GODORT Newsletter
Number 77, March 2007

Contents

- Message from the Chair
- It's All About the Buddy System
- Human Rights Country Data at the United Nations
- GODORT Officers 2007

Message from the Chair

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the newly-appointed chair of the ILA Government Documents Roundtable. I look forward to working with all of you in the upcoming months. Additionally, we have two new board members this year with Tom Keyser filling in as Vice Chair and Steve Ostrem serving as Secretary/Treasurer; thank you in advance for your participation. As I prepared to draft this letter I was prompted to do something that as a member of the male persuasion, I rarely attempt - I actually read the directions. To gain a better understanding of what it is that we are trying to do here I read the GODORT bylaws. If you have done the same, you will know that Article II states that we are here to exchange ideas, talk about our problems and promote document library service, not necessarily in that order. I will tell you here and now that I am confident that I am proficient in at least one of these three stated objectives. Joking aside, it is my goal to put together an informative and entertaining conference this summer in Des Moines. I have tentatively scheduled some interesting speakers in beautiful venues around the Capitol Complex. Further details about the GODORT summer workshop will be forthcoming. Once again, GODORT will sponsor a booth and a session at the ILA fall conference. In closing, I would just like to say that I have really enjoyed working on the GODORT board over the last couple of years. I would encourage any interested parties to come to the business meetings and participate. My involvement with GODORT has provided me with the opportunity to learn and share alike. It truly has advanced my understanding of the "big picture" in documents librarianship. Don't be a stranger.

Cory Quist, Chair
State Law Library of Iowa
cory.quist@lib.state.ia.us

It's All About the Buddy System
Often when we meet new people it's not uncommon to be asked what we do for a living. If we answer, "I'm a librarian" most people have a general sense of what that entails, or at least, they think they do. However, if we answer, "I'm a government information librarian" we might receive a puzzled expression, a pause, then a quiet, "Oh." Even other types of librarians might offer a similar response, but followed by a knowing smirk. Within your own workplace, you're probably the only one who really knows what you do. And sometimes government information issues confuse us, too! If anyone needs a buddy, it's a government documents librarian. Fortunately, the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) is all about the buddy system. We may work alone, but there is a whole network of help available just for the asking.

The Regional Library system was established to lend state-wide support to Selective Libraries in the FDLP. The Regional Librarian is responsible for trouble-shooting procedural dilemmas, interpreting vague instructions, acting as intermediary between the Selective and GPO, and making visits to Selectives to talk about issues not easily handled by e-mail or a telephone conversation. The Regional Librarian is generally the first buddy to contact. In addition, the response is faster than by going through GPO. After all, the Regional in Iowa serves 13 libraries while GPO serves over 1,200. Believe me, they are all asking questions!

Your second buddy is the Government Printing Office. GPO has created some terrific online help resources including Ask GPO. Everything you ever wanted to know about the FDLP (and a little more) is available on the FDLP Desktop. Yes, it's a daunting website to tackle, but the good news is that it's being redesigned for easier navigation. If you haven't taken a look at the proposed chapters of the new FDLP Handbook, which will replace the old Instructions and Manual, you'll be pleasantly surprised. The narrative is a readable description of both practical applications and the theory behind the Program. It combines the What and the Why of the FDLP. Two conferences are offered each year by GPO, providing a wonderful training opportunity and a way to meet other librarians with documents responsibilities from all types of libraries in situations just like yours. Generally, there are at least two other librarians from Iowa who attend these conferences, so if you attend you won't be alone. GPO has launched a new web-based training initiative that will increase depository libraries opportunities to develop skills.

Your third buddy is the Iowa Government Documents Round Table (GODORT), a subgroup of the Iowa Library Association. GODORT provides a way for anyone interested in government information to meet and talk about issues of mutual interest. One doesn't have to be a member to attend the annual summer workshop which always provides food for thought and is a very pleasant gathering of colleagues. However, membership has its privileges. Members of GODORT are eligible to receive a travel scholarship to attend one of the two annual FDLP Conferences. At present about 50% of the required travel expenses are awarded. I hope that the GODORT leadership will work toward providing full funding in the future.

Your fourth buddy is the collective group of Iowa Selective Libraries. Even if traveling to the annual Iowa GODORT workshop is not possible, the FDLP Library Directory can link all 14 of us, provide a way to compare our resources, and share/seek advice.
There are other buddies including Marcive for libraries that receive cataloging records by
tapeload, the 53 Regional Librarians that I consult and meet with at Depository Conferences,
GOVDOC-L listserv, and more.

We may work alone, but there is a whole network of help available just for the asking. But, we
have to ask.

Marianne Mason
Regional Librarian for the State of Iowa
The University of Iowa Libraries
marianne-mason@uiowa.edu

**Human Rights Country Data at the United Nations**

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the United Nations has recently
updated its [country pages](http://www.un人权rights.org). Each country page has information about the status of ratification of
human rights instruments (treaties), and committee reports describing the human rights
conditions in that country. This is a useful resource for anyone wanting background data on
human rights around the world.

Brett Cloyd
International Documents Librarian
The University of Iowa Libraries
brett-cloyd@uiowa.edu

**GODORT Officers 2007**

Cory Quist, Chair
State Law Library
cory.quist@lib.state.ia.us

Tom Keyser, Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect
State Library of Iowa
tom.keyser@lib.state.ia.us

Steve Ostrem, Secretary/Treasurer
The University of Iowa Libraries
steve-ostrem@uiowa.edu