

Your voice

Are we losing the battle?

The first Riverina Reading Group, chaired by Marsha Reilly, met on Thursday 6 September to discuss the article by Professor Ross Harvey 'Losing the quality battle in Australian education for librarianship'. (*ALJ* February 2001, pp15-22). A lively and at times robust debate ensued among the group of practitioners, managers and academics (including Ross Harvey).

The key discussion themes revolved around two of the three key questions from Harvey's paper: What is our field? and What is our product? However the most interesting discussions surrounded the vexed questions of our role definition where we touched on librarian as information manager, educator of users, information 'techo' and 'web wiz'. Other related issues included are IT professionals hijacking our agenda or do we allow this to happen? That clients have so many and confusing information choices and that librarians play a vital role in the evaluation and targeting of appropriate

resources, irrespective of format, was also raised.

On library education, the need for targeted education for specialist librarians, for example law librarians, was discussed. The role and training of library technician and librarian raised the issues of the need for broad liberal education as a key starting point for librarians. Two people who had technician training discussed the practical nature of technicians training. It was agreed that technicians seemed to have defined their roles clearly and were active professionally. The need for library graduates to be industry ready with the skills for the contemporary library was hotly debated between the academics and the library directors.

Library directors made reference to the lack of time, which enables research to take place, and that academics need to increasingly draw library directors into their research. Library restructuring and diminished library staff numbers, along with increasing client demand provide big challenges for directors to undertake research. Professional doctorates were suggested as a way forward

for linking work with research and credentials.

Marsha Reilly, Wagga Wagga

Calling mums and dads...

This is a genuine request from a mum of three, a three-year-old boy and 14-month-old twin girls. I am writing a book about the funny 'antics' children get up to and the funny things they say. A twin group I established last year thought the book may help other mums and dads when they are having 'one of those days', to cheer them up and help them realise their kids aren't that bad after all. If the book sells well, I would like to donate some of the proceeds to children's hospitals for research into childhood illnesses, and to the Heart Foundation. If you know of any clubs or organisations who you think would like to share their funny tales, please forward my request to them on my behalf.

I'm looking for tales about: funny things said or done; words said or things done at the most inappropriate or embarrassing times and places; words said mistakenly for others which may sound similar; actions kids have done which

they thought were innocent enough; even lessons to be learnt by both parents and children (like leaving the cupboard door to your best china open, instead of the door to your plastic containers, for your toddler to play with!); whether the incident occurred this morning or 80 years ago, or even if you overheard something in a supermarket from a complete strangers' child.

Please send letters to Mrs Lexie Walker, 11 West Street, Sarina, 4737, Queensland, or e-mail gandwalker@dingoblue.net.au, with 'children's funny tales' in the subject line. All contributors' names will be acknowledged in the book unless otherwise requested.

Lexie Walker, Sarina

Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

All letters should be addressed to the *inCite* editor and may be e-mailed to incite@alia.org.au, or faxed to 02 6282 2249, or posted to: *Your voice*, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.

Letters will be accepted for publication until the 18th of the month.

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