

ALA Councilor from Wyoming Report  
Annual Conference, 2011, New Orleans, LA  
June 23 -28

Patty's Notes --

This is my second year, 4th meeting as the WLA -- ALA Chapter Representative. I can't tell you how much I have enjoyed this opportunity. It is an honor and a privilege to represent you at a conference of 20,000 people who live and breath library world. If you have not chosen to run for a WLA office yet, I recommend that begin your participation in state activities and put this position on your to-do list. It is the best part-time job you will ever have.

This year's topics ran the gamut from the onerous to the enjoyable. The Wikileaks resolutions I was concerned about did not pass. The more I think about the approach by the committee protecting open access to information, the more I think they made a strategic blunder in bombarding us with three resolutions containing way too much -- pushing the representatives to having to say No instead of agreeing to the ALA philosophy of support for an ideal. Daniel Elsworth of the Pentagon Papers fame was a keynote speaker, and he was surprisingly (to me) charming and witty. Elsworth too agreed to part of the resolutions, but not all of it. There was strong comparisons between the two incidents.

The other thing I saw this conference was a gentle move from the old guard to the energy of a "new" ALA. The leadership from the executive director Keith Michael Fiels and president Roberta Stevens remains calm, strong, professional. Is it silly of me to report that I just get tickled with the process? Ah, well. ALA is truly amazing and huge. The national office does tremendous work for all of us.

Budget reports and financial discussions are a huge part of the Council sessions. They are repeated at the membership meetings. Still they are concise, clear, understandable. ALA is constantly on the brink of disaster because in spite of the large membership and other income, ALA is costly. The national office is costly, and I truly admire those people who stick with us through thick and thin -- meaning furloughs. They must be better money managers than I am. It is the professionals at the national office that complete the work of the council, concentrate on achieving goals, and guide all of us from our small town locations. Again, it is an amazing process.

There was tremendous discussion about the new Strategic Plan for ALA -- and that does help all of us.

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/missionhistory/plan/strategic> plan  
2015documents/cd\_36.2\_2015\_stra

The Executive Director's report was filled with excitement about:

Connect with Your Kids <http://www.atyourlibrary.org/connectwithyourkids>

E-Meetings -- more than 500 ALA members attended an online membership meeting; not a lot in comparison to the conference, but ALA is looking for membership participation through this avenue for non-travelers.

Transforming Libraries -- one of the goal areas that is seeing success

Flood Donations -- collections for American, Japan, Haiti libraries were taken

Several other reports of interest that are worth looking at for the future of libraries are:

Future Perfect Task Force Report; Envisioning ALA's Governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – There was lively discussion about this report's suggestion of merging membership and Council for all votes to be done on-line – 61,000 members who may or may not care about ALA goals. Hmmmm.

[http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/governance/council/council\\_documents/2011\\_annual\\_docus/cd\\_44\\_future\\_perfect.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/governance/council/council_documents/2011_annual_docus/cd_44_future_perfect.pdf)

Confronting the Future: Strategic Visions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Library

[http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oitp/publications/policybriefs/confronting\\_the\\_future.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oitp/publications/policybriefs/confronting_the_future.pdf)

And a new fundraising toolkit at

<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/advocacy/frontlinefundraising/index.cfm>

As Councilor I also have the job of Intellectual Freedom for WY and the national report led to the adoption of a resolution supporting privacy for holds practices:

<http://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=2371>

Office of Intellectual Freedom ALA committee report can be found at:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/ifgroups/ifcommittee/ifcinaction/ifcreports/ifcac2011reporttocou.pdf>

New Orleans was an amazing place to visit, and the conference took advantage of the energy of rebuilding knowledge for numerous workshops and themes. The city itself welcomed the librarians with open arms; waiters and taxi drivers commented on their appreciation of librarians and our conference support five years ago. The city has cleaned up, is vigorously rebuilding, and drawing young professionals into their area.

Submitted by Patty Myers, July, 2011