

ciation should communicate in coming months with academic librarian delegates attending the White House Conference to coordinate the academic library agenda to be discussed at the conference.

Many White House Preconferences have brought forth resolutions supporting NREN thanks to ACRL chapter members. Chapters Council had presentations on this important piece of legislation during 1990 and the awareness taken back to the state level has produced results. Many chapters are actively discussing the ramifications of NREN at local programs and will be ready to aid in any national effort.

Chapters are meeting with their state librarians to find out how collection and budget statistics can be used to demonstrate the importance of library legislation. Librarians are also meeting with business and academic leaders in an effort to widen the circle of those aware of academic library concerns.

As chapters continue to step up their political activities and state-level political awareness increases, the membership of ACRL will come to expect an increased political agenda at the national level. Future association planning should take into account these expectations as well as the political influence that can be generated at both the local and national level and use both equally to further the goals of the profession and the association. ■ ■



**Prepared by Barbara Brown**

*College Libraries Committee  
Commission on Preservation and Access*

● **Columbus, Ohio.** The January 1991 issue of *Preservation Issues*, a publication of the State Library of Ohio, contains an excellent brief article by Dina Schoonmaker on "Oberlin College Libraries: A History of Preservation" in which she describes the growth of the preservation program at Oberlin. To obtain a copy of this issue or to be placed on the mailing list, contact Miriam Kahn, Preservation/Conservation Consultant, State Library of Ohio, 65 South Front Street, Columbus, OH 43266-0334, (614) 644-1972.

● **Dawson, Pennsylvania.** The Giant Brittle Book exhibit (produced by the Commission on Preservation and Access) is on the road again and will appear at the Pittsburgh Regional Library Center Spring Conference in May, at the Ohio State University Libraries in October, and at the American Academy of Religion/Society of Biblical

Literature annual meeting in Kansas City in November. The Giant Brittle Book is available free of charge, except for shipping charges. For more information contact Trish Cece, communications assistant, at the Commission on Preservation and Access, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 313, Washington, DC 20036-2117.

● **Washington, DC.** The May 1991 issue of the Commission on Preservation and Access newsletter contains a list of publications available from the Commission. The form should be used to help expedite orders for the Commission's reports. To request copies, call or write Trish Cece, communications assistant, at the Commission on Preservation and Access, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 313, Washington, DC 20036-2117; (202) 483-7474. ■ ■

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## **NREN, electronic library systems, and information services are topics at CNI meeting**

An electronic library system completely replacing paper, a governance vision for NREN, and information services from the user's perspective were some of the scenarios described at the Spring 1991 meeting of the Coalition for Networked Information Task Force. A total of 258 individuals, representing 134 institutions and organizations belonging to the Coalition, attended the March 18-20 meeting in Washington, D.C.

In presenting one of three vision papers, Marvin Sirbu, professor of engineering and public policy and chair of the Executive Committee of the Information Networking Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, described a distributed electronic library system. Sirbu's research goal is to "develop a

plan which demonstrates that an electronic library system (ELS) for scientific and technical journals is economically feasible, can be built with today's technology, and can provide high levels of service to users." (See "An electronic library system scenario" for a description of Sirbu's model.)

Citing the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and COMSAT as pertinent examples, John P. Witherspoon, the Center for Communications, San Diego State University, suggested in his vision paper establishing NREN as a congressionally chartered public-private partnership. He noted that in both of the prior cases, the country turned to a Congressionally chartered corporation "when it was necessary to establish a structure to manage a new technology-based development that was perceived to have great importance although its implications were not well understood." In response to questions, Witherspoon said that establishment of the NREN as a public-private partnership would be a sensible and politically expedient way to get the important but expensive NREN initiative moving. The Partnership for the NREN in its January 1991 statement of principles, advanced as key for the establishment of NREN: (1) creation of a federal, state, and local networking partnership, with contributions from all levels; (2) education in its broadest sense complementing established research objectives as a reason for development of the NREN; (3) all involved constituencies of the NREN must have a voice in the development of network policy; and (4) all fifty states must be provided with high capacity and affordable access to the network.

"Technical problems and issues associated with the design and operation of the NREN may be easier to resolve than the organizational, social, and behavioral ones," asserted Charles R. McClure, professor at the School of Information Studies, Syracuse University. The final vision paper described the need for information professionals to develop academic information services from a user's perspective. McClure emphasized that users want straightforward technology and "holistic assistance on accessing electronic information resources and obtaining the actual information in the desired format." Users don't want someone to explain to them how or why it works, they just want the system to work. Stating that developing educated users would be a key component of the success of networked information, McClure encouraged conference attendees to reconcile themselves to the need for training and retraining. ■ ■

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### **Information Pricing Crisis: Monterey Meeting**

Three working groups of the Coalition held an invitational meeting March 3-5, 1991, in Monterey, California. Karen Hunter, Elsevier, chair, Commercial Publishing Working Group, Peter Lyman, University of Southern California, chair, Noncommercial Publishing Working Group, and Clifford Lynch, University of California, chair, Systems and Architecture Working Group, convened the meeting of librarians, economists, commercial and noncommercial publishers, university administrators, and technical systems experts.

The forty conference participants discussed new economic models for scholarly publishing, the complex relationship between electronic and paper methods of information distribution, and the unpredictability of the possible end states of electronic publishing. Different possible economic futures for electronic publishing were considered. A proposed flat-priced national site license would centralize control, but not address distribution, resale and cost-recovery issues. An alternative model suggested pricing based on demand or perceived value with articles by Nobel Prize winners costing more than those by assistant professors. The conference ended with a clear consensus that new economic models are needed in publishing especially for the distribution of information and that new models should be developed and validated in sufficient detail that they can be used to study and react to the implications of each. ■ ■

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## The Coalition's working groups need your help

Much of the work of the Coalition for Networked Information takes place in its seven working groups (see April 1991 *CBRL News* for a brief description of each) and the March meeting gave participants the opportunity to set goals and develop activity plans for the coming year. I would like to draw your attention to the plans of two of the working groups in particular because I think the input and assistance of ACRL members to these groups would be useful.

The Working Group on Teaching and Learning (T&LWG) is concerned with the use of networked information in teaching and learning environments. Such environments included traditional educational institutions as well as distance learning situations. T&LWG sees as its primary goal development and maintenance of a significant educational role for present and future networks (e.g., NREN). T&LWG members want to identify successful teaching and learning environments that are using networked information and to publicize

their existence. Particular emphasis will be given to existing low technology and inexpensive projects. It is through the demonstration of the successful use of the present networks that future expanded access for students and faculty through networks such as NREN can be ensured.

The T&L Working Group will serve as a facilitator of discussion of the barriers to the use of networked information to improve education because members believe the use of networks needs to be promoted among teachers and other groups concerned with the provision of better educational opportunities. Such promotion must address the human, technical, and/or financial barriers to the use of networked information.

T&LWG is interested in learning about healthy network environments for teaching and learning and about efforts to remove barriers to the use of networked information through experimental projects, legislative initiatives, and other efforts to

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## An electronic library system scenario

Users of the electronic library will be able to retrieve documents, view them on large screens, or print them out at their workstation eliminating the need for paper distribution of journals to users of such systems. Such was the scenario drawn by Marvin Sirbu, professor of engineering and public policy, Carnegie Mellon University, during the recent Coalition meeting.

During 1990 a group of master's students at Carnegie Mellon University's Information Networking Institute (INI), led by Marvin Sirbu, studied a broad range of issues relating to the development of an electronic library system. The INI study examined the technical issues of a nationwide architecture for a distributed document system.

Solving the technical problems of developing an electronic library system are not considered inordinately difficult. It is the economic and political issues that are more difficult and challenging. "One can always build an ELS given enough money, but if the costs are more than users are willing to pay, no one will ever use the system. Furthermore, if the interests of publishers, brokers, libraries, and users are not satisfied, the system may never receive the backing required to get off the ground," asserted Sirbu.

In developing a cost model, Sirbu assumed an ELS that completely replaces paper, includes first-

page costs, uses a nationwide system composed of three index and document brokers, and accounts for declining costs of relevant technologies. The model also takes into account costs of hardware, storage, operations, networks, software packages, maintenance contracts, software maintenance, and data production for an ELS containing 20 years of 5,000 journals accessed by four million users served by small, medium, and large libraries.

Among Sirbu's conclusions were that the initial software development costs would require approximately \$4.5 million, that ELS costs are dominated by first-page costs and system operations, that storage is not a major concern and becomes less so with time, and that bitmaps are a reasonable way to store ELS pages. He projects such a system would cost only tens of dollars per user per month, would be usage insensitive, would be dominated by publisher costs, would be strongly affected by number of journals and size of library, and would compare well with current library budgets. He emphasizes that success of this scenario is dependent on standards development and coordination relating to document storage formats, unique document identifiers, naming databases, billing systems, and protocol interfaces.—*Thomas J. Michalak, library director, Carnegie Mellon University Libraries* ■ ■

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promote the use of existing networked information. Send information to Philip Tompkins, convener of the Teaching and Learning Working Group, at the Maricopa Community College District, Estrella Mountain Community College Center, 919 North Dysart Road, Avondale, AZ 85323 (voice: (602) 932-6500; fax: (602) 461-7681; e-mail: tompkins@gc).

ACRL members can also contribute to the Working Group on Management and Professional and User Education. This Working Group believes that at the heart of the Coalition's success is the ability to organize personnel resources to make the vision of a national network a reality. This working group seeks to identify and promote educational materials and programs directed at management, professional and general users of networked information. The group plans to develop a series of generic materials on networked information and seeks sample materials from those who have devel-

oped presentations on the use of information resources accessed via electronic networks. Three types of material are sought: (1) that used to inform academic administrators about networked information resources and their potential use in education and research activities; (2) that for professional librarians and computer center staff to prepare them to deal with those technical and service issues to support patron use of networked information; and (3) instructional material showing patrons how to use networked information. Samples should be sent to Sheila D. Creth, University Librarian, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242 (voice: (319) 335-5868; fax: (319) 335-3830; e-mail: cadsdccts@uiamvs) or Thomas C. Gabriele, director of academic computing services, Western Michigan University, 3326 Rood Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5154 (voice: (616) 387-5436; fax: (616) 387-5473; e-mail: gabriele@gw.wmich.edu.)—Thomas Kirk, college librarian, Berea College



# PUBLICATIONS



by George M. Eberhart

• **Atlas of Communism**, edited by Geoffrey Stern (256 pages, April 1991), traces the history, ideals, successes, and failures of this controversial social experiment. Many color and black-and-white illustrations accompany maps of the Franco-Prussian War, the October Revolution, the Cold War, the New Order in China, Budapest in 1956, student power in 1968, the collapse of Communism in 1988-1990, the new Russia, and many others. The atlas is divided into five parts: the roots of Communism (1810-1917), the Soviet experience (1917-1945), Cold War Communism (1945-1962), new perspectives (1962-1985), and reform and revolution (1985-1990). A final essay discusses the directions Communism might take and how its future relates to religious tolerance and economic stability around the world. This atlas is a fascinating and objective reminder of grim social reality. The cost is \$95.00, available from Macmillan Reference, 866 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022. ISBN 0-02-897265-1.

• A **"Brand" New Language: Commercial Influences in Literature and Culture**, by Monroe

Friedman (183 pages, February 1991), shows how commercial products have greatly affected American speech, literature, and popular culture since World War II. Three interesting chapters look at the results of content analyses of popular novels, plays, and songs from the postwar era, while others examine newspaper texts and American humor to see how product advertising has affected the language. Are these changes good or bad? There are arguments on both sides, but the consensus seems to favor use if the idiom is widespread enough. After all, the term "Pepsi generation" has a layer of significance beyond the words "youth culture." Copies may be ordered for \$39.95 from Greenwood Press, 88 Post Road West, Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881. ISBN 0-313-26169-5.

• **CD-ROM Local Area Networks: A User's Guide**, edited by Norman Desmarais (131 pages, April 1991), examines the increasingly common yet complex use of CD-ROM servers on local area networks. The seven chapters cover network software and hardware, considerations for the systems manager, alternatives to CD-ROM networks, li-