

ALA Midwinter Conference Report
Philadelphia, PA, January 11-16, 2008
Sandy Barstow, WLA's ALA Chapter Councilor
Presented February 20, 2008 to the WLA Board

As the ALA Chapter Councilor representing the Wyoming Library Association, I attended various meetings at which the ALA Council and ALA-APA Council conducted the business of the organizations. The formal record of these meetings will be available on the ALA website, and I will be happy to provide my interpretation of specific items in this record upon request. In this report, I am providing information that I feel is most relevant to the WLA constituency.

I attended the ALA Council/Executive Board/Membership Information Session on January 13, 2008. This meeting was open to all members of ALA, and I encourage you to attend future occurrences of this meeting as it is an opportunity for members to be heard. A representative of the Presidential Task Force on the Graduated Dues Study reported that the study would be too expensive and recommended that it not be pursued further, but I am sure we have not heard the last of this issue. A new brochure, "Our Libraries, Our Legacy," was distributed as part of the Endowment Trustee's discussion of how people can include ALA in their planned giving strategy. It was announced that the ALA elections will occur from March 17 through April 24, 2008, with results to be announced May 2, 2008.

At the ALA-APA information session on January 13, we learned that almost one hundred people are enrolled in the Certified Public Library Administrator Program, and that the first candidate to complete the program, Lois Blythe from the Burlington (IA) Public Library, will be honored at the Annual Conference in Anaheim in June. We also heard reports on the Workplace Wellness Survey, the Library Support Staff Certification Project, the data collection for the ALA-APA Salary Survey, and the possibility of a reception to celebrate the fifth-year anniversary of ALA-APA on June 27, 2008. We were also reminded that National Library Workers Day is Tuesday, April 15, 2008.

ALA Council I, held on January 13, consisted of a series of reports on the activities of the association since the conference last summer. A resolution concerning member access to ALA electronic lists was brought forward to be deliberated at the last council session a few days later.

The ALA-APA Council, which is composed of the same councilors as represent constituents in the ALA Council, met on January 14. The formal meeting did not cover any items not previously revealed at the previous day's information session.

At ALA Council II, on January 15, we learned that the full cost of the Graduated Dues Study was estimated at about \$600,000, so the Executive Board decided to put it on hold. However, a demographic study of the ALA membership was approved. This study will cost about \$45,000 and will provide information that can feed into the larger study if it is later carried out, as well as providing useful information now. An interesting discussion of election campaigning guidelines led to a vote to have the Executive Board review the existing guidelines and report back to Council at the Annual Conference. There was some concern that the current guidelines, strictly interpreted, would make it difficult for anyone in a leadership role in Council or at the division level to run for President-Elect or Treasurer because the act of reporting on their current duties might be seen as campaigning and would provide an unfair advantage vs. those candidates who did not give reports in public forums. The Committee on Professional Ethics presented a revision to Article 4 of their bylaws; I voted against the revision as being too vague and not inclusive enough.

At ALA Council III, on January 16, a couple of the more interesting decisions included the establishment of an Advocacy Committee to work with the new ALA Advocacy Office; and a resolution from the Constitution and Bylaws Committee clarifying terms of office and councilor succession.

You may recall that the WLA membership, at our annual meeting last fall, approved a change to the succession process for the WLA ALA Chapter Councilor position. During this fall's WLA election cycle, a new chapter councilor-elect will be elected, to provide an orderly transition from the current councilor,

whose term will end at the conclusion of ALA Annual Conference 2009, to the new councilor, whose formal term of office will begin immediately following ALA Annual Conference 2009. The new councilor will be assisted by the outgoing councilor in such activities as preparing the ALA display at the WLA conference in Laramie in September 2009, and the new councilor will represent WLA at Council starting at Midwinter in January 2010. The new councilor-elect should plan to attend some of the council meetings as a member of the audience in 2009, and should be recognized by ALA as a councilor-elect so that he or she will be added to the council listservs and will receive information in advance of the first ALA meeting at which he or she represents WLA.