

## 2008 Annual Report VTLS Users' Group

This year's annual meeting was held at the Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center April 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008. It was great to be back in familiar surroundings. Three days of training at VTLS Headquarters preceded the meeting and many members took advantage of this opportunity to learn about Virtua version 49.

Dr. Carol Tenopir of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville was our keynote speaker. She is a Professor of Information Sciences, Director of Research, College of Communication and Information, and Director of the Center for Information and Communication Studies. She spoke on *E-Journal Usage and Scholarly Output*.

Dr. Tenopir had Five Observations to present to us. Faculty are reading more, but not in proportion to the increase in articles published, spending more time reading, but less time per article. Faculty have an increasing variety of ways to locate articles: browsing, searching, following citations, recommendations from others, others including preprints, alerts – 60% come from electronic sources. More electronic reading, overall 60/40 split, personal reading is still highly print based. Faculty read higher percentage of older articles. Age makes a difference, but you need to be careful (purpose, motivation, maturity, very hard to predict) - Google Generation Report (right to be cautious) – younger are clearly reading more electronic, scholarly societies are worried as younger have less personal subscriptions. Faculty prefer PDF format.

Dr. Chachra, CEO of VTLS, gave an overview of the current state of the corporation. He said the company was healthy financially and gave a review of the latest version of each of their products. He also mentioned industry trends such as: consolidation among ILS vendors, open source, social tagging, OCLC expansion, institutional repositories, "software as a service" and discovery tools.

The group met for dinner at the Indian Garden restaurant and enjoyed a belly dancing performance as they ate. Fortunately, we were not asked to participate in the dancing.

The most notable improvement for the users was the change in the way we all vote on the enhancement requests. Instead of trying to get the users of each subsystem together at each meeting to vote on the proposed enhancements, voting capabilities were added to the IM system so that each library can review the enhancements and vote on them at specified times. The first vote using this method was held in January without much response. And, there were a number of issues with what was listed so it was decided to vote again with the updated list. This was done in May 2008 with a better response.

The executive committee had new members join and several departures during the course of the year. Susan Baldwin resigned her position as a representative at large several months after joining the committee due to a move. Marilyn Guy also resigned due to issues going on at her library. David Paynter announced his retirement from New Hanover County Public Library which ends his services as Treasurer to the group. David was an active part of the User's Group for many years and he will be missed. Ella-Fay Zaleszak from Vancouver Community College joined as a representative at large at the spring meeting.

The European meeting took place this year at Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia, September 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Gunhild Bäck, European Group Chair, presented the university digital copies of letters from John Comenius that are part of the collection of Uppsala University library. The Vice Dean of the Philosophical Faculty gave the keynote address about education and libraries in higher education and also provided some background information on the university. This is the oldest and largest university in Slovakia. The university hosted a reception one evening and VTLS hosted a cruise on the Danube the second evening.

The executive committee met in October at the Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge, MA. The group's focus was on adapting the structure of the users' groups to better meet all users' needs. The idea is that this group becomes a regional group (North America) and that each regional group sets up its own budget to be funded by VTLS. The group drafted an updated set of bylaws and worked out to fund future activities with the elimination of dues. The bylaws will need approval of the group at the annual meeting.

The 2009 Spring meeting will be held at the Inn at Virginia Tech in March.

Kate Porter  
Chair, VTLS Users' Group