

ANCHORAGE LIBRARIANS REACT TO THE OIL SPILL

BY CATHY VITALE, ALASKA RESOURCES LIBRARY

"The truly noble and resolved spirit raises itself, and becomes more conspicuous in times of disaster and ill fortune."

Plutarch

Anchorage librarians (who have always seen themselves as noble and resolved spirits) certainly became more conspicuous following the Prince William Sound oil spill. Although inundated by a flood of reference requests, the librarians continued their intense networking, gained new patrons, and contributed significantly to the knowledge of those involved in the state and federal efforts. Following is an account of the unfolding impact of the oil spill on Anchorage libraries.

Day one and immediately following:

Librarian Celia Rozen of Alaska Department of Fish and Game library came into Alaska Resources Library and checked out everything she could find about the impact of oil on herring and salmon. Her agency had to decide quickly whether or under what conditions to open or close the Prince William Sound fisheries.

Alaska Resources Library using LASER-CAT began putting together a bibliography on oil spills and the biology of Prince William Sound.

Fish and Wildlife Services librarian, Nancy Tileston, searched the Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts CD-ROM for "birds and oil, otters and oil, mussels and oil, the effects of oil spills on (you name it)".

Sharon Palmisano, librarian for the Anchorage Daily News, phoned Alaska Resources Library, ARCO, BP, Loussac and the University and drove from library to library in search of drawings of tankers and booms and skimmers.

Anchorage Municipal Library began clipping spill articles from the local papers.

Week 2:

Anchorage librarians teleconferenced with librarians in Fairbanks and Juneau to organize a proactive response to the oil spill that would plug existing information gaps and yet avoid duplication of effort.

Alaska Resources Library as well as Elmer Rasmuson Library and Alaska State Library were designated regional oil spill response libraries. Their purpose was to be a collection and distribution center for all oil spill related library activity.

Alaska Resources Library immediately obtained computer searches done by other Anchorage libraries on oil spill subjects, duplicated them and passed them on to the other oil spill response libraries. In turn the other two response libraries

passed Alaska Resources Library press releases, education packets and bibliographies.

Alaska libraries compiled five different bibliographies in response to the spill.

1. Oil Spill in Prince William Sound: A Bibliography. This is a bibliography of technical books on oil spill and the biology of Prince William Sound. Prepared by Alaska Resources Library.

2. Oil Spill Bibliography Kenai Peninsula-Cook Inlet. This is a bibliography of petroleum biodegradation and the biology of the new areas into which the oil has spread.

3. Oil Spill Liability. This was done on WESTLAW of legal periodical literature 1982-88. (Created by Alaska Court System Library)

4. Oil Spills and the Sea: A Bibliography. This is an annotated bibliography of popular books on oil spills including fiction. (Prepared by Elmer E Rasmuson Library)

5. Oil Spill Bibliography. This is a bibliography of the Alaska State Library's Materials related to oil spills. (Compiled by Alaska State Library)

In addition the Anchorage Daily News Library built a database accessible by keyword as well as name, of all those people whose names appeared in stories related to the spill.

Month 2:

The function of a special library is to meet the information needs of its clientele, change is a way of life. The oil spill was no exception. Alaska Resources Library set up a special "rush" account with EBS Book Service and received and cataloged more than seventy five oil spill related books in the two months following the spill. At Martha Shepard's request OCLC has agreed that these and all other Alaska Resources Library holdings can now appear on LASER-CAT (they have previously been blanked out as the result of a law suit between OCLC and WLN).

The Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game Library catalogs articles they acquire for patrons via interlibrary loans on a computer system. In the two months following the spill they collected and cataloged five new file drawers of journal articles.

Alaska Court System Law Library began to collect all of the periodical articles cited in its bibliography.

British Petroleum Library participated with a consultant in building a world oil spill data base, so that company officials can retrieve citations on the immediate and long term impacts of oil spills.

Looking Back

Did we truly become more conspicuous? Librarians report that proactive responses to the oil spill did enhance their library's position within their companies or agencies. A perplexed Fish and Wildlife employee asked early in the spill, "What does the library have to do with oil spills?" The

librarian reports that he and many parts of the agency unaccustomed to using the library now know the answer.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game Library has had a full time technician added to its staff along with the budget and ability to search LEXIS. The library will be supporting the newly created Oil Spill Assessment Division of Fish and Game.

Alaska Resources Library, whose interlibrary loans increased by fifty percent, saw use by parks that had previously never made a request.

The Daily News was so impressed with the names database that they will now keep all of their sources on the computer using the names database as a prototype.

How successful were our efforts to provide oil spill information evenly to all those who needed it? Barb Pearson of Exxon Production Research Division (Houston) reports, "Alaskan librarians are among the most professional information specialists I have ever dealt with." She had feared that the level of anger Alaskans feel about the oil spill would impede here research but found instead excellent networking. "I would hope Texas librarians would do as well," said Pearson.

Currently

Anchorage librarians are now in the lull between immediate response to the oil spill as an information crisis and the many years of work that agency oversight, litigation and scientific research will require. Another oil spill information teleconference in September will coordinate new directions. Anchorage libraries (noble and resolved spirits) are proud of their effective response to an information crisis.

MC

CHARLES D. HAYES
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

MARSHALL CAVENDISH CORP
147 WEST MERRICK ROAD
FREEPORT, NEW YORK 11520

P O BOX 872749
WASILLA, ALASKA 99687
907-376-2932

DISTRIBUTOR OF
LERNER PUBLICATIONS
CAROL RHODA BOOKS & UNGAR
IN ALASKA CALL TOLL FREE
800-478-2932

HAWAII LIBRARY BINDING SERVICES INC.

1316 Mookaula Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
(808) 841-4877

Member of Library Binding Institute

For more information:

Ted Ryberg, Alaska Representative
P.O. Box 80529
College Station
Fairbanks, Alaska
(907) 452-7454

Class A Buckram

Fabricoid

Leather

Durobind

BOOKBINDING
AND
BOOK RESTORATIONS

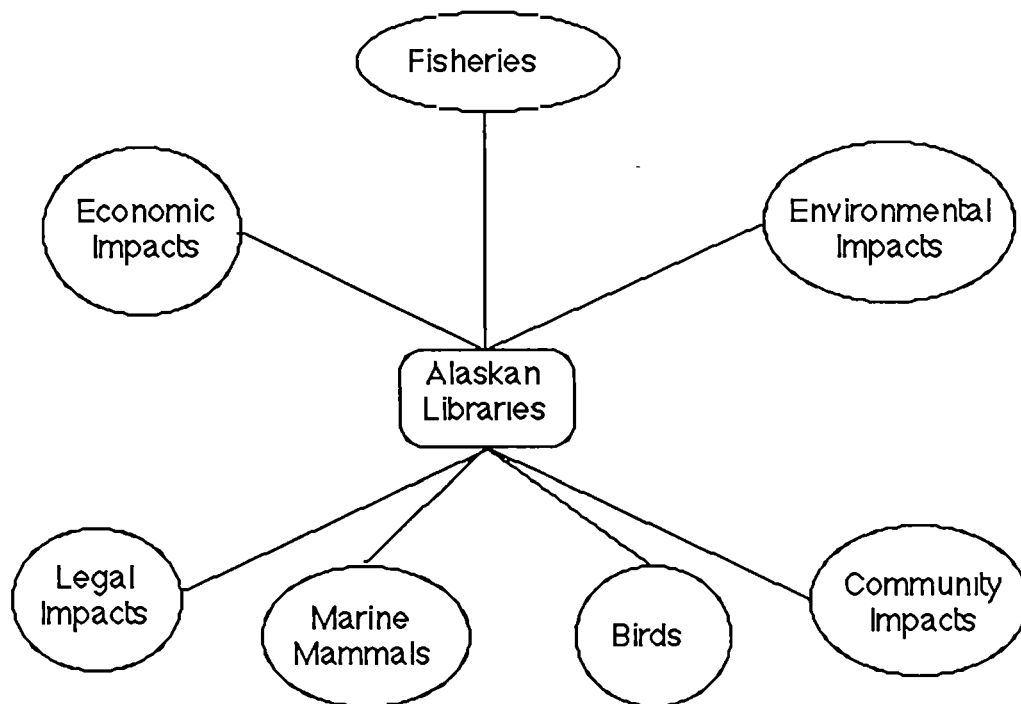
The SOURDOUGH

vol 26, no 3

Summer 1989

ISSN 002-4570

Alaskan Libraries



Deal With The Oil Spill

The SOURDOUGH

vol 26, no.3

Summer 1989

ISSN 002-4570

ALASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

Lauren Barker, President
7901 Snowview Drive
Anchorage, AK 99501

Judy Arteaga, President-Elect
1439 Millar
Ketchikan, AK 99901

Marjone Cole, Secretary
P.O. Box 90155
Fairbanks, AK 99775

Audrey Kolb, Treasurer
Alaska State Library
1215 Cowles Street
Fairbanks, AK 99701

THE SOURDOUGH, Journal of the Alaska Library Association (ISSN002-4570), is published quarterly winter, spring, summer and fall.

EDITORIAL, ADVERTISING, CIRCULATION, and SUBSCRIPTION offices: SOURDOUGH, c/o Noel Wien Library, 1215 Cowles Street, Fairbanks, AK 99701

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICES \$15 00 Domestic, \$20 foreign, including Canada Single copy price, \$2.75.

THE PRICE OF AN ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION TO MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION IS INCLUDED IN THEIR DUES Send membership request to Audrey Kolb, Treasurer, Alaska State Library, 1215 Cowles Street, Fairbanks, AK 99701

THE SOURDOUGH is indexed in the BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ALASKANA.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE MATERIAL IN THE SOURDOUGH IS HEREBY GRANTED WHEN CREDIT IS GIVEN.

THE EDITOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT ANY COPY.

MOVING? Send all address changes to. SOURDOUGH, c/o Noel Wien Library, 1215 Cowles Street, Fairbanks, AK 99701

CONTENTS

From the President.....	4
By Lauren Barker	
Editors Comments	4
John Cotton Dana Contest	4
Anchorage Librarians React to	5
The Oil Spill, By Cathy Vitale	
Juneau and The Oil Spill.....	8
By Sonja Lyon	
Fairbanks Reacts to the Oil Spill	8
Valdez Library Deals with the Oil Spill.....	10
By Karen Wieland	
Where Mountains Meet the Sea	11
Reviewed By Dennis Stephens	
Explore Your Excellence Potential.....	12
By Harriet McClain	
Moving In Concert.....	13
By Clara Sitter	
Reviews Section	16

EDITOR: BILL GALBRAITH

REVIEWS EDITOR: BETTY GALBRAITH

FROM THE PRESIDENT

BY LAUREN BARKER, PRESIDENT, AKLA

EDITOR'S NOTES

Dear Colleagues

This issue of *Sourdough* is devoted to the *Exxon Valdez* oilspill which occurred March 24, 1989. This was most certainly a tragic day for Alaska. An accident occurred in the beautiful and prolific waters off of Valdez which changed the course of the state both environmentally and politically for many years to come.

In the ensuing turmoil, librarians became a cohesive network supplying up-to-date information to all parties involved. The following accounts written by our peers will exhibit some of the intellectual and tangible work necessary to achieve organizational effectiveness and extraordinary response time during what only can be termed an "information crisis"

With the immediate crisis over, there are some of us now who are left with the aftermath of the oilspill - litigation. Our libraries and staffs will be affected for the next decade by the domain of the legal system. It is estimated that the lawsuits stemming from the oilspill will produced over one billion documents. All of this information needs to be indexed, cataloged, and made retrievable. These activities should put us well within the reach of new technology, for it will take that to control the information flow.

And, while we are working diligently with the overwhelming amount of information, nature will quietly be taking control of an overwhelming situation. Slowly as the shifting sands, water and beaches will be cleaned and returned to normal. Within a decade new generations of marine animals can exist to make the Prince William Sound area of Alaska once again one of the most pristine regions of the state.

Time, effort, and patience - for nature and for us. Working in unison with every library being an important entity in the information process. I am proud to be associated with a group whose strength resides in the ability of its members to respond quickly across organizational lines and whose emphasis is the sharing of strategic knowledge in the spirit of impartiality.



Lauren Barker
President

On March 24th of this year the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground on Bligh Reef in Prince William Sound and drastically changed the state of Alaska, physically, and socially in one of the worst disasters ever. It also had its effect on libraries in the state in many different ways. Librarians in the state, particularly in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau reacted to the spill in a very positive manner in terms of putting together sources of information that will be useful to researchers. Instead of waiting and reacting to requests, they anticipated needs, pulled together information and actively made this information available to researchers. Included in this issue is the story of this effort in the three major communities. Early on, the Alaska State Library sponsored an audio conference so that libraries throughout the state could share information on the spill. This was a success and resulted in the establishing of three regional centers for Oil Spill information. These are the Alaska State Library, in Juneau, The Alaska Resources Library in Anchorage and the Elmer Rasmuson Library in Fairbanks. It was agreed that these three locations would share any Oil Spill information collected with the other two so that libraries throughout the state would have close access to all Oil Spill information that has been gathered. An additional item that is worthy of note is that Martha Shepard of the Alaska Resources Library was able to get OCLC to agree to allow the transfer of her library's holdings from OCLC to WLN so that all Alaskan libraries would be able to access information about the Oil Spill. A final article is about a library that has experienced a different type of impact from the oil spill. This is the Valdez Consortium Library.

Although the Spill has been a disaster of the greatest possible magnitude, we can be proud of the way the Alaska Library community networked and worked together to make information available where it is needed.

JOHN COTTON DANA AWARDS FOR 1990

Tell the world about your outstanding public relations project - Enter the John Cotton Dana Public Relations Contest!! Awards are given annually for either a library's total annual PR Program or for a special project or event!

The contest is sponsored jointly by the H.W. Wilson Company & the Public Relations Section of the Library Administration and Management Association, a division of ALA.

For an information packet containing contest entry forms, rules and guidelines contact the H.W. Wilson Company, Library Relations Department, 950 University Avenue, Bronx, NY 10452. **Hurry**, the deadline for all entries is February 5, 1990!