

## 1. IFLA

IFLA, (The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions), is the leading international body representing the interest of library and information services and their users. It is the global voice of the library and information profession. Nearly 1,700 associations, institutions and individuals, from widely divergent cultural backgrounds, are working together to further the goals of the Federation and to promote librarianship on a global level. Through its formal membership, IFLA directly or indirectly represents some 500,000 library and information professionals in 150 countries. About 3,000 people attend IFLA's annual meeting which are held in locations around the world. Of the people that attend about 700 are members of Standing Committees. I am one of those 700.

Being elected to a standing Committee is one of the highest achievements in a librarian's career. In order to be elected from the United States the individual must first be nominated by their Division of the American Library Association. I was nominated by the Public Library Association. After the Public Library Association confirms the nomination, it must go on to the American Library Association for election. After successfully being elected by the American Library Association Board, the person still requires confirmation by the Board of IFLA. There are less than 80 standing committee members from the United States.

## 2. Direct benefits of international conference attendance to the people of Fayette County

### IFLA: Oslo, Norway

While going through the IFLA exhibits, I found a Netherland based company that had developed soft ware that provided search of the library catalog in a very different and easier way. Features included being able to track requests in other languages, correcting for misspellings by patrons, and easy, visual searching. When I returned, I worked with the company and our library system provider to have this product available on Lexington's public access catalog. This was accomplished in 2004. Lexington Public was the first Library in the United States to have this product which we named Thorobrowser. Many libraries have subsequently adopted this technology in the last two years, but the people of Lexington had the advantages of being able to use this two years before other libraries.

Also while attending the IFLA meeting in Norway, I was able to visit several libraries in Scandinavia, including one which had been named the most innovative library in the world by the Gates Foundation. Ideas that Lexington Public Library adopted from visiting these libraries include: shelves on wheels for Village Branch and Northside which allows for adaptable work spaces, the arrangement of computer centers so that they could be both

used for computer classrooms and for public computer use when no classes are in session. This cost saving idea reduces that number of computers that have to be purchased since there is better utilization of the ones in the computer center.

Libraries in Scandinavia have been using self-check of materials for over 15 years. Most libraries in the United States are now starting to use it. By visiting the libraries and talking to IFLA attendees, we have been able to successfully transition Village, Tates Creek and Northside libraries to self-check which allows for better usage of staff and allows the library to keep up with the increased circulation without having to add new staff.

#### Ontario Library Association: Toronto, Canada

This trip was sponsored by the Ontario Library Association at no cost to the Lexington Public Library and I presented a three hour workshop on Creativity in the Workplace. I spent one day visiting the Toronto Public Library and several of its branches. Their digital studio was the model for the Studio at Northside. I talked to the director of the studio, was able to get a list of the equipment they used, talked to people using the studio and was able to see the studio layout. As we planned the building of the Lexington Public Library Digital Studio we continued to seek advice from staff at the Toronto Public Library.

#### Richmond Library, British Columbia (Side trip from Vancouver Library)

This library is one of the most innovative libraries in the Northern Hemisphere. They allowed food and drink, had self-check and several other innovations. Northside layout and Café were influenced by this library visit.

#### IFLA: Quebec, British Columbia

I visited the Quebec Public Library and used ideas from their Children's Department for the Northside Library. The simple but child-friendly design elements in their Children's Department provided inspiration for the visual graphics at Northside.

I also met with the Past President of the Canadian Library Association, who was preparing a program for the Canadian Broadcasting Company on global library services to seniors. The Lexington Public Library and its Senior Adult Program was one of five libraries in the world that were highlighted in this CBC feature program and the only Library in the United States mentioned.

## IFLA Metropolitan Libraries Standing Committee Annual Meeting: Prague, Czech Republic

Over 60 metropolitan and other high level staff attended. Of the Public Library Directors in attendance, two were from the United States: Myself and the Director of the Brooklyn, NY Public Library.

Because the group was small I was able to talk with many of the Directors to get their ideas and solutions for a smooth transition to self-check. Most of the libraries represented at the meeting had used self-check for 10-15 years.

There were presentations about the library as a community service agency. Many libraries in other countries have various social agencies, ie. Employment, health, or housing agencies, located in their library buildings. We were able to discuss the pros and cons of this partnering approach. Based on these discussions, the Lexington Public Library decided to create Job Information Centers and Job Labs rather than host other agencies in the Libraries.

## IFLA: Durban, South Africa

While in South Africa I was able to arrange with a South African friend to tour four libraries in the Durban area, as well as a central processing Center. In addition, I toured the Durban Library and Cultural Center, the University Library at Stellenbosch, and the University Library of KwaZulu Natal.

Since the quality of Library support varies dramatically from library to library, I could observe first hand some of the poorest libraries compared to a well funded one. A direct benefit to the Lexington Public Library was seeing how many spaces were used for multiple functions. This was the origin of the multi-function spaces at Northside. The story room at Northside, instead of being a separate room with use limited to several hours when stories hours are held, has sliding doors which are open all the time except when story hour is held. The Computer Classroom at Northside is not closed off except when there are classes held. This makes 22 more computers available much of the time. I participated in an IFLA initiative of books for AIDS orphans while I was there.