Northern California Technical Processes Group

Annual Meeting

Friday, May 7, 2010

Co-sponsor, San Francisco Public Library

Cross-Pollinating: Collecting, Collaborating, & Sharing Among Information Communities

9:00 Registration and continental breakfast
9:30 Introductions and NCTPG business
9:45 Tim Spalding, Founder/Developer, LibraryThing
10:30 Cathy Marshall, Senior Researcher, Microsoft Research Lab
11:15 Break
11:30 Günter Waibel, Program Officer, OCLC
12:15 Q&A

NCTPG 2010 Steering Committee
Debbie Benrubi, Chair
Jean Dickinson
Dan Lou
Michelle Reeder
Tim Spalding, **LibraryThing**

Tim Spalding is the founder and lead developer of LibraryThing, the website that helps booklovers catalog their books easily and connect with other readers, and LibraryThing for Libraries, bringing catalog enhancements and reviews to the OPACs of libraries and consortiums worldwide. Before LibraryThing, Tim was a graduate student in Greek and Latin at the University of Michigan, and worked for Houghton Mifflin in Boston and as a freelance Web developer and publisher. Launched in 2005, LibraryThing has over a million users signed up who have cataloged over 49 million books.

Cathy Marshall, **Crowdsourcing and the future of user-contributed metadata**

Cathy Marshall is a senior researcher at Microsoft Research’s Silicon Valley laboratory. Cathy has long worked in the disciplinary interstices of computer science, information science, and the humanities, with occasional collaborations in the arts and the sciences. She was a long-time member of the research staff at Xerox PARC and is an affiliate of the Center for the Study of Digital Libraries at Texas A&M University. Cathy recently completed a book about eBook research called *Reading and Writing the Electronic Book* (Morgan and Claypool, publishers). Her homepage is www.csdl.tamu.edu/~marshall; there you will find her publications, her blog, her twitter ID, contact information, and—most importantly—how she is related to Elvis.

**Cathy writes:** Coming up with effective metadata is hard work even for trained professionals. It requires extensive domain knowledge, well-maintained authority lists, and a thorough familiarity with readers’ needs. Yet these days, there’s a pervasive belief that we can turn to crowdsourcing—to the users themselves—to generate the rich metadata we need to describe our digital resources and make them accessible. Is this a realistic vision? Will such a strategy work? There are already plenty of examples of user-contributed metadata in the digital realm. Instead of relying on wishful thinking, I’ll talk about some study results that reveal the strengths and weaknesses of user metadata. I’ll also talk about what these results mean for the development of mechanisms for eliciting and collecting user metadata.

Günter Waibel, **Library, Archive and Museum (LAM) Collaboration: Beyond the Silos of the LAMs**

Günter Waibel is a Program Officer for OCLC Research. He focuses on sharing, aggregating and disseminating cultural materials in a networked environment, particularly from a museum and art library perspective. Further areas of interest are the intersection of libraries, archives and museums, and the necessity for more collaborative approaches within and among different communities. Günter currently blogs at hangingtogether.org, and tweets as GuWa.

**Günter writes:** If I told you that the future for libraries, archives and museums lies in collaboration, would you keep listening, or turn away with a yawn or a smirk? Unfortunately, the term “collaboration” has both been cheapened (there are no limits to facile interactions being hyped as “collaboration”), and vilified (you have certainly heard the quip “collaboration is an unnatural act between non-consenting adults”). Rather than superficial or beastly, true collaboration is utterly transformative—it changes behaviors, processes and organizational structures, and leads to a fundamental interconnectedness among the partners. This talk will introduce the environmental factors conducive to a collaborative culture, and share early exemplars of cross-community convergence under a common administrative umbrella.