Profile: Christine Neilson
SHIRP Librarian
Saskatchewan Health Information Resources Partnership (SHIRP)
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Role on the editorial board: Profiles Editor

Describe your role on the Partnership editorial board.

As the Profiles Editor, I select profiles from the pool of submissions and guide them through the online journal system. If there isn’t a pool of submissions to choose from, I’m also responsible for drumming up interest to get people to submit.

What prompted you to become involved with Partnership?

The Profiles section has always been my favourite section in Partnership because of the interesting stories people have to tell, and it was always the first thing I looked at when a new issue was published. I’d been an active member of the library community at the provincial level, and when the position of Profiles editor became available, I thought it would be a great opportunity to contribute to the library community at the national level.

Where do you think Partnership is headed?

I hope for two things for the Partnership journal of the future. First, that Partnership will be both the must-read journal for Canada’s library community and a high quality journal that is at the top of the list when people think about places to submit their work. I think that the journal is starting to pick up steam, and this is an attainable long term goal.

Secondly, I hope that we can achieve a better balance in terms of which library sectors are served by Partnership. Partnership accepts submissions from people working in all
library sectors, but it’s my impression that the majority of the articles submitted cater to the academic library crowd. It can be more of a challenge for individuals working in special, public, and school libraries to publish, but it’s important for people working in all library sectors to contribute to the journal’s content so that others can learn from what they have to share. My first permanent job after library school was a solo position in a special library, so I know from experience that the library literature can be an important source of guidance and information for improving professional practice and library services. I can also tell you how frustrating it is to search the literature and only find articles that relate specifically to the academic library context. Partnership is both free and uniquely Canadian; there is no better journal to meet the needs of the Canadian library community as a whole if we all contribute!

What was your first job?

My first job as a teenager was working as a student page at the public library in The Pas, MB. I signed books in and out, shelved, did shelf reading, and carried out whatever miscellaneous tasks came up. The ladies I worked with were really nice, and one of the highlights of the job was listening to “Definitely Not the Opera” on Saturday afternoons as we worked. They automated the catalogue and the circulation system while I was working at the library; I didn’t think too much about it at the time, but I have a greater appreciation for the scale of the project now.

If you didn’t work in a library, what would you do for a living? Explain why.

I’m not sure. I think it would be nice to do something where I would create something. A job with less sitting would be nice.

What issues do you think will have a big impact on libraries in the next few years?

At the time of writing this profile, I think the biggest issue that will affect libraries in the next few years is copyright. I’ve been hearing about various developments that could drastically change the nature of user rights and the internet as a whole; it could make for some interesting times ahead.

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

The accomplishment I’m most proud of is when I moved from a white belt in karate to a yellow belt. I’ve never been very athletic or coordinated so even though it’s pretty much impossible to fail that first test, you can’t imagine how happy it made me.

What do you do for fun?

My husband and I got back into karate this past fall, so lately we’ve been spending a lot of our time training at Shotokan Karate Saskatoon. It’s good exercise, and the people are awesome. When I have the chance, I like making cards and cooking. Generally
speaking I like to try new things, so over the past few years my leisure activities have included cake decorating, Ukrainian dancing, rowing, and gardening. We moved into our first house this past fall, so I see a great deal of yard work in my future.

**Name one person you admire, and explain why.**

There are several people I admire, but in the work realm I have to say I have great admiration for Maureen Bingham. Maureen (who is now retired) was my supervisor in a previous position. She did more in a day than most people do in a week, and she did it with style. She was always cheerful; she knew how to strike a balance between providing direction and letting people do their own thing, and she was a master at the human side of management. Maureen is the supervisor that I’d like to be.

**If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?**

I’d really like to go camping in the Cypress Hills. When I was growing up, my family used to go camping and fishing fairly often, and I miss that kind of thing. I love Saskatchewan and have an appreciation for its beauty, so holidaying relatively close to home is pretty appealing to me. I hear Europe is pretty nice too, but I need a good excuse to go anywhere exotic.