1997 Meeting Summary

Friday
Introductions
We began with our highly-anticipated roundtable session on what's new in our libraries and institutions. Most years we find a hotly burning issue from this session. Not so for 1997. However, the presence of four librarians from marine science institutions in La Paz brought the issue of resource sharing to the forefront of our discussions. (We were fortunate to have Andrea at this meeting. Her fluency in the native language of La Paz made us seem far less provincial than we probably are! Muchas gracias.)

International Issues
Sergio, Horacio, and Ester from Centro de Investigaciones Biologicas del Noreste S.C. (CIB) and Teresa from Centre Interdisciplinario de Ciencias Marinos (CICIMAR) provided compelling remarks on the difficulties of marine science libraries in Mexico. The lack of professional librarians is a national problem. CICESE in Ensenada is the largest marine science library and provides much of the interlibrary loans needed. If the information is not available there it is very difficult to find. Sergio reported that there is a consortium of seven science libraries from the major institutions in Mexico. They are in the process of creating a master list of theses and dissertations. They are also trying to obtain copies of the Ariel software but it is very expensive to purchase in Mexico. Fran is going to contact RLG about purchasing in the US.

The duplicate exchange list, IAMSLIC listserv and Cyamus reflector were all suggested as ways these libraries might increase access to materials not available in Mexico. Our La Paz colleagues reported that the length of time to receive an interlibrary loan from the US is often greatly extended by translation difficulties thay may arise when a request poses a problem — not on shelf, not as cited, etc. Andrea volunteered to work on bilingual interlibrary loan forms (with help from Susan at HMSC) and will get feedback from La Paz.

Resource sharing was a long-debated topic. Will the listserv suffice or should there be a single point of contact? Barb, as chair of the IAMSLIC committee, agreed to outline a model project.

Field Trip
Sergio kindly offered to include his institution in our afternoon tour. We travelled to CICIMAR and toured their aquaculture facilities and Library, then on to CIB where we saw more aquaculture, primarily shrimp, and a very attractive Library. Both institutions are connected to the Internet with web access and have ASFA on cd-rom.

Saturday
International Issues/Resource Sharing (continued)
The Cyamus union list was the focus of extended discussion. Both CICIMAR and CIB will send holdings in electronic format to Joe for inclusion. No concensus was reached on the best approach to the union list. There was general agreement that it is difficult to access; there was wide-ranging disagreement on a possible solution. Joe will continue to assist those who need help getting holdings loaded. Joan will be working on a "reflector" prototype for resource sharing on another project and will attempt to make the two converge.

The ASFA Serials Source list could be useful. Christie will talk to Craig Emerson. This list is also web-accessible. Steve will look into this possible alternative.

Cyamus will put forward a grant to IAMSLIC for seed money to support our outreach efforts to Baja California. Funds will be requested for purchase of the Ariel software and partial support for attendance at next year's Cyamus meeting. Joan will draft and send to the Cyamus reflector for comments.

Non-monetary Value of a Library
Andrea needed ideas on measuring the value of a library. Since several in attendance have had to do similar assessments there were no shortage of suggestions. (Notes provided by Andrea Coffman.)
Home page:
Include on your home page a request for comments. Make this easy for someone to do by making a link to your e-mail address.
Surveys:
Make sure that your survey solicits the information you need.
Put some thought into choosing the target audiences for the survey.
Include some questions on the implications of NOT having particular library services.
Surveys can be wrapped around books or included in various library mailings, such as new book lists. For the latter, it's important to make these "fold and stamp" forms that can be easily separated from the rest of the mailing.
Other methods:
Interview students.
Keep a journal of patron comments and anecdotes.
Individual anecdotes can be very useful, because they show examples of the range of patrons and the range of services provided.
Give patrons response cards with your e-mail address on it.
For additional approaches and ideas, search the library literature.
There have been several useful articles written about in-depth surveys and tracking library users.

IAMSLIC
Janet reported briefly on IAMSLIC issues. The rolling grant cycle is in its first year. Peter P. is urging us to get our scientists to put their listing into the Global Directory. Planning for the annual conference in Charleston is well underway.

Cambridge Scientific Abstracts
Christie updated the Cambridge guidelines on consortium pricing of their databases. The critical element for this package is that all subscriptions have the same start and end date.

1998 Cyamus Meeting
There was general agreement that our first choice for next year is Bodega Marine Lab with Hatfield as our second choice. Joan will contact Eleanor for possible dates.