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## From the President

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## *From the* PRESIDENT

It's barely 2007, and we are off to a running start! December 1 was GLA Leadership Day (okay, that's the old-fashioned name! Officially, GLA Midwinter Conference!) and we had many great ideas for 2007 GaCOMO. Responsibilities for COMO rotate each year among the different sponsoring agencies, and this year GLA is responsible for the program.

Every year we hear many complaints that there is not enough programming for "xyz." Since the programs come from the membership, this is your chance to have your voice heard by suggesting programming ideas. We are already contacting speakers for next fall, so it's not too soon to start! Program proposal forms will be available in March, which is right around the corner, so be thinking of topics you would like to hear more about or would make great programs.

We will be going back to Jekyll Island for the first time in several years for 2007 GaCOMO. Mark your calendars for October 17-19, 2007. Several of the older hotels have been torn down to make place for newer lodgings, so there should be a nice choice of accommodations. Internet and wireless access have been upgraded, eliminating the problems many of the vendors had in demonstrating their products at previous conferences on Jekyll.

Meanwhile, there is much to be done. Our next event will be Library Day at the Capitol on February 13. Jim Cooper, Director of the West Georgia Regional Library in Carrollton, will be coordinating this event. It is our opportunity to meet one on one with our legislators and express our thanks for their support over the past year and, of course, to tell them about our needs for the coming year.

My state senator remarked after his first year as a senator that one of the biggest surprises he had when he took office was how few of his constituents contacted him. If

he hears from five or six people, he considers it a high number. So, it doesn't take much work to get our voices heard. What's hard is picking up the telephone and making the first call!

And what results we can achieve! The extra \$2 million that was appropriated to public libraries last year by the General Assembly for the purchase of books was the result of one of the public library directors running into her state senator in a grocery store parking lot and telling him the sad amount of state book money that public libraries were allocated. Public libraries this year will be trying to get that money not only continued but doubled!

Representative Billy Horne, from Coweta County, introduced a bill for public libraries last year that paves the way for the production of a library car tag. It passed on the November ballot and should be available for purchase next year. The car tag will be a great advertisement for libraries, so we hope to see everyone sporting a library car tag over the next several years!

These are just several examples of the results of talking to our legislators. Whether you have lunch or visit with them on Library Day at the Capitol or call on them in their home district, the important thing is that they hear from you! And, don't forget e-mail. While there are still several holdout legislators who do not use e-mail, the majority do, and if you drop them an e-mail message, you are likely to hear back from them.

Georgia libraries should take great pride in what we have achieved. GALILEO and PINES/Evergreen have made us not only national but international models of cooperation. We hope to continue building on this success over the coming year, so we shouldn't hesitate to blow our own horns!

— **JoEllen Ostendorf**  
*President*  
*Georgia Library Association*