Bringing New “Life” to a PTDL: Easing the Burden

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The Situation

- Present situation at PTDLA (& elsewhere)
- Argument for proactively recruiting new PTDLA members
- Putting a plan in action for change with them
- Viewpoints from Maureen, Damon, and Nedelina
- Jim Miller’s conclusion and afterthoughts
Reasons for New “Life”

- Background at University of Maryland’s Engineering & Physical Sciences Library (EPSL)
- Exceptionally sharp and experienced cadre of PTDLA members
- This core group of members is dwindling, which reduces this quality of P&T knowledge
- Washington Post article 1/3 of government employees eligible to retire in 2012
- New PTDLA’ers concerns & aspirations
Types of Training

- MLS classes covering Patents and Trademarks
- Self-education
- USPTO training
- Peer training
- Mentoring
- On-the-job with customers
An MLS Student Perspective on Patents

- Basic reference courses in LIS programs tend to not address patents
- On-the-job interaction with patrons
- USPTO training: foundational knowledge
  - Tutorials and guides
  - PTDLA conference
- Peer training and mentoring @ EPSL: applying that knowledge
Personal & Professional Interest

- Agricultural Engineering & Operations Management
- Library Work
- Interest in Patents and Trademarks
- International Agricultural Policy
  - USA & EU biotech in agriculture
  - Humanitarian Efforts
Patent/Trademark Applications in Agriculture

- Agricultural Industry as history of the United States

- Agricultural Law
  - E. Whitney
Patent/Trademark Applications in Agriculture

- Marketing & Industry Growth
  - Affects small grower operations
  - Individual creativity

- Current Technology Applications
  - Biodiesel/Fuel
  - Food & food safety
  - Pharmaceuticals

- Biotechnology/Bioethics issues
  - GM crops (Bt) vs. organic - “king corn”
  - Environmental concerns
  - Range from livestock to flu shots
A New Librarian's Perspective on Patents

- Library school in USA
- Chemical engineering study in Bulgaria
- On the job at EPSL
- USPTO training (X-search and EAST training)
Oh No, Not Patents!
Miller’s Mullings

- Jim and Bob’s insights into the training sessions afterwards
- What could we have done better?
- Seeing problems with technology from a new viewpoint
- New PTDLA’ers main concern seems to be handling P&T patrons comfortably
What could we have done better

☐ Hard to organize a VERY complex subject
  ■ Most common questions
  ■ Best databases/sites for each
☐ Finding the best “Tips & Tricks”
☐ Staying aware of other PTDLs’ training
☐ Keeping up with changes in databases
☐ Trying out and publicizing new websites
Technical & Software problems

- PubWEST and PatFT web TIFF viewers
  - Explaining troubleshooting hints
  - Showing “quick fixes” and shortcuts
- Seeing the “old BRS search engine” through new users’ eyes
- Learning from teaching – new users have learned their OWN fancy tricks
Making the jump to actual help

- Hurdle of helping Patent-TM users for the first time; easy to call on the “experts”
- Hard to predict when patrons will come in
- Experienced folks tend to help right away – rather than give newer folks a chance
- But the new librarian already knows:
  - Boolean search
  - Subject classification (call numbers, indexing...)
  - Citation searching
Thank you!