

# MCMLA

E X P R E S S



Newsletter of the Midcontinental Chapter of the Medical Library Association

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## Searching Biomedical Databases

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I recently had the good fortune to attend the last (at least for now) NNLM National Training Center and Clearinghouse training session for medical librarians on searching biomedical databases. Unfortunately, they have no funding for this class in the coming year, at a time when even clinicians are increasingly interested in the genes and proteins that affect their success in treating patients. All medical librarians will soon need a grounding in these databases.

Fortunately, the motivated librarian can still take advantage of the training materials at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/Class/MLACourse/index.html> and watch recordings at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/bsd/disted/courses/molbio.html> It is helpful to review the pre-requisite readings online first for a grounding in the basics of

## Election Results – Congratulations!

**Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect**  
Claire Hamasu

**Recording Secretary**  
Kate Anderson

**Candidate to the MLA Nominating Committee**  
John Bramble

**Chapter Council Representative to MLA**  
Holly Henderson

**Alternate Chapter Council  
Representative to MLA**  
Carolyn Warmann

molecular biology. The course modules themselves will gradually become outdated as the NCBI databases continue to develop, but should be instructive for some time to come.

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As in searching PubMed, there are generally several ways to search for similar results. Many researchers choose the "All Databases" option for their initial search. As in the NLM Gateway search, this will give one an overview of which databases will produce results from one's search statement, but for focused and effective results you may need to repeat your search in an individual database, checking the Details tab or taking advantage of the available Limits.

A good place to start when searching for genetic information is Entrez Gene. This database can be searched under many versions of a gene name, as well as associated diseases, and is heavily cross-linked to other databases. From the PubMed or NCBI home page, just look for Gene under the drop-down Search menu. Once you have tried a search and selected a record, take the time to look at the links to other resources located at the right or the bottom of the entry.

NCBI molecular biology databases are only a fraction of the total molecular biology databases available to your researchers. The other two most-used genome sites are ENSEMBL ([www.ensembl.org](http://www.ensembl.org)) and Santa Cruz ([www.genome.ucsc.edu](http://www.genome.ucsc.edu)), but many specific databases and search software programs are publicly available at other university web sites.

NCBI databases include archival databases, in which researchers submit data about genes and proteins, resulting in a great deal of duplicated or overlapping information about nucleotide or protein sequences, and curated databases, in which the best or "reference-quality" version of this information is identified and linked to related information in other databases. If you search the nucleotide database for "leukemia," you will get a list of nucleotide sequence records from this archival database. Just above your list of results you will see a tab labeled RefSeq which is a list of curated nucleotide sequence records.

From the NCBI home page (click on the NCBI logo at the top left of any NCBI page) note the

Site Map at the top of the left-hand navigation bar. If you type Sample Record in the search box, you will find the GenBank sample record in which the field and feature labels rather than the content are hyper-linked. For example, the feature label "CDS" will be linked to an explanation of Coding Sequence along with some helpful search tips. This sample record can help a lot if you are looking at a record and are not sure if you've found the information your client wants.

For another Site Map trick that may make you look smart to your client, type "sequence revision history" in the search box. This will take you to a tool that will allow your client to compare old and new versions of a record. Remember, scientists are learning more about gene and protein sequences every day so a history may be useful to them. Even your institution's researchers may not be aware of this feature. Note also, on the NCBI home page, there are additional resources for learning about NCBI molecular databases, or check the NCBI Bookshelf for the NCBI Help book.

Other tips: knowing a few key field labels can help you look smart when you search! If your client knows the official name of the gene, rather than search it as a keyword, focus your search a little by adding the field label: PER2[gene]. If your client only wants to see the human version of this gene, you can search PER2[gene] AND human[orgn] in Entrez Gene and get just one result, generously cross-linked to all relevant data. Contrast this to the same search without field labels (23 records). It is possible to search many common organisms (human, mouse, rat) in the organisms field by their common names rather than their scientific names (*mus musculus*) but this doesn't work with every organism. A search for wolf[orgn] may produce zero results but a search for Canis[orgn] will retrieve many records. Use the taxonomy database to find names of organisms; you can search by partial name or by specific name (e.g. *Canis rufus*, or red wolf). Another useful field label is [titl].

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In an archival database like Nucleotide or Protein, searching a disease term like leukemia with the [titl] tag will get much more focused results than searching without it.

Many records in the NCBI databases are salted with “i” icons that give additional information about a particular field in a record. Look for them; they can be helpful.

There are many visual features in the biomolecular databases; color-coding in the SNP database, sequence viewers, chromosome maps, etc. One of the easiest and most fun visual databases is the Structure database. Take some time to change the View options or try out the right-click options on your mouse. It's fun! Images from the Structure database can also be used to illustrate your client's presentation.

Biomolecular researchers may use these databases in more sophisticated ways than the average medical librarian, but there are many information-seekers we can assist if we take the trouble to familiarize ourselves with the non-bibliographic resources of NCBI. Unless and until the NTCC course resumes, we must use our own resourcefulness to explore and learn about, if not master, the biomolecular databases. Good luck, everyone! 📖

## **The Pleasures of Patrons: Chapter Chair Report**

**Jerry Carlson, MLS, AHIP**

*MCMLA Chair*

*Medical Library*

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One night while rehearsing Arsenic and Old Lace, as the actor playing my brother Mortimer and I were waiting for our entrance (as you might guess if you know the play, I was Teddy), he softly

lamented on my behalf about it being Monday. I didn't have time to respond, but it got me thinking – I LIKE Mondays. Monday is the first day after two without that I begin the day with the residents. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday I sit in on their morning report as they discuss a case with a volunteer attending physician from the community – usually an internist, occasionally a cardiologist, geriatrician, or infectious disease specialist. That and serving on a couple nursing committees on each of our campuses (Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Research, natch) are what I've managed to do in the ISIC (Information Specialist in Context) line so far. Any questions that come up that can't be answered in the room, I take back to the Library and try to answer, including ones they don't know they're asking (something I like to point out to anyone wavering on whether to attend rounds or just wait for questions). For instance, anytime the attending says “I haven't seen any evidence on that,” I take that as a challenge to see if there's evidence s/he simply hasn't seen. Occasionally there is. More often I'll back them up when they say, “There was a study on ...” I'll produce that study. I counted up once – about 70% of the searches I do come from those three hours per week. They're also the ones that thrill me the most as a hunter, as I know the full context of the question – something most e-mail and voicemail messages don't contain. They also warm me most as a servant – I see the recipients for a month at a time, so they're in a better position than most to thank me.

It's these small pleasures – thanks for small services – that make my job worthwhile to me. Sure, it would be good to have one of the dramatic “Hospital Stories” the Colorado Council of Medical Libraries Advocacy Committee is collecting, but I only remember one, and it's over 15 years old – a doc came out and told me that an article I got for him was what told him his patient needed to go to Denver to get the care he needed. I do have some data, from one of my semi-scientific surveys (see the February 2008 issue of the *Express*), that library services have, since January 2005, prevented mortality for at least 11 current patients and were expected to do so for

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future patients by influencing at least 27 policies, procedures, and education offerings.

That's how many people have said so in a survey I attach to every set of search results and set of articles I send out, based on the Rochester Study.<sup>1</sup> A whiteboard in my office contains at least a dozen thank you notes; an e-mail folder contains over a hundred more which the system hasn't eaten yet. Best of all these are the stories of what people plan to do with their new knowledge. A retired FP who now writes exams wrote to me a couple months ago, "It is very helpful for the question I am to write on this subject." One of our hospice physicians: "Thanks very much for getting this article. It is very helpful in supporting the use of this useful palliative measure with patients and physicians." (Actually, this was a fringe benefit from when he was attending for the residents). The IT person for our residency, about a product they had had a smaller subscription for, then I got a site license: "I'll make sure our residents know where to find this software in the Medical Cybrary. I'll also inform the software vendor of our intent not to renew our 6 user license here at the residency."


(By the way, a recurring theme in some of the shorter thanks is the speed with which I got an article through ILL; it's become so routine that I don't always take the time to thank the lenders who made it possible by scanning and e-mailing their articles instead of photocopying and snail-mailing them. So let me say it now: THANK YOU!)

A favorite incident currently in my memory came yesterday. Last week one of our radiologists requested several journal articles, two book chapters, and a book for a paper he's writing. All but one chapter and the book had been e-mailed, and I had forwarded them to him; the last chapter and the book came in yesterday's mail. I was going to leave them in his office on my way home; but on the way to lunch I saw him in the courtyard. So I went back to the Library, got his items and a survey form, and caught up with him

in the hallway. He saw me and thanked me for all the articles I'd sent, THEN saw what I had in my hand. His eyes lit up. "And there's more!!!"

Service doesn't have to be strictly library services. One day a student nurse who was going to shadow one of our Birthing Center nurses crossed the street with me, then asked for directions to the unit. I led her there instead, to which she said, "I didn't want to take you away from what you were doing." I told her that what everybody at PVHS is doing includes getting people where they need to go. She replied, "That's why you're a Magnet hospital and [another hospital she had worked at] isn't." Our Grounds manager had bought metal tables and chairs for the courtyard outside our cafeteria; one morning when I ran into him there I relayed some praise for the new chairs I'd overheard at lunch the day before. He said I'd made his day. For all my creations in various arts, my favorite thing to make is someone's day. Just the other day I came out to catch my parking shuttle – two of our lots are slowly becoming an office building and a parking garage, so we're using two offsite lots instead – and found that our hospital CEO had just missed his shuttle. There was still time, and I told him so, for him to walk across a nearby street while the shuttle exited the parking lot, and the drivers had always picked me up on the street when I did that. He caught his shuttle.

All these little services are advocacy. Whatever comes of them may remain to be seen; at the same time, the thanks are rewards in themselves. They make my day. Earn them, watch for them, save them. Remember what a benefit you are. I'd like to close with something from one of my nursing committee mates: "Thank you Jerry, I really appreciate how you take the lead and search things out for us so quickly. We are really fortunate to have a medical librarian!!!"

1. Marshall JG. The impact of the hospital library on clinical decision making: the Rochester study. Bull Med Libr Assoc. 1992 Apr;80(2):169-78. <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/articlerender.fcgi?tool=pubmed&pubmedid=1600426> 

## Research Committee—Making Progress

### Claire Hamasu, MLS

#### Research Committee Chair

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The MCMLA Research Committee just finished one of its priorities – supporting participation in the Benchmarking Survey. We did better than many chapters but still wish that there had been a lot more participation. The benchmarking data provides information to establish how your library relates to another and can be used to garner support from administration to improve services. The Research Committee members brainstormed a lot of ideas to encourage support. We thought the most feasible, in the amount of time we had to pull it off, was to offer a flash drive to all who provided data. Thirty-five flash drives were mailed out at the end of April. Congratulations to all the libraries at the following institutions for contributing to the MLA Benchmarking Survey:

- A.T. Still University/KCOM
- Arc of Denver
- Children's Mercy Hospital
- Campbell County Memorial Hospital
- Cox Health System
- Denver Medical Library
- Exempla St. Joseph Hospital
- Gambro, Inc.
- Graceland University
- Midwest Research Institute
- National Jewish Medical & Research Center
- Newton Medical Center
- North Colorado Medical Center
- Penrose-St. Francis Health Services
- Porter Adventist Hospital
- Poudre Valley Hospital
- Primary Children's Medical Center
- Providence Medical Center
- Regional West Medical Center
- Rocky Mountain Univ. of Health Professions
- St. Anthony Hospital
- St. Elizabeth Regional Med. Center
- St. John's Health System
- St. John's Mercy Medical Center

- St. Louis Children's Hospital
- St. Luke's Hospital
- Stormont-Vail Healthcare
- The Children's Hospital
- Univ. of Missouri - St. Louis
- University of Missouri - Columbia
- VA Medical Center - Cheyenne
- VA Medical Center - Grand Junction
- VA Medical Center – Omaha
- Via Christi Regional Medical Center
- Wyoming Institute for Disabilities

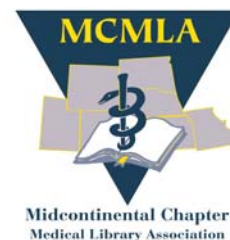
The Research Committee is also assisting with the MCMLA Annual Meeting. We're always thinking of ways to encourage and improve the research going on in the region. This year we proposed that Connie Schardt's *EBM: Introduction to Study Design and Critical Appraisal* be offered at the meeting. We are pleased that the Education Committee liked our suggestion and delighted that Ms. Schardt has agreed to teach her workshop. We will also be reviewing the abstracts submitted for paper and poster sessions and be awarding the best research paper and best research poster presented at the meeting. (Submitted by Brenda R. Pfannenstiel) 

### Publication Statement

MCMLA Express is a publication of the Midcontinental Chapter of the Medical Library Association. It is published four times per year in February, May, August, and November.

#### Committee Members:

Heather Brown: Editor  
Brenda Pfannenstiel  
Amanda Sprochi  
Beth Tweed



## RML Update

### Amanda Sprochi

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A slate of programs is being presented by Regional Library Liaisons and the Associate Director of the NN/LM at this year's MLA Annual Meeting in Chicago. They include both presentation and continuing education courses:

### Presentations:

Sunday May 18  
High Tech High Touch: Sharing Staff at a Distance  
Sharon Dennis, Claire Hamasu and Heidi Sandstrom, Associate Director, NN/LM PSR

Monday, May 19  
Demonstrating Effectiveness from Planning to Outcomes: One Regional Medical Library's Story  
Betsy Kelly & Claire Hamasu

Tuesday, May 20  
A Calculator for Measuring the Impact of Health Sciences Libraries and Librarians  
Barbara B. Jones & Betsy Kelly

Interdisciplinary Clinical Team Experience: Bridging the Education Gap  
Joan M. Stoddart (Co-Author)

### Continuing Education Courses:


Saturday, May 17  
Getting Started with Information Outreaching Minority Communities  
Siobhan Champ-Blackwell

Wednesday May 21  
Introduction to Blogs and Wikis  
Sharon Dennis

For more information, please see the MLA Annual Meeting website at <http://www.mlanet.org/am/>

### Other items:

Jim Honour is the new MidContinental Region's RML Wyoming Liaison. He works through University of Wyoming and can be contacted at [jhonour@uwyo.edu](mailto:jhonour@uwyo.edu). (Submitted by Claire Hamasu via the MCMLA listserv)

Jean Shipman has accepted the position of director for the Eccles Health Sciences Library and NN/LM MidContinental Region. Ms. Shipman is currently director of the Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences at Virginia Commonwealth University. She is past-president of the Medical Library Association and current member of the New England Journal of Medicine Library Advisory Board and the Journal of Electronic Resources in Medical Libraries Editorial Board. Ms. Shipman is directing the NLM funded "MLA Health Information Literacy Research Project" as one of its principal investigators. You will begin encountering our new director starting, October 1, 2008, her first day of work. (Submitted by Claire Hamasu via the Midcontinental Region News on the MCMLA listserv) 

### News Briefs

Stormont-Vail Healthcare Stauffer Health Sciences Library in Topeka, Kansas was recently chosen as one of only nine hospital libraries in the U.S. and Canada to pilot a health information literacy curriculum through the MLA Health Information Literacy Research Project. For more information about the project, go to [http://www.mlanet.org/resources/healthlit/hil\\_project.html](http://www.mlanet.org/resources/healthlit/hil_project.html). (Submitted by Kelly Klinke via the MCMLA listserv)

Proposed MCMLA Bylaws changes have been approved by the MCMLA Bylaws Committee and have been sent to MLA for their approval. (Submitted by Brenda R. Pfannenstiel)

## From the Archives....

### Amanda Sprochi

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Sue Fleming from the Archives section has been gathering minutes from every MCMLA business meeting. She has compiled highlights from the minutes for a short history and timeline of the MCMLA Chapter. This issue we are featuring the years 1968-1980.

(Part I Chapter Highlights)

April 22, 1968 – Representatives from CO, KS, MO, NE, SD, and UT met at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, MO and agreed to organize as the Central States Regional Medical Library Group (CSRMLG). Nina Matheson, Chair.

July 1969 – Fourteen institutions signed a formal agreement and submitted a grant application to the NLM for the establishment of an RML. There are now eleven regions. This would be the last and defined by existing areas.

December 5, 1969 – Meeting held at St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO. Dr. Rogers proposed the Group “cease to exist as a body of libraries and become an organization of librarians”. Modifications of By-laws were made to meet the NLM requirements for organizing a Regional Medical Library. Omaha, NE will be the new RML headquarters and host the next meeting. Dr. Frank B. Rogers, Chair.

January 1970 - Midcontinental Regional Medical Library Program (RML) announces start of services to 500 Libraries in the region.

November 23, 1970 – The second edition of the Union list of serials was distributed.

December 12, 1970 – Meeting held at St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO. The CSRMLG

disbanded and reorganized as Midcontinental Regional Medical Library Group (MCRMLG). MCRMLG passes motion to seek Medical Library Association Chapter status. Each person present gave a dollar in dues to cover expenses in the coming year. Bernice Hetzner, Chair.

October 5, 1971 – The meeting was held in conjunction with the dedication of the new Eccles Library of the Medical Sciences in Salt Lake City, UT. A schedule was announced for future annual meetings for the next four years. There was discussion of medical libraries being forced to cancel subscriptions for economic reasons. Robert Braude suggested implementation of a canceled title list. Estelle Brodman, Chair.

October 5, 1972 – Meeting held at the University of Missouri, Columbia, MO. Secretary-Treasurer reported a balance on hand of \$55.00 with expenses of \$12.50 for postage. Washington University Medical School Library absorbed all other expenses. Robert Braude suggested inviting not only members of the MCRMLG but other medical librarians in the region as well. Dean Schmidt, Chair

October 6, 1973 – The meeting was held in the Writers’ Manor Hotel, Denver, CO. Robert Braude suggested a study to determine a possible dues structure and methods of financing future meetings. Doris Borlef asked for future program suggestions for the next meeting. Priscilla Mayden , Chair.

October 5, 1974 – The meeting was hosted in St. Louis, MO. There were 141 dues and registration questionnaires returned by the membership. 22 opposed any dues. 39 voted for \$5.00 dues and 57 votes for \$5.00 registrations. A By-laws Committee was appointed to look at the By-laws for a potential change. Ann Marie Corry, Chair.

October 18, 1975 – The meeting was held in Kansas City, MO. By-laws Committee made a section-by-section presentation of proposed changes in the By-laws.

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A report on the Study of MLA Group Structure was given by the Ad Hoc Committee. There was a recommendation for a special committee to study the re-direction of the MCRML Group for next year. Marjorie Wannarka, Chair

February 1976 – First membership dues of \$5 per year was initiated.

October 9, 1976 – The meeting was held in Omaha, NE. Revisions to the By-laws accepted as read. Membership cards were discussed. It was suggested that a group profile survey be sent out with the dues statement notices. Bill Leavens, Chair.

April 1977 – RML ILL fees of \$1.50 per item increased to \$2 in one year.

August 13, 1977 – The meeting was held in Vermillion, SD. The Profile survey results have been compiled. 725 surveys were distributed. 174 surveys were returned at a 24% response rate. The Group was asked to consider a joint meeting between MCRMLG and the Midwest Regional Medical Library Group to be held in St. Louis in 1980. Dr. Estelle Brodman's presence was acknowledged as well as the contribution she has made to the MCRML Group during the past 10 years. Trenton Boyd, Chair.

September 22, 1978 – The meeting was held in Snowbird, UT. New Union List Committee (to study feasibility and time frame for production and distribution of the Midcontinental Union List of Serials) report was given by Wayne Peay, Committee Chair. There was discussion of a MCRMLG/RML Liaison Committee Charge. Emma Jean Mckinnen, Chair.

February 1979 – First issue of the MCRMLG Express newsletter was published. Mariann Gardiner, Editor.

October 27, 1979 – The meeting was held at the Holiday Inn Plaza in Wichita, KS. Karen Butter, Chair.

October 4, 1980 – The meeting was held in St. Louis, MO, A Joint Meeting with the Midwest Regional Medical Library Group. Vote for a name change from Midcontinental Regional Medical Library Group to Midcontinental Chapter of the Medical Library Association (MCMLA). Sandra Arneson, Chair.

*In the next issue of the Express: 1981-present. *



**Hotel reservations now being accepted!**

Group rate of \$79 is only available by calling the hotel in Cody. The code is "MLA."

Holiday Inn, 1-800-527-5544, ext. 635.


## News from Chapter Council

**Paula Raimondo**

*Chair of Chapter Council*

Section Council Composition Review Task Force was formed to review the structure and function of Section Council. The Task Force has recommended a reorganization for the Council. If the bylaws are approved by MLA membership, Section Council will be comprised of section chairs and past-chairs. There will no longer be additional Section Council representatives. The recommended term of office on Section Council would be two years.

As of January 2008, membership in MLA totals 4,075, a slight increase from the January 2007 figure of 4,069. In May, 2007 the Membership Committee decided to produce a new membership survey. The last survey was conducted in 2003-2004 and provided valuable insight into what our members wanted to see changed and/or added to enrich their membership experience. The revised survey was promoted in MLA Focus and as of January 16, 2008, 578 members had responded. The survey ended January 31, 2008 and the results will be available shortly. The Membership Core Committee and MLA will use the results to develop programs for the retention and recruitment of members.

The New Members/First Time Attendees breakfast is being planned for Chicago. Based on feedback from previous meetings, the 2008 program will be more interactive and less speaker-intensive, freeing up time for new members to network. Clickers will be distributed to the new members so they can answer questions and see the overall results in real time. The goal is to provide a fun way of educating new members and first time attendees on meeting logistics, programming and other MLA information. Representatives from sections, chapters and special interest groups will attend and there will be a presidential address, as is custom. Lucretia McClure will once again share her Pearls of Wisdom. New members or first-timers in the MCMLA chapter are strongly encouraged to attend. *(Submitted via the MCMLA Listserv by Marie Reidelbach and Stephanie Weldon, Chapter Council Representatives)* 

## MCMLA Members Corner Profiles of New MCMLA Members

**Steve Rauch**

**Medical Librarian**

**Medical & Consumer Health Library**

Community Hospital

Grand Junction, Colorado

MCMLA welcomes Steve Rauch, the new medical librarian in the Medical and Consumer Health Library at Community Hospital in Grand Junction, Colorado. Steve has a BA in political theory from Marlboro College in Marlboro, Vermont and received his MLS from the University of Maryland in 1987.

Steve began his career in medical librarianship in 1988 at Memorial Hospital in Colorado Spring, CO. He then moved to Merle West Medical Center in Merle West, Oregon, which was the first institution to receive internet connectivity funding and the first hospital connected. He continued his interest in network information resources with the University of Washington Health Sciences Library and served there in several capacities. Prior to his hiring at Community Hospital he worked as a freelance web design consultant.

Steve is married and in his free time he enjoys gardening and outdoor activities. He joked that he has to stay employed to pay for the tuition to private colleges for his two children.

He has a strong interest in the liberal arts and says his MLS affords him the opportunity to keep informed on a wide variety of subjects. He also values being able to help people find information that can literally change their lives.

He is looking forward to networking with other MCMLA members and gaining knowledge about available resources. *(Submitted by Michlene Mankin)*

