

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESKTOP



his special issue acknowledges the role of INSPIRE, also known by its fuller name, **IN**diana **SP**ectrum of **I**nformation **RE**sources, and more simply as Indiana's Virtual Library on the Internet, in Indiana libraries. This collection of databases is available to all Indiana residents, both in their libraries and their homes. INSPIRE offers Hoosiers a wealth of resources: full-text online articles from a diverse collection of popular and academic publications, Midwestern tree identification materials, Spanish-language resources, current biographical information, and more.

What do our libraries and our library users make of all this electronic information? What are the possibilities for use of this resource? How can we improve search effectiveness? These matters are discussed by the authors of articles in this issue of *Indiana Libraries*.

Debora Shaw and Kathryn LaBarre examined the way libraries throughout Indiana promote – or fail to promote – use of INSPIRE through links and information provided via their Web sites. Examples of strategic Web presentation of the databases conclude this analysis.

From the offices at INCOLSA, which serves as administrator for INSPIRE, we are offered three sets of ideas about the database. First, Howard Trace provides a recent history of the database suite. Next, Margaret Mohundro announces plans for a new INSPIRE inter-

face. Additionally, INCOLSA has made available what might be called talking points, or a short collection of highlights about use of INSPIRE.

Jean Rodgers sees INSPIRE as a golden opportunity for instructional work in school media centers, and she has written all about the ways this resource supports her students' work.

Best use of electronic resource depends not only on contextual knowledge but on specifics that will guide users through the in's and out's of database searching. Two articles offer such search guidance. Adele Hoskin provides instruction in the use of the databases overall, including the ability to set up alerts and other specialty functions. Marian Corya and David Dyer offer perspective on the use of *LitFinder*, one of the individual components of the INSPIRE database suite.

Finally, Marissa Priddis overviews library literature on effective database searching in *The Well-Read Librarian*. The articles she recommends can be found using INSPIRE.

We hope that this collection of articles supports your use of INSPIRE, enabling all Indiana residents to take advantage of this resource.

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