personnel and information professionals in all types of libraries. The survey will provide data to leaders of all types of libraries about critical staffing issues across the state.

Colorado has a New Library Law!

The Colorado Library Law Bill (SB03-326) took effect on August 15, 2003. The full text of the law can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/LibraryLaw/Index.htm>

Major provisions of the law include:

Changes in the regional library authority allowing any combination of two governmental units to establish a separate "Regional Library Authority."

A provision that allows existing library districts to vote on a bond issue to build a library in their community. Clarifications, deletions, and additions to the principal section of library law including definitions, powers and duties of the state library, establishment of libraries, and privacy of user records.

AskColorado is Colorado's new virtual reference service.

(<http://lib.colostate.edu/reference/AskColorado.html>) Forty-two libraries are participating in this free online information service where real people in real time assist users with research needs. After a rather slow start, the service is becoming more popular and most of the initial glitches have been corrected. It is working very well so far.

The Colorado State Library and the Library Development Services staff worked with a committee for almost a year to revise the Rules for School Library Media Endorsement. The new rules address the need to update the skills and knowledge section to conform with other Colorado Department of Education endorsements; create more flexibility in how librarians may obtain endorsements by creating three levels of endorsement depending on educational levels and background; and allow those without teaching experience, but with library background and degrees, to be eligible to obtain teaching practice through the Alternative Teacher Licensure programs. The revised rules can be accessed from:
http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/Endorse_Rules.htm

The CAL Executive Board had a two-day retreat in August to develop a new mission and vision statement for the Association. These statements have been presented to the CAL membership and will be put forward for approval at the next general meeting. Both statements can be found in the CAL Annual Report which is accessible from the CAL website: www.cal-webs.org

The Colorado State Library continues to look at ways to absorb the overwhelming budget cuts of this past year. In FY2002-2003, the Colorado Regional Library Service Systems received over \$2.4 million from the Colorado Legislature to support services from seven regional Systems. In the state's severe budget crisis, funding was first eliminated and then, due to the efforts of Representative Mike Merrifield (D-Manitou Springs), \$600,000 was restored. Every System has cut staff and services and worked to reduce expenditures. System staff have been reduced from 33 staff people to 17 and from 26.66 FTE to 12.41. Many staff are now part-time with the remaining workload spread thinly. Obviously, the viability of the regional library systems are under consideration and a task force is formulating a new structure which would make it possible to retain essential services provided by the systems.