Election News
From the SALIS Nominating Committee

Chair Elect By-election Results
Congratulations to George Marcelle, our newly elected Chair Elect. Not only does he bring to SALIS considerable knowledge, experience and loyalty, he also brings wit and a touch of glamour. What a star! Thanks to all who showed support for both George and our organization by taking the time to cast a vote.

Call For Nominations
As the April conference approaches, it’s time to plan for the next election. As my term draws to a close, I am feeling a bit nostalgic about my tenure on the executive coming to an end. Perhaps that is why Past Chairs are responsible for the election. We are kept too busy to think about it!

We are recruiting candidates for the following executive positions, to be filled effective April 1999, during the annual conference (April 21-24 in Bloomington, Indiana):

- Chair-elect (one year term, Chair the following year)
- Treasurer (two year term)
- Member-at-large (3 positions, one year term, may run for a 2nd)

Each candidate must be a full member of SALIS, and is required to renew his or her membership effective 1999 (April 1 renewal). Each candidate must submit a brief biographical sketch - no more than 400 words please, preferably in electronic format. Be sure to include any past experience with SALIS, such as committee work, and highlight your plans and goals for SALIS.

Please forward nominations by Friday March 5, 1999 by e-mail or fax to:
Sheila Lacroix
Chair, Nominating Committee
slacroix@arf.org Fax (416) 595-6601
or mail to:
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Library
33 Russell St.
Toronto, ON Canada M5S 2S1

Based on my positive experience, I urge you to think about running yourself, or to encourage any of your SALIS colleagues, whom you know have the knowledge and talents to bring us into the Y2K with strength and purpose.

Nominating Committee:
Sheila Lacroix, Chair
Stephanie Asteriade
Nancy Sutherland

SALIS 21st Annual Conference
If you haven’t yet booked your room or made your plane reservations for the April 21-24 meeting, now is the time. See the SALIS Web site http://salis.org for all the details, or contact the SALIS Home office salis@arg.org for conference information. Deadline for conference abstracts is Feb 15. Conference fees reduced until March 15th.

1999 Membership Dues
Membership applications are on the WEB at SALIS.org. If you do not have WEB access, contact SALIS Home Office at salis@arg.org or phone (510) 642-5208. If you are attending SALIS Conference, dues must be received by March 15th to get discount rate. Dues are due April 1st, to get your name listed in SALIS News Spring Annual Membership List.
The Future of SALIS

Leigh Hallingby, Librarian
Lindesmith Center

In order to think about the future of SALIS, I find it helpful to look at the current major activities of SALIS. These are (in alphabetical order): Conference (annual), Directory, Listserv, Newsletter: SALIS NEWS, WEB site,

Other activities which SALIS has engaged in, but is not currently doing are training. All of the current activities fall into the category of networking and information-sharing among professionals dealing with library and information services within the alcohol and drug fields.

I am of the opinion that SALIS doesn't have to do more than it is doing now, because what SALIS is doing now is impressive. For a small organization such as SALIS to keep going for over 20 years, without even piggybacking on a larger organization, is very impressive. There has been talk, from time to time, about trying to raise money to do more projects such as training. While I have no opposition to this, I don't feel that this is essential to the future of SALIS, and I certainly do not feel that we should think that we have failed if we do not succeed in expanding SALIS's current activities. SALIS has found a valuable niche doing what it does now, and to continue to provide these networking and information-sharing services well into the future is a worthy goal.

The most important immediate goal of SALIS, I feel, should be to publish an updated directory. This has been an elusive goal for the five years that I have been in SALIS. It seems, however, to be a realistic goal that could be fulfilled if it is made a very high priority by one or two people who are dedicated to following it through to completion and if a work plan is made and followed for doing it.

A major concern of mine regarding the future of SALIS is the extent to which the organization has throughout its existence, revolved around one visionary, energetic, dedicated person, Andrea Mitchell. The good part of this is that it has brought SALIS great stability and continuity. The Home Office has not had to move around from place to place depending, for instance, on who the President is. Routines have been established which have not had to be upset by changing of Executive Directors. The down side of this situation is that, by definition, it cannot go on forever. None of us are going to be at our current jobs indefinitely, including Andrea. We need therefore to think about SALIS's future someday without Andrea. We need to think about whether we might want to take any steps now to prepare us for this eventuality.

Tom Colthurst, SALIS Treasurer
University of California San Diego, School of Medicine

(These are remarks prepared for the SALIS 20th Anniversary Conference, but not delivered as the conference schedule rearranged. Those making up the 'Future of SALIS' now use SALIS News to share their thoughts and provoke discussion among the members.)

SALIS heads into its third decade as a one of a kind organization, the largest international professional association concerned with information technology in the realm of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

We have tremendous potential in two key areas -- membership services and consultation to third parties.

In the first instance, we continue to demonstrate exceptional services to our own growing membership base. Whether through the immediacy of our listserv, reflective reviews and timely topics featured in the quarterly SALIS News, or the wide-ranging agenda at our annual conferences, SALIS members enjoy exceptional access to relevant resources. These resource tools support us in our individual roles as information brokers. Regardless of constituency served, our membership, because of these dependable tools, are better qualified to function as reference librarians, clearinghouse managers, research associates, curricula developers, and/or information specialists.

This membership foundation also equips us to provide practical advice to third parties. The aggregate experience of our members and the diversity of their professional affiliations afford us a unique and uncompromising vantage. We are a notable source of advice, already, on subjects ranging from World Wide Web navigation training to the technologies that go into organizing and managing an ATOD information center.

While never ignoring its principal role as a membership-based professional association, SALIS, in my opinion, will grow its consulting business in the next two decades. As government agencies and international bodies increasingly turn to information technology for communicating with their citizens and clienteles, honest, neutral and competent information brokering will become more and more in demand.

SALIS can be of use to organizations ranging from units of the U.S. Federal government to the World Health Organization. Whether through contribution to standards for websites, support for the Virtual Clearinghouse, technical assistance to information centers in development nations, or maintenance of a directory of ATOD-specific libraries and clearinghouses, SALIS has an important role to play in upcoming years.
ELISAD Conference
ELISAD 98: 10th Annual Conference, Paris
Barbara Seitz de Martinez, SALIS Chair
Indiana Prevention Resource Center

The European Association of Libraries and Information Services on Alcohol and other Drugs, ELISAD, presented its 10th Annual Conference in Paris on December 3rd and 4th. The theme of the Conference was "The Role of Information Professionals in Alcohol and Other Drug Monitoring Systems."

The host of the Paris meeting was Thomas Rouault, Managing Director of Toxibase, Past President of ELISAD, and currently a member of SALIS's International Committee. He was a splendid host and made us feel very welcome.

For the past five years, SALIS and ELISAD have been sending a representative of their respective association to the others annual meeting. Hence SALIS was honored to have Ms. Carla Rouge, ELISAD Treasurer at the 18th SALIS Conference in Vancouver, 1996 Thomas Rouault, then ELISAD President, at our 19th Conference in Little Rock 1997 and Marianne Van der Heyden, current ELISAD President, at our 16th in Chicago, 1994 and 20th Anniversary Conference in Los Angeles 1998.

SALIS was represented at the ELISAD Conference by SALIS members: Barbara Seitz de Martinez, Chair; Andrea Mitchell, Executive Director; Tom Cotthurst, Treasurer; Leigh Hallingsby, Past-Secretary; and George Marcelle, Chair-Elect.

The conference was held at Medecins du Monde, an international association that is about 20 years old and dedicated to the well-being of its members, who are health professionals, and to the health needs of victims of natural disasters, war, political oppression and other crisis situations. Having just returned (30 hours previously) from Nicaragua where I was with refugees from communities destroyed by mudslides provoked by Hurricane Mitch and where I witnessed the valuable presence of Medecins du Monde (MIDICOS del Mundo/Doctors of the World), I was particularly pleased to be visiting their headquarters in Paris.

Several inaugural speeches opened the conference. These included ELISAD President Marianne Van der Heyden's opening remarks, laying out the goals of the conference, and further welcomes from the President of the Mission Interministerielle de Lutte contre la Drogue et les Toxicomanies (MILDIT), Nicole Maestriac, and from the Director of Medicins du Monde (MDM), Michel Brugiere. The meeting was organized into four main sessions with several invited speakers addressing theoretical aspects of a topic, followed by a period of "Open Communication" during which additional presentations were offered related to that same topic.

(ELISAD Conference continues on Page 6)

Developing Web Links and Guides: The Importance of Knowing Your Audience

Sheila Lacroix
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

The role of librarians in organizing and evaluating web sites is a hot topic these days. Numerous articles continue to appear focusing on the importance of evaluation and providing brief 'How To' guidelines. It has also become apparent that the cyber world has changed drastically - almost overnight, it has shifted from the realm of academia to the commercial, with the consumer becoming the main target audience. I had quite an eye opener recently, making it apparent just how expectations have changed and how crucial defining our audience has become.

The Eye Opener

Last fall, ARF received a complaint about the library's Internet Guide (www.arf.org/isd/links/mainpage.html). The complainant questioned why we link to the Lindesmith Center and why it is placed as number 1 of our Top 10 List, the premise being that this action is contrary to the health of Canadians.

Links and guides are such an important part of our organizations' web presence. They are also important to our work as information professionals. Even with the ever improving search engines, I still rely on links more than using search engines to find key documents. Our response to the individual highlighted the following:

1 The Internet Guide is a library product, reflecting the collection development policy of our library and the users we serve: researchers, students, policy makers, health professionals and the general public. Our main focus is not consumer health.

2 The Lindesmith Center web site is an excellent site and clearly states the mandate of the organization. It provides invaluable resources to policy makers and advocates for high risk groups as well as researchers and students.

3 The Top Ten are not ranked - there are several categories and The Lindesmith Center and Web of Addiction just happen to be placed at the top of the list.

How can we avoid these situations like the one above without resorting to extremes such as censorship?

Some Suggestions
- Know and define your audience. Incorporate this into both how your site is organized and where the links appear on the site.

(Developing Web Links & Guides continues on Page 7)

SALIS News, Vol. 18, No. 4

Winter 1999
EMCDDA: Putting you in the picture on drugs in Europe

Kathy Robertson
European Monitoring Centre for Drugs andDrug Addiction

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) is the heart of drug-related information in the European Union. Set up by the European Council in 1993, the Centre is one of 11 independent European Community agencies created to develop scientific or technical know-how in a particular area.

The Centre's mission is to provide Europe's citizens, professionals and politicians with the information they need to take appropriate action and make decisions on drugs and related problems.

Main tasks of the Centre include:
♦ collecting and analysing existing information on drugs;
♦ improving data-comparison methods;
♦ disseminating this information; and
♦ co-operating with European and international bodies and organisations and with non-EU countries.

Prior to the creation of the EMCDDA, drug-related information in the European Community Member States was scattered, variable and contradictory, making it virtually impossible to draw an accurate and reliable picture of the extent of the drugs problem in Europe on which to base common action by the Member States and the Community. The result was that both national and EU level policies often tended to be based on speculation rather than hard facts.

To counteract this somewhat patchy picture, the Centre was mandated to provide information that was 'objective, reliable and comparable'. This, in itself, is a political advancement, symbolising a conscious decision by policy-makers to base drug-related policies on reliable scientific and technical findings.

The Centre achieves its goals by organising expert group meetings and seminars; carrying out surveys, studies and pilot projects and facilitating the exchange of information between decision-makers, researchers, specialists and the media.

Under its first Three-year Work Programme (1995-97), the EMCDDA focused on the demand for drugs and reducing that demand. In the area of epidemiology, this entailed improving the quality and comparability of epidemiological information on drugs; estimating the prevalence of problem drug use in Europe; and analysing the health consequences of drug use. In the area of demand reduction, it meant promoting the scientific evaluation of prevention and establishing an information system on drug demand-reduction activities.

The second Three-year Work Programme (1998-2000) is now building on the achievements of the first and includes projects to improve and develop reliable and comparable data-collection methods and to consolidate the Centre's epidemiological and demand-reduction information systems on the basis of agreed sets of core data. Also noteworthy is the key role that has been assigned to the EMCDDA in the detection and assessment of new synthetic drugs in the European Union under the terms of an agreement concluded in June 1997. This agreement establishes an early-warning system which identifies new synthetic drugs, provides a mechanism for assessing the risks of these drugs and furnishes a decision-making process through which these products may be placed under control in the EU Member States.

How to keep up to date with the Centre's work
A comprehensive range of publications publicises the work of the EMCDDA throughout the world. A bimonthly newsletter, DrugNet Europe, keeps readers regularly up to date with the Centre's activities (recorded in more detail in an annual General Report of Activities) while three series - Scientific Monographs, Insights and Manuals - target the scientific community, international organizations, practitioners and the press with the findings of major conferences, studies or surveys.

Top of the list, however, is the Annual Report on the State of the Drugs Problem in the European Union, the flagship of the agency, providing European decision-makers and citizens with an in-depth overview of the drug situation in Europe. Information for the latter is gathered by national centres in the 15 countries which is then analyzed and synthesized by scientists at the Centre. The Report is launched to the press every Autumn as a key reference document for understanding the major features of drug problems and the legal, political and social responses to them within the EU.

Information on the agency is also available on the EMCDDA web site (http://www.emcdda.org) which contains comprehensive information on all aspects of the Centre, its work and products, from an overview of its Origins and administrative structure, to details of its epidemiological, demand-reduction and REITOX Work Programmes. Also available via the web site is the information system EDDRA (Exchange on Drug Demand-Reduction Action), a database containing detailed information on drug demand-reduction activities in the European Union. EDDRA caters to the information needs of practitioners and decision-makers involved in planning and implementing demand-reduction activities and contains information on demand-reduction programmes from all EU Member States.

In response to the growing interest in drug legislation and policies in Europe, the EMCDDA is exploring the feasibility of setting up a legal database and a network of national legal experts. It is also improving and extending the legal information contained in its publications and is preparing specific publications on legal matters.

(EMCDDA continues on Page 5)
EMCDDA continues...

The Centre and its Partners
The Centre co-operates with a number of European bodies, including institutions of the European Union, specialized centres and NGOs. It also co-operates closely with six international and European organisations. These are: the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP); the Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe; the World Health Organisation (WHO); the World Customs Organisation (WCO); Europol; and Interpol.

In March 1998, the Centre signed its first Memorandum of Understanding with an international organisation, namely the UNDCP. This enhanced co-operation between the two bodies and symbolised a significant step forward in national, European and international efforts to combat the global drug problem.

While the EMCDDA is primarily European in focus, it also provides information on the European drug problem globally and participates in events and programmes around the world. In 1998, the Centre organized its first US-EU Informal Drug Forum to examine US and EU drug strategies and to discuss mutual drug-policy perspectives. This Forum, held in the presence of General Barry McCaffrey, Director of the US White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), has led to continued contacts and possibilities for joint publications.

Under the terms of its founding Regulation, the Centre is open to nations from outside the EU, a provision allowing these so-called 'third countries' to participate as observers in the Centre's work. Since its creation, the Centre has forged close links with Central and Eastern European countries, particularly in the establishment of national data collection centres in the region. Links with Latin America have also been established to explore areas of common interest and possibilities for exchanging information and experience. The backbone of the Centre, however, are the 16 centres or Focal Points (one in each Member State plus one at the European Commission) forming the European Information Network on Drugs and Drug Addiction or REITOX. These centres feed data from drug monitoring bodies in the EU to the Centre, data which is primarily used for the Annual Report.

Documentation
The EMCDDA's documentation system was conceived to work in conjunction with, and to complement, the documentary infrastructures of the National Focal Points (and other major national documentation centres), as well as those of other international organizations. In order to fulfill its mandate, a Documentation and Information Centre (DIC) was established at the EMCDDA's headquarters in Lisbon.

The EMCDDA's Documentation and Information Centre comprises two complementary elements:

- a Library housing a specialized document collection; and
- an electronic information service connected to the REITOX network, providing internal and external information (through CD-ROMs and access to the Internet).

The aim of the Documentation Centre is not to provide an exhaustive and fully comprehensive collection of primary documents on the drug phenomenon, but to be a resource centre promoting information-sharing with other major European centres on topics related to the EMCDDA's work. As such, the EMCDDA has adopted a policy of non-duplication of resources with other major European specialized document centres, mainly within the REITOX network.

The EMCDDA's document collection thus contains a selection of specialist materials on drugs and drug addiction deemed most relevant to the EMCDDA's activities and its users' needs. The major elements of the EMCDDA's documentation collection are:

- technical and scientific reports prepared within the framework of the EMCDDA's Work Programmes;
- the National Reports produced by the Focal Points describing the state of the drug problem in each Member State; and
- documents and other works published by EU bodies on community policy and strategies covering the drugs domain in its broadest sense.

As a step towards increasing document information exchange on drugs, the Centre launched a project - in co-operation with the REITOX National Focal Points - to create a 'Virtual Library'. This Library is a pan-European distributed database providing a selection of documents from existing national databases in a comparable and standardized format. The Virtual Library allows bibliographic searches of different sources to be made on one common database and prevents duplication and overlap of information among the EMCDDA and its REITOX partners. The Virtual Library is the first common database in the field of drug abuse in Europe and covers topics such as epidemiology, national and community policies and EMCDDA internal reports. Other topics will be available in the future.

Conclusions
Despite different national approaches in Europe to the drug phenomenon and the different information systems in place, clear reference points and common denominators are emerging. One of these is that in today's Europe, where drugs are a major concern for all citizens, sound information on the subject is crucial. For this reason the Centre is striving to become a reference point for long-term decision-making on drugs, a repository of documents on the subject and an international centre of excellence.

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, Rua da Cruz de Santa Apolonia 23-25, PT-1149-045 Lisbon, Portugal. Tel: ++351 1 811 3000. Fax: ++351 1 813 1711. E-mail: info@emcdda.org URL: http://www.emcdda.org
ELISAD Conference continues...

Marianne Van der Heyden chaired the first session entitled, "Overviews on Monitoring and Information and Documentation Strategies." Monitoring is currently of key concern in Europe because of issues surrounding the European Union and its implications for drug policies across national borders. Especially well received was the discussion of the meaning of the term "monitoring" by Severine Mathieu, sociologist from the Medical University of Lille. She pointed out that in medicine the definition is clear and precise, whereas in the addiction field it has various meanings and there is no one term that is understood by all. In addition, Paul-Dominique Pomart, Head of the Electronic Information Department of Bayard-Presse, discussed the impact of new technologies in information and communication on information dissemination, research strategies, and the operation of drug information resource centers. Pierre Oudet and Nicole Pinhas of the IN-SERM-Dicdoc network of the National Institute for Health and Medical Research, Strasbourg, described the establishment of thematic "platforms" and "co-operatives" for the sharing and exchanging of data that is readily accessible via the web.

They emphasized the challenges of the new environment which have motivated them to create "made to measure" tools to incorporate, validate, and link information through "a knowledge extraction process." During the subsequent "Open Communication" period, we learned about the drug information functions of the Marmottan Medical Center, Paris; the Czech Drug Information Center, Prague; the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and other Drugs, CAN, Stockholm; and Drogues-Info-Service, Paris.

Thomas Rouault chaired the second session entitled, "National and International Experiences of Monitoring Information." Christian Sueur of Medicins du Monde, Paris, explained the strategy of the non-governmental medical organization in its early development as a specialized resource center for information on drug addiction, AIDS, and harm reduction. Focusing on harm reduction, Christian told of the MDM's pioneering activism, promoting public health policy from as early as the late 50's within France and throughout the world. Celebrating the victories achieved in the area of drug abuse prevention and calling for more balanced reporting in the media, the spokesperson for the United Nations' Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, Sandro Tucci, outlined the role of the United Nations in monitoring information dissemination. He emphasized that, whereas the media presents a story of doom and gloom in relation to drugs, the truth is much more encouraging. As the official representative of SALIS, I gave an overview of who we are, what we do, and recent developments and opportunities of our organization, inviting ELISAD members to become members of SALIS in the special membership category recently created. During the "Open communication" period we learned from Alain Wallon about the on-going information activities of the European Monitoring Center on Drugs and Drug Abuse, Lisbon; from Madeleine Laquer about proposed alterations in the Dutch national monitoring system. We also heard from Andrea Mitchell about the powerful tool available to us via ETOH (the Alcohol Science database of the US National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism) Especially interesting was the comparison of the ETOH data base with Medline, for the coverage of European alcohol studies.

After a delicious lunch provided by ELISAD, we returned for the third session, "Experience of Information Monitoring in Documentation Centers, in the Field of Publishing and Research, and in the Field of the Internet," chaired by Ove Sundby of the NDFPDA, Norway. During this session we were introduced to the Lindesmith Center web site by Leigh Hallingsby, who demonstrated examples of its hundreds of full text documents, linked from catalog entries, and its use of focal points for topics of special interest. She described the creation of the web site, its organization, and plans for its further development by inclusion of live broadcasts of seminar meetings. Elisabeth Fellinger highlighted the experiences of TOXIBASE information centers in Strasbourg and Reims and their efforts to make their information services appropriate for the variety of audiences they serve. She emphasized the need for creating "local information dynamics" which are important to local, national, international linkages and partnerships. During the "Open Communication" period we heard the pros and cons of internet publishing from Arjan Sas, a researcher at the Centre for Drug Research (CEDRO) of the University of Amsterdam. Semiotic aspects of the prevention information exchange were addressed by Patrick Dessez of the CNDT, Lyon, France. The difficulty of selecting the appropriate facts and communications methods has to do with the relationship between the subject and the object of the information exchange. He stressed the need to clarify the roles and positions of primary prevention versus harm reduction.

The fourth session entitled, "Monitoring and Information Strategies in the Field of Health Care and Prevention of Drug Abuse and Addictions," featured a presentation by Professor Philippe-Jean Parquet of the Health University of Lille on the objectives of prevention. Prevention can take the form of direct action or can be a more subtle influencing factor. The later can take two forms, either fortifying protective factors or addressing risk or vulnerability factors. He favors enhancing the subject's ability to select behaviors that are healthful, while eliminating those that could be potentially harmful. During the "Open Communication" period George Marcelle used slides and a quiz to illustrate the role of alcohol, tobacco and drugs in the lives of Hollywood stars and the power of the messages conveyed to audiences that could influence personal decisions about substance use.

The conference was closed by Jasper Woodcock, a former ELISAD President and a founding member, who reflected on the accomplishments of ELISAD throughout its history, recognizing the continuing need for ELISAD and the challenges that remain for the future.
Developing Web Links continues...

- Be clear about the purpose of the web site links presented. This may involve an introduction.
- If possible, maintain a separate set of organizational links or a formal guide on your library page that reflects your clearly defined collection development policy, which may be broader than you organization's mandate. If conflict arises, you may want to consider having these links made available to staff by putting them on your organization's intranet. For example, a prevention organization may not want to have an industry site link on its main page, but it may appropriate on the resource center's page. We know that the industry sites often have invaluable information, such as economic data, legislative surveys, etc.
- Work with other parts of your organization to assist with the overall distribution of links throughout the site. For example, recommend that the corporate page limit links to parents and partners. This avoids potential conflict of interest complaints.
- Let's use the SALIS Web Site to launch a comprehensive set of organizational links. Our membership covers a broad array of organizations dealing with a variety of issues, disciplines, approaches and functions. Some have a single, clearly defined focus while others, such as my organization, have many. This would enable our members to assist their user groups in finding broader information by making a single link to the SALIS web site, thus avoiding any conflict of interest.

As our collections continue to expand beyond the protected walls of our libraries and resource centres, our responsibilities and roles change. I am planning to make a presentation at the SALIS Conference on some of these issues. If anyone has any further ideas or suggestions, please contact me and perhaps we can set aside some time for dialogue or a panel discussion.

New Books


Periodical News

New Books continues...


Deadline for next issue of SALIS
News Vol. 19, No. 1, Spring 1999 is
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SALIS News
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