

Survey of Continuing Education  
Opportunities for Rural Librarians

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What educational opportunities are being made to rural librarians? Rural libraries, for the most part, have been forgotten in past years, excluded from active consideration, but now their time has come (Vavrek 87-88). The advancement of technology now allows the small and rural library to keep its coziness while at the same time, provided the most updated services. Especially in the past 10 years, the concept of the rural library has been more in evidence, in some cases meaning serving 2500 or less people, in others, serving 25,000 or less people.

There have been many surveys done on this now contemporary topic -- small or rural libraries. They all have one chapter alike in their stories -- the one that states there are not enough professional librarians staffing small libraries. The reasons, like the statistics, are myriad. But here, I will just deal with statistics.

An exploratory survey of 80 Pennsylvania libraries serving a population under 25,000, conducted in 1979, dealt with rural libraries and information needs. It noted

in areas around the state was predominant, according to 34 respondents. Next highest offered was also a one-day workshop, held in 30 states, but this one-day workshop includes travel time both ways to the workshop site, which is not necessarily in a rural area. Third most popular, with 18 affirmative responses, was again a one-day workshop, including an overnight stay either before or after the workshop. Next popular, at 17, was the two-three day workshop. Eight states offer a concentrated, college live-in setting where the event lasts a week or less.

After that, the numbers declined considerably: weekend workshop (5); workshop longer than three days (5); concentrated college live-in setting lasting more than one week (5); satellite workshops (3); annual regional retreats other than the state conference (2); and correspondence course workshops (2).

Other workshop offerings written in by respondents were half-day, a series of workshops, audio-link to classrooms around the state, and, in Hawaii, an annual Library Institute Day held simultaneously on Hawaii's four major islands.

Questions Six through Nine dealt with funding, and the respondents were asked to check all answers that applied to their states. Question Six asked if the workshops are meant to be profit-making, break even financially, be funded by those attending, or be funded by other means.

This question was poorly organized. The majority of the answers wound up in the "other means" column. None said workshops were to be profit-making; 13 said they should break even; and 12 said they were funded by those attending the workshop. But 33 offered other options for funding, with major sources being state

network is in development and expected to provide an alternative for delivering educational opportunities to Oregon library staff members."

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"In Utah, the (Utah Public Library Institute for Training), UPLIFT, was established in 1986 and provides basic skills in library management to librarians from small rural communities. In 1989, 23 librarians were honored for attending over the past four years and fulfilling a major upgrade requirement. There are 34 slated to finish their four-year training program this year. While the focus may change as needs may change, the program will continue to symbolize continuing education and professional development in library service."

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## CONCLUSION

In 1983, a survey showed that 25 of 42 responding state agencies were taking responsibility for providing educational opportunities to rural librarians, while in 19 of those states, other agencies were also participating. This year, the number is up, with 27 of 39 responding states providing educational opportunities, and other groups in 23 of those states as well.

It appears state libraries have increased their efforts to provide professional training to staff working in libraries that qualify as small or rural, but which in actuality are beginning to see a need for the same sophistication and technological expertise that large libraries have possessed in past years. The advancement in technology will allow the small or rural library to keep its coziness, while providing the best in reference and resources through networking, resource sharing and inter-library loans.

While the confusion still exists in defining the "small" or "rural" library, research should be done in the future to define such libraries based on other data, such as socio-economic, life-style or education standards.

Research needs also to be done to show how much is spent in LSCA funding to provide education for the librarians who are serving all ages in our society, in a society where demand on that librarian is increasing because literacy is decreasing.

Librarians, too, need to be the target of research -- perhaps on the actual out-of-pocket expenses librarians must spend for educating themselves to their job, and their feelings about the need for some tangible form of recognition. They could also

be queried as to how attaining the MLS could be made more feasible, since it appears this kind of education is still of great importance.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR RURAL LIBRARIANS  
PLEASE ANSWER EVERY QUESTION USING THE REQUESTED MARKING.  
ALSO, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO MAKE WHATEVER NOTES YOU WISH TO ADD.  
RURAL APPLIES TO LIBRARIES SERVING UNDER 25,000 POPULATION.

Q-1. Please check the appropriate lines:

Yes No

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ Is rural library education a funded activity in your state library budget?

If not, is such a program anticipated for funding in (how many) \_\_\_\_\_ years?

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ Does the state library ASSOCIATION assume any responsibility for rural library education programs?

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ Is there a cooperative venture between the state library agency and state library association in providing for continuing education?

Q-2. If you are aware of other sponsors of library workshops targeting rural library staff, please check each that applies:

\_\_\_ Regional library system

\_\_\_ Higher education provider

\_\_\_ Local library

\_\_\_ Professional library association

\_\_\_ Local school district

\_\_\_ Business or industry

\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q-3. Are there other means that you use to provide educational opportunities for rural librarians, such as: (please check all that apply)

- Newsletter
- Traveling consultant (for collection evaluation, on-site training, assistance with weeding, budgeting, etc.)
- Free access to assistance by telephone (800 number, etc.)
- Other (please elaborate): \_\_\_\_\_

Q-4. In front of the workshop topic, please check all topics covered in workshops given in your state in the past year. Then check if the workshop was presented in a rural setting, and if attendance by rural library staff met your expectations. Finally, please circle the topic you felt was most needed. Please give as much information as you can, but don't feel obligated to spend time researching matters.

TOPIC(S) COVERED AT WORKSHOP	WORKSHOP HELD AT RURAL SITE	RURAL ATTENDANCE MET EXPECTATIONS?	
		YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/> Automation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> CD ROM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronic mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Microcomputers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Online searching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (fax, modem, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Booktalks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Literacy projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Youth programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Board, council relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Developing friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Developing volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Publicity, promotion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<hr/>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Building programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Fund raising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Grant writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



- Acquisitions
- Book repair/preservation
- Catalog, classifying
- Collection Development
- Materials Selection
- Weeding collection

- Inter-library loan
- Networking
- Reference
- Resource sharing
- Service delivery
- Union catalog

- Basic librarianship
- Goal setting
- Management
- Personnel issues
- Policies, procedures
- Stress

Q-5. Please check all the kinds of workshops you offer, and circle the one style you have found to be most successful in terms of encouraging attendance of rural library staff members.

- One-day workshop held on-site in areas around the state
- One-day workshop (including travel time both ways)
- One-day workshop (with overnight stay either before or after)
- Two/three-day weekday workshop
- Workshop longer than 3 days
- Concentrated college life-in setting, one week or less
- Concentrated college live-in setting, more than 1 week
- Annual regional retreat other than state conference
- Correspondence workshop
- Satellite workshop - TV and classroom
- Other workshop settings (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTIONS 6-11, PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY. CIRCLE MOST PREDOMINANT.

- Q 6. Are your workshops usually meant to:
- Be profit-making ventures
  - Break even financially
  - Be funded by those attending the workshop
  - Be funded by other means (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- Q 7. Are your workshop speakers most often
- Volunteers who pay their own expenses
  - Volunteers with expenses reimbursed
  - State library staff
  - Staff from other libraries
  - Paid professional speakers
  - Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- Q 8. Does the State Library usually provide funds for:
- Registration for workshops
  - Travel expenses to and from workshops
  - Both registration and travel costs
  - Replacement librarian to keep rural library open
  - Distribution by regional or county library
  - None of the above
  - Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- Q 9. When funds are provided for CE workshops, are they available
- By application
  - On a one-time basis per person
  - Based on library size
  - Based on library budget
  - Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_
- Q-10. Do you hear reasons from rural library staff members why they cannot or do not attend workshops? Please check all the reasons you hear and circle the one you hear most often.
- Too far to travel
  - Too expensive
  - No one to keep the library open
  - No support from board to attend
  - Topic not of interest
  - Topic over my head

- Don't want to attend alone
- Not interested in more education
- Interferes with family life
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q-11. Please check if you provide any of the below to recognize attendance at a workshop, and circle the means most often used.

- Certificate of certification
- Credit towards certification
- College credit
- Letter to attendee's supervisor
- Letter to attendee's governing body
- Press release to local media
- None of the above
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Please feel free to make any additional comments here:

ALL DATA WILL BE KEPT ANONYMOUS UNLESS WE HAVE PERMISSION FROM YOU. FOR PURPOSES OF COMMUNICATION, PLEASE PROVIDE THE INFORMATION REQUESTED BELOW:

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 State Represented \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
     Street                      City                      State                      Zip

funds and Library Services Construction Act (LSCA) funds. This is a plus for showing how many states rely in part on LSCA funds to provide necessary education for librarians. State funds are used in 22 states, LSCA funds in 21 states, library association funds in three states, and state or regional funds in two states. One state replied the workshops are free if presented by the state library staff. Oregon noted that some workshops are jointly funded by attendees and their Rural/Small Library Program. The Basic Librarianship Institute, which is a week-long college campus setting, is open by application and takes donations to help defray expenses, most of which are paid by the state library.

Question Seven asked who is recruited to present workshops. The greatest number of states (34) use state library staff members as speakers. But 28 states also call on staff members from other libraries; 25 also use volunteers and reimburse their expenses; paid professional speakers are used in 24 states, and volunteers speak and pay their own expenses in six states. Another option, again from Oregon, is finding speakers who work at another state library or are on the faculty of a library school. Their expenses are paid and small honoraria offered.

In Question Eight, when asked if the state library usually provides funds for attendees' workshop expenses, 16 said no. In 12 states, registration is paid; six pay travel to and from workshops; seven pay both travel and registration; and three provide funds to be distributed by regional or county libraries.

Nine respondents cited other funding alternatives:

1. Provide funds for out-of-state conferences only.

2. We provide room, board, and conference costs, while participants pay tuition and travel costs.
3. Regional systems and the library association together provide CE grants, and housing is provided free for non-MLS staff attending a college live-in workshop.
4. Room and board are provided free for our two-week institute.
5. Workshops are free, and local libraries provide travel funds.
6. Workshops are free, but participants pay own travel costs (two responded this way).
7. Costs are split: state library pays housing and speaker, and attendees pay meals and travel.
8. Funds go to regional libraries which may or may not use them for covering workshop costs.
9. No fees of any kind are charged (two responded this way).

Question Nine asked respondents to tell how it is decided to whom funds will be provided. In 18 states, it is by application. It is on a one-time-per-person basis in one state. None of the agencies base funding on the library's size or budget size. There were 14 "other" answers written in as follows:

1. No funds provided.
2. Workshop content is reviewed by committee for consideration of LSCA funding.
3. As part of eligible state aid expenditures.

4. All applicants are treated the same and receive some funding opportunities.
5. We pay costs directly.
6. Funding is made available to all public libraries.
7. Funds are used to pay speakers; no food or lodging for participants.
8. For workshops not funded directly by LSCA, there are LSCA grants available to individual applicants through the Council on Continuing Education.
9. Funding is based on the length of and demands of a workshop.
10. Workshops are free to all who register.
11. Each library system receives CE funds through LSCA.
12. Funds are given based on distance traveled to workshop site.
13. Funds are open to all who apply.
14. Regional staff presents plans for CE which are funded directly by the state agency.

Questions Eight and Nine were confusing and needed to be made more specific, dealing separately with each basic concept of funding workshops and financial aid to attendees.

Question Ten was my favorite. It asked respondees to list the reasons they have been given or have heard why librarians or staff cannot or do not attend workshops. Respondees were asked to check all the reasons they have heard and circle the one heard most often.

The high score, 31, went to "no one to keep the library open." This is ironic,

in light of responses to Question Eight which shows that not one state agency provides a replacement to keep rural libraries open so staff can attend workshops. it is curious to suppose if the reasons for not attending would change, or if workshop attendance would go up if replacements were made available for rural libraries. This is truly a frustrating problem in a library with only one person on staff. Five respondents circled this as the reason they heard more than any other.

A close second to "no one to keep the library open," however, is "too far to travel," listed by 30 respondents, and ten circled this as the reason heard most often.

It was surprising to find in third place, from 18 states, "no support from library board to attend." Perhaps the high number of workshops given this past year dealing with library boards and other governing bodies (Question Four) will change this statistic in the near future.

Other reasons given, in numerical order, are: too expensive (12); topic not of interest (nine); interferes with family life (nine); topic over my head (eight); don't want to attend alone (six); and not interested in more education (two).

Other reasons that were not included in the questionnaire, but were cited by respondents, are: there's not enough time; the workshops are too long; I can't drive in the big city; we're too small and the workshop (any topic) doesn't pertain to use; and, my husband doesn't like me to travel out of town.

Not everyone hears excuses for not attending workshops. In Utah, the state requires completion of a four-year UPLIFT program by library staff for the library to receive state aid. (UPLIFT is an acronym for Utah Public Library Institute for

Training, and the symbol is a hot-air balloon!) Given this requirement, and since the state pays all expenses, they hear few excuses about not attending workshops. Occasionally personal problems will require someone to skip a year, but most love to attend.

In Alaska, due to geographic distances and cultural differences, they have the most problems getting small village aides to take training. There is also a very high turnover rate among their library aides, so it is a constant problem.

Question 11 dealt with kinds of recognition given for workshop attendance. Certificates of participation top the list in 16 states. Others were: press release to local media (11); credit towards certification (10); college credits (7); letter to attendee's supervisor (4); letter to attendee's governing body (3); and none of the above (9). One state provides graduate credits. Several states have special programs to assure meeting established requirements for accreditation or certification.

At the end of Question 11, which is the end of the survey, at which point respondents were encouraged to make any additional comments they wished, 19 of the 39 did. They are listed below:

The state library's certification program is highly regarded by the library community of Iowa. One factor in the accreditation of public libraries (another state library program) is a trained, certified staff. A state library committee screens plans for workshops and awards continuing education credits for those who attend. A state library database management program tracks the credits earned by each individual



and certification and status of renewal. An annual status report is sent from the state library to each individual.

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"We encourage participants to share workshop information with colleagues. Minimal staff support does not permit other forms of recognition."

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"Although continuing education programs are available to libraries serving under 25,000 people, they are the same programs available to those serving over 25,000 people. South Carolina only has five libraries serving a population of less than 25,000 people."

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"We are presently planning a Basic Skills Institute, but do not have certainty of funding for the next biennium yet. We have recently initiated a "workshops upon request" program which is available to rural libraries as well as urban (we'll do a workshop for as few as 8-10 participants.)"

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"It should be noted that fully 77 percent of Massachusetts libraries serve communities of less than 25,000, but only about half of those are situated in rural areas. Most of our towns are satellite communities to three major cities: Boston, Springfield, and Worcester, and serve a relatively sophisticated clientele. For planning purposes the state agency considers libraries serving populations under

15,000 to be small. A strong regional library consultant program is in place throughout the state with frequent contacts to member libraries."

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"Because almost 100 percent of Idaho libraries are classified as rural, about all CE programs are targeted to this level. However, very few, if any, deal with "rural 'rural' problems."

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"There are only two counties out of 23 that meet the description of a rural library. Maryland is a small state and while there are rural areas, each library system participates in state, area and local activities. The "rural"-ness is not separated nor distinguished from any other activities in Maryland at this point.

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"In Colorado, the cooperative CE arrangement is that, on the whole, the seven regional library service systems provide CE at their weekend retreats on basic, specific library topics taught best to smaller groups. The state library provides workshops on broader topics to reach more people and/or longer CE activities like the week-long Small Library Institute last August. Then we pay travel expenses if held in Denver only."

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"The Nebraska Library Commission runs a voluntary certification program for public librarians. All librarians must, if wishing to be certified, complete basic skills courses in four subject areas: Public Library Administration; Organization of

Materials; Public Services and Collection Development/Selection. In addition, to be re-certified, they must have 45 hours of continuing education in a three-year period. The six regional library systems, autonomous but funded through the library commission, are responsible for the delivery of the basic skills classes as well as practical type workshops such as weeding, etc. The Library Commission will (or tries to) only offer workshops that these library systems could not offer because of cost or lack of expertise, or of a statewide nature. A great deal of our training deals with NEBASE, our statewide OCLC network and other NE information network components."

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"The Vermont Department of Libraries provides over 50 workshops each year in numerous locations throughout the state. The state assumes all financial responsibility for presenting the workshops. Local libraries must assume mileage expenses for their own staff. All workshops are filled to capacity."

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"Since one-third of the public library systems in Louisiana serve populations under 25,000, we design all continuing education events so they will have relevance for rural libraries."

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"Workshops planned and presented by Bureau of Development Services (BODS) staff at local (area) meetings are generally the most effective (and free!) way of reaching librarians. These are conducted on a monthly basis in some part of the

state.

The University Systems School for Lifelong Learning is an off-campus-located organization, specifically aimed at the non-traditional student. Through LSS, we are able to offer the Library Techniques Program Courses in at least five locations per semester, and at times that are more available for the libraries in a particular area. Courses are presently two credits each, to become (next fall) three credits. Certification of Librarians requires a minimum of 8 courses, or an MLS degree."

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"In Washington State, three one-day workshops are provided each year specifically targeted for the non-degreed person in a library serving populations of under 5,000. Each workshop is given in six different locations. They also provide a three-day workshop each year, one for trustees and friends in even-numbered years and one on automation in odd-numbered years. There is also a newsletter aimed at the "one-person library" as well as occasional "fact sheets" on subjects of immediate concern."

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"In Oregon, the state library's objective is to present 12 workshops during each legislative biennium, marketed under the acronym SLICE -- Small Libraries Continuing Education series. They are directed at library directors, board members and other staff in Oregon's rural or small libraries, and repeated in two to five locations around the state. Most of the workshops are free or have a small registration fee to cover materials costs. In addition, a statewide telecommunications

that many rural librarians do not have formal education as librarians (Head, Professional Isolation 23).

Another survey noted that Kansas has 1,300 persons employed in 315 libraries and only 135, or just over 10 percent, have the MLS as of 1988 (Starke 40). In Iowa's 520 libraries with a total of 600 library employees, slightly less than 20 percent have the MLS (Stanke 79). A national survey in 1984 of 1,100 libraries serving a population of under 25,000 showed that half the libraries had no staff member with the MLS (Head, Reference Survey 316).

Another nationwide survey published in 1988 noted that 63 percent of public librarians have the MLS (Greiner, Nonprofessionals 79). That means 37 percent are considered to be nonprofessionals, or without formal training and accreditation in library science. It is likely that the 37 percent could be made up of any kind of librarian or staff person, from a highly educated, enthusiastic and experienced person, to a staid stereotypical librarian who wants to sit in the quiet, orderly library and not be bothered by patrons; or from a small-town library advocate willing to learn and do all that's possible, to a warm body who knows the alphabet and can cipher.

The National Center for Education Statistics notes that in 44 states there are 6,105 libraries serving up to 25,000 population, and only about 20 percent of those libraries, or 1,172, have any staff members with an MLS degree from a school accredited by the American Library Association (U.S. Dept. of Ed. 6).

Now, there has been a longstanding debate regarding the need for the MLS. General knowledge, specialized education in another field, and work experience all

are assets to the library worker. But these do not replace the study of cataloging and collection development, training with reference tools and learning to use them efficiently, philosophy of librarianship, techniques of database searching or the rich history of literature. For these, experts are needed in each field who are trained to effectively share their knowledge; and a good example of that kind of person is a professor.

There are many librarians who want to be able to provide the standard services their patrons seek and deserve, and who are willing to dip their toes into the new levels of service, programs, and technology that will expand their community's information resources, as well as their patron's horizons.

Libraries are in a struggle for survival. The competitive financial and political environment demands more of today's librarian, especially in small- and medium-sized libraries, and especially when there is no regional setup to provide support and expertise in these arenas. On the other hand, even in a regional setting, the person behind the desk or in the stacks of a small or rural library is the person who has the most impact on that library's patrons. That staff member must be taught at least a modicum of librarianship for the sake of those patrons. "Individuals whose loyalties stop at their library door, who believe libraries mean checking out books, are underestimating their patrons and limiting their communities" (Mech, 235).

Demographic trends show that rural areas are gaining in population. The pastoral setting may be a welcome relief from the crime-ridden metropolis, but that simplified lifestyle may also be the cause of culture shock from lack of social activities

and information resources (Head, Reference Survey 320).

As more and more people move to rural and suburban areas, many of them bring with them more education, as well as more sophisticated information needs which likely were met in the larger libraries and are now being demanded of the smaller libraries. In addition, with the rapid advancement in technology and information sources, the demand is increasing especially in the small libraries for more educated, enlightened librarians. What is being done to help the staff in small and rural libraries meet the challenge to ensure these needs are met?

It is clear that nonprofessionals constitute the major portion of the library staff in rural libraries, but what is being done to help them toward professionalism is not clear. For that reason a survey was conducted on a nationwide random sample that showed that continuing education activities are encouraged and sometimes even required (Greiner, Nonprofessionals 78).

In 1981 in North Dakota, a statewide survey was conducted of public librarians regarding continuing education interests and programming preferences. At that time, 50 percent of the staff (including 40 percent of supervisors) had less than a college education; only 13 percent had any formal training in librarianship (Homes 37-38). But the goal is to have motivated employees who want to offer the best in library service and to help the library organization develop towards that end (Greiner, Nonprofessional 10-11).

In a study completed in 1983 by the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship, dealing in part with education in rural libraries, Dr. John W. Head

noted that 25 of the 42 state library agencies responded that they had a plan or program for (or including) rural library education (Head, State Library Agencies 7-8). Head also asked if there were agencies other than state libraries and library schools that provide training for rural librarians. The response was 19 affirmatives out of the 42 total (Head, SLA, 9-10). "The need to upgrade rural librarians' education seems clear both from the previous studies and from the conventional wisdom of the profession" (Head, SLA, 14).

His conclusion was that no one agency or group of people has both the clear responsibility and the required resources to move rural libraries on the problem of lack of adequate training ... but it's comforting to know some state agencies are working vigorously and intelligently on these concerns (Head, SLA 15-16). Stanke agrees. "State library agencies, state library associations and regional library systems are the primary providers of training for the non-degreed librarians" (Stanke, Non-degreed, 79).

Is the above true? What are state libraries or their counterparts doing to meet the educational needs of paraprofessional librarians in rural libraries? Also are they offering what the librarians want and need?

Stanke also writes that "... survey after survey reveals that library directors, without a master's degree, generally in geographically remote areas and in communities of under 25,000 population, prefer workshop-type programs at a district level that offer 'useful' information, i.e., relevant to their situation" (Stanke, Training 80).



So I arrive at the purpose of this survey -- to determine what educational opportunities are being made available to rural librarians and rural library staff.

This survey of state library agencies was conducted in March, 1990 from the Center for Rural Librarianship at Clarion University of Pennsylvania. For this survey, a rural library was defined as one serving a population of under 25,000 people. A total of 51 4-page surveys with cover letters were sent out March 1, 1990, one to each state agency and one to Washington, D.C., to be directed to the person responsible for, or most familiar with, continuing education opportunities in his or her state. There were 40 completed surveys returned, for a 78 percent return rate. In addition, other information, catalogs and printed materials were also sent along to expound the special efforts some states are making to encourage rural participation in the continuing education process.

The 11 questions were specifically geared toward a response regarding libraries serving a population of under 25,000. Respondents were directed to check the blanks on items listed, but they were also encouraged to add any information or comments they wished.

Questions one and two asked for general information regarding continuing education opportunities for rural staff members. Question one had three parts. The first part asked, "Is rural library education a funded activity in your state library budget?" The response was 27 yes and 12 no. While some respondents noted the term "rural" was not in a budget line item, their state was primarily rural so the continuing education budget was "defacto" rural education. One state is beginning

such a line item in the 1990-91 fiscal year. The second part of Question One asked if the state's library association assumes any responsibility for rural library education programs. The response was 23 yes and 15 no. The third part of Question One asked if there is a cooperative venture between the state library agency and the state library association in providing for continuing education. It was heartening to see a spirit of cooperation in so many states: 30 said yes, nine said no.

Question Two asked if respondents were aware of other sponsors of library workshops targeting rural library staff. Of the six listed, they were asked to check any or all that applied. The top response was that in 20 states, regional library systems (including county libraries) provide CE; in 14, higher education provides and in 13, professional library associations provide. Some local libraries provide workshops in eight states, local schools in three states, and business and industry were marked by none.

Question Three asked, "Are there other means that you use to provide educational opportunities for rural librarians?" The responses showed that 36 states use traveling consultants to provide educational opportunities. Next highest was free telephone access, either by 800 number, electronic mail or accepting collect calls, in 32 states. There are newsletters in 28 states. Other means of providing educational opportunities that respondents wrote in included: publications issued on an irregular basis; manuals, handbooks, and AV materials; teleconference events; and LSCA grants to attend state and national conferences.

Question Four asked about workshop topics covered in the past year, whether

the workshops were presented in rural settings and if rural attendance met expectations. Very few respondents noted attendance did not meet expectations, but it is ponderable whether the workshops were always wonderfully received or if memories might be somewhat fallible. This was not a fair question to ask.

The workshop topics were listed in logical grouping, to include, for example, automation with CD-ROM, electronic mail, microcomputers, online searching, fax, modem, and so on. A list will be given below.

Of the 499 workshops given in 39 states in the past year, 351, or 70 percent, were held at rural sites, and 395, or 79 percent, met rural attendance expectations.

The subject covered most often in workshops was automation, presented in 27 states in the past year. Of those 27 workshops, 16 were held in rural sites, and 19 of the 27 workshops met rural attendance expectations while two did not. This preponderance of automation workshops reveals that technology is advancing in the rural areas, and state libraries are meeting the need of training users in those rural libraries.

It is even more heartening to see the topic of the second most predominant workshop, board and council relations, held in 24 states. I believe this is evidence of the growing attitude that strength in public relations, politics and assertiveness is being recognized as necessary commodities in rural libraries to stabilize financial aid and increase community support.

In addition to those listed on the survey, respondents wrote in workshop topics that have been presented in the past year. The most predominant was long-range

planning (in 5 states), in 2 states, service to special groups, and in 1 state each: statistical reporting, output measures, intellectual freedom and information referral. Other workshop topics included in the survey and the number of states in which they have been presented are listed on the next page:

Collection Development	23
Reference	22
Youth Programs	22
Literacy	21
Microcomputers	19
Inter-library loan	18
Weeding	18
Cataloging, Classifying	17
Grant Writing	17
Management	17
Adult Programs	16
Goal Setting	16
CD-ROM	15
Materials Selection	15
Basic Librarianship	13

Budgeting	13
Fund Raising	13
Personnel Issues	13
Policies, Procedures	13
Book Repair/Preservation	12
Fax, Modem, Etc.	12
Electronic Mail	10
Publicity, Promotion	10
Resource Sharing	9
Developing Volunteers	8
Online Searching	8
Book Talks	7
Building Programs	7
Networking	7
Acquisitions	6
Stress	6
Newsletters	5
Union Catalog	5
Topics Not Included	7

In Question Five, respondents were asked to check all the kinds of workshops offered in their states; 11 varieties were listed. The one-day workshop held on-site