

Meet the Editor

CIL: It Takes Two, Baby

by LAUREE PADGETT

When a creative project brought them together in college at Ohio State, Tory Cox and Dick Kaser probably couldn't have imagined that, decades later, they would be happily married and their creative collaboration would still be going strong. Today, their joint editorial efforts are producing *Computers in Libraries (CIL)*.



Lauree Padgett

Kaser came to Information Today, Inc. in 2001 to fill the new position of vice president of content. Basically, he works on everything that ITI produces, from the printed works to the conferences. He manages all of ITI's editors and conference planners, along with 25–30 staffers and contractors who collectively produce ITI's periodicals, newsletters, directories, information services, and conferences. This work is in addition to the three-to-four projects he handles a year, including a website (Enterprise Search Center) and a conference (Buying & Selling eContent). But when longtime *CIL* editor Kathy Dempsey stepped down in early 2008, Kaser temporarily (or so he thought) assumed the editorial reins. He wanted to take *CIL* and, "Redefine it, if necessary, and reshape it before making a permanent editorial assignment."

But with all the content he was already overseeing or creating, Kaser knew he needed help—someone who could do "the heavy lifting." Because of their history of working together, Dick thought Tory was an ideal choice for interim acting editor. (Previously, they co-authored a history of BIOSIS, the abstracting-and-indexing service now part of Thomson Reuters, for the company's 75th anni-

versary. And through a grant from the U.S. Geological Survey, they co-edited an important series of papers about the challenges facing museums, libraries, and government agencies in managing and integrating massive data files, specimen records, and other information resources.)

After starting her career with Charles E. Merrill Publishing (now a division of Prentice-Hall, Simon & Schuster), Tory established a successful freelance editorial business that has continued for many years. *CIL* is the first magazine Tory has edited, although she has written or edited many elementary, high school, and college textbooks, specializing in American history, geography, and world cultures. Most recently, Tory worked on a study guide for students taking the GED exam.

The Kasers tackled *CIL*'s workload functionally. Dick became executive editor, directing the business development of *CIL*; Tory handled the day-to-day responsibilities of soliciting and editing manuscripts and working with the production department. A year later, they have signed on for more. According to Dick, "At this point, the publisher is going to have to pry it out of our cold, dead fingers."

It's All About the Librarians ... And Technology

But let's take a closer look at *CIL*. First and foremost, "*CIL* is by librarians for librarians and about technology all the time," says Tory. The magazine publishes case studies about various aspects of library automation that are written by hands-on librarians. The expertise of columnists and contributing authors also plays a vital role in the magazine's content.

What makes *CIL* unique among ITI's publications is its focus. While the editors suggest the editorial focus for each issue, the readers are the ones who drive the content and have the input about what is important. The Kasers maintain that this reader-driven content approach is different from other ITI publications where the editors drive the content.

"I said early on in one of my editorials that I love the voice of the publication," says Dick. "It's genuine, authentic, and sincere." And he also thinks "Librarians are really cool." The added bonus is that the librarians working on *CIL* are the ones who are on the cutting edge in the industry.

As *CIL* moves through its 29th volume year, the Kasers are focusing on some hot issues. Right now, it's all about the technology: how libraries are using technology to redefine themselves and to reach patrons in exciting ways that "burn away the stereotypes."

The February issue was the second to center on openness in library systems. "Technology is empowering libraries," says



Victoria (Tory) Cox Kaser and Dick Kaser

Photo courtesy of BIOSIS

Dick. "Libraries are no longer just on the receiving end of technology. They are using the new tools to create their own solutions for everything from cataloging to serving remote user communities to developing learning tools." This allows libraries to sharpen their appeal to a new generation.

New and Continuing

Despite an emphasis on technology and new tools, Dick noticed a gap in the publication's coverage of digital content. So, to counterbalance this, the magazine is now experimenting with some new features that deal with content collections. Recent issues have included ebook developments as well as primary journal scholarly collections. Since Tory and Dick want to use everything that meets the "by librarians, for librarians and about technology all the time" mantra and since the economy is making it challenging to add pages to the magazine, the web has become a viable outlet for some of the articles. For example, in the January issue, *CIL* published several "digital-only" articles, where the articles only appeared virtually. Time will tell whether this turns into a "virtual" reality.

As for regular columns and sections, *CIL*'s coverage of integrated library systems has always been a major focus for *CIL*. Columns also cover the various types of libraries, from public to academic and special. The columnists also offer a mix of perspectives: Marshall Breeding's The Systems Librarian, Daniel Chudnov's Libraries in Computers, Terence Huwe's Building Digital Libraries, Jessamyn West's Tech Tips for Every Librarian, and Janet Balas' Online Treasures.

Dick also noted that three in-house editors—Celeste Peterson-Sloss, John Carr, and Bill Greenwood—are preparing the departments. And according to Dick, designer Danielle Nicotra "makes the magazine look as good as it reads," turning the magazine production into a team effort.

CIL is now aligned to three ITI conferences: Computers in Libraries as well as Internet Librarian (Monterey) and Internet Librarian International (London). The latter two conferences share the *CIL* show's emphasis on applied technology for librar-

ians. Dick's position within the organization this past year has enabled a closer connection between *CIL* and the shows.

Fun With Dick and Tory

Dick, a native Ohioan, and Tory, born in Pittsburgh, think their current home in Philadelphia is the most interesting place they have lived, especially for a couple of history buffs. Says Dick, "Our house was built in 1840. We are just blocks away from the Liberty Bell. And on my way to and from work, I pass Independence Hall."

When asked about a hero within or outside the industry, Tory says, "I truly admire librarians. I am aware that they have long been and continue to be crucial in protecting my civil rights and, as a direct result, keeping the United States truer to its democratic ideals. I am proud to work for them." Dick agrees, adding, "Librarians are better at defending the First Amendment than are journalists."

When they are not working on *CIL*, Tory and Dick like to watch movies. In fact, back in college, they were also thespians, performing together in the play *David and Lisa*. They are also avid book collectors. "It's hard to say whether our house is a dwelling or a library," says Dick. But they have recently been forced to curtail their book hoarding because they have simply run out of shelf space.

And I Quote

It's clear that even when answering questions, they work well in tandem. Just take a look at their choices for favorite quotes. While Dick took a line from the Tom Selleck movie *High Road to China*, "The oxen are slow, but the earth is patient," Tory went with a sci-fi cult TV classic, citing Dr. Spock's famous "Live long and prosper."

While the economy may be on shaky ground for some time to come, one thing seems certain: *CIL* should continue to prosper for a long time.

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