

Indexing in the Heartland

The newsletter of the Heartland Chapter of the American Society for Indexing

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In this issue:

Staying Connected	1
Upcoming Events	1
Fall Meeting Recap	2
Indexing Ebooks: Where Are We Headed?	3
Meet a Fellow Heartlander: Tanya Bomsta	4
“What’s On Your Desk (Besides Work)?”	5
Works for Me: Building a Website with MS Office Live Small Business	6
Minutes (Fall 2009).....	9

Staying Connected

Devon Thomas, Co-President

2009 will go down as an economically challenging year for many folk, indexers included, I am sure. Even those not immediately affected by the downturn have been chilled by the constant drumbeat of negative news. It can be especially hard to stay positive when you work in isolation.

Meetings are a great way to meet others in the field and get encouragement, as well as continuing education, but don't limit yourself to our biannual gatherings. You can connect to each other through email, listservs, networking sites, informal meetings—whatever works to help us pull through these hard times, which hopefully will end soon.

In chapter news, the big story has been the proposed changes to the handling of our finances. Long story short, we are now in a position that we can continue to handle our own banking, which is not burdensome, but we have the option of turning it over to ASI and the Resource Center if we wish. For now, we are continuing to handle our finances independently.

Look for more from me in the future on the approval of our by-laws and the possible uses of e-voting.

Until then, Happy Indexing! ■

Upcoming events

April 10, 2010 - tentative Heartland Spring meeting, Richmond, Indiana

May 13-15, 2010 - ASI Annual Conference, Minneapolis, Minnesota, <http://www.asindexing.org/site/mtgs.shtml>

Fall Meeting Recap

Paula McCoy, Co-Editor

The Heartland Chapter enjoyed an engaging day of discussion at its fall meeting in Richmond, Indiana, on October 17. The visiting speaker was Charlee Trantino, a professional indexer for some twenty years and winner of the Wilson Award for her index to *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake: Unlocking James Joyce's Masterpiece*, by Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson. Charlee began indexing long before she knew it was an actual profession. When the national ASI called to tell her she had won the Wilson Award, she had no idea who or what the ASI was. That is certainly no longer the case, given her current status as a board member.

Charlee's presentation focused on "rekeying," or revising the locators in an index in the event of a new edition, such as a paperback. Some attendees had never heard of this or been asked to perform it by a publisher; others had done it but had never called it that.

Charlee first listed the materials essential to rekeying: a #2 pencil, white-out, and a straight edge. She was proud to show us her antique ruler, a clue to her second profession as an antique store owner. She then led the group through a process she calls "ticking off": marking up the "old" book pages to show where the pages in the new edition begin and end. As they methodically worked on their task, the meeting attendees discussed how an indexer should charge for this work; how publishers approach the work; and what kinds of "mistakes" in the original index to fix or not fix. As they readily admit, many indexers are perfectionists, and it's hard to see an index with mistakes or inconsistencies they're not allowed to fix.

Charlee's presentation continued until lunch, which was enjoyed at one long table this time because we were able to use the larger room. Following the business meeting, the afternoon program began with Charlee giving a short presentation on time management and procrastination. Her main points: You have to manage your whole life, not merely your time, and procrastination can be attacked and eradicated. Her tips were useful for anyone who works on their own, because we're all human and we all waste time one way or another!

John Bealle, a Heartland member who is also a SKY Software tester, provided the group with some details



Speakers Charlee Trantino and John Bealle



Lunch and conversation

about the "hidden" improvements to SKY v7.0. One member has already placed her order after hearing his presentation! Talking about the software led to comments about how people use their own chosen software. This kind of interaction and conversation is invaluable to new indexers, several of whom were at the meeting.

Overall, the meeting was enjoyable, well-attended, and, once again, fruitful for all who attended. Thanks go out to Devon and Tanya! ■

Indexing Ebooks: Where Are We Headed?

Notes from the O'Reilly Tools of Change Ebook Conference

by Carol Reed

In early October, technology publisher O'Reilly focused on ebooks for its first online Tools of Change (TOC) conference. The half-day conference covered ebook pricing, what users want, and the future of electronic reading. Presenters and panelists included editors and publishers from O'Reilly, Safari Books Online, Lexcycle, Scribd, Harlequin, and Shortcovers, among others, as well as Matthew Bernius from the Rochester Institute of Technology's Open Publishing Lab.

Fellow Heartlander Maureen Johnson and I attended the conference to better understand where indexers fit in this rapidly evolving medium. We've both been alarmed to see otherwise high-quality nonfiction titles published as ebooks without indexes. Do ebook publishers see the negative reviews on Amazon ranting about missing indexes? Will pricing models for trade ebooks pressure publishers into sacrificing indexes? Or is it just too early in the game to draw any conclusions?

Here's what we gleaned from the conference:

- **There is significant user demand for portable content**—books that you can read on a Kindle on the subway, put down, and continue reading on your iPhone while you're waiting in line at the store. For now, digital rights management (DRM) prevents true portability (in addition to posing other problems). But in terms of indexing, reflowable content will be key.
- **The format wars will take some time to work out.** Many e-readers use proprietary formats, and until the bestselling e-readers make open format (ePub) books both available and convenient, the industry remains somewhat fragmented. Yet publishers recognize that ease of access is one of the things readers clearly want. Stay tuned.

- **Ebook indexes will need to earn their keep, so to speak, and contribute directly to sales.** Beyond \$9.99, demand for basic trade ebooks falls off significantly, so publishers will be evaluating which enhancements pay off for them. That means indexers will need to make a strong case for the return on investment indexes can provide.
- **At a higher price point, you may start seeing enhanced ebooks**—think travel guides with linked maps, related articles, and video content, perhaps available by chapter or by region rather than packaged as a complete book. This is largely uncharted territory, and consumer demand and pricing are still big unknowns.
- **Watch for devices to continue evolving and shaping the way people read.** Both Apple and Microsoft are promising tablet computers that will combine e-reader and full web browsing functionality. The possibilities for interactive content are endless. (See the MS Courier at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmIgNfp-MdI>.)

Unfortunately, the conference did not delve into e-textbooks, though we expect those users will demand quality indexes and search interfaces.

Overall, we were surprised that ebook publishers seem to be learning as they go, finding out what they can sell and how much they can charge. Even though ebook readers have been around for eleven years now, the consumer market is just beginning to ramp up. In this still-new medium, indexers have a great opportunity to be problem-solvers for our clients, helping them weigh the cost and benefit of professionally created indexes. ■

Meet a Fellow Heartlander: Tanya Bomsta

By Paula McCoy, Co-Editor

This month's member spotlight is on Tanya Bomsta, elected this year as co-president of the Heartland Chapter. Tanya took on these duties even as she was in the midst of moving to a new home with her husband and three small children. This demonstrates the commitment and dedication of so many independent indexers, people who seek not only to develop their own skills, knowledge, and contacts in the industry, but who also want to support their peers and contribute to the field as a whole.

Tanya now lives in Portsmouth, Ohio. Her husband, Brandon, graduated from medical school in May and has just begun his residency in Emergency Medicine. Tanya says, "We plan on being here for at least four years until he is done with his residency. After that, we're not sure where we'll end up, but we've both always liked the idea of living in Colorado." No matter where she lives, Tanya will be able to index as much as she wants—that's the advantage of an independent career like book indexing.

Tanya graduated in 2004 with a B.A. in English from Brigham Young University. Right now, she is a full-time mother to two girls and one boy, ages 5, 4, and 1. Indexing is part-time for her. She worked for many years as a catalog librarian, and says that if she ever feels the need or desire to go back to full-time work, she would love to get her masters in library science and go back to cataloging.

Tanya discovered indexing in a book about part-time careers. The connection was instantaneous: "Immediately upon seeing the word 'indexing' my heart leapt. I knew right away it was something that sounded perfect for me." She looked into the American Society for Indexing and found that the Heartland Chapter was having a meeting only a month later, so she signed up to go. She loved meeting everyone in the chapter and finding out about indexing. Wasting no time, she enrolled in the UC Berkeley Indexing Theory and Application course and finished it within about four months.

So far, Tanya has indexed mostly textbooks, American history books, and biographies, although a book on acting was especially fun. She really enjoys indexing biographies and would like to attempt a literary criticism text. At the moment, she's working on a twenty-book series on adolescent health, from which she



is learning "all about controlled vocabularies and maintaining a similar index structure across the series." Probably her only complaint is that her projects tend to come in "droughts and floods"—no jobs for months, then a spate of work in a single month.

Tanya has a website, www.inkpressindexing.com, where she displays samples of her work along with information about herself and her credentials. She says the only real marketing she's done is her initial email campaign. She researched publishers and found the ones who work with topics she enjoys. Then she created a short résumé and cover letter and emailed about fifty publishers asking if she could send her materials. Of the ten that replied, four are now regular clients. Tanya has also gotten several jobs through networking. She says, "At this point, having more experience, I feel that I could do another marketing campaign and find more work, but with three little kids and a husband in residency, I feel like I have enough to focus on." (cont. on page 5)

Tanya Bomsta

(Continued from page 4)

Tanya says she would always like to keep indexing. She says, "It's especially important to me as a stay-at-home mom to keep my skills up in case I ever need to re-enter the workforce. I also find that the intellectual challenge keeps me happy and motivated."

As Heartland's co-president, Tanya hopes to find great speakers for our meetings who will inspire all of us to step up our indexing. She is also hoping to organize more frequent, less formal meetings throughout the year

with local chapter members. "Indexing can be lonely," she notes, "and it's great to get together with other indexers to talk about our work."

In her spare time (is there any, you might wonder?), Tanya likes to read, play word games, and do genealogy. She'd also like to hear from chapter members about their ideas for keeping Heartland a vibrant, engaged community of indexers! ■

We Asked: "What's on Your Desk (Besides Work)?"



"My Personal Assistant, Janet. Her favorite spot is directly beneath the Individual Kitty-Warmer (known to me as a halogen desk lamp). She is very careful never to step on my keyboard, although she thinks page proofs are some kind of bedding material. If I don't pet and praise her regularly, she finds cellophane and munches on it, which drives me crazy. And she meows in her sleep." (Sandy Topping)

"R2D2 is my USB hub. I got him last spring for my birthday from thinkgeek.com. Whenever I get a little crazy, I push his button and let him talk to me." (Laura Ewald)



(more on page 7)

Works for Me. . . .

Building a Website with Microsoft Office Live Small Business

by Laura A. Ewald

As I have been working this summer to get my indexing business off the ground, one of my priorities has been to create a professional web page. Keeping in mind that I am what I would call “selectively” computer literate, and the fact that my one class in web design and HTML was over a decade ago in library school, I knew it would be a challenge. But having already sunk around \$1,000 into this business without seeing a paid gig, I knew I would not be hiring someone to design a web page for me.

A quick Google search on “domain names registration” produces some 27,400,000 hits. So where does the amateur—who wants to at least appear professional online—start? Even adding “small business” to the search nets over one million hits, and after stumbling around in GoDaddy.com for a while, I felt that this and other similar options were not for me.

When I found Microsoft Office Live Small Business (<http://smallbusiness.officelive.com/en-us/>), it was the answer I had been looking for. I know more than one person who heartily dislikes anything from Microsoft, and I have certainly had my own frustrations with them. (I have Windows Vista and Office 2007 on my work computer—need I say more?) But in spite of the frustrations involved, I now have what I want: a business domain registered to me, a web site I was able to build and maintain myself, a business email address, and a place to store documents off-site, all for \$15.00 a year.

The Good:

- Step-by step instructions take you through the process of registering a domain, planning and creating your web site, and setting up your business email account.
- Multiple videos and help screens are available to show you how it is done.
- Templates for theme, style, and color are available for your web site, so all you need to do is select the look you want and add content.
- It is easy (even for me!) to upload documents from my computer to my Document Gallery and then add hotlinks to them from my web pages. This is especially handy for posting your curriculum vitae or sample indexes without cluttering up the look of the web pages themselves. And because they can be found by an Internet search engine, they create more opportunities for users to find your site.
- You can do the same with images. For example, I have added the ASI logo to my Image Gallery so it appears on my home page under “Memberships.”
- From your home page, you can create multiple sub-pages with internal links, so you can provide grouped information under specific headings.
- The Contact Me template includes an active form that goes to your email.

The Frustrating:

- I have two different logins to Microsoft Office Live—one for my web page, which I did first, using my Gmail email address for the login, and one for my business email, which uses my Microsoft Live email for the login—and I cannot figure out how to use the same password for both.
- The initial login for both accounts NEVER works the first time. I always have to enter the password a second time. (Grrrrrr. . . .)
- When rearranging the order of individual sub-pages, I had to redo some pages multiple times, because sometimes the reordering would also replace content with another page. It took me longer than it should have to realize what it was

(continued on page 7)

MS Office Live Small Business

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doing, and this was the most frustrating part of the entire experience. My advice: When a web page appears exactly as you want it, back up and print out that version, so that if you have to recreate it, at least you have the content.

Finally, there is a Microsoft Office Live Workspace available (<http://workspace.office.live.com/>). It is still identified as a beta testing site, but it allows you to save your files off-site. I have uploaded one of my sample indexes to it, and it seems to be fairly easy to use. This may be an option for my off-site storage as I take on professional jobs.

So why have I chosen to use Microsoft Office Live Small Business?

- **Stability:** Microsoft is not going anywhere anytime soon. In spite of the economy and layoffs, I believe it will continue to be a leader in the marketplace.
- **Affordability:** While I'm told I could have the same services for "free" with other providers,

for my small, \$15.00 annual fee, I don't have any advertising on my site other than the tiny, bottom-of-the-page line that says "Powered by Microsoft Office Live."

- **Professional Appearance:** While templates can sometimes be a pain to use (at least for me), the web page looks sharp in the end. (For an example, see mine at www.laeindexing.com.)

If you want to have a web page for your indexing business, I highly recommend going to the ASI Indexer Locator first to see what other people have done in order to get ideas about what might be right for you. Second, downloading a free version of PDFCreator allows you to create PDF documents that you can upload to your site, maintaining your original formatting and allowing anyone with the free Adobe Reader to view the files.

From the over one million options out there, I can safely recommend Microsoft Office Live Small Business as a place to start for creating your own online presence for your business. It may or may not be the best option out there, but for this amateur, it was a workable means to a satisfactory end. ■

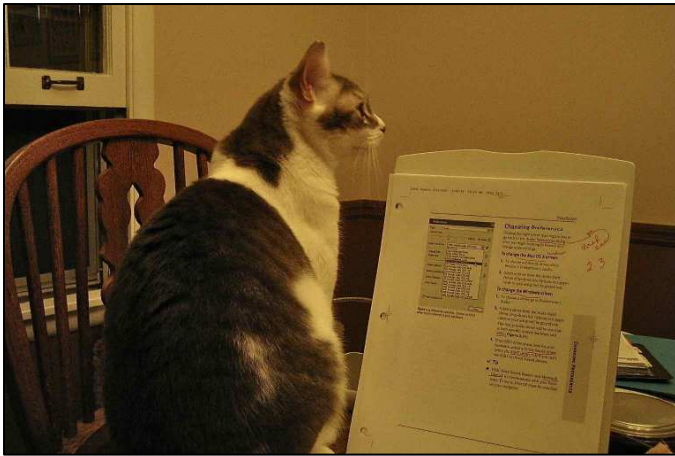
"What's on Your Desk?"

"The indexing monster my son made me last year. His gesture is inspired by Nick Park's Wallace ("Cheese, Gromit!"), because my son thinks it's probably the best way to express one's enthusiasm for indexing. (Carol Reed)

(more on page 8)



“What’s on Your Desk?”



“This is my friend’s cat Leisel, reading the copy in my copyholder when I was house/pet- sitting.” (Joy Dean Lee)



“The three computers of my two daughters and me (mine’s in the middle) on a coffee table at a lakehouse in Texas where we were spending a long weekend. Notice the Apples-to-Apples game and Seventeen magazine under the table.” (Joy Dean Lee)

What makes your workspace unique? Send your photos to Carol Reed at caree05@bluestemclarity.com.

About this Newsletter

This newsletter is distributed twice a year to Heartland chapter members, ASI officers, ASI SIG contacts, and ASI chapter contacts. Archives are available on the Heartland website: <http://web.spsp.net/jbealle/heartland/index.html>

American Society for Indexing

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**MINUTES OF FALL MEETING
OF THE HEARTLAND CHAPTER OF
THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR INDEXING**

October 17, 2009, MCL Cafeteria, Richmond, IN

Members Present: Marilyn Augst, Devon Thomas, Tanya Bomsta, Paula McCoy, Cathy Seckman, Barbara Bushnell, Laura Ewald, Julie Stowers, Margaret Hentz, Mary Peterson, John Bealle
Guests: Amy Van Huisen, Shelley Quattrocchi, Joe Augustin, Janet Wagner

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. Devon introduced speaker Charlee Trantino.

Morning Program:

The guest speaker was Charlee Trantino, a professional indexer for some 20 years and winner of the Wilson Award for her index to *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake: Unlocking James Joyce's Masterpiece*, by Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson.

Charlee's presentation was about "rekeying," or revising the locators in an index in the event of a new edition, such as a paperback. She led the group through the process she has used for "ticking off," or marking up, the "old" book pages to show where the pages in the new edition begin and end. Throughout the exercise, the group discussed how an indexer should charge for this work; how publishers approach the work; and what kinds of "mistakes" in the original index to fix or not fix.

The session continued, with one break, until lunch.

Business Meeting:

President Devon Thomas called the business meeting to order at 12:55 p.m. Everyone introduced themselves and described their involvement in indexing.

Secretary's Report: Paula McCoy noted that she had revised the Spring meeting minutes to remove the name of someone erroneously reported as having helped in the ballot counting at the meeting. The minutes were approved after a first motion by Barbara Bushnell, seconded by Cathy Seckman.

Treasurer's Report: Mary Peterson reported on the financial statement for the period Jan. 1, 2009 – Oct. 17, 2009.

The beginning balance for the period was \$1728.59. The ending balance as of Oct. 17 is \$1737.81. Spring meeting revenues (registrations) totaled \$425.00. Total income for the period from meetings, ASI chapter allotment, and sale of mugs was \$828.00. Spring meeting expenses totaled \$287.49. Fall meeting expenses to date are \$31.29 (includes travel and hotel only). Total expenses for the period were \$818.78.

President's Report: Devon pointed out to the group the various materials she had brought to the meeting, including several brochures about indexing courses, such as the ASI course and the USDA course. The differences among the courses were discussed.

Co-President's Report: Tanya Bomsta was given a round of applause for her work in putting together the Fall meeting.

Committee Reports:

Newsletter: On behalf of Carol Reed, Devon announced that Carol was soliciting pictures of "quirky" things that members have on their work desks. Carol has sent an email to the listserv to the same effect.

Paula noted that the Fall newsletter is coming together and may be out in a couple of weeks.

Webmaster: John Bealle brought up the question that some have had as to whether the chapter should move its website to use an ASI-affiliated URL. He noted that he has used his own page. There was no strong opinion that that should change.

Old Business:

Devon noted that the bylaw changes approved by the chapter one year ago had not yet received official approval from the national ASI, despite numerous emails by both Cathy Seckman and Devon. She suggested that Heartland therefore consider the changes approved. Members agreed with that. There was discussion of another contact person at the national office that Devon could contact for affirmation.

Marilyn Augst said she would like an updated copy of the bylaws. The secretary will update the bylaws so that they can be distributed at the Spring meeting. The revised bylaws have not been posted on the website since they have not been approved by national ASI.

Heartland-ASI financial changes: Devon reviewed the financial options offered to chapters following the 2008 national meeting. At present, the chapter is still handling its own finances with its own treasurer. The options now are: 1) let the national management office handle our finances for us, or 2) continue to handle our own finances, which requires the chapter to file for tax-exempt status with the national office. The latter has been done: the filing form was filled out and sent several months ago. There was consensus that the chapter continue to manage its own finances without involving national ASI. There was a suggestion that this decision be reconsidered in the future.

New Business:

Devon said that the national meeting in Portland was a good one. The 2010 meeting is in Minneapolis, about as close to a Midwestern location as can be expected.

There was some discussion of the idea of having online meetings, as some chapters have done. Technology is a major consideration.

Devon addressed the idea of using e-voting instead of the complicated, somewhat costly two-envelope method of casting ballots. At least one chapter has used e-voting. After discussion of the voting provisions in the Policies & Procedures manual, Cathy motioned, and Paula seconded, that Devon add a statement to the policies in the voting section saying that an alternative method would be "via an electronic system that preserves anonymity and limits voting to eligible members." She will research the method and re-present it at the Spring meeting, at which time the Policies & Procedures can be updated.

Standing Committees: Devon announced that she would not be continuing as president after this term ends. Cathy volunteered to be on the Nominating Committee, as did Laura Ewald. Tanya Bomsta will stay as a co-president; Paula McCoy is unsure about continuing as Secretary.

Cathy reminded everyone that, when the chapter voted to continue meeting in Richmond, it also was agreed that that decision would be revisited in the future.

Spring 2010 meeting: April 10 was selected as the first choice for the Spring meeting, with April 17 as an alternate. The national meeting is May 13-15.

The business meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Afternoon Program:

Time management: Charlee presented her views on time management, which she calls "life management." She emphasized the need for a good routine for everyday life, a pattern of behavior that one follows every day and that eliminates wasted time. She then suggested steps to prevent and attack procrastination and procrastinating behavior.

Sky Indexing: Following a break, John Bealle gave a presentation of version 7 of the Sky indexing program. He described how he became an official tester of the program, then demonstrated the “hidden” improvements. Among the major enhancements are the option for a side-by-side view, with the display pane on the left; many new keyboard functions; new page increment functions; and new design features.

John provided everyone with a copy of his “How I Use Sky Indexing” article and invited feedback. The presentation was well-received and generated much discussion of indexing software and how people use it.

Tanya Bomsta asked the group whether they would be interested in embedded indexing or web indexing as topics at future meetings. Everyone agreed they were interested.

Marilyn Augst described her own method for writing an index for a new edition of a textbook. This includes getting the original index from the publisher and loading it to Cindex.

There was a discussion of organization: how individuals organize their time and their work.

Devon asked if any new indexers or new meeting attendees had questions for the experienced indexers. Educational courses were discussed. Mary Peterson described the indexing class she teaches.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula McCoy, Secretary