

From the President

Ross Holt, President

The Tie That Binds

On behalf of the North Carolina Library Association, I would like to welcome you to the first edition of *North Carolina Libraries* online. While it may seem a dramatic transformation to some, it's the next logical step for this award-winning professional journal, which has been in continuous publication since 1942.

You'll still find a juried, academic journal with the same integrity that won *NCL* three national awards. Although there are a few changes in concept — the issues will not always revolve around central themes, and quotidian NCLA business will move to other venues — *NCL* will evince the same quality and coverage that you have come to expect. And you won't have to wait for it to arrive in your mailbox!

Conversion of *NCL* to the electronic format also comprises one element of an overall NCLA effort to improve communication with members and create more of a sense of community among North Carolina's librarians, library paraprofessionals, library educators, and library supporters. It's a matter of putting the right information in the best format most effectively to reach our members, and to reach nonmembers in the library community. With our thanks to Johnny Cash, we're keeping the end out for the tie that binds — on the Web, via e-mail, in print, and any other way we can.

The appearance of *NCL*'s first electronic issue coincides with an overhaul of the NCLA Web site, the first such change more or less since its inception. Our goal was to reorganize the way information was presented on the site, the idea being that a first-time user should be able to find whatever information he or she needed about NCLA without any difficulty.

On the site, you'll notice that information is organized into four main groups. In the upper left corner are links to everything you need in order to do business with NCLA, from joining us to getting a bill paid or finding out about a particular association policy. In the upper right corner are links to NCLA's association-wide activities and pursuits: the Biennial Conference, the Leadership Institute, Intellectual Freedom, Literacy, and so on. Down the left margin you can go directly to a section or round table. In the right hand margin you'll find links to up-to-the-minute reports from the *NCLA E-News* and upcoming events.

The central panel, using graphics from our professionally designed tabletop display, describes the organization's mission and goals, and will change from time to time as warranted to feature big NCLA events or projects.

The debut of the electronic *NCL* also meets up with publication of the second issue of *Tar Heel Libraries*, our print newsletter published in cooperation with the State Library of North Carolina. It's a most impressive, 12-page tour-de-force of tidbits and community-building news.

So NCLA is moving on all fronts and in all formats. I hope you enjoy this issue of *NCL*, and find its new format agreeable. Let us know what improvements we can make as we undertake this major transition.