

So long, farewell . . .

. . . to a year of successful transformation-related programming

by Leslie Burger

It's hard to believe that my presidential year is coming to a close in just a few weeks. Soon I will join other ALA past presidents, serving as the elder stateswomen and men of our profession. As I anticipate my impending retirement from office I look forward to remaining engaged and active in the Association, hoping that I can mentor the next generation of leaders and future presidents.

This has been a terrific year for me. Serving as ALA president is a unique experience that provides a new perspective on what it means to be a librarian and part of a professional association.

Mission accomplished

Hundreds of people have worked with me during the last 24 months building on my presidential theme, "Libraries Transform Communities." Together we set forth an ambitious agenda and have accomplished a great deal in just a short period of time. The following are some examples of what has been done this year:

- We launched the Emerging Leaders program with 117 new leaders—forever to be known as the first class (see p. 120–121)—who will complete their training and present poster sessions during this month's ALA Annual Con-

ference in Washington, D.C. I hope you will take the time to meet them and find a home for them within our varied committees, divisions, and chapters. More important, I encourage you to mentor them. They are a great group that has a lot to offer to our Association.

- The Library Corps volunteer program, an effort to match librarians and library workers who want to volunteer their talents to libraries in need of assistance, is under development through ALA's Office of Human Resource Development and Recruitment. A Library Corps database will soon be available.

- We extended our advocacy efforts with the launch of a new ALA website, ilovelibraries.org, aimed specifically at increasing the number of library advocates who can support libraries at the local, state, and national levels using the power of the Web.

- We tackled the idea of a national library agenda, articulating broad principles and guidelines to provide a focus for our legislative agenda and an easy-to-understand message to communicate our issues to policy- and decision-makers.

Makeover tools available

The transformation-track programs that will take place during the upcoming Annual Conference



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and the accompanying transformation tip sheet will provide you with ideas and inspiration for changing your library's services, staff, technology, building, and the communities you serve.

ALA, as a member-driven organization, relies on the generous volunteerism of our members to move the Association ahead. But a volunteer organization also needs staff to keep the forward momentum going. In addition to all of you who worked on these projects, I want to recognize the dedicated and highly capable ALA staff, who have supported each of my projects and ideas with enthusiastic support. We are indeed fortunate to have them behind us.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your president. It is an extraordinary honor and an experience I will forever cherish. ■

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ilovelibraries.org