North American Serials Interest Group

NASIG Newsletter

Vol. 28, no. 4 December 2013 eISSN 1542-3417

Profile of Paula Sullenger, Head of Electronic Resources and Serials Services, Auburn University

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Paula Sullenger serves this year as NASIG's archivist, having been the archivist in training with Peter Whiting last year. Her membership on the Continuing Education Committee was from 2011-2013, and before that she was a member of the Nominations and Elections Committee (2009-2011). Paula has also been a member of NASIG's Regional Council (1999-2003) and served as State Membership Coordinator from 1996- 1998.

Outside NASIG, Paula is an active member of the Alabama Library Association and was appointed Visiting Program Officer during the 2011-2012 academic year for the Cooperative Journal Retention Project of the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (now a joint program with ASERL and WCLC called Scholars Trust).

Librarianship is Paula's first career. She started working in her high school library, was hooked immediately, and never seriously considered any other line of work. Paula worked in her local public library after high school where she discovered cataloging and technical services (!). While attending the University of Alabama at Birmingham as an undergraduate, Paula worked in the Sterne Library and decided that she wanted to stay with academic libraries. Upon receiving her Bachelor's degree in History, she made the move to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to work on her MSLS.

One of the courses Paula took at UNC focused on serials management. Her instructor, Marcia Tuttle, talked about NASIG in that class, leading Paula to join the organization early on in her career. Another key factor in her professional education was working an internship at UNC's Davis Library with Frieda Rosenberg. This internship made her fall in love with serials cataloging, and after her graduation in 1992, Paula was fortunate enough to land a serials cataloging position at Auburn. She has been an Auburn Tiger ever since, moving to Serials Acquisitions in 1997 and becoming the department head for Acquisitions in 2007. Her current title is Department Head, Electronic Resources & Serials Services.

When asked what part of her job she enjoys most and why, Paula replies, "I really like the interactions I have with people. In my role I supervise a department, but I also interact with almost every other department so I

see a lot of people most days. I take a shift or two each semester on our reference desk and get to see students and get to work closely with our public service librarians."

What she likes least, she says, is "being the bearer of bad tidings," of things like "ugly price increases, unreasonable use restrictions, budget shortfalls…but it's just a part of the job that has to be done." The negative parts aside, overall Paula enjoys her work and has continued to grow as a leader not only in the library but also in service to her university.

In addition to being a member of the Library Leadership Group at Auburn, Paula's service to Auburn Libraries has included working groups in serials, electronic resources, and WebCat, and chairing the 50th Anniversary Committee for the Ralph Brown Draughon Library. Active also in the University Senate, Paula has been a member of various Senate committees since 1995. Her Senate service ranges from Student Discipline to the Faculty Handbook Committee, and from the Rules Committee to a term as the University Senate Secretary. She has also served on the Faculty Welfare Committee and two terms on the Insurance and Benefits Committee.

Even with all of these service activities, Paula has remained an active researcher and writer. She has presented at several NASIG Conferences, at the Charleston Conference, and at Voyager User Group Meetings on topics related to serials cataloging, workflow, evaluation techniques, and the effects of tenure and publishing requirements on professional librarian turnover rates. Paula has published refereed articles on these same topics as well as writing about the acquisition of Latin American serials and contributing multiple conference reports for the NASIG *Conference Proceedings*.

Outside work, Paula volunteers with the Lee County Literacy Coalition, and currently serves on the Coalition Board. In addition to her literacy work, ask her about cycling! The Auburn Flyers Cycling Team lists her as their faculty advisor. She loves cycling, particularly bicycle touring, and last year took a three-week ride in Alaska. She says she is dying to go again. She also likes hiking, and recently joined an orienteering club to learn how to navigate off-trail, so that she can get into backcountry hiking without getting lost. Paula also describes herself as a dog person who volunteers most Saturdays at a local dog rescue organization. She has been working with a couple of feral puppies lately, trying to get them to like people so they will be adoptable.

In thinking about NASIG's professional support, Paula says that she has enjoyed each of the conferences she has attended, returning to Auburn "with new ideas and fresh perspectives." Her confidence in fellow serialists has been bolstered by the annual conferences: she says, "I've always felt that if I'm struggling with a serials issue, I'll find the answer at NASIG." When Paula went to Auburn in 1992 librarians were partially funded for one conference per year and NASIG was usually the one she picked. The Serials (now Electronic Resources) unit at Auburn has always been understaffed so she have not been as active in NASIG as she would have liked, but she says that she is really enjoying the Continuing Education Committee and its work developing webinars for practitioners.

When asked what changes she sees for serialists over the next five years, Paula says "I think we'll see the erosion of library-based subscriptions. The new JSTOR individual subscriptions are very cheap and should become popular. The ReadCube pay-per-view project with *Nature* is interesting, and I'm hoping Auburn will run a trial. I don't think our subscriptions will disappear

in five years, but I do think we'll see significant effects soon."

To the question how NASIG can help serialists be prepared for these changes, Paula answers, "Just keep doing what NASIG does: provide a place for exchanging ideas and coping mechanisms and keep the conversations going. I think that as long as something called a library exists, there will be a role for serialists."