



# Technically Speaking

The Newsletter of CATS

Fall/Winter 2006/7

Also in this issue:

- Presidential Meowings .....2
- Report from NYLA.....3

Elected Officers

Michael Aloï  
President

Tom Cohn  
Vice-President/  
President-Elect

Joyce Bogin  
Secretary

June Zinsley  
Treasurer

Past President  
Ted Gutmann

Board Members-at-Large  
Renée Capitanio (Publicity)  
Erwin Fox  
Cynthia Guzzo  
Mellissa Hinton  
(Membership)  
Susan Ketcham (Programs)  
Min Liu (Archives)  
John Richardson (SCLS  
Liaison)

Newsletter Editor  
Tom Cohn

## MP3s Revisited

By John Richardson

Back in April, I presented a CATS-sponsored program on MP3s and digital sound files. Since then several libraries have signed on with vendors who provide MP3 files, and many libraries circulate players alone or with MP3 files. Let's therefore revisit the scene. MP3 is not new. It allows users to store and transmit audio of near-CD-quality easily. It allows users to compress and decompress files into smaller bytes so that a user can download a song in minutes as opposed to hours. It allows a user to store hundreds of songs on their computer's hard disk without taking up too much space. A talking book could be compressed on a single CD-ROM. The only catch is that the user needs an MP3 player or a computer with MP3 software to decompress the file.

Another cautionary bit of advice – there are many players available but not all of them are compatible with e-audio vendors. Most users want to store these files on players that can go in their pockets for playing in the car, in the doctor's waiting room, on commuter trains, to the beach, etc. So check with the vendors for compatibility, especially if you want to circulate players.

It is very important that you

### *Technically Speaking's Featured Quotation*

“In fact, the services involving the operations and techniques for acquiring, recording, and preserving materials are among the oldest aspects of librarianship.”  
From *Technical Services in Libraries*, by Maurice F. Tauber and Associates, Columbia University Press (1953)

# Presidential Meowsings

By Michael Aloï

As the year winds down to a close, I am also wrapping up my year as president of CATS. First, I would like to express my appreciation to all of the members of the CATS Executive Board for their hard work and support during the past year. Their constant effort and dedication made things run very smoothly. I would also like to thank Tom Cohn, who has been by my side as Vice-President this past year, and who will be the president of CATS in 2007.

I hope that all of you who attended CATS programs and events this past year were rewarded with ideas and information you can put to good use in your own institutions. For those of you who weren't able to attend the programs, they included "MP3s: Another New Format to Deal With ... The Technical Services Experience", "RSS and XML for Libraries" (at the Long Island Library Conference), a two-part training session on Microsoft Access, our annual library tour, which visited Middle Country, Harborfields, and West Babylon Public Libraries, and three

sessions of our Cataloging Roundtable, where a cataloger can get just about any question answered (or at least we have fun trying!).

The roundtable will be returning in the spring, as will our popular Technical Services Open Forum, and another great program is in the works for the next Library Conference in May. As always, we strive to make our programs as interesting, fun, and useful as possible, and we can only do that with your help. Please let us know if there is a topic about which you would like us to develop a program, or think about joining the Executive Board and developing some programs yourself. We are always looking for new programs, new ideas, and new members.

Thanks for joining SCLA, and for choosing to be a member of CATS. An organization is only as good as its members, and we couldn't do it without you. Have a wonderful holiday season, and thanks for a great year!

—MP3s, continued

indicate that a player/software is needed when you provide access to MP3 files. Otherwise, you may find a patron who is confused, frustrated, or angry (or all three) at the circulation desk. If you are circulating a CD with mp3 files in it,



CATS President  
Mike Aloï

label the container. If you are cataloging those items in your library (not everyone does) make sure the "player/software" information is part of your catalog record. Again, patrons who borrow items via the OPAC may not want an MP3 version of the

**It's very important that you indicate that a player or software is needed.**

latest audio bestseller.

MP3 files are something your library should consider for purchase. They take up less physical space; patrons already have the players which are not expensive and are so portable. They are here to stay (for a while).



Some choice “photo ops” at last May’s Long Island Library Conference held at the Huntington Townhouse. *Above, L to R:* CATS officers June Zinsley, Joyce Bogin, and Ted Gutmann. *Below:* CATS board member and program chair Sue Ketcham.

## Report from NYLA

By Tom Cohn

I had the great good fortune to attend the New York Library Association (NYLA) conference in Saratoga Springs on November 1-4 as a Dewey Fellow. The association’s Section on Management on Information Resources and Technology (SMART), the statewide analogue of CATS, sponsored the fellowship and many of the programs I attended.

On my first day I participated in a preconference continuing

education workshop entitled “Cataloging 411” presented by Maggie Horn of the SUNY Office of Library and Information Services and John Myers of Union College. The workshop covered “CCCP.” Those with an interest in geopolitics may remember “CCCP” as an acronym for the former Soviet Union, but it also serves as a mnemonic device to remember the four major aspects of the enterprise: cataloging, communication (i.e., MARC), classification, and presentation (how the record looks in the PAC). SMART’s Rudi Weiss Lecture

was delivered by Jenny Levine of ALA. Jenny’s talk on new technology trends covered blogs, RSS, MP3s and MP4s, and wikis. In other words, the host of web-facilitated library services now grouped under the rubric “Library 2.0.”

My stroll around the exhibit floor brought me up to speed with such technology vendors as Overdrive, Innovative, and SIRSI/Dynix. I also attended an informative session sponsored by the Library Corporation (TLC) on their product AquaBrowser, an intelligent visual search engine that graphically organizes OPAC search terms to enable the user to obtain better search results.

A brief detour from the “techie track” took me to the Saratoga Public library for the morning session of “The Reading Child in the Modern World,” an exchange program between the sister cities of Albany and Tula, Russia. The teachers and librarians who spoke face some of the same problems we do (e.g., competition from T.V. and computer games!).

I would encourage all CATS members to consider joining NYLA’s SMART division and supporting the organization by attending the annual conference. You will meet librarians from around the Empire State, make new friends, and return home with many new ideas born of a unique four-day experience that’s both fatiguing and refreshing at once.

Calendar of Upcoming Events  
Tuesday, February 27, 2007:  
Cataloging Roundtable  
Wednesday, May 3, 2007:  
Long Island Library Conference

Computer and Technical Services Division  
Suffolk County Library Association  
c/o SCLS  
627 N. Sunrise Highway  
Bellport, NY 11713

E-mail: [aloim@dowling.edu](mailto:aloim@dowling.edu)

Visit us on the World Wide Web:  
<http://cats.suffolk.lib.ny.us>