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The Seven Year Ache

Ivan Gaetz
Colorado College, ivan.gaetz@coloradocollege.edu

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In February 1981, Roseanne Cash released what came to be her hit 45 RPM record (does anyone still know what that is?), “The Seven Year Ache.” I was living in the Canadian Arctic at the time and folks up there were lucky to have one radio station, even if it played only country music. Cash sings of a troubled marriage and how relationships were shifting. Many other performers have covered this song over the years. Maybe there is something to the notion of big changes after seven years.

In December 2015, Collaborative Librarianship will complete seven years of publication, four issues per year, with a total of 247 articles, reviews, columns and editorials (counting items planned for Volume 7, number 4). It’s not that we who produce the journal are “aching,” or that this amazing adventure in library collaboration is in trouble in anyway. But we have been looking for new partnerships; we call it succession planning.

Initially, the management of Collaborative Librarianship was centered in the “Front Range” area of Colorado, an urban north-south corridor that runs along the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains through most of the State. Since the management team was able to meet face-to-face on a regular basis, this helped to develop strong and committed working relationships. When folks moved away or were drawn to other local responsibilities, our team needed to expand beyond Colorado to include editors and specialists from other parts of the USA. Over the past year or so, it became clear that an even wider management base was needed to ensure the sustainability of the journal. An ad hoc group was formed to consider options.

Long story short, after discussions with the senior leaders of the University of Denver (DU) Libraries, it was agreed that, beginning in January 2016, management and operations of the Journal will fall under the auspices of DU. Michael Levine-Clark, an editor of our peer review section, along with Jill Emery, Collection Development Librarian at Portland State University, will become Co-General Editors, and the software platform of Collaborative Librarianship will, overtime, migrate from Open Journal Systems to the publication suite of Digital Commons. In my view, this truly is a best-case scenario. DU has an impressive team of library professionals and specialists, a strong commitment to Open Access, and extensive technical expertise. Moreover, a good number of librarians at DU have been deeply involved with the Journal since its inception; they know its publication systems and landscape. While many details are still being worked out through the Fall of 2015, announcements will be forthcoming as plans develop. If you have questions or concerns, or if you wish to become involved in Collaborative Librarianship as it becomes reconstituted, please contact Ivan Gaetz (ivan.gaetz@coloradocollege.edu), Michael Levine-Clark (michael.levine-clark@du.edu), or Jill Emery (jemery@pdx.edu).

One problem with the characters in Cash’s song is spontaneity at just the time when rash, poorly considered actions lead to breakdown in relationships. Maybe the edge in a seven year ache could be dulled a little with some succession planning. I know this type of planning has made a world of difference for Collaborative Librarianship as we anticipate change after seven years.