

# ◆ DLS Newsletter ◆

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org/~distlearn/](http://caspianswitchinc.org/~distlearn/)

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## A Word from the Chair: Distance Unites Us

The Distance Learning Section, then known as the Extended Campus Library Services Section (ECLSS) was only one year old when the First Gulf War got underway in January 1991. "Distance" learning had a very different meaning to many of us then as the Internet and the Web had not significantly taken hold as an educational delivery mode. Thinking back on the early 1990s, besides physical

separation from our users, "distance" often represented "professional separation" -- separation from our traditional academic colleagues in that *we* and not *they* were the ones serving the students and often faculty who infrequently or never came to campus. However, there were several major outlets including the Off-Campus Library Services Conference and OFFCAMP that gave us a sense of community.

Within ACRL, the emergence of ECLSS -- first as a Discussion Group, then as a section -- and now as DLS was a galvanizing force for bringing us together and creating a sense of unity. It remains so

and only increases as the section grows. Whether you are a member of long standing; new to the section but professionally seasoned; or just beginning your career, DLS membership offers you a wide range of opportunities this year and in the years to come.

You can look forward to:



Distance Learning Section

• A Spring 2003 section membership survey to find out who we are, where we are in our careers, and what we are now doing as distance learning library professionals. Information gathered from this will guide the section's strategic planning, membership and communications efforts.

• The formation of a permanent "Social Events Planning Committee" (approved at ALA Midwinter Philadelphia) that would begin planning for section gatherings at forthcoming ALA conferences.

• A terrific, co-sponsored program at ALA Toronto titled, "Crossing Our

Borders: Partnering with Faculty and Instructional Designers in the Online Environment."

• A call for nominations for the first "Distance Learning Librarian of the Year Award" to be awarded annually at the ALA annual conferences beginning in 2004.

• A new section brochure to inform others of who we are as section and the value of membership.

• Our section's 15-Year Anniversary Celebration in 2005 at the ALA Chicago Conference.

As we find ourselves engaged in another Gulf War as the section turns 13, the term "distance" in our name reminds us how important it is to keep professional friendships and networking alive and to work as one in support of the education of so many others who rely on us even if they never see us.

-- Maryhelen Jones, DLS  
Chair (Florida State  
University)

## Web Notes

### TOOLS & SOFTWARE

StickIt [http://www.singerscreations.com/AboutStickIt.html]

This freeware utility will make your computer's desktop more like your actual desk - by allowing you to put "post-it" notes onto your computer desktop. StickIt allows you to customize the font, color, and size of each note; to choose to have the note always on top (i.e., floats above all open windows); and to copy the text of your note automatically to your clipboard. If you convince your colleagues to use StickIt too, you can send StickIt notes to each other as well.

TextAloud [http://www.applian.com/pc/TextAloud/]

This inexpensive software (\$29.95) allows you to easily create MP3 digital audio files from any plain text file. The MP3 files can then be played on almost any computer, MP3 player, or MP3-compatible handheld. A great tool for creating audio from text for users with disabilities - or just for students and faculty on the go!

Tiny URL [http://tinyurl.com/]

One of a number of free online tools that takes a long URL and shortens it to a manageable size so that won't break onto two lines in an e-mail. Tiny URL has a couple of extra nice features, though. The first is that it has a link you can drag into your browser's "Links" toolbar. Once you've done that, anytime you want to shorten the URL of the page you're viewing, just click on the Tiny URL button. Another excellent feature is that after creating your tiny URL, it automatically places the shortened URL on your clipboard - ready for pasting into an e-mail!

WatchIt [http://www.watchit.us/]

Another free online tool, WatchIt keeps an eye on whatever websites you choose and notifies you when changes are made to those sites. You can also add WatchIt buttons to your toolbar - one that adds the site you're viewing to your list of sites to watch, and another that takes you directly to your watch list so that you can change your settings or update your list.

Moreover [http://www.moreover.com/main\_site/solutions/pub\_feeds.html]

Keep your users up-to-date with customized news feeds. Moreover is a free tool that allows you to create dynamic, topical newsfeeds that can be embedded into your webpages. Your pages can have dynamic content without requiring you to constantly update them manually. Whether it's breaking news or a topical feed, your users will have instant access to current information.

### ONLINE ATLASES

Periodical Historical Atlas of Europe [http://www.euratlas.com/]

This online atlas presents maps showing the countries/states (and many cities) of Europe every first day of each centennial year from AD 1 to AD 2000. The maps are viewable by section or by the "big map" that shows the entire continent. The big map also lists separately the place names shown on the map. There is a CD-ROM version of the atlas, which has additional functionality.

OSSHE Historical & Cultural Atlas Resource [http://www.uoregon.edu/~atlas/]

This resource was developed cooperatively by the University of Oregon Department of History, the UO New Media Center, and the Department of Geography InfoGraphics Lab. While it is limited in scope (primarily the

history of Europe and the Near East up to the early medieval period and 18th & 19th century North America), the maps are great. Many of the maps feature interactive functionality (requires Shockwave plug-in) that allows the user to layer additional information onto the map.

GeographyIQ World Atlas [http://www.geographyiq.com/]

GeographyIQ is, technically, an atlas of the world, showing maps of countries. It has so much more information, though, that it may belong in a category all its own. Each entry for a country also includes facts and figures about the country (demographics, economy, etc.); information about the government and political system; historical and cultural information; climate and weather information; current currency exchange rates; and more! In addition, it has a section called "Rankings" where it ranks countries by various attributes including geography, economics, communications, etc. You can see the top 25, the bottom 25, or all in ascending or descending order.

Library of Congress Map Collections 1500-2002 [http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gmdhome.html]

Not to be left out is the Library of Congress map collection. Historical maps in another sense, this is an incredible collection of digitized maps from the LC collections. Like other American Memory projects, this one is detailed and in-depth. View maps from all eras of American history showing all kinds of geographical and cultural information.

-- Brian Mikesell (St. John's University)

## Off-Campus Library Services Conference

The Carefree Conference Resort is located in the small town of Carefree Arizona, ten minutes from Scottsdale Arizona. Carefree's mountain foothill setting, desert landscaping and Arizona ambiance provide a perfect setting for the Eleventh Off-Campus Library Services Conference May 5-7, 2004. Immerse yourself in professional library issues and networking with people who understand "what you really do." Relax around one of the many fire pits in the evening and enjoy the laid-back atmosphere.

The Off-Campus Library Services Conference is held every other year and has been in existence since 1982. It is sponsored by the Central Michigan University Libraries and the CMU College of Extended Learning. This international conference brings together librarians, administrators, and educators to discuss, study, demonstrate, and champion the technology, techniques and theories of providing library services for students not pursuing their education on a university campus. The Distance Learning Section of ACRL has been a big supporter and its members have contributed many excellent papers.

For current information about the conference, subscribe to the conference listserv. The traffic on this list will be low and will be used primarily to collect e-mail addresses for those who are interested in conference information.

To subscribe, send a message to: [LISTSERV@LISTSERV.CMICH.EDU](mailto:LISTSERV@LISTSERV.CMICH.EDU)  
In the message area type: subscribe OCLSCONF your first name your last name.

For example: subscribe OCLSCONF Jane Smith

Please visit our web site periodically at <http://ocls.cmich.edu/conference.htm>.

—Connie Hildebrant (Central Michigan University)

## Distance Learning Award

The Distance Learning Section Executive Board is pleased to announce that ACRL and ALA have tentatively approved a new Award, sponsored by Haworth Press. It will officially be named the "Haworth Press Distance Learning Librarian of the Year Award." The award will be given for the first time at the DL Section Program in Orlando, Florida at the 2004 ALA Annual Meeting. The year before, beginning with the ALA Conference in Toronto, will be used for nominations and preparations. Thanks to Haworth Press, the award carries with it a \$1000 award to the recipient, a plaque and memento of the occasion.

The award recognizes an individual's contribution to, impact on, and/or support for distance learning librarianship and library services including but not limited to: service to students and faculty, publications, training, innovation, leadership and for consultation services support to higher education students and programs beyond the traditional library boundaries: training of faculty and staff, advocacy at decision making levels, especially in funding and policy roles and work with outside agencies in support of student learning at a distance.

--Tom Abbott (University of Maine)

## Virtual Reference Discussion Group

"Staffing a Virtual Reference Service" was the title of the inaugural meeting of the RUSA/MARS Virtual Reference Discussion Group. So many people attended that it had to be moved to a ballroom. Participants sat at tables of eight with a facilitator at each table to facilitate the discussion. The general topic to start the discussion was: what model of virtual reference staffing libraries were using, successes, failures, and alternative yet to be tried.

There seemed to be as many models of virtual reference as institutions represented. Some libraries staffed with volunteers while others made it mandatory and treated it as second reference schedule. Participants from two consortia explained their shared services. Some expressed concern about knowing all of the databases and policies of other libraries. Various means of promoting the service were discussed: a highly visible web page icon, integrating VR into the course management software, radio ads, flyers to students, and bookmarks.

Some of the issues that were mentioned at other tables were: fear of technology, rapid change, and looking like an idiot; working from home; using volunteers vs. requiring staff to participate; using non-reference librarians to staff the service; staffing during extended hours to serve international patrons; the importance of reviewing transcripts; workloads and how to cope with them; staffing to provide an adequate number of hours of service; and how to evaluate the service.

—Susan Davis (Gallaudet University)

## Editors' Note

This *Newsletter*, committee meeting minutes, and Strategic Planning documents are available on the DLS Web site.

Please submit corrections to either editor ([nburich@ku.edu](mailto:nburich@ku.edu) or [fadevlin@ku.edu](mailto:fadevlin@ku.edu)).

## Distance Education Law and Copyright Issues

On Saturday, January 25, the ALA Washington Office and the ALA Office for Information Technology Policy jointly sponsored a Midwinter program entitled "Distance Education Law and Copyright Issues." The program was divided into two parts. In the first part, Kenneth Crews, Professor of Law and Library & Information Science at Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis, gave a presentation entitled, "The TEACH Act Revealed! And Various Other Irreverent Acts." In the second part of the program, Merriam Nisbet, ALA Legislative Counsel, and Jonathan Band, an ALA lobbyist with Morrison & Foerster, gave a brief overview of the variety of library, copyright, and technology related legislation being considered by Congress.

Professor Crews began his presentation by giving attendees a brief summary of the Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act. Crews believes that the Act is (1) a benefit to distance education library services, (2) a protection of copyright liability, (3) an opportunity for librarians, and (4) a responsibility for librarians. After his positive introduction, Crews next turned negative, pointing out some of the things that the TEACH Act is not—it is not the same as "Classroom Use;" it is not required; it is not automatic, it is not a panacea, and it is not "Fair Use."

Throughout his presentation, Crews emphasized the positive accomplishments of the TEACH Act—broadening opportunities to use copyrighted works in distance education, expanding the scope of usable materials, expanding the range of receiving locations, allowing digitization and storage under certain conditions, and

protecting librarians from liability under certain conditions. The TEACH Act recognizes the legitimate use of any work or performance in "reasonable and limited portions" and in "an amount comparable to that which is typically displayed in the course in a live classroom session." To comply with the Act, materials should be transmitted as an integral part of the class and directly related to teaching content.

Crews also emphasized, however, that, in order to take advantage of the TEACH Act, each educational institution must have in place a written copyright policy and must make copyright educational materials readily available. At each institution, copyright notices should be prominently posted to inform students and faculty about the restrictions on materials being used for classes. In addition, access to materials should be limited to enrolled students only, and when possible, technological controls should be used to prevent unrestricted downloading, copying, or further transmission of copyright-protected content.

In his conclusion, Crews pointed to several lingering problems with the TEACH Act:

- How strictly or loosely does one define "mediated instructional activities" or "class session" when dealing with distance education?
- How does the TEACH Act relate to electronic reserves?
- How does one deal with the repeated use of copyrighted material (semester after semester)?
- How does one deal with mixed delivery systems and multiple technologies being used for a single course?
- How will one deal with the inevitable technological developments in the future and the dilemmas they will create?

Following Crews' presentation on

the TEACH Act, Miram Nisbet and Jonathan Band discussed a number of library, copyright, and technology issues involved in legislation being considered by Congress. Among those issues (some bad, some good) were the following:

- A revision to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act that would favor copyright holders over users—it would establish Digital Rights Management (DRM), giving teeth to copyright holders who try to enforce their rights with no regard to legitimate "fair use."
- The establishment of technology security standards for digital media, authorizing the use of "demodulators" or "broadcast flags" that prevent the transmission of a work over another medium, especially over the Internet.
- A revision to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act that would require the labeling of copy-protected CDs (purchasers need to know of this embedded restriction before the purchase and currently are not warned in most cases).
- A revision to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act that would allow for the circumvention of technological protections embedded in works, if the purpose were for "lawful use" or "fair use."
- A revision to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act that would establish a "Consumer Technology Bill of Rights," providing for the right to make back up copies, the right to use content on different platforms, and the right to translate works into compatible formats.

-- Stephen H. Dew (University of Iowa)

## Electronic Reserves Discussion Group

"E-Reserves: Current Practices" theme at the midwinter meeting of the Electronic Reserves Discussion Group. Rebecca Martin, Northern Illinois University Libraries and co-chair of the discussion group, led off the presentations with "E-Reserves and Accessibility: Where to Begin". Rebecca recommended using federal and state accessibility standards as points of departure for developing institutional standards. She advised the audience to use validation services such as "Bobby" ([www.cast.org/bobby](http://www.cast.org/bobby)) to find accessibility flaws in web pages and to test pages in different browsers, such as Opera 6 and Lynx, to see how they look. Library staff who create web pages should also think carefully about help screen links and how they will or won't work with screen readers.

Alan Cornish, Systems Librarian, Washington State University Libraries, discussed features of CONTENT.dm, a database management software program. The Library collaborates with faculty in creating and maintaining the databases. CONTENT.dm can handle large databases better than a static web site and provides other benefits like metadata support and customizable interfaces. The databases that have been created to date, or are in the works, are photograph and image collections. Alan demonstrated how the software is used by faculty and library staff to create a database and the various ways students and researchers can use the databases.

Miriam Nesbit, one of ALA's legal counsels who specializes in copyright answered questions about the recently passed Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act, which contains provisions for fair use of copyrighted materials for distance learning environments. Her primary

message was that it is going to take the library world a while to figure out how to make use of the provisions. "We don't know a lot yet about how this is going to work out", she remarked. The ALA Washington Office's web site has a TEACH Act paper by Kenneth Crews ([www.ala.org/washoff](http://www.ala.org/washoff)). The ALA Office of Information Technology Policy will be putting out a paper with practical advice on how librarians can implement the provisions of the TEACH Act ([www.ala.org/oitp](http://www.ala.org/oitp)).

The final presenter was Lauren Esser, E-Reserves Librarian at Harvard College Library. Lauren conducted two student surveys in the past year to get feedback on electronic reserves use and satisfaction. Students liked e-reserves because of the convenience and access and they considered e-reserves to be a valuable service. Top problems were that readings were not available when assigned and students disliked reading from a screen. Another complaint was the slowness of downloading and printing. One question asked was whether students were more likely to read the assignments in e-reserve format and the majority of the responders said yes.

--Susan Davis (Gallaudet University)

## How to Join DLS

To join the Distance Learning Section, contact:

Membership Services  
ACRL  
50 Huron Street,  
Chicago, Illinois 60611  
1-800-545-2433 ext. 2521  
email: [acrl@ala.org](mailto:acrl@ala.org)

## Marketing E-Reference

E-Reference is a hot-ticket item in many libraries and is taking some libraries into uncharted areas. Libraries which have relied on word-of-mouth to spread news of their services are recognizing that e-reference has the potential to be an invaluable service to individuals who may never set foot into the library. To reach these individuals calls for marketing efforts, which may be new to many libraries.

Marketing involves the total service or product concept, design of the product and how it will be used, target audience, product placement, advertising (of course), and the priority of the product to the institution. If properly combined, these elements help to create a product or service that will be welcomed and actually used by the individuals for whom it is intended.

"If you build it they will come," was a great movie line but misleading as far as library services are concerned. A better phrase for our purpose would be, "Build it well, publicize it well, run it well and hope they come." The common themes discussed at ALA would go a long way to accomplish this.

\* Ease of use: The service should be as easy to use as possible. If the service is voice-chat, the download of required plug-ins should be automatic. Even many experienced users of the internet find downloading programs required to use a service somewhat forbidding. Inexperienced users hear of viruses and worse, and can be even more reluctant to follow directions they don't quite understand. If e-mail reference is used, the forms to be completed should be as simple as possible. Complicated forms

*(Continued on page 6)*

## What's In a Name?

In April 2002 I attended the 10<sup>th</sup> Off Campus Library Services conference in Cincinnati, OH. I led a pre-conference discussion on a controversial-sounding subject: "Is there such a thing as a distance education librarian anymore?"

I thought that because of the increasing number of distance students in North America, and because of the increase in distributed education (local students taking web-based courses), more and more "traditional" librarians would be used to dealing with distance students. I hypothesized that the DE librarians would agree.

Boy was I wrong!

One dozen distance education librarians attended this session, representing the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. No two librarians shared the exact same job title. Most had been involved in DE for at least several years and this was beneficial in allowing us to discuss changes that had occurred in this field over the past several years.

When we tried to determine what we did that our traditional colleagues didn't, we realized that the day-to-day operations were indeed similar to traditional library functions.

What we learned though was that DE librarians differ from traditional librarians. We tend to have interaction with the rest of the institution across the board in relation to distance education issues. Rather than liaise with one academic department, we find ourselves dealing with many, with Information Technology departments, and with other central support operations such as the Registrar's Office. Wherever the needs of distance education students are at stake, we are there.

We are on the cutting edge, and are usually the first in the library system to experiment with new software or course management systems such as Blackboard and

WebCT. The DE librarian often pioneers virtual reference before it's adopted at the main reference desk. This early adopter role often makes us teachers of our colleagues. We're even more comfortable with technology than our colleagues. A few DE librarians mentioned that they do things nobody else wants to. Often some time down the road, whatever that thing was suddenly becomes popular or necessary, and the DE librarian ends up with some good expertise.

DE librarians are advocates - for the needs of distance students, and for the role of the library in distance education programs. To be sure, traditional librarians are advocates too, but not for the exact same things, and that's what makes the DE librarian unique and still worthwhile.

Here's what we came up with when I asked what the DE librarian participants did that their more traditional colleagues didn't:

- Interaction with the rest of the university on distance education issues
- First to learn to do something (teach Blackboard to my colleagues)
- I do things nobody else wants to do
- Catalysts – willing to try new things, pushing the boundaries
- Advocates for distance students
- Advocating for the library having a place in distance education
- Coordinating cooperative agreements
- Involved in course development
- Someone to help online faculty

From the spirited discussion that ensued, I can only conclude that we DE librarians are not obsolete, and that we still play a valuable and different role than that of our traditional colleagues. What do you think?

--Paul R. Pival (University of Calgary)

## Marketing E-Ref.

*(Continued from page 5)*

requiring detailed information should be avoided. If more information is required to answer a question – respond with a request for the specific information needed.

\* **Publicity:** A well-designed and colorful button-link prominently placed on each and every library web page is a first step in publicizing an e-reference service. Brand recognition begins here. Local newspaper (including campus newspapers) may have an interest in doing a story on the service (it's new and high-tech) and may be willing to include articles at no cost to you. Advertisements should also be considered. Money for this purpose will depend on the institution's commitment to the service.

\* **Commitment to Service:** Twenty-four or forty-eight hours should be the maximum response time, with most questions responded to within an hour or so. Serious consideration should be given to providing evening and weekend service because they impress clients and demonstrate a commitment to service. Part of this commitment involves ensuring that the responses continue at a high quality. Discussion of the responses should be encouraged at reference meetings because the various ways of answering a particular question can suggest new methods for those participating in the service.

--P. Charles Livermore (St. John's University)

## Travelogue: Libraries and Librarians in Eastern Europe

I recently had the opportunity to visit City University's campuses and libraries in Slovakia and Bulgaria. CityU, based in Washington State, has been involved with the development of Western-style education in former Communist countries since soon after the fall of the Iron Curtain. Our European headquarters is in Bratislava, the capital of the Slovak Republic.

My journey had two main "action items" that had to be accomplished before my return. Together with our Dean of European Programs, I needed to interview and hire a new Library Director to serve our European operations, and I needed to know enough about what was going on in Bulgaria to prepare the library portion of the university's substantive change document for our accrediting body, the Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools.

In a more general sense, I needed to get to know the staff with whom I had been working for two years by e-mail and phone, and I needed to garner an understanding of the cultural and social context in which our CityU operations in Europe function. To do all this, I had three weeks.

Packing my suitcase eight times during the journey, I traveled back and forth between Bratislava and other locations, getting the lay of the land and learning as much as I could in those three weeks.

My first day in the country, I visited the graduate library school at Comenius University in Bratislava. I had contacted a faculty member there after seeing a recent article she had published. I met that day with the director of the program and two professors, including the author of the article I'd seen. They told me of how they are revising their curriculum in light of the political and cultural changes their country is experiencing. You can imagine that librarianship in an information-restrictive political system is much different than in an information-

free one. You can read more about their efforts, and about the research that members of the school are conducting in "Information Science Research Agenda in Slovakia: History and Emerging Vision," by Jela Steinerová. *Journal of The American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 54(1):81-86, 2003.

I spent time at CityU's annual faculty and staff retreat, held in the High Tatras, the picturesque mountain range in northern Slovakia. This served as an excellent beginning to my trip, since I was able to get to know a large number of our faculty and staff in an informal setting.

I visited our campus in Trenčín and saw the largest group of English-language holdings in the country—our 27,000-volume collection! I also visited a public library in that city.

Slovakia is beginning to boom with post-socialist economic development. Much renovation and restoration has been accomplished, and Bratislava has turned into a truly beautiful city. The malls, I guess, are the proof positive of their Westernization. In the two-level, city-block-size Polus City Centre, had I not seen the signs in Slovak, I would have never known that I wasn't in any mall in the U.S.

In Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, I was very fortunate to find that librarians are great networkers the world around. Based on a couple of leads that I had been given by the Comenius faculty, I was able to visit, all in one day, the director of the Central Library of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the Head of Acquisitions at the Bulgarian National Library (also president of their national librarians organization), staff at the Sofia University Library, and the head of

the British Council Library.

They were kind enough to give me the short course in the most vital pieces of information. I came away from the day knowing what English-language periodicals were published in the country, who the best subscription-jobber for local titles was, where to advertise when we were ready to hire a librarian, what the average salaries were, and much more—it was amazing. And every colleague offered to be of service via e-mail if needed in the future as well.

Our Bulgaria campus is in Pravetz, about a 45-minute drive from Sofia. It is a new program, and is in the infant stages of development. It was with great hope that I toured the tiny, almost-empty library and met the one library staffer, hoping that I will return in a year or two to see what CityU has developed in its place there to serve our students.

Bulgaria has been much slower to progress economically than Slovakia,

*(Continued on page 8)*

### Subscribing to OFFCAMP Listserv

The OFFCAMP Listserv has been established for "discussion about all aspects of service to remote users, including but not limited to branch campus service, state regional, national, and international academic programs and their associated constituents."

To subscribe to OFFCAMP, send an e-mail message to:

listserv@listserv.utk.edu

In the body of your message type:  
SUB OFFCAMP YOUR NAME

See the Web interface at: <http://listserv.utk.edu/archives/offcamp.html>

## Travelogue

*(Continued from page 7)*

and there are still many run-down and abandoned buildings, both in Sofia and throughout the countryside. Unemployment is rampant. However, CityU worked both with private parties and with the Bulgarian Ministry of Education to establish our enterprise there. The expectation of those Bulgarians involved with the endeavor is that by educating more of their young people in Western-style business practices, their country will begin to have the intellectual capital to grow and flourish.

I did accomplish what I set out to do—we found an excellent candidate for the Library Director position who begins April 1<sup>st</sup>, and I have already written my part of the Bulgarian accreditation document. But in three weeks, I was only able to scratch the surface in getting acquainted with this lovely part of the world and the many dedicated and talented people who make up the university and library communities there. I expect I may have to fit in a pleasure trip back to the area even before CityU sends me again. It will take that to satisfy the desire that arose in me to know better this new and interesting place that could not be taken in with such a brief encounter.

-- Verla Peterson (City University)

Note: See also my personal web site with photos and more information at <http://www.highlandsmusic.com/verla>

Distance Unites Us

In This Issue...

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