

American Library Association
2012 Midwinter Meeting in Dallas, TX
January 19-24, 2012
Report of President Molly Raphael

During the first six months of my ALA presidency, certain issues have been priority in addition to my presidential initiatives in advocacy and diversity.

1. Successful completion of the Neal-Schuman acquisition;
2. Ensuring libraries' access to digital content, particularly e-books;
3. Focusing attention on the importance of professionally staffed school libraries;
4. Library funding issues, particularly for public and school libraries.

Acquisition of Neal-Schuman Publishers

A tremendous amount of research and analysis was required for the very important decision and action to acquire Neal-Schuman Publishers. Special thanks for their thorough and careful process at information gathering and analysis are due to ALA Treasurer Jim Neal (no relation to Jack Neal of Neal-Schuman) as well as Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels for their joint leadership throughout. In addition, commendations for their extraordinary efforts are also due to Don Chatham and Michael Jeffers, ALA Publishing; Gregory Calloway, ALA Finance; Cynthia Vivian, Human Resources; and our attorneys Paula Goedert and Larry Blust from Barnes & Thornburg LLP. The ALA Executive Board was involved in this effort over an 18-month period, carefully making key decisions along the way. In addition, units such as the Budget Analysis and Review Committee also were part of the process at the appropriate time. Acquisition of Neal-Schuman supports ALA's strategic priorities and makes ALA a stronger organization as a result, able to contribute to the growth not only of our professional association but also of our profession.

Treasurer Jim Neal will provide a full report on the acquisition of Neal-Schuman Publishers during his report at Council II in Dallas on January 23rd.

Digital Content & Libraries

A Working Group of approximately 25 members of ALA has been appointed to address the many issues around digital content and libraries. The group is co-chaired by:

- Sari Feldman, Executive Director of the Cuyahoga County Library (OH) and former President of the Public Library Association, and
- Robert Wolven, Assistant University Librarian for Bibliographic Services and Collection Development, Columbia University Libraries.

The membership of the Working Group includes a broad representation from the wide-

variety of interests and expertise needed to address key issues on digital content and libraries including ALA divisions as well as units involved in privacy, accessibility, and inclusiveness. The intent is to build coordination across the Association, while building on the continuing good work on digital content under continuous development by ALA divisions and other units.

The Working Group will hold its first face-to-face meetings in Dallas, after beginning its work over the past several months through conference calls and other electronic channels. Co-Chairs Feldman and Wolven will report to Council I on January 22nd.

School Libraries Task Force

The Special Presidential Task Force on School Libraries, co-chaired by Pat Tumulty, chair of the Committee on Library Advocacy (COLA), and Susan Ballard, President-elect of American Association of School Librarians (AASL), has been working hard over the past several months to raise awareness about the value of school libraries in the education of young people. The task force membership includes leaders from different types of libraries because we view libraries of all types as part of an eco-system. Strong school libraries are essential for public and academic libraries to be able to carry out their missions. Focus on including separate funding for school libraries in the re-authorization of ESEA is a priority.

Carl Harvey, 2011-12 President of the American Association of School Librarians, has authored a White House petition, which must have 25,000 signatures by February 4th, in order to receive the attention of the White House. Many people within ALA are working hard to make sure the word is spread, not just among librarians, but also among community lists where education of children and youth is a priority. If you have not signed the petition, please go to <http://wh.gov/Wgd>

Advocacy Initiative: "Empowering Voices: Communities Speak Out for Libraries" and Midwinter Activities

We have been able to put together several events supporting our advocacy initiative in collaboration with other parts of ALA, in an effort to enhance opportunities for conversation and networking at Midwinter. Special thanks to my Steering Committee: Co-chairs Barbara Stripling and Patty Wong and members Marci Merola and JoAnne Kempf. Also contributing in significant ways to the two "conversations" are ALA staff Mary Ghikas, Kathryn Deiss, and Angela Thullen Baker.

The Advocacy Institute on the afternoon of January 20th will feature success stories from difference types of libraries where communities have been the advocates for their libraries.

Then, on the afternoons of January 21st and 22nd, moderated by renowned Syracuse iSchool Professor David Lankes, we have planned "Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities", two sessions of deep conversation about the evolving needs of our

communities and how we can transform libraries and librarianship to meet their challenges. Facilitators will lead small group discussions following the World Café model.

Completing the arc will be my President's Program later on January 22nd featuring Richard Harwood of The Harwood Institute. Harwood has become a leading national authority on improving America's communities, raising standards of political conduct and re-engaging citizens on today's most complex and controversial public issues.

Diversity Initiative: "Empowering Diverse Voices" and Midwinter Activities

During Midwinter in Dallas, a new event will be held called "Champion Connections". Through a "speed dating" approach, new leaders can match with established leaders who can advocate for their increased leadership development within the association. Member coordinators "Champion Connections" are Rose Dawson and Dr. Mary Jo Venetis. Special thanks also goes to Miguel Figueroa for his leadership and involvement in making this idea a reality. We will assess its success and decide whether we should offer the event again at future Midwinter gatherings.

We will also be filming for our "Leadership Video Series". In a series of video segments featuring established leaders from diverse backgrounds in the profession, members will learn about leadership within the association and be inspired to take on new opportunities within the profession. Special emphasis will be put on leaders from diverse backgrounds. Loida Garcia-Febo is leading this effort, again with strong support from Miguel Figueroa and the Office for Diversity. We expect to launch the video series at the annual conference in Anaheim.

Travel and Speaking Engagements (July-December 2011)

It has been a pleasure to be able to travel widely and meet colleagues at their conferences and in other venues. Fall is an especially busy time for chapter and affiliate conferences.

August 13-18 – World Library and Information Congress: 77th IFLA General Conference and Assembly (San Juan, Puerto Rico)

September 15-18 – REFORMA IV National Conference (Denver, CO)

September 24-26 – Arkansas Library Association Centennial Conference (Little Rock, AR)

October 4-5 – Missouri Library Association (Kansas City, MO)

October 6-7 – Georgia Library Association (Athens, GA)

October 13-15 – Colorado Association of Libraries (Loveland, CO)

October 17-19 – Illinois Library Association (Rosemont, IL)

October 21-23 – ALA Fall Executive Board Meeting (Chicago, IL)

October 30-November 3 – Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA): Keynote Address and “Empowering Voices” Workshop (Wellington, NZ)

November 23 – LIANZA/Wellington District: “What’s on ALA’s agenda?” (Lower Hutt, NZ)

November 27-30 – Guadalajara Book Fair (Guadalajara, Mexico)

December 8 – “I love my librarian” Ceremony (New York, NY)

December 15 – Pima County Public Library Visit (Tucson, AZ)

December 16 – University of Arizona – iSchool Commencement Address (Tucson, AZ);
University of Arizona Libraries visit

Media Interviews (October – December 2011)

Throughout the first half of my presidential year, the primary focus of media interviews has been on library funding, increasing library use, and the changing role of libraries. It has been interesting to draw the reporters’ attention to the increasing use of libraries, particularly in relation to job-related library resources and activities. The stories are usually triggered by local issues and involve small town newspapers as well as national/international media. Since most of these stories focus on public libraries, I am grateful to PLA President Marcia Warner for responding to these media inquiries when I am not available. ALA staffers Macey Morales and Jennifer Petersen do an excellent job of coordinating and supporting us in responding to these media opportunities.

October 2011

PRINT

Outlet / Journalist	Topic	Website Link	Date
Shareable.net / Cat Johnson	Libraries and budget cuts	http://www.shareable.net/blog/libraries-are-doing-more-with-less *Article picked up and quoted in several publications	10/17/11
Chicago Tribune / Melissa Jenco	Chicago library budget cuts	http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/ct-met-library-cuts-focus-20111025.0,2434094.story	10/25/11

INTERVIEWS

Outlet / Journalist	Topic	Date
Huffington Post / Cathy Rubin	Library reading trends	10/10/11
Chicago Tribune / John Byrne	Chicago Public Library cutting hours	10/11/11
Emerald Insight / Margaret Adolphus	Future of library construction	10/17/11
Chicago Tribune / Melissa Jenco	Chicago's systemwide library funding cuts	11/19/11

November 2011

Print

Outlet / Journalist	Topic	Website Link	Date
Progressive Magazine / Antonio D'Ambrosio	Public Library Funding/ Closure	http://www.progressive.org/node/170519 *Interviewed in September	11/1/11
Huffington Post / OP ED	State of America's Public Libraries	http://www.huffingtonpost.com/molly-raphael/why-libraries-matter_b_1107419.html	11/22/11
Huffington Post / Cathy Rubin	Library reading trends	http://www.huffingtonpost.com/c-m-rubin/how-will-we-read-in-publi_b_1103601.html	11/21/11

December 2011

Print

The Windsor (Ontario) Star / Brian Cross	Library fines	http://www.windsorstar.com/news/Library+declares+amnesty+fines/5828326/story.html	12/8/11
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Pittsburgh Post- Gazette / Mackenzie Carpenter	Future of libraries	http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/11348/1196660-51-0.stm	12/14/11
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With Appreciation

I continue to rely on the excellent support from JoAnne Kempf and the staff of the Governance Office: Alicia Bastl, Lois Ann Gregory Wood, Cheryl Malden, and Delores Yates. They are always cheerful, always willing to do whatever needs to be done, and very patient. They make this ALA president (and I am sure others) able to manage the many responsibilities we have. To them I say another of many public “thank-yous”.

I am also grateful for the excellent work of my assistant, Kim Read, who continues to provide me with a variety of assistance with tasks including my extensive travel. Kim will also be assisting me in Dallas, in managing the events in suite as well as other duties.

Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels with his senior staff including Mary Ghikas, Emily Sheketoff, and Cathleen Bourdon have been terrific partners for meeting the demands of leading ALA. I am also grateful for the deep commitment and participation of President-elect Maureen Sullivan, Treasurer Jim Neal, and Past President Roberta Stevens. The full participation of the Executive Board in discussions and decisions is vital to good decision-making. I could not imagine a finer group of people to work with, and I offer my appreciation to all of them as well.