ASLI CELEBRATES ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Atmospheric Science Librarians International (ASLI), a sponsored organization of the AMS. ASLI was formed to provide an association focused on atmospheric science librarianship and the need to communicate the recording, retrieval, and dissemination of atmospheric knowledge and information for the benefit of scientists, fellow librarians, and others involved in this scientific area. For the past 10 years, ASLI members have been following this mission by supporting and encouraging communication and networking between information professionals who work in the many scientific specialties of the atmospheric science field. Through their discussion list, Web site, and annual meetings they have exchanged ideas and explored issues that affect the growing field of information related to atmospheric science.

Much of the early organizational work for ASLI is detailed in the article, "Through Thin Air: The Creation of the Atmospheric Science Librarians International," by Lisa Wishard, one of the organizers of ASLI. (The article was originally presented at a 1998 joint conference of the Polar Libraries Colloquy and the International Association of Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers.) Wishard describes the idea of creating ASLI as "brewed over a cup of coffee in 1994 between Janice Beattie and Carol Watts of the NOAA Central Library, and Betty Petersen, then of the National Climate Center," as they saw the need for atmospheric science librarians to begin to meet one another and share information. Throughout 1995 they surveyed the staff at various atmospheric science libraries, and Betty Petersen visited the libraries at the World Meteorological Organization and the British Meteorological Office. The response from the listserv was unanimously in favor of creating an organization.

ASLI librarians at the third annual ASLI booth during the 2000 AMS Annual Meeting in Long Beach, California: (from left to right) Maria A. Latyszewskyj, Julia H.Triplehorn, Doria B.Grimes, and Evelyn Poole-Kober.

Julia Triplehorn, of the Geophysical Research Institute of Fairbanks, Alaska, was on sabbatical at Environment Canada from July to September of 1995 and at NOAA from October of 1995 to June of 1996. She was given the task of making a list of worldwide meteorological organizations to create a directory that would help with the organization of the group. She was also asked to create a name, and after studying the abbreviations of other library groups decided on "ASLI."

The idea that this would be an international organization, reinforced by Triplehorn's work with Maria Latyszewskyj at Environment Canada, was always important in the minds of the organizers. This was aided by the growth of the Internet and the use of e-mail listservs for communication. One of the unique aspects of ASLI is that from the beginning it viewed the virtual community that it was creating as an extremely robust facet of the organization. Librarians, who had for years conducted interlibrary loan by phone and mail, now saw a powerful new tool presented by virtual relationships with other librarians around the world. With the Internet ubiquitous in our lives today, it is hard to remember a time before this kind of connectivity, when library services found it difficult to locate significant but isolated materials. ASLI based its original concept on the idea that an international virtual community was primary, and it grew based on that precept. Today, the ASLI listserv is the backbone of the association and has members from around the world.

One problem presented to many nascent organizations is that of finding an appropriate affiliation that will nurture its growth. Early informal meetings were held in Boston in 1996 and in Seattle of 1997 in conjunction with the annual meetings of the Special Library Association (SLA). Affiliation with SLA as

well as with the American Geophysical Union was considered. While in Boston, Maria Latyszewskyj and Carol Watts met with representatives of the AMS, and in 1997, Keith Seitter of the AMS flew to the Seattle SLA meeting with an offer to host the ASLI conferences as a component of the AMS Annual Meeting. Based on a positive majority vote by members of the listserv, ASLI accepted the offer and held its first annual meeting six months later at their AMS meeting in Phoenix, Arizona.

The AMS conference milieu is an ideal setting for ASLI's annual meetings. ASLI members are able to reach out to the greater atmospheric science community through the ASLI booth in the exhibits area, and by inviting scientists to speak at ASLI sessions. Meeting with AMS also provides a wonderful opportunity for ASLI librarians to network with clients and publishers in their field. Special sessions are held where they can hear from representatives of the publishing industry and are able to ask timely questions about this rapidly changing aspect of the library world. ASLI members also have opportunities to influence information products to the benefit of the international atmospheric clientele. Presentations by local experts in library matters and fellow members who share information about their specialized library collections are extremely valuable to professional growth. One additional highlight each year has been a tour organized by Julia Triplehorn of select local libraries, archives, and specialized collections. These tours allow members to see how local professionals are serving their unique communities.

Through the years, ASLI has sponsored several major initiatives. In 2004, a formal survey of the members became a guide in planning future meetings. The results of the survey can be seen on the ASLI Web site (http://aslionline.org/index.html). ASLI instituted the ASLI's Choice Awards for the best book of the year in the fields of meteorology/climatology/atmospheric sciences. The first award was presented in 2006 to *The Arctic Climate System* by Mark Serreze and Roger Barry. As an ongoing project to assist atmospheric science research, ASLI has plans to create a core list of atmospheric science materials that will be placed on the Web.

As it begins its second decade, ASLI has a strong core membership, but there is room to grow, particularly in reaching out to more members from the international community. ASLI members are very concerned about the loss of information due to the recent downsizing and closure of federal libraries, and the ASLI association is publicly voicing this concern (see the July 2007 *Bulletin*, pp. 1114–1115). ASLI members are contributing to the International Polar Year with talks, displays, posters, and bibliographies. Beginning

AWARDS

HELP ASLI FIND 2007'S BEST BOOK IN METEOROLOGY/CLIMATOLOGY/ ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCE

Each year during the AMS Annual Meeting, the Atmospheric Science Librarians International presents the **ASLI's Choice Award** for the best book of the year in the fields of meteorology/climatology/atmospheric sciences. The books are judged on uniqueness, comprehensiveness, usefulness, quality, authoritativeness, organization, illustrations/diagrams, competition, and references.

Have you submitted your choice for the best book in 2007? If you haven't, there are still a few days left to send in your nomination—the deadline has been extended to mid-November 2007.

To nominate your choice, use the online form at www.aslionline.org/bookaward.html or send an urgent e-mail to one of the following addresses: *Maria.Latyszewskyj@ec.gc.ca, Doria.Grimes@noaa.gov, gilibrary@gi.alaska.edu,* or *gcsherra@mit.edu.*

Then wait for the announcement of the 2007 **ASLI's Choice Award** at the January 2008 AMS Annual Meeting and see if your selection matches ASLI's.

The 2006 **ASLI's Choice** winners were:

- *Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics: From Air Pollution to Climate Change* (Second Edition), by John H. Seinfeld and Spyros N. Pandis
- *The Callendar Effect: The Life and Times of Guy Stewart Callendar, the Scientist Who Established the Carbon Dioxide Theory of Climate Change,* by James Rodger Fleming

The 2006 **ASLI's Choice** Honorable Mentions went to:

- *Atmospheric Halos and the Search for Angle X,* by Walter Tape and Jarmo Moilanen
- *An Inconvenient Truth: The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do about It,* by Al Gore
- *Railroads and Weather: From Fogs to Floods and Heat to Hurricanes, The Impacts of Weather and Climate on American Railroading,* by Stanley A. Changnon

For more information on the award, please go to www.aslionline.org/bookaward.html.

You can submit your 2008 nominations at any time to the e-mail addresses above, and watch the ASLI Web site for updates and additional information.

Be part of **ASLI's Choice**!

in 2006, ASLI reviewed the functionality of the *AMS Glossary* online and has submitted formal recommendations for its enhancement. The AMS is working with Allen Press to implement these recommendations.

ASLI looks forward to continuing its relationship with the AMS and its leadership. In the words of Seitter, now the AMS executive director, "We are partners, after all, with the shared goal of making sure that the knowledge coming from members of the scientific community is disseminated to the rest of the community in ways that are as effective as possible."

—Madeleine Needles, MIT Haystack Observatory; Maria Latyszewskyj, Environment Canada; Julia Triplehorn, Geophysical Research Institute

POLICY PROGRAM NOTES

New Orleans: A Closer Look at Societal Impacts

The upcoming AMS Annual Meeting is taking place in the great city of New Orleans, one of the many communities in the Gulf Coast area that was struck by Hurricane Katrina (and soon after, Hurricane Rita). This meeting provides a great opportunity to learn more about societal impacts and policy implications as it relates to the weather and climate enterprise. In fact, many special events will focus on these topics. However, finding the time to engage in these activities, as well as attend the meetings pertaining to your interests, is not always an easy undertaking. Please allow me to share some stories to explain why taking the time is so important.

It was the summer of 1991. My parents volunteered to be music camp coordinators for the high school music program, consequently creating a lot of paperwork and consuming much of their time. After watching our local meteorologist's forecast, I emphatically explained to my parents that Hurricane Bob was heading toward New England. My parents were too busy and too consumed with their responsibilities to pay attention to my message—a situation that would subsequently cause a deluge of more work.

My parents successfully finished their paperwork and excitedly waved goodbye to the 150 students, teachers, and chaperones on their way to a camp in Sweden, Maine. As my parents came home, they breathed a sigh of relief, very pleased with their accomplishment, but they soon realized what their 10-year-old daughter was attempting to tell them: Bob was coming, and my parents and I, along with the 150 students, were not prepared.

This true story is an example of how everyone in society has work or family responsibilities that consume much of their time. But there are some situations, like Bob, that require us to step out of our daily routine and take a closer look at the environment around us. Just like my parents were many years ago, during the Annual Meeting we will all be consumed with responsibilities: attending symposiums, presenting papers, building collaborations, and selling products, just to name a few. It is important for all of us to focus on these activities, as it was for my parents to fill out important paperwork. But while focusing on these activities, we are doing a disservice to ourselves and to the greater community by staying in the conference center from sunrise to sunset. As my parents learned, there are reasons to look and listen outside of your normal routine. Hurricane Bob did hit New England, and along with a deluge of rain, my parents also received a deluge of phone calls from worried parents. In the case of the Annual Meeting, if we don't venture beyond the conference center, we will miss an opportunity for firsthand experience of societal impacts.

New Orleans is a special city, deeply rooted in history and well known for its great jazz, fine cuisine, and distinctive culture. But today, New Orleans and the immediate Gulf Coast area are part of an unfolding story. On the one hand, this area witnessed one of the best hurricane-forecast efforts by the weather enterprise, enabling communities to take immediate action. On the other hand, despite unprecedented evacuation efforts, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita continue to cast shadows on this area. Those storms proved the power of Mother Nature and indicated that even a perfect forecast would not have prevented the impacts seen in the Gulf Coast area. Those storms were just one example illustrating the further need to research societal impacts and communicate such information effectively.