Officially Speaking

Reaffirming Our Collective Purpose

Diversity is an issue much on the minds of people these days. The unfortunate events unfolding in our communities seem steeped in misunderstanding long festering and unspoken. Libraries are the place for our communities to come together. The libraries of our country are symbols of hope and a reminder of the principles on which our country was founded. Libraries are about personal and community aspirations. As librarians, we work to have our collections and services reflect all the members of our communities so all feel welcome.

This quest for community representation in shaping library services is not a uniquely American one. In my world travels this year, I had the good fortune of traveling to China and most recently New Zealand. Though they share a hemisphere, these countries are vastly different in many obvious ways. Remarkably, in libraries they are similar.

On the surface, the libraries seem quite different. Size of the buildings, space allocation, and signage vary quite a bit. In China, in Beijing, there is a formality of space. In New Zealand, there is a noted push to be “the living room of the city.” There are few bilingual signs in Chinese libraries in Beijing. In New Zealand all library signs are in both Maori and English (there are two official languages in NZ). Yet, in the most important way, even in these vastly different communities, ideologically and geographically apart, the staffs of both libraries are united in their mission to improve people’s lives.

Staff believes that libraries improve lives. In some cases, this improvement is very literal. In Christchurch, New Zealand, libraries were one of the first services to resume after the devastating earthquakes of 2011. Even in the shadows of continued upheaval and loss, the library provides a sense of continuity and hope.

In China, the concept of children’s librarians takes root in the belief that through education lives improve. This principle drives staff and administration alike to push to improve, renovate, and serve their vast country in the very best way possible, making use of the most innovative spaces, technology, and programming the country can offer.

Here in America it is important to remember that our struggles with diversity are truly universal. All cultures the world over must remain diligent in their intent to live peaceably together, foster empathy, share heritage, collect and share stories, and gather around important causes that benefit all.

We are taking particular care now to keep the diverse population of America in sight as we build collections, recruit and train new staff, provide programming, and deliver library services to our communities. Our work will never be done. The focus of knowing and including all those in our communities is the essence of our work and we are all, all over the world, in service to it. --Ellen Riordan, ALSC President

Rainbow Family Literacy and Awareness

This column is due on the same day that the U.S. Supreme Court is scheduled to begin hearing arguments on marriage equality (and several days after Bruce Jenner publicly came out as transgender). Whatever the high court’s ruling, it will affect many families in the United States and have its impact felt by many others across the globe. As ALSC President Ellen Riordan recently reminded us, April 30’s Día! Diversity in Action celebrates how “Libraries and librarians play an important role in family literacy and multicultural awareness,” and during this exciting time when our profession is particularly mobilized around the issue of multiculturalism and diversity, with ALSC as a proud and strong leader, the value of respecting families of all origins, faiths, and political perspectives—conservative, liberal, and everyone in between—remains as true as ever.
ALSC Board member Dr. Jamie Campbell Naidoo reminds us in his book *Rainbow Family Collections: Selecting and Using Children’s Books with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer [LGBTQ] Content* (Libraries Unlimited, 2012) that rainbow families, those with LGBTQ members, “are legitimate members of the community . . . and are found in almost every county in the nation.” Manifestations of the importance of rainbow families in all of our communities, including our professional one, can be found in this spring’s publication of a new edition of the classic *Heather Has Two Mommies* by ALSC’s and the Children’s Book Council’s Day of Diversity participant Lesléa Newman and in the subject of Caldecott Medalist Brian Selznick’s Arbuthnot Lecture, May 8 at the District of Columbia Public Library’s Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library: “Love Is a Dangerous Angel: Thoughts on Queerness and Family in Children's Books.”

I’ve just returned from a Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) conference in Indianapolis, which occurred on the heels of the national debate about that state’s Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a topic also being discussed in several other states at the moment. ALA President Courtney Young said that Indiana’s law, interpreted by many as anti-LGBTQ, “contradicts the fundamental values of the ALA and libraries” and that, “We reaffirm that it is the responsibility of library staff everywhere, regardless of the legal ability to refuse service, to offer equal and unfettered access to all users.” During my visit to the Indianapolis Public Library’s Central Library, it was very clear that all families are welcome, and I had a fantastic time exploring *The Learning Curve*, described as “a high tech, hands-on information environment designed for children.”

And next month, passionate advocates for children and books will come together for ALSC’s annual Newbery-Caldecott-Wilder Banquet, which just happens to be taking place on the same day as, and two blocks from, the annual San Francisco Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Pride Parade. The theme of this year’s parade is “Equality Without Exception,” and all around the world ALSC members serve the families in their communities equally and without exception, in order to create a better future for all children and their families. --Andrew Medlar, ALSC Vice-President/President-Elect

**Thank You to Our Most Recent Donors**

Many thanks to the following generous contributors to ALSC. To learn how you can support ALSC, visit our website and click on “About ALSC--Contact ALSC--Donate to ALSC” on the left-hand navigation menu.

**Gold Circle**
Andrew Medlar

**Silver Circle**
Susan Faust

**Notables Circle**
Edith Ching
Barbara Genco
Phylis Mattill
Claudette McLinn

**Friends Circle**
Elisa Gall
Patrick Gall
Susan Moritz
Michael Santangelo
ALSC Voices

ALSC Profile

Penny Peck
Instructor
San Jose State University

ALSC membership: 25 years

Where do you currently work?

I retired in 2010 after 25 years as the Youth Services coordinator for the San Leandro Public Library (San Francisco East Bay area). I still work as a part-time instructor for San Jose State University’s MLIS program, now called the iSchool; I have been teaching since 2002.

What is your position title?

I started as a combination children’s and young adult librarian, and my title was expanded in 2000 to ”Senior Librarian Youth Services,” when we finally hired another librarian to serve teens in my department. I still enjoy serving youth from ages 0-18, which is why I was elected to my local school board after I retired!

How many years have you been an ALSC member?

25 years. I was a relatively new children’s librarian and joined the Association of Children’s Librarians of Northern California (ACL), which meets once a month, bringing together Bay Area children’s librarians. I met Linda Perkins at ACL and she urged me to join ALSC, which I did since I knew Linda was (and still is) an expert on all things library and youth.

Where did you attend library school?

I attended San Jose State University’s library school right after I earned my B.A. in American History, and graduated a year later. I think I was the youngest person in my class (I was 22, and this was 1977).

What was your very first library position?

I worked part-time at both San Jose State and Cal State Hayward’s university libraries, but my first professional position was at the San Leandro Public Library where I stayed for 25 years. It took me nine years after getting my MLS to get a professional library position, but during that time I was the manager of a restaurant/bar/nightclub, which gave me a lot of skills I used later at the library! Booking entertainment, crowd control, customer service, etc. Nothing prepares you for being a children’s librarian like running a night club!

What do you love most about your current job?

I love teaching for San Jose State and meeting all the newer librarians coming into our field. They are so excited and very innovative; for example, many have started Makerspace programming for kids at their libraries.

You’re marooned on a desert island; what three books and food item do you need to survive?

For the food item, I would choose tacos, since they have all the food groups in one thing. For the books, I would have to choose Laura Ingalls Wilder’s “Little House” series, To Kill a Mockingbird, and a book on film history filled with photos.

What are your hobbies?

I love films and film history, and probably watch at least one film each day (film noir, musicals, anything in black and white) on Turner Classic Movies cable channel. I also go to their film festival each year.
What three words best describe you?

One of my oldest friends called me industrious, and I think I am also optimistic and idealistic, which is really helpful when you work with and for children. Especially now that I am in local politics as a school board member, I strive to stay positive and remember “this is all about the kids.”

Bright Ideas

Gaming, Old School Style

Darien (Conn.) Library’s Children’s Library celebrated our country and cultural heritage during a “Game Across America, American Girl” program last July. The event featured games and crafts ranging from the early 1800’s to the present day, all planned thematically around four different American Girls: Josefina (1824), Addy (1864), Samantha (1904), and Molly (1944).

The Children’s Department set up four game/craft stations for the 55 program attendees, which were: jacks from the 40’s; a hoop toss competition from the 1800’s; a Mexican-American top game from the 1800’s; and Victorian paper doll decorating. The program culminated in an afternoon tea for the attendees and their dolls, complete with doll-sized cookies.

Want to do your own American Girl program? Pick a few American Girls, along with a craft or game from their lifetime. Briefly discuss some of the challenges and differences about that time in history, and then explore a game or a craft closely related to that time period. To host a tea for girls and their dolls, simply set up tables for tea, and arrange a tray of “doll” cookies from 100-calorie snack packs. Bonus points if librarians dress up like the dolls: Etsy is a good resource for finding vintage accessories like hats or aprons. Have fun!—Amy Laughlin, children’s librarian, Darien (Conn.) Library

Exploring Science with "Little Engineers"

Inspired by the STEM connection to the Fizz, Boom, Read summer reading theme, the Puyallup (Wash.) Public Library wanted to create summer programs full of science fun for all ages. Finding speakers and performers for the upper and lower elementary kids was a snap. But what could we do for the younger, preschool age crowd? We were looking for something that included science and math inquiry beyond Legos® and building blocks. When we saw information about the engineering robotics kit from Hatch Early Learning, our imaginations took off. Creating the program, Little Engineers: Ready to Read for children ages 3 to 6 years old, became a reality.

Looking at the price of the Hatch kit plus an additional Cubelets robot set, we figured this was the same cost as a performer. We decided that by using supplementary materials we had on hand, the two children’s librarians could manage a program using this kit with no extra costs. The program we created consisted of a short book reading followed by time to explore the different engineering stations. Parents were given a checklist of the various stations. This list explained how each station introduced STEM concepts in developmentally appropriate ways. When each child finished the checklist, he or she received a special treat (in this case it was a colorful pencil leftover from last year’s Halloween trick-or-treat giveaway – but it could be as simple as a sticker or getting a hand stamped).

Our stations offered a wide variety of activities:

**Scissor station** - Scissors are a simple technology and a handy science tool. The children strengthened the small muscles in their hands on top of practicing hand-eye coordination by cutting patterns of straight and wavy lines on paper.

**Design a robot** – Use craft foam shapes and glue to design a personal robot. Families were encouraged to name the various shapes while practicing creativity and hand-eye coordination in the placement of the shapes and glue on the paper.

**Mini robots** - Investigate and construct a simple robot using the Cubelets modular robot kits. The children and their caregivers applied the scientific inquiry method of trial and error to put together robots that moved, turned on lights, or sensed nearby objects.
Connect the pieces - Create robot-like figures using the Zoob Jr. pieces. Children used engineering skills and strengthened finger muscles as well as hand-eye coordination as they explored how parts and joints go together to move in different ways.

Building with varied materials – Create structures with Straw Connectors, Lego Duplos, and wood blocks. Children and caregivers practiced creative problem solving and engineering techniques as well as hand-eye coordination as they built together.

Our biggest concern when planning this program was that a lot of the kids would want to do the same thing at the same time (such as the mini robots) and there would not be enough room. Having several stations spread the kids out, and the checklist encouraged them to move around to all of the stations. To ensure each child a great experience, we had advance sign-up limiting the group to 30 kids, plus their caregivers. (It filled up with a waiting list!)

In the end, this program became a fun inter-generational learning experience for the children and their families. It was heartwarming to watch the parents get on the ground with their young children to build together with the wood blocks and Straw Connectors. Some of the structures were large enough to go inside! And the adult caregivers were just as enthralled by the mini robots as the children. This science program for young children was surprisingly easy to put together. It can be done even without the purchased Hatch kit, although the little robots in the kit did introduce an aspect most children this age (and many adults) do not often explore. We loved that it provided open-ended STEM activities that challenged the imagination while building pre-literacy skills. This was a very successful STEM program we plan to do again...and again.—Carol Garnett Hopkins, children’s librarian, and Bonnie Anderson, youth services librarian, Puyallup (Wash.) Public Library

Teen Board Hosts Percy Jackson Party

The Teen Advisory Board at Mt. Lebanon Public Library, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, hosted a “Percy Jackson: The Blood of Olympus Pre-Release Party” in celebration of the Rick Riordan novel released last year. We utilized two side-by-side meeting rooms: one for a trivia contest and the other for snacks, crafts, and costume contest registration. The room that held the trivia contest was decorated with purple streamers, balloons, and handmade posters to resemble “Camp Jupiter.” There were six rounds of trivia total, each with eight questions; the person with the highest score at the end of each round received a Percy Jackson pin or bookmark. The individual with the most points at the end of all six rounds won a copy of the new novel!

The room with snacks, crafts, and costume contest registration was decorated with orange streamers, balloons, and cabin numbers to make it resemble “Camp Half-Blood.” We had two crafts: cardboard shield decorating and Camp-Half Blood bead necklaces. Participants used a combination of paint, markers, glitter, and crayons to decorate a circular cardboard shield with any design they imagined. Participants also used paint and markers to decorate wooden beads in the same fashion as those worn by the characters in the books. There was a variety of different colored thread for participants to string the beads along.

In recognition of Percy’s mother’s love of blue food, we served blue cupcakes, candy, corn chips, and Kool-Aid. Participants also wrote their predictions about what will happen in the book on a white board, which helped facilitate a lively, fun discussion. Costume contest participants wore a paper lightning bolt with a number on it, and at the end of the party everyone voted by secret ballot on who they thought had the best costume. The winner, dressed as Leo Valdez, received a $10 Barnes & Noble gift card!

Over fifty children and teens (ages 10 & up) attended the event. This was the first program hosted by the Teen Advisory Board, and the success of it has motivated members to come up with even more great programs for the future!—Sarah McGowan, public services librarian, Mt. Lebanon Public Library, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Multnomah’s Books 2 U Motivating Readers for 20 Years

In 2015, Multnomah County Library is proudly celebrating the 20th anniversary of Books 2 U, a reading motivation outreach program that has delivered over 650,000 books to 3rd-6th grade classrooms. Talented and highly trained educators and volunteers present engaging booktalks using a wide range of fiction and nonfiction titles, bringing each class a rotating collection of high-interest paperback books to explore throughout the school year. An exciting book promoted by a well-informed, engaging booktalker to students eager to read and explore is the recipe for magic, and
in the past twenty years Books 2 U has delivered that magical message an estimated 39,000 times to dozens of schools, hundreds of classrooms, and thousands of students and their supporting communities.

Books 2 U educators and volunteer booktalkers have nurtured lasting connections with teachers and students over the years. Teachers in the program report that having Books 2 U in their classroom increases students’ reading excitement, skill, confidence, and frequency.

The teachers themselves say it best. “Books 2 U talks ignite my students and get them to try all sorts of new and exciting choices. The library staff put great thought into the books we receive, and it is always a delight to welcome them into our classroom. Everyone in my class has a library card because of the program,” says Jeff Ramsey, 5th grade teacher, Whitman Elementary.

Expansion of Books 2 U is made possible by gifts to The Library Foundation, a local nonprofit dedicated to our library's leadership, innovation, and reach through private support.—Mandy Tuthill, school age services supervisor, Multnomah County Library, Portland, Oregon

Getting Together

Next Stop: San Francisco

Heading to San Francisco and the ALA Annual Conference next month? If so, you'll want to check out ALSC's full list of meetings and events. Below are some highlights.

ALSC Preconference -- Distinguished and Diverse: Celebrate the 2015 ALSC Honor Books
Registration is required.
Friday, June 26 | 11:30 am – 4:00 pm | Moscone Convention Center, 2003 (West Building)

The 2015 Honor Book recipients for the Newbery, Caldecott, Batchelder, Pura Belpre´, Sibert, and Geisel awards get their moment in the sun (or San Francisco fog) as we honor them, and the history and tradition of ALSC Honor Books and their creators.

Charlemae Rollins President’s Program -- More to the Core: From the Craft of Nonfiction to the Expertise in the Stacks
Monday, June 29 | 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. | Moscone Convention Center, 2001 (West Building)

Awarding-winning author and illustrator Melissa Sweet and literacy advocate Judy Cheatham, VP of Literacy Services at Reading Is Fundamental, share the stage to present an informing and inspiring look at the creation of excellent nonfiction and the matchmaking of great books and kids who need them. Libraries' role in innovative implementation of programs and services to support the Common Core Standards is a central skill and an important contribution to the communities we serve. Even if CCS aren’t a part of your educational landscape, great nonfiction books, and ways to connect them to children and families, are central to our craft and critical to our ability to collaborate with our communities. Let's be inspired together!

2016 ALSC Institute: Save the Date!

ALSC’s 2016 National Institute will be held September 15-17, 2016, in Charlotte, N.C. The Institute is everything you need in one place—programming, keynotes, networking, and much more. This intensive youth services focused learning opportunity is designed for front-line youth library staff, children’s literature experts, education and library school faculty members, and other interested adults. It is one of the few conferences devoted solely to children’s librarianship, literature, and technology and takes place every two years. Plan to be with us!
Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Member News

Last month, the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) at Kent State University honored its top alumni, friends, students, and graduates. Among the honorees was ALSC past-president Carolyn S. Brodie, retired SLIS professor, who was named Friend of the Year. Congratulations, Carolyn.

At its 2015 conference last month, the Texas Library Association presented its Distinguished Service Award to Jeanette Larson for her outstanding leadership and continuing service to the library profession. Kudos, Jeanette. Also, earlier this year, Rowman & Littlefield published Children's Services Today: A Practical Guide for Librarians, by Jeanette Larson, a handbook full of tools and resources on how to plan, implement, and manage public library programs and services for children, ages birth to twelve years old.

ALA’s Library History Round Table awarded Sharon McQueen the 2015 Justin Winsor Prize for her essay, “The Feminization of Ferdinand: Perceptions of Gender Nonconformity in a Classic Children’s Picture Book.” The prize is given annually to the author of an outstanding essay embodying original historical research on a significant subject of library history. Congratulations, Sharon.

Barbara Klipper is co-author of The Secret Rules of Social Networking (AAPC, 2015), which outlines the unstated rules that guide relationships overall. The book also demonstrates how one can carry these relationships into an online environment, with a particular focus on adolescents and young adults with communication and social skills challenges.

2016 Arbuthnot Host Applications

Celebrate diverse books by hosting the 2016 Arbuthnot Honor Lecture with Pat Mora, award-winning author of three-dozen books for young people that reflect the Mexican-American experience. Mora is founder of the flourishing family literacy initiative El día de los ninos/El día de los libros, known as Día, which will celebrate its twentieth-anniversary in 2016.

The Arbuthnot Endowment covers the speaker’s honorarium and transportation to and from the host city. In addition, ALSC contributes two thousand dollars to help offset the expenses of the host site. To apply, go to http://www.ala.org/alsc/arbuthnot. Scroll down to the 2016 Arbuthnot Lecture with Pat Mora. Applications are due May 15, 2015.

Questions? Contact committee chair Julie Corsaro by email. Thank you!

Media Awards & Notables - Send Us Your Suggestions

ALSC personal members are welcome to suggest titles for the upcoming media awards notable lists. Send recommendations with full bibliographic information to the appropriate committee chair listed below. Please note that publishers, authors, illustrators, and/or editors may not nominate their own titles. For more information about each award, visit www.ala.org/alsc and click on “Awards & Grants.”

Newbery Medal, Ernie J. Cox, ernest.cox at gmail.com
Caldecott Medal, Rachel Payne, rpaynenc at gmail.com
Arbuthnot Honor Lecture (2017), Ellen Ruffin, ellen.ruffin at usm.edu
Batchelder Award, Elizabeth D. Stafford, edrosania at hotmail.com
Belpre Award, Ana-Elba Pavon, apavon0405 at gmail.com
Carnegie Medal/Notable Children's Videos, Lizabeth L. Deskins, liz4lib2000 at yahoo.com
Geisel Award, Robin Smith, smithr at ensworth.com
Notable Children’s Books, Maralita L. Freeny, maralitalf at yahoo.com
Notable Children’s Recordings, Barbara Scotto, bscottoat gmail.com
Odyssey Award, Cindy A. Lombardo, cindy.lombardo at cpl.org
Sibert Medal, Elizabeth C. Overmyer, ove1817at gmail.com
Wilder Medal, Chrystal Carr Jeter, ccj.wilder2016 at gmail.com
**Día Site Update**

As part of ALSC’s commitment to diversity in library programming and material collections for children, an "Action" tab has been developed on the Día website as a clearinghouse of multicultural resources for youth services librarians.

The “Action” section’s resources include advocacy tools, action steps, awards information, Day of Diversity materials, access to professional development programs, and more. You'll find free webinars, links to useful articles and websites, ideas on how YOU can move the diversity needle forward, and so much more!

Access the new Día “Action” section at [http://dia.ala.org/action](http://dia.ala.org/action)

**Fall CAL - Focus on Diversity**

The Fall 2015 issue of *Children and Libraries* will focus on diversity. This issue, available in September, will feature contributions from Kathleen T. Horning, Debbie Reese, Allie Bruce, and Africa Hands; interviews with authors of diverse literature; and reflections on what diversity means for libraries and library programming. Look for this specially-themed and critical issue in your mailbox this fall.

**IF Policies: Proposed Changes**

The ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) is proposing a number of changes to its intellectual freedom policies, and the committee is requesting feedback from members.

Based on concerns expressed at the 2014 ALA Annual Conference, the IFC has split the Labeling and Ratings Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights into three interpretations: 1) Labeling Systems; 2) Rating Systems; and 3) User Generated Content

Members can access the revised Interpretations as well as leave comments about the interpretations on ALA Connect:

- Labeling Systems: An Interpretation to the Library Bill of Rights
- Rating Systems: An Interpretation to the Library Bill of Rights
- User Generated Content: An Interpretation to the Library Bill of Rights

IFC also revised Internet Filtering: An Interpretation to the Library Bill of Rights. The major changes from the last version are: 1) the addition of substantial treatment of schools and school libraries; and 2) a general reorganization of the text.

- Internet Filtering: An Interpretation to the Library Bill of Rights

The IFC would greatly appreciate receiving comments on ALA Connect by Wednesday, May 27, at the latest. The committee will do another round of revisions as needed before Annual Conference.

**Teen Programming Guidelines**

YALSA has released a new resource, "Teen Programming Guidelines," intended as a guide to library staff who design, host, and evaluate library programs with and for teens. The guidelines were developed in alignment with YALSA’s report, *The Future of Library Services for and with Teens: a Call to Action*, and were created to assist library staff with providing relevant, outcomes-based programs to better the lives of all teens in their community. Accompanying the guidelines are a glossary and a list of selected resources to provide library staff with a path to further exploration of teen programming best practices.
Talking Is Teaching Guide

Too Small to Fail, a partnership between the Clinton Foundation and Next Generation, recently released its Talking is Teaching Community Campaign Guide, a resource designed to help communities tackle the word gap and support early learning and brain development.

The guide is available through the Too Small to Fail website, which also offers the latest research on early brain development, information related to launching a community campaign of your own, and other materials from Too Small to Fail and its partners.

2015 Read for the Record

Mark your calendars for the 10th Anniversary of Jumpstart's Read for the Record®, October 22, 2015. This year, Jumpstart is proud to announce Not Norman: A Goldfish Story, written by Kelly Bennett and illustrated by Noah Z. Jones, as its 10th-anniversary campaign book.

Jumpstart's Read for the Record is a global campaign that generates public support for high-quality early learning and highlights the importance of building children's vocabulary and love for reading. On October 22, 2015, children and adults worldwide will take action by participating in the world's largest shared reading experience.

Read along on October 22, 2015, and help break the world reading record (again!) for the most people reading the same book on the same day. To learn more, visit the Read for the Record website.

ABC Mouse for Libraries

With 3,500+ interactive books, educational games, puzzles, and other learning activities, ABCmouse.com's award-winning online curriculum is a resource for young learners (ages 2-7), covering reading and language arts, math, beginning science, social studies, art and music. To learn more about ABCmouse.com for libraries and sign up for a free account visit the website.

© American Library Association/Association for Library Service to Children
http://www.ala.org/alsc