

**American Library Association**  
**2012 Annual Conference in Anaheim, CA**  
**June 20-26, 2012**

**Report of President Molly Raphael**

This report will highlight my activities during the past 12 months since I was inaugurated as President of the American Library Association in New Orleans. Needless to say, ALA has been engaged in many, many more issues during that time period than my report covers.

**Digital Content and Libraries**

In the late summer 2011, I appointed a new high-level Digital Content and Libraries Working Group (DC&LWG), co-chaired by Sari Feldman and Robert Wolven. See this link for the working group charge and membership: <http://connect.ala.org/node/159669>. The Working Group has broken into six subcommittees and has been moving forward in a variety of areas.

In the early autumn, ALA Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels, OITP Director Alan Inouye, and I met with Tom Allen, President of the Association of American Publishers, and AAP Vice President Tina Jordan. We had useful discussions about how we might approach publishers about our growing concerns about many trade ebooks not being made available for library purchase.

Shortly after Midwinter, Executive Director 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; OITP Director Inouye for all five meetings; and Digital Content & Libraries Working Group Co-Chair Wolven for four of the meetings.

Our purpose was to open direct communication with the top leadership of these publishing houses. We had the opportunity to make the case for why making ebooks available 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 in March. Also invited to participate on the panel were Jim Neal (ALA Treasurer and Vice President for Information Services 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 intermediaries 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 in April, we devoted a significant portion of our agenda to a full discussion on strategies re e-content, the most appropriate role for ALA, and our focus in the short and medium term. The Board adopted the following resolution:

That the Executive Board strongly affirms and advances the following objective: that libraries of all types must be able to provide effective access to electronic media for their users at a reasonable price and consistent with ALA core principles and that ALA develop an aggressive tactical plan to achieve this objective.

In May, several of us (Fiels, Inouye, Wolven, Raphael) returned to New York to meet with several organizations representing authors (Authors Guild, American Society of Journalists and Authors, PEN, and National Writers Union) as well as an additional publisher (Hachette). <http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/e-content/ebooks-promising-new-conversations>

We are encouraged that we are seeing movement on the part of publishers. At the same time, we have impressed upon them the need for urgency that we feel to resolve these issues and make the e-content available.

The DC&LWG has been making progress in several different areas and will report to the Executive Board and Council in Anaheim. I am very grateful to Sari

Feldman and Robert Wolven for their leadership and for the many members who are contributing to this important work. We also have been very fortunate to have excellent support from Alan Inouye and the OITP staff.

### **School Libraries and School Librarians**

I appointed the Presidential Task Force on School Libraries in the late summer of 2011. The Task Force has been meeting regularly in telephone conference calls and in person. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/schoollibrarytaskforce>

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 was received and reported on Carl Harvey's blog. <http://carl-harvey.com/libraryties/>

The Task Force has worked with individual cases brought to its attention. In addition, AASL President Carl Harvey and I have worked together to fight proposed reductions in school librarian positions, always working in collaboration with the local communities to see how we might be most effective.

I am pleased that this initiative will be continuing next year because our work is far from being done. The leadership of Pat Tumulty and Susan Ballard has been key to addressing issues, and I am also appreciative of the contributions of the Task Force members. As with all efforts of this type, the ALA staff support from Office of Library Advocacy Marci Merola and Jaclyn Finneke has been critically important to its success. I am grateful to all.

### **"Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities" (Advocacy)**

One of two presidential initiatives I launched this year focused on advocacy and how we can empower our communities to become more effective advocates for libraries of all types. With a number of talented ALA members from all types of libraries, we have been building on the work of several ALA past presidents. The initiative is co-chaired by Barbara Stripling and Patty Wong, with strong support from Marci Merola and Jaclyn Finneke, from ALA's Office for Library Advocacy. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/empoweringvoices>

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/>)

The focus of our work shifted part way through this year toward helping library communities of all types engage much more "authentically" with their respective communities. We will be continuing this effort going forward, and it will link with work that President-elect Maureen Sullivan will be doing in her presidential year, beginning in late June. A webinar on June 8th entitled "Passing the Community Engagement Baton" featured the two of us, being interviewed by 2012-13 President-elect (and initiative co-chair) Barbara Stripling, on the work we have been doing and how it will be carried forward during the next year.

In addition, we have been able to present the ideas and practices from this initiative at state and affiliate conferences at many locations throughout the United States throughout the past year.

The many efforts and activities of the "Empowering Voices, Transforming Communities" have benefitted greatly from the leadership of initiative co-chairs Barbara Stripling and Patty Wong, as well as the excellent staff support from Marci Merola (and her office) and JoAnne Kempf. Again, I am deeply grateful for their inspiring contributions and sustained work over the past two years.

### **"Empowering Diverse Voices" (Diversity and Leadership Development)**

My second ALA presidential initiative focuses on connecting the work that ALA has been doing around diversity, particularly in relation to the Spectrum Scholars recruitment efforts, with the many different leadership development programs within ALA. We launched some of these efforts at Midwinter and will add more this summer in Anaheim.

Midwinter provided a venue to launch programs intended to support our goal of ensuring that we are providing leadership development opportunities for

members from diverse backgrounds. We recorded videos of many ALA leaders from diverse backgrounds, under the excellent work led by Loida Garcia Febo. The videos are now on YouTube and show the diversity of our profession. <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLE1A31AF6C62A3CF3&feature=plcp>.

At Midwinter, we also launched an event called "Champion Connections", where we paired seasoned leaders with aspiring leaders using a "speed dating" format. Rose Dawson and Mary Jo Venetis led this effort. The feedback we received was very positive, from both groups of leaders.

We are presenting an "Associations Options Fair" for Anaheim, to help people from diverse backgrounds connect with volunteer activities within all parts of ALA. Trevor Dawes and Holly Okuhara are leading this effort.

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. A report with recommendations has been prepared by subgroup co-chair Janine Golden and her team.

In addition, we have launched several leadership webinars, with this effort being led by Janice Simmons Welburn and Dale McNeill.

I am deeply grateful to all who have contributed to this work. ALA Office for Diversity Director Miguel Figueroa and Assistant Gwendolyn Prellwitz provided very strong support for this initiative. In addition, each of the subprojects co-chairs contributed in significant ways. The contributions of many ALA members working on this initiative have been significant. For details, see <http://www.ala.org/offices/diversity/empowering>.

The focus of this diversity and leadership initiative was the centerpiece of my presentations throughout my visit to Brazil, during the first 10 days of March. My topic, requested by ALA Past President Carol Brey Casiano, who is now the Information Resource Officer for the US State Department in Brazil, 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) in addition to speaking to the library community in each of four different cities on diverse library leadership.

### **"The Promise of Libraries Transforming Communities"**

Under the leadership of Kim Olsen Clark and the Development Office, with significant contributions of President-elect Maureen Sullivan, ALA (in partnership

with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Institute for Museum and Library Services) convened a meeting of thought leaders from foundations and nonprofits that share priorities and goals that overlapped with ALA's. The meeting in Washington, DC on May 4<sup>th</sup> was proposed and funded in part by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The three areas of focus were on digital content and access; 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning; and changing communities. The discussions were rich and thought-provoking. We will continue to follow-up with the connections and conversations this gathering produced, which present promising new collaborations and partnerships.

### **Virtual Membership Meeting**

ALA convened its first Virtual Membership Meeting on June 6, 2012. We were very pleased at the hundreds of members who participated in the meeting from all around the world. We presented reports – President, Executive Director, and Budget Analysis and Review Committee Chair – and then had good discussions on topics of interest to the membership: ebooks and the changing role of libraries.

A change in the ALA Bylaws permitted the virtual meeting to be held. We received no resolution for consideration, but we now have in place the procedures, which would permit the introduction and voting on resolutions at a virtual meeting.

Planning and preparation for the virtual meeting involved many ALA staff especially from the IT Department, the Governance Office, and Membership. Many thanks to all who made this possible and successful.

### **Acquisition of Neal-Schuman Publishers**

A report on the acquisition of Neal-Schuman Publishers in the autumn of 2011 is reported in my Midwinter 2012 President's Report and can be found at this link [http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/officers/eb\\_documents/document\\_inventory2011\\_2012](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/officers/eb_documents/document_inventory2011_2012)

### **Travel and Speaking Engagements**

I have been very fortunate to be able to travel to many state library association and affiliate conferences as well as accept invitations to speak in several other countries. ALA, being the oldest and largest library association in the world, is

held in very high esteem in many places around the world. I estimate that I have travelled to over half of the 50 states and spent over half of the days of the year on the road for ALA. This has been an invigorating and somewhat exhausting experience, but one that I would not trade. Librarians, library workers, and library supporters are an amazingly diverse and passionate population.

Since the Spring 2012 Executive Board Meeting, here is a list of the places I have appeared:

### **April 2012**

- April 20-22 ALA Executive Board Spring Meeting (Chicago, IL)
- April 23-24 National Library Legislative Day (Washington, DC)
- April 25-27 Utah Library Association (Salt Lake City, UT) - Keynote

### **May 2012**

- May 2 Association of Research Libraries meeting (Chicago, IL)
- May 3 AARP Foundation (Washington, DC)
- May 3-4 Thought Leaders Meeting (Washington, DC)
- May 6-7 Connecticut Library Association (Mystic, CT) – Ebook Panel
- May 8 Wilbraham Public Library (Wilbraham, MA) - visit
- May 8 Worcester Public Library (Worcester, MA) – Talk with Trustees
- May 9-10 Massachusetts Library Association (Worcester, MA)
- May 14 – 16 Meet with Author Groups (Authors Guild, ASJA, PEN, NWU) (NYC)
- May 19 – 21 Timberline Acquisitions Institute (Timberline, OR)
- May 22 – 25 Mexican Library Association (Villahermosa, Mexico) - Keynote
- May 29 – June 2 Canadian Library Association (Ottawa, Ont., CA) – Ebook Panel

### **June 2012**

- June 5 – 6 Virtual Membership Meeting (Chicago, IL)

June 18 – 20 Association of Jewish Libraries (Pasadena, CA) – Closing Keynote

June 20 – 26 ALA Annual Conference (Anaheim, CA)

To see the list of places and events for the entire 2011-12 presidential year, please go to this link:

[http://mollyraphael.org/?page\\_id=730](http://mollyraphael.org/?page_id=730)

## Interviews

Throughout the year, I have had the opportunity to speak to the media about a variety of issues. These requests often arise from some happening in a locality, where the local media, after interviewing local sources, are interested in having a national perspective. The most frequent topics centered around the impact of budget reductions, the future of libraries in this digital age, and the impact of technology on libraries. When there were controversial issues, it was always useful for me to touch base with the local libraries so that I could be sure I understood the issues before commenting. For a listing of these interviews, see my quarterly reports in the Executive Board Documents at this link

[http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/officers/eb\\_documents/document\\_inventory2011\\_2012](http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/officers/eb_documents/document_inventory2011_2012)

Interviews since the last quarterly report include:

### PRINT

Outlet / Journalist	Topic	Website Link	Date
Northwest Herald / Meital Caplan	Evolution of libraries	<a href="http://www.nwherald.com/2012/04/04/countys-libraries-enter-new-chapter-of-evolution/atudz00/">http://www.nwherald.com/2012/04/04/countys-libraries-enter-new-chapter-of-evolution/atudz00/</a>	4/9/12
CNN Schools for Thought blog	Why libraries matter	<a href="http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/2012/04/13/my-view-why-libraries-matter-more-than-ever/">http://schoolsofthought.blogs.cnn.com/2012/04/13/my-view-why-libraries-matter-more-than-ever/</a>	4/13/12
Atlanta Journal Constitution / Rosalind Bentley	Future of libraries	<a href="http://www.ajc.com/lifestyle/libraries-add-more-to-1423656.html">http://www.ajc.com/lifestyle/libraries-add-more-to-1423656.html</a>	4/22/12

## INTERVIEWS

Outlet / Journalist	Topic	Date
Chicago Tribune / Heather Gillers	Chicago Public Library and the past 20 years	4/2/12
Northwest Herald / Meital Caplan	National Library Week	4/3/12
CNN Schools for Thought blog	Why libraries matter	N/A
Atlanta Journal Constitution / Rosalind Bentley	Future of libraries	4/12/12
News Enterprise / Amber Coulter	National Library Week	4/12/12
Daily Journal / Annie Goeller	Public libraries and fundraising	4/26/12

May and June have been relatively light for media interviews with one in May (Jeff MacDonald, *Christian Science Monitor*, on May 11) and one in June (Avishay Artsy, KCRW, an Internet Public Radio station in Los Angeles, on the upcoming ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim).

### Once More... In Appreciation

I am deeply grateful to the ALA membership for giving me the honor of leading ALA during 2011-12. It is a privilege to speak on behalf of the tens of thousands of librarians, library workers, and library supporters who are ALA members. My admiration for libraries and the people who work in them, while already very high, grew immensely during my time in office.

ALA presidents stand on the shoulders of their predecessors, and that is certainly true for me. I am grateful for the foundations they provided for me for both of my initiatives and the work of the office in general.

There is also an enormous amount of work that is done to advancing ALA priorities through the work of task forces, committees, and all the units of ALA. I am deeply appreciative of those who have chaired and served on ALA and Council committees as well as the many other members whom I have called upon and who have responded and served. Divisions, Round Tables, and ALA Offices have provided support whenever I needed it.

I want to offer my profound appreciation for the outstanding ALA staff, starting with Executive Director Keith Michael Fiels, Senior Associate Executive Director Mary Ghikas and the various departments in ALA led by Associate Executive Directors Emily Sheketoff, Cathleen Bourdon, Don Chatham, and Greg Calloway, with recognition for the many contributions of staff in their departments. As noted above, I offer special thanks to three offices that have supported the Office of the President through my initiatives: Office for Library Advocacy, Office for Diversity, and Office for Information Technology Policy.

The secret of ALA presidents is that when they look good, the reason is the extraordinary support and work of the ALA Office for Governance, led by JoAnne Kempf, with strong support from Alicia Bastl, Cheryl Malden, and Lois Ann Gregory-Wood. Thank you all for always being there to help and for always maintaining a positive and can-do attitude. You have been a joy to work with and get to know as the past two years have unfolded.

Macey Morales and Jennifer Petersen in the Public Information Office have done a great job of coordinating interviews, talking points, and all that I needed to sound informed when being interviewed.

I also want to express my appreciation to the ALA Officers during 2011-12: President-elect Maureen Sullivan, Treasurer Jim Neal, and Immediate Past President Roberta Stevens, as well as all the full Executive Board for the strong support and guidance you have given me.

Lest one think that I might forget Council, I have not. I have appreciated the way Council has done its work and maintained a civil and welcoming environment, even when there has been disagreement about what is our best course forward.

Finally, I know that I have missed some important people so please forgive me – the list of thank-yous is incredibly long.