



Concordia Seminary library in St. Louis. Photo courtesy of Blake Walter, from his blog (<http://theologicallibrarianship.blogspot.com>).

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Member News

ATLA Board Meeting in Chicago

Despite temperatures that marched well below zero, the ATLA Board of Directors met in Chicago on Thursday and Friday, January 16-17. (See Eileen Crawford’s summary of the meeting below.)



Front row, left to right: Jim Pakala, Cait Kokolus, Cheryl Adams, and Laura Wood. Back row: Roberta Schaafsma (Vice President), Carisse Berryhill, Allen W. Mueller, Eileen Crawford (Secretary), Duane Harbin, Sandra Lipton, Pat Graham, and David Stewart (President).

Updated Member Benefits

We know that the current global economic uncertainty is affecting ATLA members in a variety of ways. The recent poll taken by the ATLA Board of Directors (www.atla.com/member/librarians_tools/Survey_0109.html) revealed that members are concerned and planning for--or already experiencing--budget and staffing cuts. Even those libraries reporting an increased budget expressed concern regarding future cuts. Staff are committed to serving ATLA members, and one strategy is to negotiate new and ongoing benefits that save you money and time. We are pleased to announce two new and three ongoing benefits that may help you better manage your budget in difficult times:

1. NEW - ATLA/EBSCO Publishing Consortium. Go to www.atla.com/member/ATLA_EBSCO_consortium.html for details.
2. NEW - ATLA/Classiques Garnier Numérique (publisher of Patrologia Græca) Consortium. Go to www.atla.com/member/ATLA_patrologia_graeca_consortium.html for details.

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From the President

“On Course, Of Course”

Mid-afternoon Thursday through early afternoon Saturday is not a whole lot of time, but that was what we

had to work with during ATLA’s recent Board Meeting. You can rest assured that your board members’ hard work was informed by the most accurate information available re: the current financial downturn, and its effects on our members.

“Informed,” however, is not the same thing as “dominated” or “overshadowed.”

The pressing or troubling thing is never the only thing. Times of challenge and uncertainty can have an unsteady effect, giving rise to questions about purpose, the worthiness of our work, even our capacities to fulfill a vocation which, in calmer times, has seemed so clear and unassailable. Now is an excellent time to reach for whatever distills for us (this can be as varied as a job description, a mission statement, organizational ends, or even some inspiring conference presentation we attended) why we do this work, why it matters, why it’s worth doing with excellence. That presence of mind helps clarify important things: even if the ways and means of staying on course may be changing, the course we are on is worth pursuing.

-David R. Stewart

From the Executive Director



How Can We Help?

At the last ATLA Board of Directors meeting we shared concerns and ideas about how we, as the Association, can best be of assistance to our institutional and individual members during these turbulent economic times. There are a number of specific actions we plan to

take leading up to this year's annual conference, including an expanded survey of institutional members.

The quick poll we conducted prior to the board's meeting was useful in framing the board's discussion and a summary is included in this issue of the newsletter. When reviewing the poll results, phrases like "uncertain," "waiting to see," "not clear," stood out. What happens at member institutions depends upon many things -- the institution's primary source of revenue (endowment, tuition, denominational support, annual gifts, etc.), enrollment (declining, rising, holding steady), and the position of the library on campus and its influence (if any) on the budgetary process. While many of these factors are outside of the Association's influence, we plan to serve as a locus for information sharing and support for members.

The board and staff will continue to solicit information, suggestions, and ideas for ways that we, as a professional association, can support our institutional members.

We're not just concerned about institutions, however; we are also concerned about all of you who are individual members of the Association. I'm sure that many of you have personal and professional concerns about the future, not just about your institution, but about your own career and professional life.

As a first step in addressing those concerns, Barbara Kemmis, Director of Member Services, and I would like to make ourselves available to visit with you individually or collectively. We would welcome invitations to meet with regional or ad hoc groups of members. We are available for confidential personal consultation by letter, telephone, email, or in person at ATLA headquarters.

Please feel invited and welcome to contact either Barbara or me. We are not trained professional counselors, but we are colleagues who are available for consultation and sympathetic and confidential listening, and we are willing to try to help you think through the issues you are facing. Here is our contact information:

Barbara Kemmis, direct line 312 775-9415, bkemmis@atla.com

Dennis Norlin, direct line 312 775-942, dnorlin@atla.com

-Dennis A. Norlin

Member News, cont.

3. Ongoing - ATLA/OCLC FirstSearch Consortium. Go to www.atla.com/member/ATLA_OCLC_FirstSearch_consortium.html for details.
4. Ongoing - The ATLA Group Catalog is a database that allows your library users to search for materials cataloged in OCLC WorldCat that are owned by ATLA libraries (www.atla.com/member/collaborative_projects/group_catalog.html)
5. Ongoing -The "Scholarly Writing for the LIS Profession Course, offered online through UIUC LEEP and developed in coordination with the ATLA Professional Development and Publications Committees. The course runs March 10 - April 28, 2009 and will include only ATLA members, with a maximum of 12 slots. ATLA is pleased to underwrite this second course offering, ensuring that the only cost to members is a \$100 fee. (www.lis.uiuc.edu/programs/cpd/sw.html)

Marguerite Wolf

Marguerite Wolf, 56, a former librarian at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, died January 12. She was Technical Services Librarian and Archivist at St. Vincent in Boynton Beach, FL from 1997-2004. Marguerite also assisted in the organization of a new library at Monastero di San Benedetto in Norcia, Italy from its founding in 2002. She died in Lexington, KY near her immediate family.

Routine Systems Maintenance

Routine maintenance will be performed on ATLA systems on Monday, March 2, 2009. You may encounter a brief interruption of service between 5:00 and 5:30 p.m. (CST). Services that will be affected include ASE and the ATLA Website. We apologize for any inconvenience and thank you for your patience.

Job Postings Online

Whether you are looking for a new position or a new employee, the ATLA Job Posting web page is the place to look. Visit www.atla.com/member/job_openings.html to see what's new.

Meet Me in Saint Louis!

Ever since the 1904 Saint Louis World's Fair, these words have been sung innumerable times beckoning countless visitors to our city. They were even sung in Rome by Saint Louis pilgrims who serenaded Pope John Paul II prior to his 1999 visit to the city.

While your local host committee for this year's Annual ATLA Conference considered cutting its own musical invitation, we thought it wiser instead to assure prospective attendees of a harmonious experience here where the Missouri and Mississippi rivers flow together by planning a well-balanced blend of both work and play.

The vista from the Millennium Hotel, our conference headquarters, dramatically unites Saint Louis's past and present. Its juxtaposition of the Catholic Old Cathedral (where one of our worship services will take place) together with Saarinen's soaring contemporary Arch encapsulates the city's history in a single view. As the very name Saint Louis implies, the site was a frontier of faith for the French explorers who were ultimately succeeded by not only Lewis and Clark but all other pioneers and immigrants in their wake, making the city the veritable "Gateway to the West" that inspired the Arch's design. Especially prominent among these arrivals was a large contingent of German Lutheran immigrants, the fruits of whose labors conference participants will experience through their day at Concordia Seminary.

From the very moment conference attendees arrive, the benefit of the Metrolink light rail system will help ease travel and exploration throughout the city. Whether wishing to explore on your own or joining one of the many excursions planned from Wednesday through Friday, the diversity of the city will certainly surprise you. While some may want to experience our world-famous botanical gardens, others might prefer an evening baseball game (within walking distance of the hotel). Whatever you choose to do, don't neglect to ride to the top of the Arch for the breath-taking view.

The members of the local host committee are working tirelessly to make this conference a memorable experience for all of you who will come to "meet us in Saint Louis." Through all its events, from the sampling of local specialties at the opening reception to the fellowship of the closing banquet, we hope to make all of you feel as "at home" in Saint Louis as we do.

-2009 ATLA Annual Conference Local Host Committee



Members of the local host committee (left to right): Lyle E. Buettner, Concordia Seminary; Garry Truman, Urshan Graduate School of Theology; James C. Pakala (Co-Chair), Covenant Theological Seminary; Eric R. Stancliff, Concordia Seminary; Andrew Sopko, Kenrick-Glennon; Allen Mueller (Co-Chair), Eden Theological Seminary; and Ron Crown, Saint Louis University.

Have You Heard?

Upcoming Conference Examines the Religious-Secular Divide

On March 5-6, 2009, Social Research at The New School will present *The Religious-Secular Divide: The U.S. Case in New York City*. Conference Coordinator Roberta Sutton invites you to "join distinguished scholars and intellectuals to explore the nature and future of religion, spirituality, and secularism in the United States, looking at their changing relations both historically and through contemporary debates. This conference will look backward at the religious secular divide and forward to what the future may have in store. The keynote address will be delivered by Charles Taylor." Visit the conference website at www.socres.org/religiousseculardivide for more information.

St. John's Bible Tour

The Saint John's Bible is continuing its tour around the country. Commissioned by the Benedictine monks of Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minnesota in 1998, *The Bible* is the first hand-written, illuminated Bible commissioned since the advent of the printing press. At more than two feet tall and three feet wide when open, Pope Benedict XVI has called *The Bible* a "work for eternity" and "a great work of art."

Through the Heritage Program, individuals and artistic, religious and cultural institutions can experience and share the only full size, fine art reproduction of *The Saint John's Bible*. Proceeds from the sales of the limited Heritage Editions of *The Saint John's Bible* will help fund the continuing preservation of endangered medieval manuscripts worldwide, a permanent home for *The Saint John's Bible*, and scholarly work related to this modern masterpiece. For exhibition dates and locations, please visit www.saintjohnsbible.org.

Nominations For National Medal Sought

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is seeking nominees for its National Medal for Museum and Library Service. Honoring outstanding

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Have You Heard?, cont.

institutions that make significant and exceptional contributions to their communities, the medal includes prizes of \$10,000 to each recipient and an awards ceremony to be held in Washington, DC. The deadline for submitting nominations is February 17, 2009. For more information, visit <http://www.ims.gov/about/medals.shtm>.

Rare Book Fair

The Washington Antiquarian Book Fair, March 6-7, 2009, will feature rare books, maps, prints, autographs and more, presented by 75 dealers, several of whom specialize in theological books. The event takes place in Arlington, Virginia.

Discounted admission to the event will be offered to ATLA members and to librarians who present a current id from their place of work. Attend the entire weekend for \$8 or Saturday only for \$5. For more information, visit www.wabf.com.

ATLA Calendar

February

- 1 Submissions for March ATLA Newsletter due on first business day of this month
- 5-6 Publications Committee meets at ATLA headquarters
- 20 Special Committee of the Association for Diversity meets at ATLA headquarters
- 21-24 M. Lyon, D. Norlin, and T. Luedtke attend the NFAIS Conference in Philadelphia, PA

March

- 1 ATLA 2009 Annual Conference Registration Opens
- 1 Submissions for April ATLA Newsletter due on first business day of this month
- 11-16 L. Wrzesinski, L. Cohen attend ACRL in Seattle, WA
- 19-20 Membership Advisory Committee meets at ATLA headquarters
- 23-24 Professional Development Committee meets at ATLA headquarters

April

- 1 Submissions for May ATLA Newsletter due on first business day of this month

Introducing: Tools for a Tough Economy

In light of recent discouraging developments in the global economy, this new column has been added to The ATLA Newsletter to help members develop strategies to adjust to the challenges and changes ahead.

January Economic Outlook Survey Results

In early January, the ATLA Board of Directors initiated a survey of its representatives of Institutional, International Institutional, and Affiliate Library members to gather facts and data to guide board and staff discussions and contribute to planning for future action. The results revealed a number of trends of interest to ATLA members (www.atla.com/member/librarians_tools/Survey_0109.html).

American Library Association Develops New Online Toolkit

"With city, county, state and federal budgets under increasing pressure, we need to be making the case for libraries more than ever," says Keith Michael Fiels, American Library Association (ALA) Executive Director. "All too often, libraries are the first to receive budget cuts. Funders need to understand the essential role that libraries play in our society and economy, with usage up significantly, and increasing numbers of people coming to libraries for job-related services, for access to government assistance programs, and as a way of making their money go further."

To help libraries make their case, ALA has unveiled its "Advocating in a Tough Economy" toolkit. According to Fiels, this new resource "will arm librarians and library supporters with the facts and strategies they need to speak out effectively for libraries in this tough economy."

The toolkit is available at www.ala.org/tougheconomytoolkit.

Other Online Resources of Interest Online Training

Fundraising - free tutorials on preparing proposals and approaching foundations:
<http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/training/online/>

Financial Literacy/Budgeting - free and fee-based online trainings on financial topics such as budgeting: www.execlearn.com/programs/lumity.php

Trends and Analysis

<http://foundationcenter.org/focus/economy/>
www.councilofnonprofits.org/economy

Summary Report of the ATLA Board of Directors Midwinter Meeting, January 15-17, 2009



The ATLA Board of Directors met at ATLA Headquarters for its semiannual Board meeting. The following summary highlights the business conducted. Full minutes will be posted on the Board's website, available to all ATLA members at www.atla.com/board/newboardhome.html.

Financial Education

On Thursday afternoon Pradeep Gamadia, ATLA Director of Financial Services, led an educational session on the organization's budget and financial reports. This session has become an annual tradition to update new and old members on the organization's finances.

On-Site Inspection of Products

Three Board members formed a team to review ATLA's products and marketing strategies. The ATLA staff provided them with an extensive report prior to a day of meetings when the team met with a number of staff members responsible for products. Overall, they found that ATLA's products are being managed and marketed professionally and competently.

New Auditing Firm

A new Auditing firm, Legacy Partners, was hired for the 2008 audit following the conventional wisdom that auditing firms should change every three to five years. Two representatives from the firm met with the Board to go over their report, which was very positive. At the auditors recommendation three new policies were approved: 1. Whistleblower Policy; 2. Record Retention Policy; and 3. Conflict of Interest Policy.

Oral History of the Association

Preliminary work on creating an oral history project resulted in a motion to form a special committee to coordinate the project. Cait Kokolus was assigned the task of writing a charge for the ad hoc committee.

Response to the Economy

Barbara Kemmis shared the preliminary results of the economic outlook survey sent to ATLA institutional representatives. The economic downturn and its potential effects on ATLA members were topics of discussion throughout the meeting. Adding additional programs or discussion venues related to economic issues at the June Annual Conference will be considered by Member Services.

New Interest Group

A proposal for the Cooperative Preservation for Archives and Libraries Interest Group (CPAL IG) was reviewed and approved by the Board.

-Eileen Crawford, ATLA Board Secretary

From the Special Committee of the Association for Diversity



The purpose of this committee is to promote and support racial and ethnic diversity within the Association and explore connections to other forms of diversity. One of our charges is to offer the ATLA Scholarship for Minorities. Since the June 2008 conference the committee has awarded three scholarships of \$1000 each to attend the Theological Librarianship (LIS 590TL) online two-credit course offered by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign LEEP course. Scholarships pay for two-credit tuition and required books. In 2009 the committee is again offering the scholarships. Information on the application process is available on the ATLA website. The committee is accepting applications until July 1. If you or anyone you know is interested, please get in your application as soon as possible. The Theological Librarianship course is invaluable for librarians new to theological librarianship and to those who are thinking about becoming a theological librarian. As a former student in the course I can attest to the excellence of the course for someone new to theological librarianship. Please contact me at dibrice@lstc.edu if you have any questions about the scholarship or the course. I would be happy to help you in any way I can.

Another scholarship that may be of interest to someone of Asian/Pacific Islander heritage is offered by the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA) Scholarship Committee. The APALA Scholarship will provide financial assistance to a student of Asian or Pacific background who is enrolled, or has been accepted into a master's or doctoral degree program in library and/or information science at a library school accredited by the American Library Association (ALA). Please visit the website for more information. The deadline for application is March 13, 2009.

Watch this column for information about the committee's activities at the 2009 ATLA Conference in St. Louis. We have several programs planned that you will find interesting.

-Diana Brice, Chair, Special Committee of the Association for Diversity

ATLA Member Profile

Michael Bradford

Title: Serials and Electronic Resources Librarian



Institution:

Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA

Years as a theological librarian: 3.5

Years as an ATLA member: 2

How did you become involved in the field?

I started working in libraries when I was an undergraduate. I was a page in the Lilly Library at Indiana University (IU) Bloomington. After graduating in 1999, I was able to get a position as a serials cataloger at the IU libraries, working on retrospective conversion with the Lilly's serials collection. While there, I was urged to pursue the library degree offered at Indiana and I worked on that part time. While at IU, I applied for and was offered a paraprofessional position as Supervisor of Serials Cataloging at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend (where I am from) so I jumped at the chance to return home and still work in libraries. While at Notre Dame, I transferred to IUPUI and utilized their online, satellite, and Friday classes. In a couple years, I was able to finish my degree.

What do you love most about your profession?

I love being a cataloger because I get to work with unique materials -- church bulletins, religious organizational annuals, etc. A

lot of these materials are wholly unique and if our library does not collect and save them, it is possible that there are no other libraries in the U.S. that will. As a repository of the Unitarian Universalist tradition, collecting the local parish newsletters over a long period of time shows us the history and changes that each church inevitably undergoes from the post-war era, through the Unitarian and Universalist consolidation in 1961, to today. In describing these unique materials, I feel that I am providing a service for future researchers. By focusing on the unique, I am able to tell the world through our catalog that "look, it is here, we have it!" It is a good feeling knowing a patron was able to find something in our diverse collection because of the metadata I created.

What has been the biggest challenge you've experienced while working in theological libraries?

I think the biggest challenge I have experienced while working in theological libraries is a personal one, in that I do not have a theology background. I first thought that this would be a disadvantage for me, but eventually found out that, more likely than not, librarians at theological libraries do not have the background either. This "disadvantage" makes me want to take an interest in learning more about theology in order to make informed decisions about my cataloging. I also look to my colleagues with the background to help me fill in the blanks.

Why did you join ATLA?

Joining ATLA was a debate for me -- in the end I decided that because I worked in a theological library I should join the organization. My colleagues urged me to join and attend a conference. They told me it would not be like any other conference I attended, and they were right (in a good way!).

What is the most rewarding benefit of your membership?

I think the most rewarding benefit is being able to participate in training offerings and attending the annual conference. In 2007, ATLA held a week-long NACO training session in Chicago, headed by the wonderful Judy Knop. Name authorities were something I wanted to be trained on for a long time. The annual conference is also a great benefit of membership. The small and tight-knit group and the wonderful programs are unique draw for me. My first conference was in Philadelphia, and I try to switch between ATLA and the North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG) conferences each year so I am looking forward to connecting with my fellow NACO catalogers and attending a wonderfully diverse program this June in St. Louis.

Would you recommend ATLA membership to other theological librarians?

Definitely! ATLA is a great organization. Whether you are starting out in your first professional job, or a wily veteran and the lion of your library, ATLA is a great organization to join and get involved with!

We welcome your submission of news, photos, and other items of interest for the ATLA Newsletter. All submissions are due on the first business day of the month preceding publication. Contact Sara Corkery (right) with any questions or concerns or if you are interested in sponsoring an issue of the newsletter.

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