

**American Library Association
Spring 2012 Executive Board Meeting
Report of ALA President Molly Raphael
April 20 – 22, 2012**

Since the ALA Midwinter Meetings in Dallas, my focus has continued on the priorities identified in my last report:

1. Digital content and ebooks
2. School libraries and the role of school librarians
3. My presidential initiatives of advocacy (“Empowering Voices, Transforming Libraries”) and diversity leadership development (“Empowering Diverse Voices”)

In addition, I have begun a very heavy spring travel season, helping to connect ALA with the state chapters and others in the library community, especially LIS students, both within the United States and abroad.

Digital Content and Libraries

Shortly after Midwinter, Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels and I traveled to New York to meet with several publishers (Macmillan, Simon & Schuster, Penguin, Perseus, and Random House). We were joined by President-elect Maureen Sullivan for two of the meetings; Alan Inouye, OITP Director, for all five meetings; and Robert Wolven, Co-Chair of the Digital Content & Libraries Working Group, for four of the meetings.

Our purpose was to open direct communication with the top leadership of these publishing houses, several of whom do not make their ebooks available to libraries. We had the opportunity to make the case for why selling ebooks to libraries was in the best interest of publishers as well as to understand what their concerns were. I reported on these meetings in a blog post.

<http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/e-content/ebook-talks-details>

In addition, I was invited to moderate a panel at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Publishers in New York. Invited to participate on the

panel were Jim Neal (ALA Treasurer and Vice President at Columbia University for Information Services) and Anthony Marx (President of the New York Public Library). This panel offered us a genuine opportunity to speak with high-level members of publishing houses about ebooks. We are grateful to Tom Allen, President of the AAP, for giving us the opportunity. Videos of our presentations and the lively Q&A that followed can be found at this link.

<http://www.ustream.tv/user/AmericanPublishers>

At the Public Library Association Conference in Philadelphia in mid-March, we also met with the aggregators for ebooks: OverDrive, Baker & Taylor, 3M, and Ingram. Included in these meetings were Keith Fiels, Maureen Sullivan, and Sari Feldman, the other Co-Chair of the DC&LWG. We had the opportunity to learn about their plans for making ebooks accessible, in some cases offering different business models from ones already available. Since it was clear from our meetings with publishers that some content producers were looking for different business models, we were encouraged that new “players” in the aggregators’ world might help open some doors to greater access. I reported on these meetings in another published report.

<http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/news/ala/ala-president-molly-raphael-releases-report-e-book-talks-e-book-distributors>

During the Executive Board Spring Meeting, we will report to the full Executive Board and have a discussion to address three questions:

1. What should the ALA’s “strategy” be with regard to e-content?
2. What do you think the most appropriate role (or roles) is for ALA in this environment?
3. Where do we need to focus our efforts in the short – and then medium term?

School Libraries and School Librarians

The Presidential Task Force on School Libraries continued its work. In one case, we worked individually to support an elementary school librarian position in Epping, New Hampshire, from being cut. Interestingly, while the letter we sent received a response from the school superintendent, it was actually through direct action of the Epping voters that the position was saved, a rare occurrence.

With help from many people including some of our vendor partners, AASL President Carl Harvey’s White House petition on school libraries and school librarians received well over the 25,000 signatures in one month required for consideration by President Obama’s Administration. A response has been received very recently and was reported on Carl Harvey’s blog.

<http://carl-harvey.com/libraryties/>

“Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities” (Advocacy)

Our advocacy work at Midwinter focused on ways to engage with communities. Two highly successful gatherings for discussion and engagement for ALA attendees were launched under the general title of “The Conversation Starts Here”. Syracuse Professor David Lankes launched the program each day (Saturday and Sunday) by framing the questions we would discuss. The World Café format was used and received high praise. At least half the attendees from the first day returned for the second day’s conversation. The feedback we received from participants was very positive. We collaborated with other ALA groups.

The two conversations were followed by a presentation from Rich Harwood of the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation at my President’s Program, focused on “turning outward” and “authentic engagement” with community. (<http://www.theharwoodinstitute.org/>)

In addition, we have been able to present the ideas and practices from this initiative at state conferences and other events. Many thanks to the excellent work being done on this initiative by co-chairs Barbara Stripling and Patty Wong, as well as the terrific support from Office for Library Advocacy and its Director Marci Merola and Assistant Jaclyn Finneke.

“Empowering Diverse Voices” (Diversity and Leadership Development)

Midwinter provided a venue to launch several programs intended to support our goal of ensuring that we are providing leadership development opportunities for members from diverse backgrounds. We were able to capture videos of many ALA leaders from diverse backgrounds, which are now being edited and will be made available through our website and other places. We also launched an event called “Champion Connections”, where we paired seasoned leaders with aspiring leaders using a “speed dating” format. The feedback we received was very positive, from both groups of leaders. We are continuing to work on preparing an “Associations Options Fair” for Anaheim, to help people from diverse backgrounds connect with volunteer activities within all parts of ALA. We also are working to provide a better road map for mentoring opportunities within ALA, to make it easier for individuals to determine what might be the best program to meet their needs and interests. We have also begun a series of leadership webinars featuring leaders from diverse backgrounds. Many thanks to

Office for Diversity Director Miguel Figueroa and Assistant Gwendolyn Prellwitz for their terrific work on moving this initiative forward. In addition, each of the projects under this initiative has a team of co-chairs who have contributed in significant ways.

The focus of this initiative was the centerpiece of my presentations throughout my visit to Brazil, during the first 10 days of March. Through an invitation from ALA Past President Carol Brey Casiano, Information Resource Officer for Brazil (US Department of State), and funded by a Fulbright grant, I had the opportunity to speak to general library community audiences in four different Brazilian cities: Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, Goiania, and Sao Paulo. My topic, requested by Carol and her colleagues, was "Developing Diverse Library Leadership for the 21st Century". In some of the locations, I toured libraries, met in small groups with library leaders, and spoke with library school students (including once remotely to three groups in places where I was not traveling).

Travel and Speaking Engagements (January – April 2012)

I have been able to accept nearly every invitation from state chapters as well as several other invitations.

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| <u>January 4</u> | Advisory Committee for "Do libraries still matter in the digital age?" (IMLS planning grant for high-quality video under the collaboration of Dominican University GSLIS and Archimedia Workshop), River Forest, IL |
| <u>January 18-25</u> | ALA Midwinter Meetings, Dallas, TX |
| <u>January 31/February 1</u> | Meetings (5) with Senior Leadership of Publishers: Penguin, Macmillan, Random House, Simon & Schuster, and Perseus – New York, NY |
| <u>February 24 – 27</u> | Alaska Library Association, Fairbanks, AK Endnote Speaker and ALA Forum |
| <u>March 4-10</u> | Multiple Presentations and Meetings in Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, Goiania, and Sao Paulo) primarily on the topic of "Developing Diverse Library Leaders for the 21 st Century" |
| <u>March 13</u> | Public Library Association Preconference – Panel on "How to get your point across to the media", Philadelphia, PA |

- March 14 Association of American Publishers, Annual Meeting Panel on "Redefining the dialogue between libraries and publishers", New York, NY
- March 15 PLA Presentation on "Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities" initiative, Philadelphia, PA
- March 16 National Freedom of Information Day, Presentation of the ALA James Madison Award to US Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D, CA), at the Newseum, Washington, DC
- March 19 Simmons College, GSLIS – Presentation on "Developing Diverse Library Leaders for the 21st Century", sponsored by the Simmons Student Chapter of ALA, Boston, MA
- March 21 Marquette University (host) and Milwaukee Area Librarians, "Libraries Thriving in the 21st Century", Milwaukee, WI
- March 26 San Jose State University, Webinar with Miguel Figueroa on "Empowering Diverse Voices"
- March 27 – 30 Oklahoma Library Association, Pre-conference on "Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities". Present with initiative co-chair Barbara Stripling; also ALA Forum/Discussion of Current Issues
- March 31 Deaf History Month Program, co-sponsored by Enoch Pratt Free Library and Friends of Libraries for Deaf Action, Baltimore, MD
- April 5 University of Washington iSchool, ALA Student Chapter, full day of events planned and organized by students, Seattle, WA
- April 6 Seattle Public Library, Conversation with SPL Leadership Team, and presentation on "Libraries Thriving in the 21st Century" for Seattle area librarians
- April 17-19 Texas Library Association, Greetings and panelist at Second General Session on the e-revolution, Houston, TX

Media Interviews (January – April 2012)

| Outlet / Journalist | Topic | Website Link | Date |
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| Atlanta Journal Constitution / Johnny Edwards | Homeless in libraries | http://www.ajc.com/news/atlanta/taking-shelter-in-the-1293821.html | 1/11/12 |
| Christian Science Monitor / Mark Guarino | Library budget cuts | http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/2012/0112/Rahm-Emanuel-and-public-sector-union-play-hardball-over-Chicago-library-hours | 1/12/12 |
| The Oregonian / Kelly House | Technology trends in libraries | http://www.oregonlive.com/living/index.ssf/2012/01/public_libraries_in_portland_n.html | 1/13/12 |
| Los Angeles Times / Susan Carpenter | Youth Media Awards | http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/jacketcopy/2012/01/jack-gantos-takes-the-newbery-at-american-library-assn-youth-media-awards.html | 1/23/12 |
| The DePaulia / John Dickow | Chicago library closures | http://www.depauliaonline.com/mobile/news/public-libraries-close-mondays-due-to-budget-constraints-1.2755419 | 1/30/12 |
| The Times Newspaper / Derek Barichello | Future of libraries | http://mywebtimes.com/archives/ottawa/display.php?id=451900&query=%22American%20Library%20Association%22 . | 3/9/12 |
| Publishers Weekly / Andrew Albanese | E-books | http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/digital/content-and-e-books/article/51095-at-busy-pla-ala-president-molly-raphael-talks-e-books.html | 3/16/12 |
| Salt Lake Tribune | Homeless, crime near libraries | http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/news/53827281-78/library-lake-salt-county.html.csp | 4/1/12 |
| Independent Publisher Magazine / Jillian Bergsma | National Library Week | http://independentpublisher.com/article.php?page=1529&urltitle=Celebrating%20the%20Future%20of%20Libraries%20with%20the%20ALA | 4/1/12 |

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| New York Times / Alan Finder | E-books, future of libraries | http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/12/technology/personaltech/e-books-are-easier-to-borrow-just-be-prepared-to-wait.html?_r=1 | 4/11/12 |
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And Once More....

As my Presidential Year continues to fly by, I find my appreciation for the work of the ALA staff just grows and grows. The advice and support I receive from the ALA Governance Office makes a huge difference in my being able to carry out my responsibilities. JoAnne Kempf as well as all her staff (Alicia Bastl, Lois Ann Gregory-Wood, Cheryl Malden, and Delores Yates) are always helpful, thoughtful, cheerful, and very competent in carrying out their responsibilities. For all that they have done over the past several months, I continue to be most grateful.

And there are many more such as Macey Morales and Jennifer Petersen with their support for media interviews.

I have spent a great deal of time working on big issues with ED Keith Michael Fiels and the ALA Senior Staff, always a pleasure. We are very fortunate in ALA to have such strong leadership.

Earlier in this report I expressed my appreciation to Marci Merola and Miguel Figueroa, who have helped guide me in so many different ways on my two presidential initiatives.

Finally the engagement and contributions of the Executive Board with additional appreciation to the Executive Committee (President-elect Maureen Sullivan, Treasurer Jim Neal, Immediate Past President Roberta Stevens, and ED Keith Michael Fiels) have made leading ALA a much easier responsibility than one might imagine. I continue to appreciate their advice and support. It has been a special pleasure to work so closely with President-elect Maureen Sullivan as we have shared our enthusiasm for issues around community engagement and leadership development. I am thrilled that she will be carrying forward this work in a seamless way as we move into her Presidential Year.