

## Libraries Create Futures: Building on Cultural Heritage

IFLA

August 23-27<sup>th</sup>, Milan Italy

There were nearly 4,000 registered participants from over 136 countries

Ingrid Parent of Canada is the president elect of IFLA. Ellen Tise of South Africa is (now) the current President.

I attended both general governing sessions as COSLA's voting delegate (we have twenty votes- half as many as ALA).

I also attended functions and programs from/by our US colleagues: The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, OCLC and the Library of Congress. The US Caucus and reception were well attended and COSLA was well recognized.

Especially interesting is the work of the copyright and other legal matters group. That group covered in depth copyright issues and the Google proposed settlement. Note: some public access through public libraries for no fee is part of the settlement at this time.

Claudia Lux of Germany- presidential theme- Libraries on the Agenda - chosen 2 ½ years ago- seemed quite clairvoyant! She called on libraries to see the economic crisis as an opportunity. Out of the "dark ages" of the economic depression could come a new Renaissance; we must learn our way to recovery. Libraries have an opportunity to prove their value. For example, right now in China, public libraries have an opportunity to be the governmental information conduit to the Chinese people. Much hangs in the balance- depending on what we (each library) decides and achieves. She also implored us to find new "fashion" and design. Creativity in crisis is crucial. We must be open to our young professionals with new ideas and new fashions.

Jim Neal of Columbia issued a call to conceptual revision. Jim sees the Google settlement as an indicator of changing factors libraries cannot avoid:

- Will we establish Centers of Excellence?
- Are we capable of mass production?
- Can we face new initiatives?
- Are we willing to form public/private partnerships?

He also renewed and asked us to think about concepts of fair use: where will access to orphan works be determined; user privacy; intellectual freedom vs. censorship (either overt or resulting – exp: what is chosen to be preserved); a new knowledge divide (who sets the price for whom and how); and finally where are our antitrust roots?

He asked how libraries will respond. For example, will libraries take digitized books off the shelf? Create online, on demand user driven, Google enhanced print on demand bookstores? Take this as an opportunity to move our collections into the "cloud"? Or be about redefining our traditional shared resources and network structures?

Social networking discussions seemingly populated every program. I was amazed at how often I heard the term "Obama effect".

Some of the most often mentioned included:

Most may be downloadable from Google

[www.drupal.org](http://www.drupal.org) Open source platform

<http://delicious.com> Social bookmarking

[www.scribd.com](http://www.scribd.com) Document sharing, searchable- including uploading the documents  
Can do: public or private

[www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com) Share photos

[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) Social networking, set up profile, repository of staff expertise, post contacts, knowledge

The Public Library of Ulessengen, Netherlands has developed a software program "Question Manager" as part of the wiki that has replaced their intranet. The program automatically matches customer inquiries to the librarians with matching expertise profiles to be sure librarians work together on customer questions. The database of answers are then indexed by Google, making the library more visible.

For more information contact:

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<http://www.slideshare.net/KarolinSelhorstien.be>

Cloud computing was also referenced from many aspects-including the wide variety in litigation opportunities. There are globally such varieties of how legal redress is approached, that many were concerned about liability. No one questioned the need for virtual resources to client groups, however.

I have a CD of the IFLA proceedings should anyone be interested in reviewing it. Also, the new IFLA website has much more information than ever before. [www.ifla.org](http://www.ifla.org). I encourage you to read through the posted IFLA Express issues, it will give you a flavor of the meeting.

Thank you for letting me represent you!

GladysAnn Wells