GODORT Newsletter
Number 88, September 2011

- Summer Workshop Summary
- Dilemma in Capturing Online Information
- Calendar of Events at ILA Annual Conference
- Treasurers Report

GODORT 2011 Workshop a success; GODORT hosts 4 events at Iowa Library Association 2011 in October

Workshop report: Our June 8th GODORT workshop was well attended—25 people, including a few gate-crashers (students who were friends of one of the green activist presenters). Mayor Ed Malloy of Fairfield gave opening remarks, along with David Fisher, head of the Sustainable Living Program at Maharishi University of Management. Maeve Clark and Brenda Nations moderated the morning session, a dialogue between green activists and the audience. In the afternoon, workshop sessions were offered by Sarah Passoneau, Asst. Prof. & Assistant to the Dean, Dean’s Office Administration, Iowa State University Library, and Maeve Clark, ILA executive council member and Information Services Librarian at Iowa City Public Library in collaboration with Jennifer Jordan, Recycling Coordinator for the City of Iowa City, and Brenda Nations, Environmental Coordinator for the City of Iowa City. The evaluations mostly gave high marks, and some people wanted Maharishi University of Management to be a permanent location for the workshop due to the nice venue. Afterward a number of librarians enjoyed Kathy Brooks’ tour of the organically prepared native prairie project.

Suzanne Araas Vesely
Chair, ILA/GODORT

The Newest Dilemma in Capturing Online Information: Static Information versus Dynamic Information

Over the last several years there has been a huge increase in the presentation of information online by the various Iowa agencies, bureaus and other official entities. Overall, this is a good situation. As more and more information is placed online, access becomes easier and faster for everyone. This is a great situation for me and my coworkers as we harvest the online documents and archive them in Iowa Publication Online. Not only are many government entities putting their current digital documents online, they are also putting their older, never-before-viewed legacy documents online.

But recently, I have encountered a situation that makes capturing the information difficult. In order to get the most current and correct information out to everyone some entities have shifted from a static online publication to a dynamic one. Let me give you some examples. In
the past a department might create a yearly directory and place it online. You would use that directory for an entire year; then it would get updated and replaced with the new one, just as it was with the print version they made from that online document. Now some directories are online only, and they are updated in real time as information changes. This is great for the user; the information they get is as fresh as it could be. This is not great for me. When in the past I collected and archived the directory, it was static, the information was set and the one version was all there was until the next year. But now there can literally be hundreds of versions of a directory in a year. Which one should I collect; which one is correct? As information gets added and dropped, which one represents the true version that should be preserved?

A real example of this dilemma: the Department of Inspections and Appeals Health Facilities Division used to produce the annual directory, Direct Care Entities in Iowa. But now it is online and viewable by chapter, or downloadable as a whole document. It is also available as a searchable database. And, of course it is updated on the fly as information changes, and can be different every time you search it.

The change from static report to dynamic document or database is not restricted to directories. There are departments that used to put out static reports on a weekly, monthly or yearly basis about their activities and duties that now present the same information in a dynamic searchable database. Online publications giving instructions to the public used to be static and are now interactive documents updated, changed, or augmented as needed. The frequency of change to each of the dynamic document is highly variable from one to the next, which makes it even more difficult to know when to check to see if any changes have occurred.

There are other states dealing with the same situation and some are trying various ways to find the best solution. There are options like recreating the whole database of information and archiving it, capturing the directory once a month or once a year, or capturing it once and then amending the changes as they occur. We have been watching to see what type of solution seems to work best. Since this is a dilemma that seems to be becoming more common, our staff has been working on finding and discussing what will be the best way for us to proceed, in order to get the best results for the citizens of Iowa.

Tom Keyser, CA
State Library of Iowa

GODORT has four events at the upcoming Iowa Library Association conference. They are as follows; mark your programs!

**Wed. Oct 12: PRE-CONFERENCE 10:00 am-3:00 pm: PIECING TOGETHER THE PUZZLE: INCLUDING FEDERAL RECORDS IN GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH.** Presenter: Jessica Edgar, Archives Specialist, National Archives, Kansas City, MO. Sponsored by Local History and Genealogy and Government Documents Roundtable. This pre-conference presentation will focus on key topics that interest genealogists: census records (benefit of using this as a tool for beginning genealogy research), military records (how to order and who to contact for certain military engagements), court records (bankruptcy, civil, and criminal cases), and immigration records (passenger arrival lists, naturalizations, and alien files). This class will be fairly fast paced, with so much information to cover.

Edgar, Archives Specialist, National Archives, Kansas City, MO. Sponsored by Government Documents Roundtable and Local History and Genealogy. In this presentation, Edgar will demonstrate where to find certain pieces of key information on the National Archives website. There are five main categories to the website that will be discussed. The five main categories are front and center on the main page at archives.gov. The bulk of the time will be focused on the first three categories: research, veteran’s services, and teacher’s resources.

Friday October 14 BREAKFAST AND BUSINESS MEETINGS 7:30 am – 8:25 am: Government Documents Roundtable. Suzanne Araas Vesely, Chair. Includes a good breakfast with vegetarian options, the treasurer’s report, introduction to candidates for next year’s GODORT governing body, share your ideas for topics/speakers for next year’s workshop, and help decide changes in the by-laws to allow a blog.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS: 10:20 am-11:00 am: INFORMATION FOR EVERYONE: FINDING WHAT YOU NEED ON IOWA STATE GOVERNMENT WEBSITES Presenter: Tom Keyser, State Documents Librarian, State Library of Iowa. Sponsored by ILA/GODORT. This presentation is not to be missed! In the 2010 GODORT workshop, Tom showed many tricks on how to jump in and find information on the various web sites of the state entities. This time he will show how all the various different web pages are actually very much alike, and how navigating through them can become quite easy once you get to know the basics of how they are organized. He also will offer a look at some of the ones that are really different from the rest.

ILA/GODORT Treasures Report as of June 30, 2011

This report is the most recent available from the ILA Office. Not included are the total registration fees received and expenses from the Summer Workshop.

Balance 1/1/11: $2,340.95
Dues received: $100.00
Meeting receipts: $15.00
Total Available funds: $2,455.95

Marianne Mason
ILA/GODORT Secretary-Treasurer