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## President's Column

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## President's Column

I want to begin by thanking Frank Allen for his outstanding service to the Southeastern Library Association as editor of the ***Southeastern Librarian***. It is with regret that I share with you Frank's decision to step down as editor upon the completion of the current volume (end of 2004). During Frank's tenure as editor, the journal has seen an impressive period of growth. For example, thanks to Frank's efforts, the ***Southeastern Librarian*** is now a peer-reviewed journal in which we can all take pride. Frank was instrumental in arranging a contract with HW Wilson to allow digital access to the journal. He has worked tirelessly to insure that through the journal members of the association receive not only access to scholarship but also current news about library activities within the twelve member states. Please join me in thanking Frank for his outstanding contributions to the association! You can reach him by e-mail at [fallen@mail.ucf.edu](mailto:fallen@mail.ucf.edu).

I'd also like to commend the Planning and Development Committee for the survey they conducted to assist them in updating SELA's strategic plan. To my knowledge this is the first time such a thorough survey has been conducted for this purpose. It was a web-based survey generously hosted by the Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET). The results of that survey are reported in an interesting and thought-provoking article later in this issue. Just reading the article led me to think of several things that could be done fairly easily to begin providing some of the resources for members most desired by survey respondents. For example, the second most desired resource is a job posting service. I'm aware of several such services already available in member states. Links to those services might be provided via the SELA web page to provide a single site for most of the southeast. I hope that as you read the article you will think about how some of the needs and desires expressed by respondents might be met by the association or its sections, round tables or committees. I hope you will also be inspired to contribute your own input to the committee. For various reasons there were a relatively low number of survey responses from active members. If for some reason you did not have an opportunity to respond to the survey, and you would like to provide input to the Planning and Development Committee, I encourage you to contact one of the members. The members and their contact information are listed on the SELA web page at <http://sela.lib.ucf.edu> in the Leadership Directory. Of course comments and suggestions about the association and its activities are always welcome on SELA-L. This might be a really good opportunity to increase communication among members via one of the excellent resources already available to us as SELA members.

Planning continues for our joint conference with NCLA in Charlotte, November 9-13. Judith Gibbons and Mark Pumphrey are working with their counterparts from NCLA to plan speakers and programs. I encourage any individual or group interested in presenting a program or suggesting a program topic to contact Judith or Mark. Their contact information is also available in the Leadership Directory. It will be particularly effective if sections, round tables and committees work with their comparable units within NCLA to prepare programming. That type of cooperation was particularly effective during the 2002 joint conference with SCLA in Charleston.

I can't close this column without recognizing a longtime member of SELA who has contributed at extraordinary levels during his many years of active service including a biennium as president. Our very own Charles Beard has announced that he will retire this year from his position as Director of University Libraries at the State University of West Georgia. I owe Charles a personal debt of gratitude. We worked together on an SELA joint conference with the Alabama Library Association during the early years of my career in Alabama. From that time Charles served as one of my mentors and was the person who helped me get my first assignment to a LAMA committee. I doubt that I would be representing Georgia on ALA Council without Charles's help and inspiration. I'm sure there are many SELA members who can tell similar stories. Please join in sending all best wishes to our legendary friend and colleague upon his retirement!