



# INTERCOM

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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## ***District of Columbia Library Association***

*Established in 1894*

*Serving Washington, DC  
Area Libraries and  
Librarians for 113 years*

*DCLA is a chapter of ALA*

### **Contact Us**

<http://www.dcla.org>  
202-872-1112 (messages only)

## **Buswoman's Holiday in Sana'a and Alexandria By President Elaine Cline**

In early December I had the opportunity to travel to Yemen and Egypt. The primary purpose of the trip was to visit our daughter and son-in-law who are Foreign Service Officers stationed in Sana'a, Yemen; however, I couldn't resist visiting several libraries during my stay in Sana'a. As is usually the case when visiting other libraries, I was struck by both the similarities and the differences from American libraries. As I walked through 3M security gates at the Science and Technology University (STU) Library, looked at their online catalog, and checked out the new book display, I felt right at home. As I noticed the students studying and surveyed their collections, I realized that I was rather far from home.

The strict traditional Muslim society of Yemen was evident from the complete segregation by gender. STU, which includes professional schools in medicine, dentistry and engineering, has two primary units—the main university (for the male students) and what is known as the "Girls Branch". In the "Girls Branch" the students and female faculty were completely covered, and the women in the medical and dental schools wore white lab coats which contrasted sharply with the solid black of their traditional Islamic clothing.

*Intercom  
Back issues are on our website.  
DCLA's Archives  
are located in the  
Washingtoniana Division  
of the  
Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Library  
(202) 727-1213*



March-April Issue  
Deadline: February 28.

Send electronic submissions  
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Elaine Cline with the librarian at the Learning Zone Library in Sana'a. The blue tint is caused by the brilliant blue glass that encloses the collection. I was delighted that this young woman agreed to be photographed. Many women prefer not to have their pictures taken.



The collections on the shelves seemed meager to support the professional programs, and it was difficult not to compare them to the Health Sciences libraries in the rest of the world. Meeting with the Dean of the “Girls Branch” and several library staff I was impressed by their visions for this relatively new university and by their commitment to providing the young women of Yemen with educational opportunities. Theirs is not an easy task and their dedication to achieving their goals under very difficult conditions is admirable. I also visited The Learning Zone which is an English language collection for women and children that is supported by the British government.

Checking out the online library system with library staff of the Science and Technology University

My visit to STU Library was a great contrast to my visit to the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Alexandria, Egypt. The new library at Alexandria is an architectural masterpiece and seems to rise like the sun on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The interior of the Bib Alex (as they call it) is even more spectacular. Bib Alex reflects both the old and new of Egyptian culture with a museum of antiquities, a large collection of ancient manuscripts and the latest in cutting-edge technology.



Elaine Cline with librarians at the Science and Technology University Library, Sana'a, Yemen

It is important to note that the Bib Alex is much more than an architectural wonder, it is also a highly functioning “public” library. (Public has a slightly different meaning – anyone can become a member after paying a relatively small fee.) It has a public Reference Desk, computers for patron use, a Children’s Room and an area for Young Adults. The members of the library staff I met were as proud of the services they were providing as they were of the building itself.

My visits to these libraries in the Middle East gave me renewed appreciation of the both the history and the future of libraries and librarians. It also reminded me of the contributions that American librarians can make to libraries in other parts of the world – especially the developing world. As you explore your plans for career development, I encourage you to explore opportunities to use your expertise and experience beyond the borders of the United States.

## DCLA Mid-Year Report

### Firsts for DCLA So Far in 2007

The year 2007 marks a numbers of firsts for DCLA, some good, some less so.

**First time** DCLA has applied for a major grant with two other local organizations, Catholic University of America (CUA) and District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), to carry out a major project with the Institute of Museum and Library Services support. The grant proposal seeks to support an MLS education for children's librarians working at DCPS.

**First time** DCLA membership hovers at a low of 300 members.

**First time** a DCLA treasurer has been issued a bank card for more efficient processing of funds.

**First time** the National Library Legislative Day Committee reached out to students by offering a competition to create a logo, theme, a color scheme for materials.

### Great Ideas Brought Back in 2007

DCLA members have the opportunity this summer to get behind a major local volunteer effort during the ALA conference to reprise the hugely successful volunteer project in New Orleans in 2006.

DCLA organized an Interest Group for Paraprofessionals, chaired by Colleen Semitek – to get involved, write to [colleensemitek@hotmail.com](mailto:colleensemitek@hotmail.com).

## Save the Date! 33rd Annual National Library Legislative Day



### Check out the Future

## May 1 & 2, 2007

May 1 Legislative Briefing Day

May 2 National Library Legislative Day

Visit: [www.ala.org/washoff/legislateday.html](http://www.ala.org/washoff/legislateday.html)

National Library Legislative Day is sponsored by District of Columbia Library Association, American Library Association, Special Libraries Association, participating state library and media associations, and other contributing organizations.

**Nominating Committee Announces . . . . Nominate by Feb. 16th !!**

Noel Rutherford, past president of DCLA and current chair of the Nominating Committee, is recruiting volunteers to serve on the committee and to be candidates.

Candidates are needed for Vice-President/President-Elect, Secretary, ALA Chapter Councilor, Membership Secretary and one Director. A detailed list of responsibilities can be found on the DCLA web site. Please go to [www.dcla.org](http://www.dcla.org) and choose the link for Organization, then click on Board of Directors and finally click on the link for Duties of the Board.

Reach Noel at [noel.rutherford@dc.gov](mailto:noel.rutherford@dc.gov) or contact her by telephone at 202-698-3298. Nominations are due by Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup>.

Self nominations are welcome! Be sure to include your qualifications.

Established in 1894, DCLA attracts members who work in DC and live in the larger metro region. In the 1980's, DCLA's roster topped 800 members. Observers attribute the decline to the demise of many federal agency libraries and the trend towards retirement of the baby boomer generation.

**Ruth Fine Student Aid Program: An Update**

In 2007, DCLA will mark the sixth year of Ruth Fine grants to library school students. The program was set up in 2001 when the Association received a generous bequest from the estate of Miss Ruth Fine, a former DCLA president. It was Miss Fine's wish that the funds be used to provide financial aid to library school students interested in service to the public.

The awards were structured as no-interest loans with repayment waived if the recipients maintained a specified grade point average. Additional details are spelled out on the DCLA web page.

Since the program began, eleven awards have been made. Recipients have expressed interest in working in academic, government, public, school, and association libraries. At \$5,000 each, the Ruth Fine awards are more generous than similar scholarships and loans offered by other library associations in the metropolitan D.C. area and elsewhere on the East Coast.

To get information out about the availability of the Ruth Fine grants, the Committee has used a variety of means. Information and application forms are available via the DCLA web page at <http://www.dcla.org>. Announcements are also featured in *Intercom*, and sent to the local LIS programs at Catholic University and the University of Maryland.

In the past few years, information about the Ruth Fine grants has been sent to local public library systems and academic libraries, considerably widening the pool of applicants.

## LIS Education Opportunities in DC Metro Area

### University of Maryland's College of Information Studies [www.clis.umd.edu](http://www.clis.umd.edu)

The College of Information Studies (CLIS), Maryland's primary center for graduate education, research and service in the field of information studies, was founded in the fall of 1965. CLIS enrollment averages 300 students. CLIS is ranked 13th in the nation among Library Science programs by *U.S. News & World Report*. CLIS offers graduate study leading to the Master of Library Science, the Master of Information Management, and the Doctor of Philosophy.

Since 1965, over 5,000 students have earned the MLS from CLIS, and 43 have earned doctorates.

### USDA Grad School Is Not About Farms and 4-H Clubs [www.grad.usa.gov](http://www.grad.usa.gov)

The USDA Graduate School is no longer accepting new students into its Library Studies certificate program. However, both in its Distance Learning curriculum and in classrooms, it offers an assortment of courses suitable for LIS positions. These range from an Introduction to Library Techniques, Basic Reference Service and Reference Tools, separate courses for Descriptive and Subject Cataloging, to Legal Research. In addition, it offers a highly competitive IT curriculum and well-regarded management courses. The LIS tuition is in the \$300 per course range. For DCLA members looking to brush up professional skills, add a language, revise a resume, the USDA Grad School is an excellent resource and its distance learning is particularly attractive as an antidote to transportation and scheduling complexities.

### School of Library and Information Science The Catholic University of America <http://slis.cua.edu>

#### Current Facts & Figures

Students 237 enrolled (Spring 2007)

89 graduated in 2006

56 matriculated for Fall 2006

Faculty 8 tenure-track faculty

17 adjuncts teaching in Spring 2007

#### Locations where courses are offered in Spring 2007

On CUA campus – 16 courses

Northern Virginia – 4 courses

Richmond (VCU) – 2 courses

Library of Congress – 4 courses

Online classes – 3 courses

DC 956 libraries in Washington, D.C.

135 CUA grads employed at Library of Congress

(41% of LC's professional staff)

7 major professional associations headquartered here.

## Employment Picture for Area Librarians Looking Stable

Years into the trend of closing federal libraries and the pall this cast on the employment picture, local observers say that opportunities are reasonably plentiful. Contractors have emerged as primary employers for retired librarians and for new recruits looking to establish reputations. Two prominent organizational listserv are quick to publicize openings. The USAJOBS.gov site offers an online clearinghouse for many librarian jobs. The steady pace of retirements among the baby boomer generation suggests that positions will be opening up. With the ALA annual conference slated for June in DC, it's time for job hunters to spruce up their resumes for the vigorous interviewing that is part of every ALA annual. Visit these sites (and the ones listed on the DCLA website under the tag Links – General links) to get acquainted with the structure of the job market and how to navigate among the openings and the application processes.

And take a look at Robert R. Newlen's *Resume Writing And Interviewing Techniques That Work: A How-to-do-it Manual for Librarians* and Rachel S. Gordon's *The NextGen Librarian's Survival Guide*. If you are setting your sights on a management job, take a look at Singer's *Accidental Library Manager* to get "au courant" with terms and concepts.

Law Library Jobs <http://www.aallnet.org/hotline/hotline.asp>

Federal Government Library Jobs <http://www.usajobs.gov>

State and Local Gov't Jobs <http://www.govtjob.net>

## And Now For Something Different – Humor! Movies! Books!

For a daily look at the rollicking fun in a familiar setting – a public library, check out the comic strip humor at <http://www.overduemedia.com/>. Bill Barnes and Gene Ambaum have already attracted 17,776 readers to their free daily strip delivered seven days a week to email accounts.

For a great double feature, next time you get a bowl of popcorn be sure to have on hand the DVDs for *The Librarian – Return to King Solomon's Mines* and *The Librarian – Quest for the Spear*. These two made-for-TV films feature Keanu-Reeves look-alike Noah Wyle as the librarian who battles criminals to protect the treasures of a mysterious library.

Libraries have been a popular place as settings for mysteries of all kinds and the latest best seller by David Baldacci, *The Collectors* features on its cover the glorious dome of the reading room of the Library of Congress (LC), the setting for a murder that sets off a merry chase. Margaret Truman, long cherished for her mysteries set in famous DC locations, also has *Murder at the Library of Congress* among her works. Charles Goodrum also penned several mysteries in the Werner Bok Library, a place akin to LC.



### Feeling a Little Stale? Try Opening a Continuing Education Window

The DC Metro Area is chock-a-block with opportunities to cheer up even the most dismal 9-to-5 schedule. Here is a potpourri of ideas to work into your busy life for some rewarding results when the time for fresh resolutions comes around.

#### Consider Being a Docent or an Usher

Most concert, theater, and museum venues in DC rely on volunteers to staff the docent roster and wear the “Usher” name tag. Often, there are benefits arising that go beyond free attendance at the performance.

Tailored red blazers mark the Kennedy Center ushers  
<http://www.kennedy-center.org/support/volunteers/home.html>

At Arena Stage, ushers don’t tear tickets – they have hand-held computers.  
<http://www.arenastage.org/support/ushers>

The Smithsonian Institution’s many venues all need docents who are treated as teachers.  
<http://www.si.edu/resource/faq/volunteer/docents.htm>

At the Library of Congress, docents get four months of training!  
<http://www.loc.gov/help/volunteer-application.html>

#### Take an art or exercise class at a public or private organization

At Torpedo Art Factory you will be throwing pots with a well-established organization.  
<http://www.torpedofactory.org/classes.htm>

Capitol Hill Arts Workshop is a place where “the arts connect and transform people”.  
<http://www.chaw.org/about.php3>

Local jurisdictions usually have very reasonably-priced classes through the recreation division. Washington DC’s program is free while the Falls Church offering charge a fee. [http://dpr.dc.gov/dpr/frames.asp?doc=/dpr/lib/dpr/news/pdf/2007\\_fall\\_winter\\_Guide\\_Design.pdf](http://dpr.dc.gov/dpr/frames.asp?doc=/dpr/lib/dpr/news/pdf/2007_fall_winter_Guide_Design.pdf)

<http://www.ci.falls-church.va.us/community/recsandparks/index.html>



### Scholarship Opportunities From ALA & ARL

★ Learn more about the ARL Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce program [ <http://www.arl.org/diversity/init/> ], which will award 45 graduate students with backgrounds in applied and natural sciences and information technology with stipends up to \$10,000 for 2007-2008.

★ The ALA Spectrum Scholarship Program [ <http://www.ala.org/ala/diversity/spectrum/spectrum.htm> ] for underrepresented librarians will award over 60 scholarships for \$5,000 for 2007-2008.





## *What's in a Name?*

DCLA Board of Directors announces a competition to select a new title for the DCLA bimonthly journal, the linear descendent of the venerable DCLA newsletter, the *Intercom*.

**Deadline** for entries: March 31, 2007. DCLA members can submit more than one entry.

**Judging:** The Ad Hoc Communications Committee will select the finalists and the DCLA Board will choose the winning entry.

**Prize:** A suitable award will be devised and bestowed on the winning entrant.

**Announcing the winner:** Guests of the DCLA 2007 Spring Banquet will witness the unveiling

**By snail mail,** send to:

DCLA  
Box 14177  
Benjamin Franklin Station  
Washington DC 20044

**By email,** submit entry at

[www.dcla.org](http://www.dcla.org)

<b>Submission Form</b>	
Your name:	
Your e-mail, telephone, and other contact information:	
Your Entry:	

## *Nominate a colleague for a DCLA Award*



*Distinguished Service—Spofford President's Award—Community Service Award*

*For a description and qualifications go to:*

<http://dcla.org/history/awards.html>

*Peggy Flynn, Awards Chair*

[Margaret.Flynn@dc.gov](mailto:Margaret.Flynn@dc.gov)

DC has chosen Harlem Renaissance writer Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* as the book for its citywide reading extravaganza. **The Big Read**, as it is called by its creators at the National Endowment for the Arts, is intended to promote reading for pleasure. The idea is to interest everyone in reading and discussing the same book at the same time in a given city or town. (<http://www.neabigread.org>) In D.C., The Big Read begins officially on April 19 and will run for a month. Area book clubs and reading groups are encouraged to select this book during March, April or May. Public discussions will take place at several Branch libraries and city wide events will be held at the MLK Library.