Food for Thought

Have you read GODORT’s Purpose Statement lately? Here is the language found in the ILA Organization Manual, page 97:

The purpose of the Roundtable is the promotion of documents library service by providing an avenue for discussion of problems and concerns and for exchange of ideas among librarians working with government publications in all types of libraries. (written when GODORT was established in 1983)

Does it reflect current expectations of the organization? Should it address specific issues or express a statement of principles? Does it imply “depository only”? Should it address changes in services, those providing service or changing technology? This might be a conversation for 2010.

Marianne Mason,
GODORT Chair (Outgoing)
UI Libraries

21st Century Model

For anyone who has complained about the Federal Depository Library Program (that includes just about everyone), a report commissioned by ARL and the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies was released on 12/17 by Ithaka S+R that “offers a new vision for a system-wide framework that emphasizes the digitization of historical collections to enable dramatically expanded access to this material, greater flexibility in collection management, improved coordination of new government publications by the Government Printing Office (GPO) to ensure that access and preservation needs are adequately addressed, and an expanded role for librarians that emphasizes helping the public to locate, access, and use the wide range of information available.”

The report summary and link to the full report are available here: http://bit.ly/6hk3b0
Des Moines Public Library Blogging to Raise Awareness

Marci Behm has started a gov docs blog geared for the general public. She had been sending out e-mails to staff, but they wanted a more accessible and searchable format, so she decided to create a blog. A link will be placed on DMPL homepage in the near future under Blogs/Wikis on the homepage (www.dmpl.org). It can be viewed at www.dmplgovdocs.wordpress.com.

Wordpress allows blogs to be crawled with Google, yahoo, and Bing (after you set it up). It takes about 4-6 weeks for it to be added to their indexes. DMPL also has a marketing person who is planning to do blog features on the DMPL homepage periodically, so that will help promote the gov docs blog. The staff has been very responsive to it and the library board asked to be put on the mailing list. Marci hope that it will spread via electronic word of mouth. People have been surprised at all the gov info that they can use in their daily lives. Marci says, “It’s revitalized an interest in gov docs.”

UNdata: A Free and Easy-To-Use Database for International Statistics

UNdata http://data.un.org/ “pools” major resources into a single internet portal using a simple search form to find over 60 million data points on topics ranging from Agriculture and Health, to Crime and Environment. An Advanced Search option, Glossary and Country Profiles support customized research.

Thanks to Brett Cloyd (UI Libraries, International Librarian) for pointing out this great resource.

Changes at Iowa City Public Library

The Iowa City Public Library's Government Documents section is no more. For many years the Iowa City Public Library proudly boasted a special collection of local, county, regional and state documents. Relationships were established with city, county, school and regional divisions and departments as well maintaining a membership in the State Depository Collection. The collection was kept up to date and new documents were frequently added. Times have changed and document collection has changed too.
Many jurisdictions no longer send paper copies and the library dropped its membership in the State Depository. A small collection of documents with historical significance are kept in the Reference Storage, but most other documents are now accessible through a link in found in the online record in the library's catalog. The print documents the library continues to collect are incorporated in the regular circulating collection or as part of the Iowa Reference or general Reference Collection. The use of government information has not decreased, in fact, staff believe it has increased with the relative ease the public now has in finding information.

Maeve Clark, ICPL
Coordinator of Information Services

University of Northern Iowa goes to “Documents without Shelves”

The University of Northern Iowa has purchased bibliographic records for federal documents from MARCIVE for many years. With more and more of our selected documents available on the World Wide Web, we have recently switched to MARCIVE’s “Documents without Shelves”. This gives us all the bibliographic records for federal documents that have URLs or PURLs. Our most recent monthly load added over 900 records to our online catalog.

Susan Moore
University of Northern Iowa

Grinnell College is the Oldest!

Since 1874 Grinnell College has been a Federal Depository Library— the oldest federal depository in Iowa. It’s a good reason for us all to celebrate Grinnell’s 135 years of service!

Julia Bauder, Data Services Librarian and Federal Information Coordinator at Grinnell, supplied some fun facts about Iowa in 1874, gathered from historic government documents in Grinnell’s depository collection:

- In 1874 there were 6,280 males and 10,713 females employed as schoolteachers in Iowa. The men made an average of $36.38 per month; the women, $28.01. Source: Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1874. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1875, p. 113.

Here’s the link to Grinnell College Libraries’ homepage, so you can see what’s happening in 2009 http://www.lib.grinnell.edu/index.php

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue of the GODORT Newsletter!