

DRAFT  
EIMERT Membership meeting  
ALA Annual, July 12, 2009

The EIMERT general membership meeting was held at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 12.

Myra, outgoing president of EIMERT, welcomed everyone, saying that it was a happy and sad time. She then recognized the contributions of EIMERT's liaison to ALA, Satia Orange. EIMERT is awarding her a lifetime membership. Myra asked everyone to sign a card.

Myra also announced David Cohen's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. She sent around a picture of David Cohen with Senator Barack Obama. This photograph will be sent, along with a card, to David Cohen.

Myra then announced the names of the incoming executive board. Homa Naficy is incoming chair, and Tess Tobin is vice-chair, chair elect. Rebecca Stuhr is in her second term as secretary and Gail Schlachter is in her second term as treasurer. Members at large were also announced. This information needs to be updated on the EIMERT-ALA Web site.

Myra continued with her agenda: The impact of declining library budgets means that conference attendance is down. EIMERT needs volunteers. She read our mission and our five core statements (<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/rts/emiert/index.cfm>). She described ALA's new connect service and how this might be used to increase our visibility and to make communication among the board members and among the membership better and more transparent. Connect provides for blogs, wikis, chat, archiving of information, and images. Myra would like to see us start using connect within the next few weeks. We need to get out the word and invite contributions.

If any members have ideas for programs, please send them to Homa Naficy and Tess Tobin. Tess, as vice chair, is responsible for developing the ideas for annual. Myra encouraged us to adhere to deadlines. We need to have our plans submitted right after Annual (we are awaiting deadlines from Elliot Mandel, our new liaison), and speakers announced by August. Our planning should actually take place at mid-winter. So consider making suggestions for 2011 during the next several months.

We do have plans to co-sponsor a program with the Jewish American Information Committee and RUSA. It will be held Sunday at 1:30 of ALA Annual in 2010. It will be a viewing of a one-hour documentary on the life of a German-Jewish immigrant in Alabama. There will also be a speaker who has published a small book on the individual.

Myra also mentioned that a subscription to *Multicultural Review* is a benefit of membership in EIMERT.

The final agenda item was a discussion of the cancellation of the panel discussion scheduled to take place at Annual 2009: *Perspectives on Islam: Beyond the Stereotypes*.

The purpose of the program was discussed: to provide information for libraries serving a growing immigrant population from Islamic countries. Although specific details could not be discussed, Myra and Homa noted that there had been miscommunication, that lessons had been learned, and that efforts would be made to ensure a smooth and successful process in the future. Three speakers withdrew from the panel. Their specific reasons could not be discussed. Some members of the executive board felt that it was better to cancel the session all together rather than having the one remaining speaker present alone. This would not serve the same purpose as a panel discussion meant to represent a diversity of opinion.

Myra read the Principles of Community as a prelude to a general discussion.

<http://principles.ucdavis.edu/>.

Many members expressed disappointment that the panel was not being held and felt that this was contrary to the values held by librarians and the ALA. The feeling was expressed those interested in attending the panel had been deprived the opportunity to listen to the speakers and form their own views on the merits of the speakers' ideas. A member of the group who had protested the speaker Robert Spencer through an open letter was present at the membership meeting and explained why she had protested his participation in the panel.

Following this meeting, an informal discussion was held regarding the cancellation of the panel. Although this was not an official EIMERT meeting, those in attendance agreed to put together an annotated bibliography on Islam that would make recommendations for readings and other material that provided "perspectives on Islam." It was also suggested that this title could be used for future bibliographies to be posted at ALA Connect, The EIMERT Web site and to be published in Multicultural Review.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Stuhr  
Secretary, EIMERT