

TO: ALA Executive Board

RE: Fourth quarter 2009 Media Relations Activities Report

ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:

Information Item – No Action Required

ACTION REQUESTED BY:

Cathleen Bourdon, Associate Executive Director, Communications and Member Relations

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DRAFT OF MOTION:

NA

DATE: December 29, 2009

BACKGROUND:

Media relations activities for the past quarter (Mid September- December 28) have focused in several areas:

- Banned Books Week
- Teen Read Week
- AASL National Conference
- National Gaming Day
- YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults
- Library use during economic recession, budget cuts

Since our last report to the Executive Board, the American Library Association's (ALA) media analysis service of online news scans found more than 8,300 articles that mentioned ALA, representing a circulation of more than 255 million with a publicity value of more than \$38 million.

According to the Newspaper Association of America, there are more than 1,400 daily newspapers and 6,700 weekly newspapers in the United States, so the following list of placements should be viewed as a snapshot of coverage achieved by the ALA.

Summary

The fourth quarter began with Banned Books Week, Sept. 26 – Oct. 3. From coast to coast libraries and bookstores celebrated the freedom to read, as thousands participated in read-out events and read from banned or challenged books. Banned Books Week achieved more than 1,600 placements including blogs, tweets and mainstream placements. Media highlights included the *Wall Street Journal*, *Associated Press*, *PBS’ NOW* and many other high level media groups.

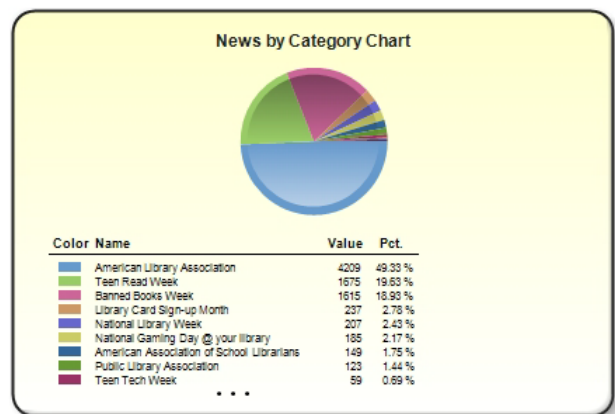
Banned Books Week received multiple attacks fueled by conservative opposition groups including a negative *Wall Street Journal* op ed titled “Finding Censorship Where There Is None.” The *Wall Street Journal* printed an ALA response entitled “Librarians Work to Protect Free Access to Information,” which reiterated ALA messaging on the freedom to read and an individual’s right to choose reading materials for themselves and their families.



The ALA celebrated the 12th Anniversary of Teen Read Week (TRW), October 18 – 24, and schools and libraries across the country hosted a variety of special programs and events to encourage teens to visit their public and school libraries, select their own reading

material and read for “the fun of it.” More than 4,000 librarians and educators nationwide registered to celebrate this event as young adult literature continues to enjoy popularity.

“Read Beyond Reality @ your library,” TRW 2009, promoted a variety of books from sci-fi, fantasy or alternate reality, to encourage teens to read something out of this world, just for the fun of it. This year’s coverage consisted of Web, print, radio and social media placements resulting in an ad value of more than \$4.3 million dollars and a circulation rate of 21.2 million according to ALA Media tracking software Vocus [9/15 – 12/28]. Teen Read Week also received the second highest amount of coverage in the fourth quarter.



YALSA President Linda Braun and local YALSA spokespeople across the U.S. participated in 10 radio interviews that aired on 91 stations, including the Minnesota News Network, which consists of 82 stations and has more than 916,000 listeners. Other interviews took place on radio stations in Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit, New York, Portland Seattle and St. Petersburg.

This year, YALSA provided pre-recorded evergreen audio public service announcements (PSAs) featuring celebrity voice actress Nancy Cartwright from “The Simpsons.” The PSAs aired on approximately 218 stations before and during TRW.

For the third year in a row, PIO secured placements on the Web site About.com, which has more than 32,365,744 visitors per month.

Also this quarter, more than 3,000 school librarians, educators, publishers and guests gathered in Charlotte Nov. 5 to 8, to discuss key issues that impact our nation's school libraries during the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) 14th National Conference & Exhibition, themed "Rev Up Learning @ your library."



The Public Information Office managed overall media strategy and onsite media activities through reaching out to journalists with library trade, higher education, k-12 reporters and Charlotte media. Outreach efforts fostered more than 149 Web, print, radio and television placements, resulting in an overall ad value of more than \$1 million dollars and a circulation rate of more than 4.9 million according to ALA's tracking software Vocus [8/13-12/28].

PIO achieved coverage with local television, radio, print, and library trade publications including WBTV (CBS), WFAE-FM (NPR), WSOC-FM, *The Charlotte Observer*, *eSchool News* and more. AASL leadership participated in both in-studio and onsite interviews.

On Thursday, Nov. 5, AASL president Cassandra Barnett, North Carolina School Library Media Association president Deb Christensen and North Carolina Department of Public Instruction school library media consultant Gerry Solomon participated in a live, hour-long radio interview on "Charlotte Talks With Mike Collins," a program on Charlotte's National Public Radio's affiliate, WFAE-FM. WFAE-FM is a major source of news and information for the Charlotte region and reaches over 200,000 listeners each week.

Television coverage was also provided by Charlotte's local CBS affiliate, WBTV. A WBTV crew interviewed Barnett at the Charlotte Convention Center and also interviewed a local librarian at Charlotte's Freedom Regional library. The Nov. 5 television segment, "High Tech Libraries," appeared on the 5 p.m. news and also includes a corresponding Web article, "School librarians facing new challenges." The segment was also re-played during the Saturday, Nov. 7 morning show program.

The *Associated Press* also provided coverage of the conference on Nov. 5 that was picked up by more than 380 Web publications.

The conference also served as a platform for the release of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills' (P21) Milestones for Improving Learning and Education (MILE) Guide, a resource created for educators and administrators to help them in measuring the progress of their schools in defining, teaching and assessing 21st century skills. PIO worked closely with the Partnership's Director of Public Relations, Albert Lang, and distributed a press release announcing the MILE Guide to Library Trade media, press members onsite and also to the Charlotte media via conference day sheets. More than 100 people attended the release announcement including library trade media.

In addition to the creation of a press kit, PIO prepared conference highlights, press releases, fact sheets and a Web press kit. During the conference, PIO staffed the press room and created and distributed day sheets to library trade, education and Charlotte media outlets, and pitched to local television, newspaper and radio reporters daily.

Thousands of libraries celebrated National Gaming Day @ your library on Nov. 14. Held annually, National Gaming Day celebrates the popularity, as well as the recreational and educational value of board, card and video games.

Many of the library celebrations featured board games from Hasbro. As the exclusive sponsor of National Gaming Day 2009, Hasbro donated a box set of its highly popular card games Monopoly Deal, Scrabble Slam and Pictureka! to more than 16,700 public libraries in the U.S.



More than 185 news placements were achieved which resulted in more than \$750,000 in free publicity and a circulation rate of more than 7.5 million. Coverage highlights include the *Washington Post* and *Reuters*.

Overall, there were more than 31,000 players who participated in National Gaming Day 2009 activities, more than double the number of participants in 2008.

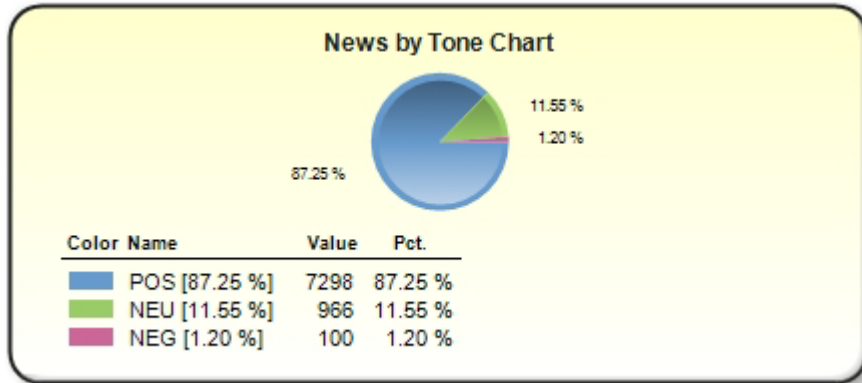
The finalists for the new YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults were announced this quarter. The announcement was covered by the *Associated Press*, and more than 3,900 Web sources and more than 81 news sites, including the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, picked up *Associated Press* coverage. So far more than \$645,500 in free publicity has been achieved and that's only counting the 220 posts that have been picked up by our monitoring software Vocus.



Throughout the quarter the surge in library use during the economic downturn continued to generate coverage and tended to focus more on how libraries are dealing with budget cuts and closures.

Findings at a glance:

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Total Clips	7.298	100	966
Total Circulation	208,992,914	4,150,710	42,629,871
Publicity Value	\$28,085,091	\$607,991.54	\$9,312,128.93



Total Clips: 8,364

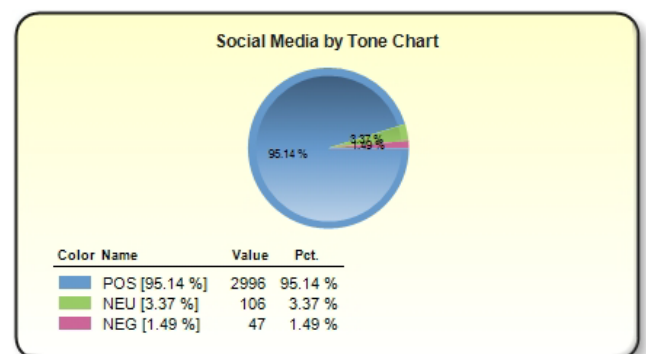
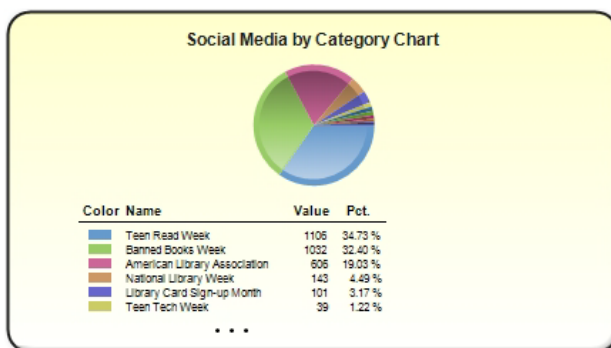
Total Circulation: 255,773,495

Total Publicity Value: \$38,005,211

Social Media

This quarter the ALA received more than 3,000 mentions via tweet or blog. The majority of social media coverage received focused on Teen Read Week followed by Banned Books Week and the American Library Association.

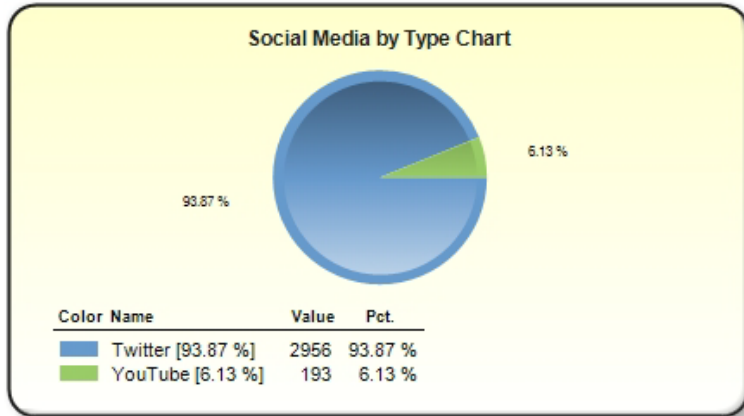
The majority of Social Media Coverage was positive.



[Positive: 2,996] [Neutral: 106] [Negative: 47] Total: 3,149

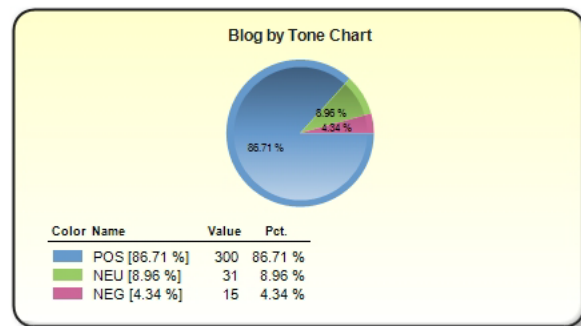
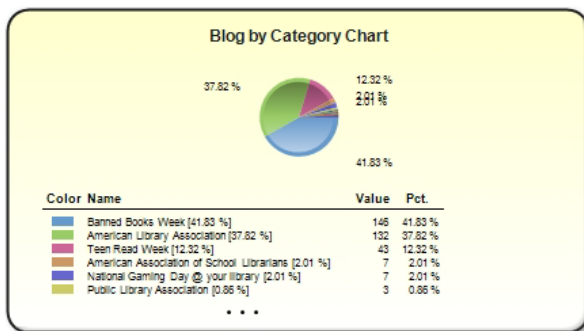
Twitter

The majority of fourth quarter social media coverage was from twitter with more than 2,900 tweets from members, ALA staff and outside groups. Tweets ranged in topic from tips on how to celebrate Banned Books Week or Teen Read Week to best places to visit while attending the ACRL's national conference. The majority of coverage was positive.



Blogs

Most Blog coverage from the fourth quarter focused on Banned Books Week followed by the American Library Association. Most Blog activity took place during Banned Books Week



(Sept. 26 – Oct. 3) and Teen Read Week (Oct. 18 – 24)

[Positive: 300] [Neutral: 31] [Negative: 15] Total: 346

[END]