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CIVIL RIGHTS & the Patriot Act

Fairbanks librarian discusses impact of new legislation



June Pinnell-Stephens, Collection Service Manager at the public library in Fairbanks, addressed APW members at the January luncheon. She is past president of the Alaska Library Association, the Pacific Northwest Library Association, and the Freedom to Read Foundation, and she has just finished her fourth term as president of the Alaska Civil Liberties Union. Pinnell-Stephens has published widely on collection development and intellectual freedom issues, with her most recent article appearing in the October 2002 issue of *American Libraries*, the journal of the American Library Association.

A government agent enters your home, attaches a monitoring device to your computer, and leaves. Weeks or months later, he returns and removes the device, which now holds all your personal files and Internet activity. No, this is not an opening scene from a James Bond movie; it is a warning about the potential threat against our civil rights as a result of the U.S. Patriot Act, Homeland Security Act, and Data Quality Act, as well as others.

by **Judy Koskela** Whether you think it's a complete impossibility or you teeter on the edge of paranoia, the information June Pinnell-Stephens, Collection Services Manager at the public library in Fairbanks, shared at the January luncheon of Alaska Press Women was a sobering reminder of the importance of standing up for our civil rights.

"There are two groups that have as their primary interest in the First Amendment: librarians and the media. And with regards to the Patriot Act, the librarians are leading the way. Those 'shy, retiring' librarians are putting the media to shame with their out-front, assertive, and knowledgeable opposition to the Patriot Act," said APW Program Chair Barbara Brown.

"Uniting and Strengthening America

by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorists Act," known as the Patriot Act was passed by Congress on October 21, 2001, just six weeks after the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center. At the time it was passed, there were not enough copies printed for all members of Congress to thoroughly review it.

The Patriot Act amends 15 federal statutes and affects at least 10 basic constitutional rights. According to the ACLU Center for Democracy and Technology, some of the major changes include permitting the sharing of information among all levels and types of law enforcement, the detention of suspects based on ethnicity or religion, and taping attorney-client communications.

Pinnell-Stephens encouraged the audience to support organizations

continued p. 5

Alaska Press Women bid farewell to Dalene Perrigo



Lyle & Dalene

Alaska Press Women met at Gallo's Restaurant in February to bid farewell to long-time member Dalene Perrigo. Dalene organized many workshops and tours for APW, including tours before and after the 2000 national conference.



Diane Walters, Elaine Williamson and Dalene chat.



Nancy Gain Schmitt, Barbara Brown, John Killoran



Elaine Rhode, Sylvia Broady, Doris Thomas, Carolyn Rinehart

It's a good thing my term of office is coming to an end. I'm running out of new things to say in this column. The next three months will be busy ones as I try to wrap things up and leave them in fairly good order for the new president.

The Prez Says

Diane Walters

The nominating committee is actively seeking officers for the upcoming year. If you haven't been contacted and would like to serve as either an elected or appointed officer, please let Carolyn Rinehart, Mariah Oxford, or me know. We hope to have a slate of officers ready in early April.

In addition to electing new officers, we will be seeking nominees for the Betzi Woodman Spark Plug Award and the Kay Kennedy Gold Nugget Award. Please start thinking now of members you feel are deserving of

these awards. We will also be voting on an increase to our local dues.

Currently, we pay \$71.50, of which National gets \$51.50 and we receive the remaining \$20. According to our records, we haven't raised our dues for at least the past 10 years. The board is recommending an increase of \$3.50 to bring the total up to \$75.00. I hope you all will seriously consider passing this increase. APW has been relying on its savings account to conduct the business of the organization for the past several years and this increase will be a much needed source of revenue.

We have excellent speakers scheduled through June, my last month in office. It will be nice to leave office on such a high note.

Diane



Dalene presents materials from her work with APW.

Book Signing...

APW member S.E. Thomas is having a book signing for his latest book, Dark Shaman, at Cook Inlet Books from 2 to 4 p.m., Saturday, May 3, 2003.

Tami Lubitsh

SHARES HER STORY

why communicators
don't communicate



by Dianne Barske

Stories of an Eskimo shaman, a rabbi on ice, West Bank children paid to throw stones, and of a chained elephant got the rapt attention of the large group gathered at the March Alaska Press Women luncheon.

The presenter, Tami Lubitsh, an Israeli arts and culture journalist, says she prefers to tell stories and encourage dialogue, rather than give a speech or lecture. She is on assignment here in Alaska for a year, "a gift" she calls it, from her daily newspaper, *Yediot Achronot* and its magazine supplement, *Chaim Acherim*.

"Tell me if you have trouble with my English—it's not my first language," she said, before launching into her stories.

She needn't have worried. Her fine English and captivating story telling drew in her audience.

She began by describing Israel as a "tiny, tiny place" that would fit 70 times in Alaska, and in that tiny place live 7 million Israelis and 2 million Palestinians. She added that Jerusalem means "city of

peace," but that not a day of peace has been known since the city was created. Against that background, Tami tells the story of how she approached her editor about a trip to Alaska. Thus begins story number one.

"Well, I need to go to Alaska," she told her editor simply. "Fine, then I want a story about an Eskimo shaman," she was told in return. Tami began her uphill search on the Internet. Finding no Eskimo shaman there, she refused to be discouraged and a month later found herself on a 36-hour trip in search of that shaman in Alaska.

"NOW THAT I WAS ON THE TRIP, I REALIZED
THAT THERE WAS NO WAY I COULD COME
HOME WITHOUT A SHAMAN."

"Now that I was on the trip, I realized that there was no way I could come home without a shaman, although my chances were slim." Indeed, she tells how she found one. "I spotted an Alaska license plate, 'SHAMAN.' He was not quite what my editor in Tel Aviv

envisioned," she adds, "but this is a true story."

Story number two is not so light hearted. It is the story of an American TV crew sent to report on the situation in a small city on the West Bank, surrounded by the Israeli army. For two days, the crew only saw people walking, walking around the city, no real action. Pressure resulted from the editors, who started to push for something more dramatic. After all, they had invested in sending the crew there.

"Aren't there kids throwing stones?" the editors asked. Another day and another day passed, with more stress and more pressure from the editors. "Finally the crew members were told to go to the kids and tell them what they wanted. For five bucks, they were to throw stones. The editors got the pictures they wanted, kids throwing stones the next day, and by that evening there was the body of a kid, killed by the Israeli army."

After a pause, Tami moved on to story number three, once again bringing humor into the telling. "I discovered there was a rabbi in

continued p. 5



GARY COHN

shares investigative reporting experiences

by Elaine Rhode

Questions come to Gary Cohn's mind as naturally as breathing. This Pulitzer-winning investigative reporter admits, "I've always liked finding out what people didn't want me to know."

More than a year of questioning went into his exposé "The Shipbreakers," revealing the out-of-sight-out-of-mind dirty industry of scrapping Cold-War-era ships and single-hulled oil tankers retired in the wake of the Exxon Valdez. What he uncovered about the dangers inflicted on workers and the environment at ports in the United States and on a beach in India led to Congressional hearings and changes in Navy policy. (To read his three-part series and follow-up go to the website listed at the end of this story.)

Currently, Cohn is encouraging the questions of others as the Atwood Professor in the journalism department of the University of Alaska Anchorage. He shared his more than two decades of investigative reporting experiences and insights with Alaska Press Women at the organization's February meeting.

He admitted that he began his career with an example of "how not to do" investigative research. At age 20, working for Washington columnist Jack Anderson, Cohn would approach the public relations persons of institutions that Anderson was investigating and tell them basically to "spill their guts and hand

over the secrets." He laughs at himself now. "When they wouldn't automatically comply, I lectured them on the public's right to know and the First Amendment."

Since then, he has developed a different approach.

Cohn said that good working relationships with various public relations sources make investigative reporting possible. For example, when researchers at Johns Hopkins refused to talk with him, he turned to a PR contact at an agency where Johns Hopkins had to report its experiments. By faxing his contact a Freedom of Information Act request, Cohn was able to break the story.

Cohn shared his philosophy for reporter - public relations interactions. Reporters shouldn't assume that PR folks are trying to hide information. Similarly, reporters should be open and honest, not pretending support while writing the opposite. Treat good sources with respect, Cohen advised. If your story will upset their agency, make sure they have their say and give them a heads up before the story hits the street, saying "you're probably not going to like tomorrow's news."

He urged public relations staffs to talk with reporters rather than say "no comment." Tell reporters as much as you can, Cohn advised. You know more than they do. Direct them to sources to educate them. Be honest about proprietary

information. And if you have a grievance, start with the reporter rather than calling the editor or publisher.

Cohn used NASA as an example. The agency currently is more open and responsive to reporters about the Columbia disaster compared with the agency's attitude after Challenger exploded. "The public is being better informed, and the agency is better served," Cohn said. "Openness has helped to diffuse criticism."

At the heart of investigative reporting is community service, Cohn believes.

He cited a recent local example in the Anchorage Daily News investigation of the delayed response after Patti Godfrey, victim of attempted murder, called 911. "Reporters' questioning revealed systemic flaws in the dispatch system and produced action, reform."

Cohn was part of the Philadelphia Inquirer team that dug into rumors of corruption inside the city's largest municipal workers' union. Willing sources didn't know specifics. Other likely sources were benefiting and didn't want to talk. Cohn learned to apply one of the fundamentals of investigative reporting: Be creative. He did surveillance and found the evidence — a revolving door of new Cadillacs given to, then sold by, the union leader. After the story ran, municipal

continued p. 5



Lubitsh

from page 3

Alaska. My editors were excited! 'Show us that rabbi on

ice and snow,' they said."

Obviously, they unaware of Alaska's snowless winter. Tami's editors were not to be defeated. They already had the title for the photos, "Rabbi on the Snow." Tami showed the resulting magazine article to her APW audience. With a little skilled design work, there was a photo of the rabbi and a photo of a snow-covered landscape juxtaposed in the background.

All three stories illustrated a point Tami clearly wanted to make. Editors have ulterior motives. When the facts are presented, they often serve the fantasies of those editors, motivated by a desire to sell. "As communicators, we become drama creators, story tellers, not reporters."

She says that this kind of pressure has had horrifying consequences in her country. She now sees the

job of women as the creators of real dialogue. "That is our added value to the world." She has interviewed many women around the globe, starting with Hillary Clinton. "I thought if I could start with her, I could get many more women to agree to a dialogue, to be interviewed by me."

She ended by saying that our profession as communicators has been abused. Rather than presenting the real dialogue or story, she says we are motivated by "the desire to please." "The editor becomes more important than that kid on the West Bank. I'll give you what you want, if you give me what I want."

Her final story was of a chained baby elephant, who after trying day after day to break that chain, had simply given up, not realizing that as it grew older and stronger it had the ability to break the chain. Was she implying that as communicators, there are patterns, chains that we need to break? She left the interpretation of this final story up to her listeners.

Pinnell-Stephens

from front page



that are fighting to protect civil liberties and to elect politicians who uphold those rights. She also challenged

everyone to speak out and to support their local library.

In December 2001, the Library Research Center at the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Illinois conducted a survey of librarians. More than 200 public libraries had information requested by authorities within four months of the September 11th attack. Twenty percent of those surveyed said they had reported patron records and/or behavior to outside authorities. Ms. Pinnell-Stephens reflected on the possibility of making the difficult decision to uphold a library patron's right to privacy, "Go to jail or turn my back on more than 30 years of defending my profession's most profound obligation? A choice I hope I never have to make."

Cohn

from page 4

Barbara Brown presents Gary Cohn with an APW mug.



workers told him, "Thank you for giving us back our union."

There are new obstacles for investigative reporters after the terrorism of September 11, Cohn said. President Bush has weakened the Freedom of Information Act, now telling government employees that the Department of Justice will defend any withholding of docu-

ments. Under Clinton, Janet Reno declared all documents available unless there was a specific reason. Cohn cited the added risk of being called unpatriotic for questioning the government.

"But there are always obstacles, just different, to digging out information people don't want you to know," Cohn said. "At the same time, there are new tools — the Internet, e-mail, cell phones. Investigative reporters have to find ways to overcome the obstacles and get the story."

Cohn is teaching an investigative

reporting class this semester at UAA to 19 students — more than he anticipated. He runs the class as if the students were on assignment in a newsroom and expects them to produce a publishable piece by the end of the term. If we are lucky, we too will see their work and benefit from their pursuit of answers under the tutelage of a master questioner.

And if questions are coming to your mind about what really happens to discarded ships, find Cohn's answers and enjoy his clear writing style and good storytelling at www.pulitzer.org/year/1998/investigative-reporting/works/

Who's got spark? Who's shining like gold?

APW members will soon receive their ballots for new officers, and will be asked to nominate one APW member for each of these awards as well:

Betzi Woodman Spark Plug Award:

This award recognizes a member who energized APW throughout the year. The member used good organizational skills and motivated others to act on behalf of APW. In addition to providing the name of the person you are nominating for this award, you must include a short description of how the member meets the Spark Plug criteria.

Kay Kennedy Gold Nugget Award:

This award recognizes a member for professional and business accomplishments.

Previous Winners

Year Award	Spark Plug Award	Gold Nugget
2002	Diane Walters/ Mariah Oxford	Barbara Brown
2001	Karen L. Lew	Nancy Killoran
2000	Dalene Perrigo	Dianne Barske
1999	Doris Thomas	Barbara Brown
1998	Carolyn Rinehart	Chrystal Carr Jeter
1997	Doris Thomas	Francine Taylor
1996	Asta Corley	Elise Patkotak
1995	Andrea Veach	
1994	Francine Taylor	Alissa Crandall
1993	Melinda Taylor/ Gloria Maschmeyer	Elizabeth Lauzen
1992	Jan Ingram/ Ella Wright	Donna Gavac
1991	Ella Wright/ Jeanne Johnson	Nancy Cain Schmitt

Duties of APW officers and board members

You will receive a ballot soon for election of 2003-2004 officers. Officer duties are described to the right.

Please note that there are several committees and projects to which you might contribute. APW always needs active members to help in various areas. Whether your talent is organizing, writing, editing, design, photography or networking, there's something you can contribute.

President: presides at all meetings and issues calls for meetings; appoints chairpersons of standing and special committees; signs contracts for the organization (This office can only be filled by an individual who has previously served on the APW Board of Directors.)

First Vice-President: acts in the president's absence or as assigned; handles media relations and ensures that APW receives positive publicity.

Second Vice-President: recruits for members outside of Southcentral Alaska; serves as a liaison for those members

Third Vice-President: identifies and arranges for speakers (personalities who motivate, promote, work, and teach journalism and

other fields of communication) to address monthly luncheons.

Secretary: takes minutes during business meetings and at the annual meeting.

Treasurer: collects luncheon fees; manages the financial affairs of the organization; reports to the board.

Leaders also are needed to manage the following committees, projects, and ongoing tasks (these leaders also sit on the board):

Membership • E-mail Express • Nominating • Communications Contest • High School Journalism Contest • Scholarship • History of APW • Archives of APW • Communicator of Achievement • Newsletter • Web Site Design and Maintenance

May luncheon

featuring

- speaker **Mary Quin**
- high school journalism contest winners, and
- college scholarship awards

Thursday, May 1

Reservations are due by **April 28.**

274-4723

Luncheons are held the first Thursday of every month at 11:30 a.m.

Golden Lion Hotel, 36th and New Seward, Anchorage

\$15.00 members

\$16.00 guests



Wanted:

Submissions for *Arcticulation*

Got some news, an anecdote, a grammar point?

Email Diane Walters:

Diane.H.Walters@poa02.usace.army.mil
753-2640 (work) • 338-1966 (home)

Elected Officers

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Appointed Officers (alphabetical by last name)

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Communicator of Achievement Chairvacant
Historianvacant



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