



International Association of Aquatic and Marine
Science Libraries and Information Centers

newsletter

SPECIAL EXECUTIVE BOARD EDITION

October 2001

FROM The Editors ...

This special Executive Board edition of the *IAMS LIC Newsletter* has been prepared for your consideration and to facilitate discussion at the 27th Annual Conference. It is hoped that it will assist you with regard to the future direction of the *Newsletter* in accord with the direction of the organization as a whole. The timing should coincide with the Executive Board sessions that will be reviewing the new web site and the organization of its pages and content.

OUR EXPERIENCE

At this juncture, it would be appropriate to mention to our readers that we have had the opportunity to be of service to the organization for the past five years. During this period, we have had the pleasure of working with more members of the organization on a continuing basis than any other individuals within IAMS LIC (with the exception of the President and Board members). This has provided us with an abundance of riches that does not flow to many others. It is reasonable to say this for the organization has, as its core component, the

skills, talent and raw energy of the most outstanding information handlers, gatherers, and deliverers in the world. And, we know most of them. This is a benefit that has, in the past, largely offset the time and effort that are attached to the production of each issue.

Our world, as the supposed bastion of aggregated knowledge relating to the aquatic and marine sciences, has been in a state of flux for some time. We anticipate that it will continue to change at an ever increasing rate. Most of this change is being accomplished under less than ideal circumstances. We see the workloads expand while budgets and FTE's diminish. Our researchers and students are clamoring for more print and electronic journals, more databases, greater access, and the ability to read their minds. Our management sometimes questions the value and quality of the work we do for our libraries and professional organizations. But, because of some genetic or cultural trait, our members persevere in excellence.

To stay abreast of the technological changes within the organization and to mirror the bleeding edge of technology at some of our institutions, IAMS LIC

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**May the Conference Prove to be
Productive and Enjoyable**



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In the body of the message, type the following:

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To delete, suspend, or reinstate yourself to the list, please refer to the article appearing elsewhere in this newsletter (click [here](#)). Please save this information for future reference.

IAMSLIC maintains a presence on the world wide web. Please check the web page at the following URL:
<http://siolib.ucsd.edu/iamslc/>

**Join your colleagues in Brest, France
for the
27th Annual IAMSLIC Conference and the
9th EURASLIC Conference
13 - 20 October**

**Contributions to the November 2001 IAMSLIC
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November 1, 2001:

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IAMSLIC assumes no responsibility for the statements and opinions advanced by contributions to IAMSLIC publications. Editorial views do not necessarily represent the official position of the organization.

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made the transition from a listserv and print operation to a newly evolving web server and an electronic newsletter.

THE ISSUE NOW

The underlying reasons for making the change were relatively obvious. Print costs were rising at a predictable rate. A review of postage costs for first class delivery showed it was growing rapidly without increased content. Due to the length of time it took for 4th class to be delivered, this was not an option if the *Newsletter* was to be timely.

At the same time as the costs were rising, the Executive Board saw the *Newsletter* as the best way to disseminate more and needed information to the members. Coincidentally, the members were asking us for a more content-rich publication. Adding the publishing opportunities, library and scientific conferences, news, and training/education columns, added a growing incremental cost to our operation. The difference in cost between a sixteen-page mailing *vis a vis* a thirty-two-page mailing was approaching the exponential. After surveying the members as to the possibility of sending *Newsletter* electronically, our fine leaders asked that we ramp up for the electronic realm without losing sight of those who did not have Internet access.

In February 2001 we made the move to a primarily web-oriented publication with print maintained to support our members who needed it and/or could not handle ".PDF" files. We did not change the style at the time because we could load only so much on that steep learning curve that our youthful minds were dealing with. But, we did add content - apparently more than anyone wanted to deal with at low transmission speeds. What was requested just months earlier was now apparently causing some problems.

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

Several questions have arisen since the *IAMSLIC Newsletter* has grown so much larger -- from 16-18 pages in 1990 to consistently more than 40 pages (with one issue being over 60 pages) -- now that it's on the web. Many people find this amount of information tedious to read on a screen. They also aren't happy about printing out that much. This is in small part due to using a different and larger font so it is clearer on the screen. Primarily it is due to the additional information included. However, since the index is hyperlinked to take you where you want to go. What you read and in what sequence is your choice.

OPTIONS

There are several options for revision of the Newsletter. Among them are:

OPTION 1 - Tradition

The newsletter again becomes a "traditional" newsletter containing the news of the organization and its members and kept to 12-16 pages. This could be on the web or printed and sent. It would be published quarterly.

The *Electronic Library, Publication Opportunities, Training/Education, Publications, In the News, Conferences* would appear as web pages on the "members only" side. This would be updated monthly at a minimum. Responsibility for this function would have to be determined.

OPTION 2. - Delete Content

Delete sections of the *Newsletter*. Candidates could include features such as the scientific articles/books/journals in the publications section, and the scientific conferences. The actual features

will have to be determined.

OPTION 3 - Abbreviate

Make the "In the News" section headlines only with links to the article. This presents both editorial and logistical situations. The editorial effort to present an informative lead-in to the web page would require more effort.

OPTION 4 -Carry On

Continue with the *Newsletter* as it is. If this happens, the editors should be compensated in some tangible way for their efforts, such an honorarium or free conference attendance. It currently takes a minimum of 60 hours to assemble and/or write the information and an equivalent amount of time to produce the copy. We have not been successful in getting additional help with this effort.

Other Considerations

We did and still believe that the added content was desired by our members. As producers of the publication, it has been quite enjoyable to present a richness of diet to our members - a change that should be a delight to the palate rather than a force feeding. There are other items that could be included. We should get to know more of our members and the unique qualities of their operations. We should review effective and useful software and related items. We should include pointers to material flagging trends in research or finances or similar areas.

We should redesign the revised *Newsletter* to give it more life on the web. We need help in this area.

Caveat Emptor

Permit us the opportunity to offer this item for your consideration. The new web page references the newsletters by date/.pdf file. You can then open or download the files at your leisure. Should some of the features be relocated from the newsletter, more work will be required in making page design changes to add these new features. Any such relocated features would then fall under the purview of a person or persons unknown at this point. Maintenance and submission to the web page with appropriate hyperlinks would be included.

Action Requested

We suggest the Publications Committee to study the problem this year and come up with recommendations to the Board in time to be implemented for January 2002 issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Avery

Roger Kelly