

Spotlight on HIRA

When asked about the history of HIRA current president, Jeanne Brennan replied "It used to be CHIRP, a million years ago." Actually it wasn't quite that bad. NLM funded HIRA (Health Instructional Resources Associated) to establish CHIRP in the spring of 1974. CHIRP was the Community Health Instructional Resources Program, an audiovisual project for the Detroit area health related institutions. Its objectives were to provide audio-visual consultation services, to conduct continuing educational seminars and workshops, and to review and assess commercially available media. Helen Dimanin was the first Director-President of HIRA. The grant was for a two year period. During this time, the first HIRA catalog was produced, various workshops were sponsored, CHIRP was dropped as the name and the group became known as just HIRA.

After a dormant spell, HIRA was reborn in the fall of 1979. Since then the original 20 hospital membership has grown to 38 institutions from health care facilities, health care associations and health related educational institutions. HIRA also has a few individual members — health professionals with an interest in audiovisuals.

The scope of HIRA is changing. Where it once concerned itself with the production and interloan of commercially produced AVs, it now covers computer software, in-house productions, satellite and teleconferencing, related books and journals, and more. The 'Good Ole' HIRA catalog will soon be available on computer disks.

Where is HIRA heading now? With much more competition for our time and money, HIRA has been looking very closely at ways to make itself more important to its members. Currently HIRA has 5 or 6 meetings a year, there is a proposal to the Executive Board to have fewer meetings, and possibly have the meetings in conjunction with other groups in order to reach more people. There is the possibility that HIRA will sponsor a Continuing Education course on on-line audio-visual searching in the spring. There is also the possibility that HIRA will affiliate with MHSLA and so become a statewide group.

The HIRA catalog will continue to be a valuable resource to our community. A new edition is already on the computer at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Educational Resources Center in Pontiac and will be out in November. The catalog has grown to over 300 pages. As mentioned before, the catalog will also be available on computer disk. The catalog is free to HIRA members and at a small fee to others.

The current officers of HIRA are: Jeanne Brennan — President, Daria Shackleford — Vice-President, MaryJo Durivage — Secretary, and Kathleen Carmichael — Treasurer.

... Doris M. Blauet