

## ACTEA Librarians eNews #4, Feb 2003

Greetings fellow librarians/information workers,

I hope that you are well and truly into the New Year, and that 2002 has proved to be challenging and rewarding so far.

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### 1. Registration for East Africa library staff training

Have you registered for the ACTEA East Africa Library Staff Training Institute? Each session is limited to 32 participants.

The LSTI will be held at Daystar University in Kenya. Here's a summary of some of the topics:

July 13-20: BASIC TRAINING

Designed for untrained librarians, learn the basics of: 1. Cataloguing and classification 2. Managing your library 3. Answering reference questions 4. The nitty gritty of administration and operations.

Library professionals with years of experience in the field will facilitate. Obtain several practical manuals and hand-outs that will help you on a daily basis.

July 20-27: TECHNOLOGY IN THE LIBRARY

Designed for experienced librarians and those who have basic computer knowledge: 1. Learn how to search the internet 2. Practice techniques in Boolean searching of full-text journals and reference materials on CD's 3. Learn how to do E-mail; the basics of MARC, (the international cataloguing standard) 4. Practice working with library automation programs and retrospective conversion. 5. Take home sample programs to continue learning, PLUS valuable hand-outs and lists of recommended internet sites and reference CD's.

Total cost for each LSTI is US\$140, and there are subsidies available for ACTEA-related schools (including active Correspondent members) located in East Africa. Pre-registration is \$67 US dollars made out to NEGST and sent to Phyllis Masso, Daystar University P.O. Box 44400 Nairobi, Kenya.

Pre-registration must be received by 5 June. Contact Phyllis Masso at [phyllism@gatewayonline.co.ke](mailto:phyllism@gatewayonline.co.ke) for a pre-registration form, more information or questions.

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### 2. Tips on caring for books

Remove dust frequently. Wipe each book with a soft clean cloth and open the book to shake out the dust. Keep books dry. Silverfish love damp paper! To discourage silverfish clean your shelves with a solution of borax and water. After you have dried shelves thoroughly, sprinkle a little borax powder on the back of the shelves to discourage pests.

If a book smells musty, place it in a plastic bag with some bicarbonate of soda; shake and leave in the bag overnight. Remove the book and shake well. Stand upright in the sun for a while. Sometimes the gentle use of a hair drier on an open book can help.

Any more useful, low tech tips out there?

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### 3. News from fellow librarians

Mrs Martha Masona is the librarian at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Lusaka, Zambia. Martha writes, "I trained as a secretary initially. My husband was already working as a lecturer at the Baptist Theological Seminary when the Principal asked if I would be prepared to help out with administrative work at the college. I accepted the offer." Martha was initially employed to help type catalogue cards. She found her niche in life! The Librarian-in-charge resigned and Martha was thrown in the deep end to act as librarian until a missionary replacement was found. This never happened, and Martha became the permanent librarian.

Although Martha received a good deal of training for the position from the previous incumbent, there were some things she could not do (e.g., classification). This is where ACTEA came to her rescue! Martha attended ACTEA workshops for librarians in Swaziland and Nairobi and is now able to run a library efficiently and with confidence. She says, "I just want to encourage those who are like I was to make an effort to attend the workshops organised by ACTEA, you'll benefit a lot."

Martha's address: Baptist Theological Seminary of Zambia, P.O. Box 320034, Woodlands, Lusaka, Zambia. Phone: 260-1-260364 (office). Email <baptsem@zamnet.zm>

Joan Sanderson, Librarian at the Theological College of Central Africa (Zambia) writes, "For the past 20 years our library has been housed in an office, a classroom and an extended classroom. As the college continues to expand (we now have 51 students), we find the need to move again. There are proposals for a library extension. In the initial stages there are so many factors to consider; shelf arrangement, offices facilities, study areas, furniture, security, etc. This could be a daunting task, but I have done it once before, when the library at the Theological College of Zimbabwe in Bulawayo moved. If anyone reading this has creative ideas I would be very happy to receive them.

In the meantime we find the pressure of needing so many copies of books which are being used as textbooks. How do other librarians cope with heavy demands? Do you have a separate budget for Library and textbook collections? How do you loan the books which are in heaviest demand? Let's share our thoughts."

You can contact Joan by email at <sanderson@zamtel.zm>

Thanks so much for these contributions, Martha and Joan!

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### 4. Publisher of African theological textbooks

Are you looking for evangelical theological textbooks that are relevant, affordable, and contextual? Check out Africa Christian Textbooks in Jos, Nigeria.

Write for their catalogue. They have an interesting array of textbooks on offer with a distinctly African flavour at really reasonable prices. Their services include Book Publishing, Book Importing and Exporting, Bookselling, and Library Support Services.

ACTS started in 1991 when participants in an ACTEA West Africa regional conference discussed ways of obtaining vitally needed textbooks and other theological books which were unavailable in Nigeria at that time.

Contact: ACTS Bookshop, PO Box 64, Bukuru, Plateau State, Nigeria. Or by email: acts@hisen.org

Do you know of other such publishers in Africa? Let us know.

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## 5. Phyllis Masso on library automation

Many schools are considering using computers in maintaining their catalogue and assisting with circulation and other library tasks. How do you choose the best software programme for your situation? In her column for this issue Phyllis Masso, our library consultant in Nairobi, tells us the right questions to ask.

Is the price for a site license or a limited number of computers? If not, how much extra must you pay for networking? Are there discounts for branch libraries? How much is the annual support fee? How much is training (including travel and accommodations)? What is included in the core price? Do you need to pay extra for other essentials?

Does it meet international standards including full MARC format?

Is it user-friendly? (If possible, see a demo version.) How easy is it to enter the cataloguing information; to circulate a book (renew, return, hold)?

Does the search strategy allow combining of terms from different fields using Boolean logic (and, or, not), e.g., search for a specific title and author simultaneously? Is it fast? What does it use for a search engine? Must you pay extra for the search engine? What fields are searchable?

Is it modular so that libraries that do not need all modules can leave out ones that they don't need such as Serials and Acquisitions? Are the modules integrated? I.e., does circulation work together with cataloguing so that as soon as you enter a book in the catalogue, it is available for circulation without your needing to somehow transfer that information to the circulation module?

Does the company have a strong, stable history? Is it a subsidiary of another company or part of a merger? If so, are these other companies stable and reputable? (You can request the company to provide you with this information.)

Is the company interested in marketing in Africa? Do they have an International market?

Is there local support personnel, or does the company do a good job of supporting through e-mails? (Contact some libraries now using the product.)

Does the programme run on Windows or NT, or does it require the more expensive and complex UNIX platform? Do you have the support personnel required to manage the IT problems that will develop? (Don't choose a UNIX based programme if you don't have IT people trained in UNIX.)

Is it password-protected at every level so that individual users can have different levels of access?

Are there many reports available including statistics, overdues, inventory etc? Are they easy to use?

Can you import and export information stored in other formats into/out of the programme such as lists of patrons, bibliographic records stored in other formats, etc? Can you export the data once it is stored so that if you choose another programme later on, you can avoid re-entering data? (This is important if you already are using another automation programme or have stored the information in databases such as Access or Librarians Helper.) Do you need to pay extra for this feature? If so, how much?

Can the database be part of a union catalogue, so you can network? Can it be put on the internet?

Is the programme able to grow with your library? How many records can it handle?

Can it work with barcodes? (This greatly speeds up circulation, inventory, etc.) Can you

have more than one database such as textbook loan, equipment, etc?

Can you access other programmes easily from the computer on which the programme is stored, or is the product turn-key only? In other words, can a patron search the catalogue and also access CDs or word processing, for instance, from the same computer?

Can the circulation module handle short-term loans (important if you have a Reserve section where books are circulated for only one or two hours at a time)?

Can the programme handle diacritical markings for use with languages other than English? If need be, does the programme work in other languages? Do you pay extra for this feature?

Does the programme have a local authority file so that as you are cataloguing you can easily check such things as your name and subject authorities?

Can you print search results, catalogue cards (if you still intend to use them) labels, barcodes, etc?

Does the circulation module allow you to charge fines, forgive fines, etc? Are they figured automatically?

Does the programme keep a history of past events such as who had the book checked out last?

Can a patron check on his own status to see if he has books signed out, owes fines, etc?

Phyllis adds, "Choosing a programme can be a lengthy process. We found it helpful to work together as a group of librarians from different libraries. All of the above criteria may not be necessary for your particular library. Think in terms of networking and plan for the future. Don't be short-sighted."

A last word, "every automation programme requires annual support fees, and you must be able to sustain your purchase. Nobody in your organisation will be happy with you if a large percentage of your annual budget will not be used to purchase books and materials because you need it for support fees!"

Let us know about your experience in choosing a software programme for your library? Do you like what you've found? What tasks are you using it for? Are you thinking about automating, but have some questions or doubts?

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## 6. Theological librarians and the internet

Theological Librarians and the Internet: Implication for Practice by Mark Stover (editor)  
Haworth Press, ISBN: 0789013428; (August 2001) Paperback: (August 2001) List Price: \$24.95

Co-published simultaneously as a double issue of the Journal of Religious and Theological Information, this work explores and discusses the effects of new technology on theological libraries and librarians. Main topics include online journals and catalogs, distance education with Web courses, homiletics, liturgics, Christian art on the Web, library Web site design, internet resources for Christian history, and a Jewish Internet Tutorial. Extensive references for some of the articles will prove useful. This resource will be used by faculty, librarians, researchers, and students of religion to locate and evaluate Web resources. Since nothing was added to the periodical articles, this reviewer finds the purchase price rather high.

Review by Susan Awe, American Library Association

Well, friends, this edition of ACTEA Librarians eNews has relied totally on your contributions, and that is as it should be! I am only your "humble" editor!

God bless, and I look forward to receiving your contributions for the next edition.

David Fitz-Patrick Librarian, Bible Institute of South Africa

The mission of ACTEA is to promote quality evangelical theological education in Africa by providing supporting services, facilitating academic recognition, and fostering continental and inter-continental cooperation.

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