

Fall 1998 ENY/ACRL Newsletter

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Incorporation for ENY/ACRL

Mandated incorporation of our chapter has been mentioned before in the newsletter and at Chapter Business meetings. Having just returned from Chapters Council at ALA, it seems a good time to report in more detail on what incorporation means for our chapter. Lynne King, Past President, Terry Ronning, Vice President, and I attended Chapters Council on June 28. At that meeting, Barbara Jenkins, Chair of Chapters' Council provided information on the ACRL mandate that unincorporated chapters of ACRL must incorporate, or become part of another incorporated organization by the end of the year 2000. The primary reason for this mandate is fear of legal liability for chapters' activities on the part of national ACRL.

Barbara Jenkins outlined some of the questions/issues that have been raised by this incorporation mandate. Below I list these issues and the answers (sometimes partial answers) that we have to date:

Issues and Answers

Does a chapter need a lawyer?

Not necessarily, but might be a good idea to at least have a one-time consultation with a lawyer experienced in this area.

Approximately how much does filing incorporation papers cost?

Varies from state to state. But generally the filing fee is not high.

How much time and effort does it take?

Varies. The actual filing is simple, but there is record-keeping involved.

What about the liability of chapter officers?

Incorporation provides limited liability for corporation officers for wrongdoings committed by the organization.

What are the tax implications?

There are two kinds of corporations: profit and non-profit. Chapters would be filing for non-profit status. This status does not necessarily include tax exemption. Generally chapters would be 501(c)(3) under IRS and would pay taxes. Even if tax exempt the corporation would have to file informational tax returns.

What about legislative lobbying?

Under 503(3)(c) status, chapters must not carry on substantial activities to influence legislation. Information advocacy is not considered lobbying.

How much additional record keeping for the Treasurer or others?

Must file an annual report with the Sec. of State. Pay a small fee with the filing of this report. If not tax exempt, must file yearly taxes. May need to pay county taxes.

Does a chapter need a permanent address?

It is helpful, because the Sec of State has to be notified of address changes. Might be useful to have a campus agree to serve as permanent address. May not use a PO Box as the address.

Does the chapter need liability insurance for conferences?

This is a good idea and is not expensive.

Are Bylaws changes necessary?

Probably, because incorporated bodies are required to have a Board of Directors. We would have to modify our Bylaws for this reason alone. It was suggested that we look at ACRL Bylaws for guidance.

So, where do we go from here? ENY/ACRL Exec. Council will be meeting in early August to decide how to proceed. Most likely, we will have an Ad hoc committee investigate the process and report back on a proposed method to get this accomplished. If any members of ENY/ACRL are interested in working on such a committee, please contact me. We'd appreciate your help.

--Barbara Via
President, 1998-99

Lobbying Made Easy

While librarians don't actually lobby (i.e., spend money to influence legislation), we necessarily engage in legislative advocacy, and the willingness to make a case with a state or Congressional representative is still a requirement of these related processes. Many of us might compare this undertaking to root canal work, but with only a modest amount of training, almost any librarian can learn not only to develop and deliver an effective message, but to enjoy the process as well.

The first ACRL legislative preconference for academic librarians was held this year at ALA's 1998 annual meeting in Washington, D.C.. Over the course of 1 1/2 days on Capitol Hill, a primarily skeptical group of college and university librarians became convinced that influencing the legislative process in favor of library needs is a do-able, empowering, and yes, even fun, experience.

Participants were assigned homework prior to the preconference--reading a packet of legislative briefs and making an

appointment with one of their Senators or with their Congressional representative, or staff of any of the three. Having already registered and paid for the preconference, there was no turning back on the assignments for the group, who met Wednesday evening and Thursday morning prior to ALA to learn how to shape a message and deliver it effectively to a legislator.

Then the group was turned loose on Capitol Hill on Thursday afternoon, to find lunch, keep the appointments with their legislators, and return to report and summarize by late afternoon. The most resourceful discovered the underground tunnel and shuttle systems that interconnect the Capitol buildings and offices, in order to overcome the 95 degree, 99% humidity levels that slowed those above ground. No one, however, was unsuccessful in his or her efforts, and many came away with rewards beyond productive conversations with staffers and legislators, such as passes to the House or Senate galleries, or photos with their Congressman.

The ACRL legislative advocacy session effectively demystified what otherwise might seem a daunting process, using a hands-on method that gets results. Look for opportunities such as the ACRL program to develop your advocacy skills, if you're not a convert already. A good starting point is to monitor the ENY/ACRL listserv for legislative updates from our chapter's government relations officer, Karen Ingeman, and to write a letter or make phone call to a Senator or Congressional representative on pending legislation that is important to you--Internet filtering, the federal document depository program, copyright and fair use in the digital age, for example. You'll find no shortage of important issues that you can address and influence on behalf of libraries and their users.

One Congressional staffer visited during the preconference remarked about how infrequently librarians are heard from, especially those in academia. You can bet that groups sometime opposing library interests--in publishing or the entertainment industries, for example--are not so quiet. Our task is clear. Learn to advocate!

Lynne King
Past President

ENY/ACRL Classified Ads

Needed:

Several energetic volunteers willing to share their time and talents by running for office and serving on the Executive Council for the next couple of years. Salary - None. Benefits - Immeasurable rewards in professional networking; the stimulation of working with talented and dedicated librarians from throughout the region; opportunities for leadership development, mentoring, and being mentored; and just plain fun.

With the exception of the President-Elect, who serves for three years, these positions are two year commitments. The Executive Council generally meets four times per year. Council members also play important roles at the fall and spring conferences. Officers elected this year will play a pivotal role in the future of the Chapter's relationship to ACRL, as the question of incorporating to maintain our chapter status or dropping our affiliation in order to remain unincorporated is finalized by the year 2000.

Program Committee Chair/Vice-President/President-Elect:

Year One - Oversees the planning process for the fall and spring conferences. Convenes meetings of the program committee as necessary (generally 4 times per year) to develop conference themes, locate host institutions, contact speakers, prepare publicity, and related duties. Prepares conference budget. May represent chapter at the ACRL Chapters Council Meeting at ALA (midwinter and summer). **Year Two** - Serves as official spokesperson for the chapter and as chair of the Executive Council. Represents (or designates someone to represent) chapter at the ACRL Chapters Council meetings at ALA midwinter and annual conferences. **Year Three** - Solicits nominations and conducts elections for chapter officers, and serves as Chair of the Librarian of the Year Award Selection Committee.

Requirements: prior experience on the Program Committee desirable; experience in planning a large wedding or small scale invasion acceptable substitutes. Must be a member of ALA and ACRL during vice-presidency and presidency. Note: Travel costs to ALA annual and midwinter meetings are partially funded by the Chapter.

Secretary:

Responsible for preparing notes and distributing minutes of Executive Council and Chapter business meetings. Also maintains current Chapter records, including the Officers' Handbook.

Requirements: Previous experience as a stenographer or court reporter a plus. Assertive personality and ability to insist that a conclusion to a discussion be reached and duly recorded a must.

Communications Chair:

Promotes communication among Chapter members and with other regional or national organizations, or appropriate individuals. Primary responsibility is the production of three issues per year of the Chapter's newsletter. Also works with appointed webmaster and listserv administrator for the Chapter to insure timely and accurate distribution of information of Chapter news.

Requirements: Ability to enforce deadlines; military background preferred. Willingness to ask the same person for the same information in enough different ways to elicit the response, "Oh, you need an newsletter article from me THIS week."

If you are interested in serving on the Council, or if you would like to nominate someone, please contact Lynne King, Past President/Nominations Chair, Albany Campus Library, The Sage Colleges, 140 New Scotland Ave., Albany, NY 12208, 518-292-1760, kingl@sage.edu.

The deadline for nominations is December 1, 1998. All candidates will be asked to submit a brief statement of candidacy, which will be sent to Chapter members, along with the ballots, in February 1999. Terms of office will commence following the Spring Conference in May 1998.

(Thanks to Past President Barbara Durniak for the format of and a number of the entertaining job descriptions examples in this article.)

Newkirk Award Reminder

The ENY/ACRL Executive Board, and the Newkirk Award Committee would like to remind members of ENY/ACRL that the Newkirk Award funds can be used to defray the costs of conference/seminar attendance, as well as direct research costs. To date, we have received no applications for the 1998-99 award. The award provides up to \$500 for a member of the association to pursue research in the areas of library technology and its use or impact on reference service or bibliographic instruction, or on the topic of homelessness. Conference attendance does not necessarily have to be tied to a research project. If the applicant can state how attendance at a particular conference would help that applicant and/or his/her institution in one of the areas listed above, it will be considered.

If you have questions, please contact either:

Barbara Via or Cathy Dwyer

ENY/ACRL's Treasury

Through a combination of membership dues, good attendance at our conferences, and generous support from vendors for our recent conferences, the association has managed to build a solid balance in our treasury. Logical questions that members might be inclined to ask of the board with regard to the treasury balance include:

"Is a large treasury balance necessary to the viability of the association?" and, "What is being done with the treasury surplus to benefit the membership?"

First, it is important to note that the Executive Board from year to year has no way of anticipating whether conferences will be well-attended, whether the costs of putting on a particular conference will rise unexpectedly, due to charges levied by host campuses, variations in vendor support, etc. It is also impossible for the Board to know from year to year if speaker costs will rise, especially for well-known keynoters. For these reasons, it is always a good idea to have a healthy balance in the treasury.

Second, having a solid balance affords us the ability to further enhance the professional development of our members. For example, we have been fortunate to have been able to offer excellent programs at our conferences, knowing that we could afford to bring in national experts and pay them reasonable honorariums and travel costs. The Executive Board feels that money spent in that way is a benefit for the membership. In addition, in recent years the Board has allotted some money from the treasury to supplement the interest earned from the Newkirk Award fund and provide a more substantial monetary award. Finally, we have used a modest amount of treasury funds to fund raffle prizes at our conferences. These raffles have proved popular with conference goers and add a bonus to conference attendance.

The Board is interested in hearing from members with creative ideas of how we can use association funds to further benefit the membership. The first-named objective of ENY/ACRL, as stated in our Bylaws is to "...provide opportunities for the professional growth of academic and research librarians..." If you have ideas of how the organization can further enhance the professional development of librarians, let us hear from you!

Barbara Via
President, 1998-99

ACRL NY Symposium

"Changing Course: Libraries as Learning Organizations" is the theme for the Association of College and Research Libraries, New York Chapter Annual Symposium, November 13, 1998. The all-day Symposium will take place at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. The focus of the Symposium will be on the proactive role librarians must take in view of organizational issues that include team management and faculty status.

Dr. Deanna Berg, President of Innovation Strategies International, author, and lecturer, will be the keynote speaker. Panelists will be: Joseph Branin (Dean of Libraries-State University of New York at Stony Brook); Dr. Barbara Buckner Higginbotham (Chief Librarian & Executive Director of Academic Information Technologies-Brooklyn College); Jane Hutchison (Associate Director of Instruction and Research Technology-William Patterson University); and Shelley Phipps (Assistant Dean for Team and Organization Development-University of Arizona). For further information, contact:

[Prof. Lucy Heckman](#)
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From the Editor's Desk

Well, summer is practically over and I've yet to figure out where it's gone! I'm looking forward to a new school year

and to the Fall conference at Skidmore in October. The program looks interesting, and I hope to see a lot of you there. Exciting things are happening in ENY/ACRL, such as the upcoming incorporation plans, and I want to invite all of you to consider running for office in the upcoming ENY/ACRL Board elections. It's an easy way to get involved with your profession and at a regional level.

Thanks,
[Kristin Strohmeier](#)
Editor, ENY/ACRL Newsletter

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Posted March 8, 1999 MOE
Eastern New York Chapter
Association of College and Research Libraries
URL: <http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/acrl/fall98.html>