

SOLUTIONS

CONNECTING YOU TO THE VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP

FEATURING: THE CLOSE TOUCH WITH MEMBERS by KATE NEVINS p. 2

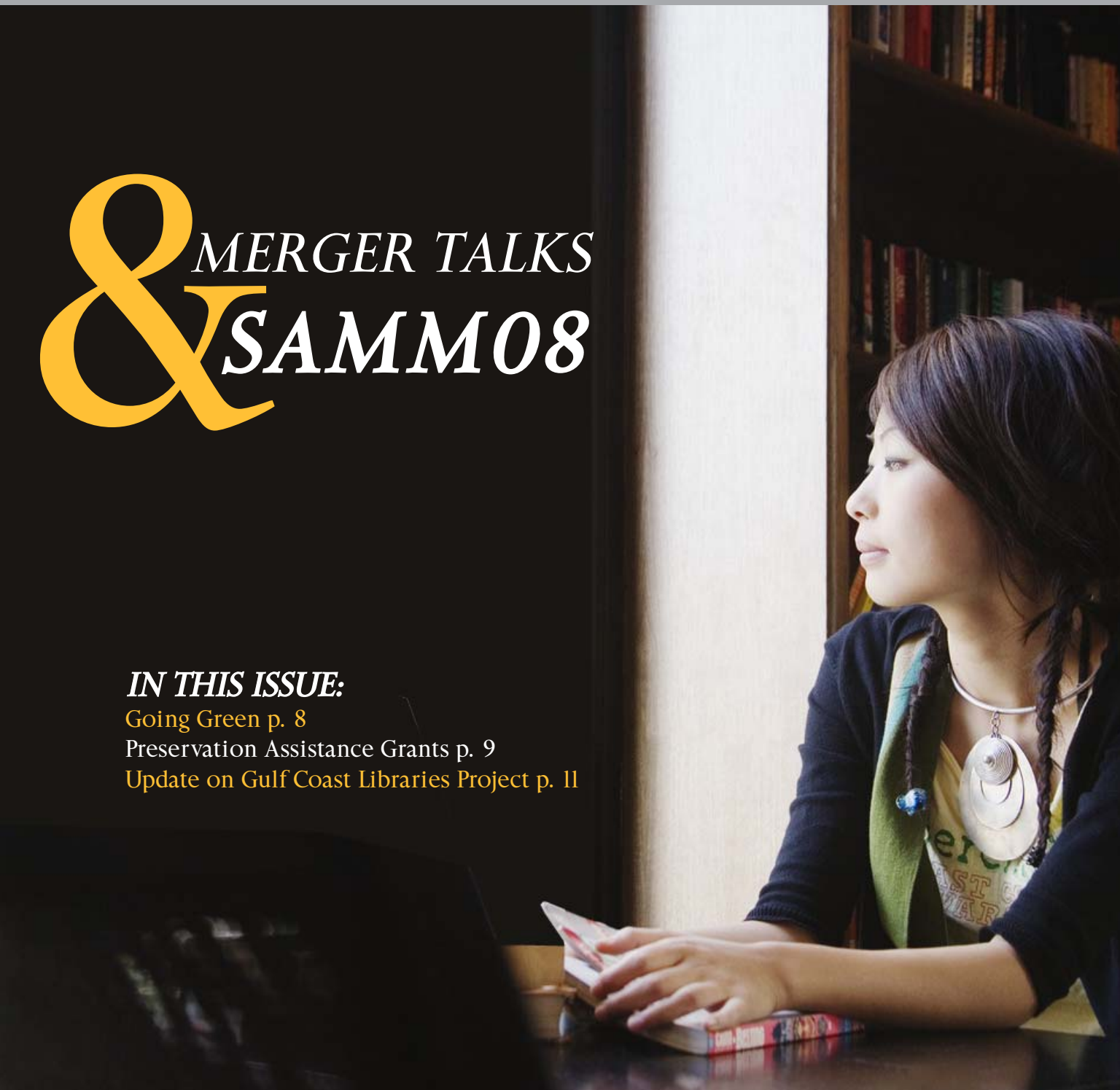
& MERGER TALKS & SAMM08

IN THIS ISSUE:

Going Green p. 8

Preservation Assistance Grants p. 9

Update on Gulf Coast Libraries Project p. 11



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Please fill out the [subscription](#) form to be included on the mailing list for *Solutions*.

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SOLINET, a membership organization founded in 1973, strengthens libraries and the communities they support through cooperation, leadership, and services.

SOLINET offers classes and training for library staff, preservation services, consulting, access to and support of OCLC products and services as well as discounts on electronic resources and library products.



Staying in close touch with members is a value held by SOLINET's Board and staff. It not only keeps us informed about your issues and choices, but also ensures that our programs are accessible, practical, and effectively integrated into your library's services. In discussions following the recent announcement of a possible merger between SOLINET and

PALINET (described on page 3 of this issue), we've been talking with members about what it means to maintain close touch within a larger organization.

So what is "close touch"? I see it as both local and high touch. We are involved at a local level, in a meaningful way that works in the context of your library, community, and state. We are in frequent touch so we understand your needs as they evolve and can provide timely services and solutions. In a web-based world, the Internet provides one tool for keeping each other informed and up-to-date. It also provides a platform for extending services to more members, such as resource-sharing and continuing education. Web-based classes are a perfect example of connecting you locally, at your desk, to a regional network of expertise.

The networking opportunities available through the Internet keep us in touch, but they haven't decreased the ways we connect with you personally. SOLINET staff travel and live around the region. Many of you have taken face-to-face classes with SOLINET instructors or had visits from our growing staff of consultative sales experts. Staff members working on the Gulf Coast Libraries Project spend much of their time with libraries in Louisiana and Mississippi. We've increased Users Group meetings around the region, and SOLINET staff always attend state library association meetings. My colleagues and I participate in meetings of library consortia and networks, such as NAAL, LAL-INC, Galileo, PLAN, ASERL, and the HBCU Library Alliance.

Close touch is important regardless of our membership size or the level of members' engagement in web-based networking. We look forward to increasing our engagement with you and welcome your increased engagement with SOLINET, other members throughout the region, and potentially members in our sister network, PALINET.



Kate Nevins, Executive Director

SOLINET and PALINET Boards in Merger Talks

By Fatima Hyder, SOLUTIONS Editor

As the needs of SOLINET members evolve, so too must the services that SOLINET offers. As a way to maintain their strength in an evolving world, the SOLINET and PALINET Boards are considering merging the two organizations into a new organization.

In late February, SOLINET emailed members letting them know about this potential move and giving them background information about what led to the decision to investigate a merger.

An oversight committee with members of both Boards is currently studying the proposal. This study period, known as due diligence, will compare the financial and legal infrastructure of both organizations. Due diligence is expected to be completed in April.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity for two leading member-focused organizations to come together to create a new organization to serve our diverse library community," said Carol Pitts Diedrichs, SOLINET Board Chair. "This would allow us to continue to provide our current broad range of services as well as implement new and innovative ones to meet our members' evolving needs. Moreover, by drawing on greater operating efficiencies, this new organization will accelerate the development of the new programs



SOLINET Executive Director Kate Nevins spearheads one of many Town Hall discussion groups.



we need to build our future."
This new organization would offer

- An expanded capacity for innovation
- Networking opportunities with colleagues at more than 3,000 institutions
- An expanded educational curriculum
- More consortial savings opportunities.

"In the near term, it means that SOLINET members will have access to the programs and services of PALINET. This ranges from a wide array of continuing education topics, to the PALINET Leadership Network, to additional databases and software packages. PALINET members will have reciprocal access to the services of SOLINET," said Kate Nevins, SOLINET Executive Director.

"More importantly, it means that members of the merged organization will benefit from increased capacity for innovation and new services. Putting the two organizations together gives us the resources for new programs in such areas as open source, advocacy, and others."

Get the Latest Information about the Possible Merger

SOLINET is committed to transparent communications with our members about the possible merger. To that end, SOLINET offers several methods for members to get the latest information and to participate in the process:

- A section of the website is dedicated to news about the [merger](#)
- [Town Hall meetings](#) are being scheduled throughout the region to give members a chance to ask questions and provide input
- The blog [Momentum](#) provides an online discussion forum with Kate Nevins. The blog also allows members to see others' input and offer their own ideas

- Continually updated [FAQs](#) on the website feature questions submitted by members
- The SOLINET Annual Membership Meeting will include a panel discussion by Kate Nevins, SOLINET Board Chair Carol Pitts Diedrichs, PALINET Executive Director Cathy Wilt, PALINET Board of Trustees President Joseph Lucia, and other members of the SOLINET Board.

The New Organization

Because it is still early in the process, details about the possible new organization are still being worked out. However, both SOLINET and PALINET are committed to "local touch" in the new organization.

"It is our intention to maintain a physical presence in both of the current SOLINET and PALINET regions," Nevins said. "We see increased movement toward a distributed work force throughout the region rather than a concentration of staff solely at a headquarters location. This will bring staff closer to members and enable recruitment of capable staff who are not able to relocate to the headquarters location."

In addition to the location of the physical headquarters, other details that are still being studied include the structure of the Board, bylaws, and the name of the new organization.

Stay Involved

Both SOLINET and PALINET are member-focused organizations, and are committed to maintaining this focus in a new organization.

"It is our members who make us who we are," Nevins said. "We want you to have ample opportunity to provide input and ask questions about the possible merger. Offer your input on the blog. Ask questions. Attend the Town Hall meetings. We want to hear what you have to say."



SAMM08: The Transformed Library



By Fatima Hyder, SOLUTIONS Editor

Libraries across our region are implementing practical approaches to innovation every day. Get ideas from your colleagues for programs you can use in your own institution.

The SOLINET Annual Membership Meeting 2008 (SAMM), themed "The Transformed Library," will feature nine presentations by staff at SOLINET member institutions; a luncheon presentation by Scott Peacock, cookbook author and chef; a keynote session by Michael Stephens titled *The Transformed Library: Trends, Tools and Transparency*; and the closing session, *Sustainable 2.0: Marketing and Strategy for Blogs and Social Software*, by Karen Schneider of the College Center for Library Automation.

"Libraries are constantly being called on to do more with less to meet patrons' diverse needs," said Laura Crook, SOLINET Marketing Coordinator. "Come learn about the innovations occurring in our region and take away ideas that can work in your library."

The meeting will be Thursday to Friday, May 8 to 9, at the Emory Conference Center Hotel in Atlanta.



- The Other Side of the Library Coin: Georgia Tech's Experience in Broadcasting Scholarly Information
- Staying Ahead of the Technology Curve
- Civil Rights Digital Library
- Managing the Virtual Library.

Featured speakers

Keynote speaker Michael Stephens is Assistant Professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Dominican University in Illinois. Stephens maintains the popular blog [Tame the Web](#) and has written *The Library Internet Trainer's Toolkit*, ALA Library Technology reports on Web 2.0, and several other articles. He has more than 15 years of public library experience.

Luncheon speaker Scott Peacock is the Executive Chef at Watershed restaurant in Atlanta. He has also served as the chef for two former Georgia governors and has co-written *The Gift of Southern Cooking: Recipes and Revelations from Two Southern Chefs*. His recipes have been featured in Newsweek, The New York Times, The Wine Spectator, Bon Appetit, Food and Wine, USA Today, Atlanta magazine, Traditional Home, Cooking Light, and Southern Living.

Closing speaker Karen Schneider is a research and development consultant with the College Center for Library Automation in Tallahassee, FL. She writes the popular blog [The Free Range Librarian](#) and has published books and articles on the library profession. Her 16 years of library experience include automating an entire library in just more than a year and developing one of the earliest Internet training programs.

Learning from Each Other

As always, SAMM is more than just meetings and presentations. The ever-popular Vendor Fair and Reception on Thursday evening will

As always, this year's annual meeting is introducing some new elements. One of the big changes is that the SOLINET Year in Review/Business Meeting has been moved to Thursday afternoon so more people can participate. The time devoted to the Year in Review has been increased to allow for plenty of discussion about the proposed merger between SOLINET and PALINET.

Additionally, there will be two sets of concurrent sessions on Thursday and one on Friday morning. As always, the Vendor Fair will be Thursday evening. But this year, attendees will have one more opportunity to meet with vendors, at the continental breakfast on Friday.

Concurrent session topics are

- Transforming Content: Using LibGuides to Harness Web 2.0 Resources
- Loaning Equipment to Patrons
- Innovations in Next Generation Library Management Systems
- Introducing Aeon: Special Collections Circulation and Workflow Management
- The Future of Bibliographic Control

give attendees time to mingle with each other, share ideas, and get caught up. In addition, this is an opportunity to meet with vendors of library products and discuss creative options for answering patrons' information needs. Thursday evening is also an excellent time to meet SOLINET staff and put a face with the names of people you have spoken to on the telephone or corresponded with through email.

Of course, SOLINET wants to learn from you, also. So, after you return to your library, please complete the brief survey giving feedback about this year's meeting and what you would like to see next year.



SAMM 2008: Registration information

Please register using the online form.

Conference fee: \$120

Deadline: April 30
(on-site registrations will still be accepted on May 8 and 9)

SAMM 2008 Featured Speakers



Michael Stephens, Keynote Speaker, has written *The Library Internet Trainer's Toolkit*, *ALA Library Technology Reports on Web 2.0*, and a host of articles on library technology.



Scott Peacock, Author Luncheon Speaker, is Watershed restaurant's executive chef the former chef to two Georgia governors, and founding chef of Atlanta's Horseradish Grill.



Karen Schneider, Closing Speaker, has published numerous books and articles on the library profession and maintains and authors a popular blog, [The Free Range Librarian](#).

e[✓]oting

Once again, voting for [SOLINET Board members](#) and the [SOLINET delegation](#) to the OCLC Members Council will take place electronically. Voting will continue until Wednesday, April 30. Instructions have been emailed to voting members.

The results of the election will be announced at the SOLINET Year in Review at the annual meeting.

Please contact [Laura Crook](#) with questions about electronic voting.

SOLINET Educational Services

Goes Green

By Fatima Hyder, SOLUTIONS Editor



These wonderful and environmentally healthy changes not only mean less waste when something becomes outdated, but also more convenience and efficient service for our members

As part of SOLINET's continuing initiative to save natural and financial resources, the Educational Services department has taken several "green" steps.

One of the most significant changes is the quarterly class schedule is no longer being printed and mailed. Instead, the schedule will be available on the SOLINET Web site as a PDF, and the link will be emailed each quarter to people who have requested it. To request the email, please contact Vanessa Richardson.

"This move also puts the schedule in members' hands more quickly because they have access to it as soon as it's ready," said Heather Dray, Educational Services Manager.

"There is no time invested in printing, preparing for mailing, and the transit itself."

In addition, instructors are encouraged to telecommute whenever possible, carpool, rent hybrid cars when traveling, use public transportation, and recycle plastics and aluminum.

Other ways the department is cutting down on paper is by creating only electronic versions of class handouts and class evaluations and sending contracts and letters to host sites electronically.

"These wonderful and environmentally healthy changes not only mean less waste when something becomes outdated, but also more convenience and efficient service for our members," Dray said.

This is just one in a series of changes departments throughout SOLINET are making for environmental conservation. Other actions include the emailing of invoices and billing statements rather than sending hard copies. In addition, most SOLINET member publications are distributed electronically. The weekly SOLINET Update is emailed to members, and the bimonthly SOLINET Solutions is available as a PDF on the SOLINET Web site.

