

From the President

Dave Fergusson, President

During the past two years, I have tried to serve N.C.L.A. well as President and have tried to communicate to the membership about relevant issues. The Executive Board has made great strides to strengthen our Association, and we have tried to make sure you, the members, get real value from your membership. I have enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity.

Now, if you think that my last column is going to be serious and insightful, then you have obviously Cuttered the wrong spine. I'm going to use this opportunity to jump into the old N.C.L.A. Time Machine to visit 2012 A.D. Join me if you will.

It's 2012. Let's Visit the Library!

You've finally come back to your hometown, Barbecue, North Carolina, for your 35th high school reunion. You can't wait to visit a few of your favorite libraries in town. When you left the library profession to become the archivist of North Carolina's newly formed American League Baseball Club, the Triad Y'all, you thought you'd never look back. But you kept up your membership in N.C.BB&TL A., and you miss libraries.

You want to visit the new Barbecue High School first, but your sister, who never left town, said they still had no school library. Years ago, they wouldn't pay for one since money was desperately needed for a stadium. They did finally hire a media center coordinator four years ago with an electronics major and degrees in systems analysis and marketing. Her six hours in librarianship actually led all candidates interviewed. The kids loved the way she kept the automated system humming, but it seems that recently a couple of them had apparently asked her to recommend some novels to read and really embarrassed her in public. Some parents actually complained at the next PTA meeting, but fortunately, as soon as the school's projector was fixed, the meeting quickly reverted to viewing a holograph on the upcoming fund raising campaign to buy the school heating oil. The incident died of neglect.

Anyway, the students accessed the school's collection of forty titles digitally. The parents loved the collection, not because certain other titles might prove objectionable, but because its small size made life so darn simple! The average parent was working six jobs now in order to meet expenses, such as buying Nike shoes!

Your visit to the grandiose and recently constructed Jesse Helms Library on the campus of the University is your first real stop. Because of the Senator's general opposition to public financing, the building was funded by the sale of "seat licenses," an idea made popular back when the old Charlotte Panthers football stadium was built, before the team moved to respectively, Houston, Cleveland, Mexico City, Branson, Mo., and their current home, Oslo, Norway. Since the old undergraduate library had become obsolete*, renovating that traditional building fit in with the plans of the Helms Library very well. This library would be immune to the fear of students' lawsuits for malpractice, a major factor in the elimination of the staffed undergrad library a few years back (the students-as-consumer's movement you know). With conservatives being opposed to frivolous lawsuits, the Helms staff felt quite secure.

Last stop today, the B.P.L., the Public Library where you cut your teeth shelf reading as a teenager. *Shelf* reading??! It's certainly different now. Nothing like the fiction kiosks, where you select digital novels, existed then. Now you insert novels into your personal, paper-like MSbook, select font style and size, and start reading — that is if you don't have the new "Content Projection Glasses" (CPG's) which project the words before your eyes as you jog, cook, or even drive.

Pat Folio, the new Library Director (real title: Library & Development Director) has been very successful since 2008. People love The Gap Kids Collection of Books (actual paper books)! Ben & Jerry's on the second floor has literally paid for *Biographies Online*, which has phone and video links to any actual subjects who are alive. Pat has even gotten corporate funding to renovate the decaying Microsoft Branches. Since the slight economic downturn in 2002, the Assistant Director spends all of her time supervising the 46% of the staff made up of workers assigned as a result of the latest welfare reform bill. You have kept up your membership in the Friends group, and the moneymaking Friends-Chilton Auto Shop on the ground floor is both impressive and lucrative.

At day's end, it's good that the changes in libraries impress you, because your employer, the Y'all, has been bought by a conglomerate in Madison, Wisconsin, and a recent job offer from Harry Tuchmayer, the "Old Man" of *North Carolina Libraries* is looking pretty good,

*Students accessed all information on the antiquated NCLIVE from their dorms or cars digitally. Naturally, all former library staff members were assigned to cater to the faculty, one librarian for every four professors.