

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Public Library Directors' Meeting Speakers*



Gene Ambaum is the pen name of a public librarian from the Seattle area. He loves graphic novels, television shows

from his childhood, pina colodas, and getting caught in the rain. He continues to make the mistake of letting Bill write his bios.



Bill Barnes is a native New Yorker who was dragged all around the world by his parents at a very formative age and finally ended up in the wilds of Seattle. He is a trained software designer and

very much an untrained cartoonist.



Linda Demmers -- As a library consultant, Linda Demmers has extensive experience in library facility planning with professional background as a librarian, planning consultant, and owners' representative on a wide variety of new construction and renovation projects. She specializes in planning process, program documentation, broad-based community and user involvement, and long-term owner client relationships.

As a professional librarian, she was the Library Director at Pine Manor College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, and Phillips Academy at Andover, where she planned library construction projects from the initial stages

through management of the construction project. From 1989 to 1994, she was the Project Coordinator for the USC Leavey Library.

Long term and repeat client involvement have marked Ms. Demmers consulting career including USC; eight year involvement with Santa Monica College; a multi-year involvement with the State of Mississippi involving three University Library projects, and twelve of the California Community College Districts. She has worked with Mill Valley, Mission Viejo, Westlake Village, Ontario, City of Concord, Temecula, Hemet, San Marino, Calabasas, Manhattan Beach, and West Hollywood.

In 1999, she rewrote the Title 5 California Code of Regulations for Library and Learning Resource Center facilities planning guidelines and space standards. She is currently Project Manager for LibrisDesign and a trainer for Infopeople. A graduate of Vassar College and Simmons College School of Library and Information Science, she lives in Los Angeles with her husband, daughter, and their cats.

Valerie Gross has been director of Howard County Library (MD) for five years. She was previously Executive Director of Goshen Public Library in Indiana and Executive Director of Mechanic's Institute in San Francisco. Ms. Gross holds a Master of Library Science from San Jose State University, a Master of Music from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and a law degree from Golden Gate University. She grew up in the French-speaking part of Switzerland and has taught English in China. She, her husband



* Nope, that's it. Like we said, everything you always wanted to know.

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Public Library Directors' Meeting Speakers*

and their 16-year-old son live in Columbia, MD. In addition to ALA, PLA, and the Maryland Library Association, Ms. Gross maintains membership in the California Library Association and the State Bar of California.

Ms. Gross was honored in 2004 by the Library Journal as a Mover and Shaker. She takes pride that Howard County Library ranks number one in the nation in its class among the great public library systems for its overall program in support of lifelong education (Hennen's American Public Library Ratings 2005).

Pat Kiefer holds a Bachelors degree in health administration from Cal State Northridge and a Master's in library science from USC. She has been employed by the Los Angeles Public Library since December 1985 and is currently Assistant City Librarian. Previous positions held include Director of Branches, Director of Central Library, and Assistant Director of Information Technologies and Collections.

Anne Marie Luthro began her career with EnviroSell in 1989 when the company existed of four full time employees who did everything from the accounting and the selling to the tracking and client management. After spending almost ten years in the NYC office, and being an instrumental force in the growth and success of EnviroSell, Anne Marie moved to Portland, Oregon where she continues to manage clients and projects primarily focused on the West Coast. As the Director of Research at EnviroSell, it is Anne Marie's responsibility to understand client's wants and needs and to see that they are delivered.

In the NW, the heart of the hi-tech world, Anne Marie has spent several years and nu-

merous studies focused on all aspects of IT. From mice and keyboards to the newest wireless communication devices, Anne Marie has followed the growth of the tech industry as it relates to retail shopping. The IT category management clients Anne Marie and EnviroSell have served continue to rely on our history and expertise in the fast changing face of the IT world. Bridging the gap between first time PC buyers and the technically savvy has been a stronghold of the work we've done in the IT industry.

With a host of other clients on her resume, Anne Marie has worked extensively with store planning projects for clients such as Adidas, Levi's, Trader Joe's, Fred Meyer/Kroger, Starbucks, The Discovery Channel and several other successful retailers. Understanding why shoppers are behaving in the ways they do is instrumental in understanding how to build a better store for them.

After almost 15 years of watching people shop, Anne Marie still professes a love of her job and of shopping. Some call it a sickness.



George Needham -- Before joining OCLC in 1999, George was State Librarian of Michigan. From 1993 to 1996, he was Executive Director of the Public Library Association, a division of the American Library Association. From 1990 to 1993, he was Director of Member Services of the Ohio Library Association. From 1984 to 1989, he served as Library Director of Fairfield County District Library in Lancaster, Ohio. From 1977 to 1984, he held various posts at the Charleston

* Nope, that's it. Like we said, everything you always wanted to know.

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the Public Library Directors' Meeting Speakers*

County Library in Charleston, South Carolina. George received a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in library science from the State University of New York at Buffalo.



Rivkah Sass -- Since graduating from the University of Washington Library School in 1978, Rivkah Sass has worked in libraries around the country, gaining the skills and experience that have served her well in her

role as Executive Director of the Omaha Public Library. She is passionate about the role that public libraries play in a democratic society and has high hopes that the Omaha Public Library will become as important to the community as civic institutions.

In addition to her library experience, Rivkah spent three years as a "Research Engineer, Knowledge Manager and Senior Product Marketing Manager" for Public Library Products for the Thomson Corporation. This private sector experience gave her an appreciation for meeting deadlines and bottom lines, and a deeper appreciation for the role that public libraries in our culture.

In January, Rivkah was recognized by Library Journal as the 2006 Librarian of the Year. John Berry noted, "Sass and the Omaha library board were made for each other. Taking risks is central to Sass's management style. The first thing she told the citizen of Omaha when she arrived in September 2003 was, "You've got a second-rate library here. A great city deserves a great library." The remark was quoted by Michael Kelly in his column in the *Omaha Herald-World*, and continues to be a

fact of life in a city that ranks 8th per capita for billionaires nationwide, but funds its public library at \$20 per capita.



Joan Frye Williams -- For more than 25 years Joan Frye Williams has been a successful librarian, consultant, vendor, planner, trainer, evaluator and user of library

services, with a special emphasis on innovation, technology and emerging library trends. She is the president of her own library and information technology consulting firm.

Just to give you an idea of how long Joan has been interested in library issues: her first library job was as a junior page in 1964. Since then she has been continuously employed in the library field. Along the way she received an MLS from the University of California at Berkeley (1975) and in addition to her consulting practice she has worked in both public and academic libraries, for library automation vendors, as well as at the California State Library. Her many clients include large and small public libraries, library consortia, state library agencies, professional library associations, library boards, library vendors and architects.

Joan is best known as an acute--and sometimes irreverent--observer of trends in what she calls "the cultural anthropology of libraries." She is a nationally recognized library futurist and designer of innovative library services.

* Nope, that's it. Like we said, everything you always wanted to know.