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SOLINET Provides Affordable Disaster Preparedness throughout the Southeast

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LIBRARY ADVOCACY IN THE POST-KATRINA SOUTH

**Memphis Public Library
3030 Poplar Avenue
April 5, 2006
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Cost: \$25.00**

Now more than ever, library advocacy is crucial to the longevity of our libraries. As leaders in our communities, we need to build coalitions of advocates who can effectively communicate the critical role that libraries play in our society.

The joint conference of the Tennessee Library Association and the Southeastern Library Association will co-host the first American Library Association Regional Advocacy Institute: *Library Advocacy in the Post-Katrina South*. Speakers will include Carol Brey-Casiano, Past-President, American Library Association; Judith Gibbons, National Co-Chair, ALA Advocacy Campaign; Marci Merola, Public Information Office, American Library Association; and Kathleen Imhoff, Executive Director, Lexington, KY Public Library.

By attending the 2006 ALA Advocacy Institute, you will build your advocacy skills and develop new strategies to successfully advocate for your library; learn to create effective coalitions with library staff members, trustees and Friends in your community; and leave with a draft of an advocacy action plan for use in your library. The Advocacy Institute is designed for the beginning advocate or anyone who wants to sharpen their skills.

To register, go to the new TLA website (www.tnla.org) and print off the TLA/SELA Conference registration form. Deadline for pre-registration is March 3. Pre-conference attendees are welcome to attend the entire conference but it is not a prerequisite.

SOLINET PROVIDES AFFORDABLE DISASTER PREPARADNESS THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHEAST

In an effort to promote disaster preparedness throughout the Southeast, and to assist libraries and archives in developing and implementing realistic plans to mitigate damage and facilitate recovery, SOLINET is offering a series of disaster classes strategically located throughout the region. Support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Division of Preservation and Access, makes it possible to offer these classes at only \$25 each. The classes will be held in March and April – and one in May – in each of the ten states that comprise the SOLINET region.

The memory of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita is still fresh, and the work of salvage and recovery continues. The importance of informed preparation is strikingly clear, as is the need for training in this regard. “We hope that the reduced registration fee will enable staff at more libraries and archives to take advantage of this training, especially those from smaller institutions with very limited budgets for staff development,” says SOLINET Preservation Services Manager Tina Mason. “Time and money spent taking the steps to protect your collection repays itself in minimizing loss. Everyone is at risk – whether it is mold due to a broken AC, or water damage from a pipe burst or leaky roof. It’s not just institutions threatened by hurricanes or tornados. A developed plan, a prepared staff, and materials and resources at hand when disaster strikes is the best assurance you can have.”

Two topics are offered through this series. The one-day Disaster Preparedness class will provide the training necessary to plan, organize, and execute a disaster plan and a salvage operation, with demonstrations of salvage techniques such as packing out wet materials, air-drying books, separating and drying manuscripts, and drying photographic materials. The Hurricane Preparedness class is a must for libraries and archives in at-risk areas. The one-day class will address the general issues involved in developing a disaster plan. It will show how to make an institution more storm-proof and teach what to do before, during, and after a storm, including where to look for available assistance.

SOLINET encourages library staff and archivists anywhere in the region to consult the class schedule on the SOLINET website (www.solinet.net/preservation/disasterseries) and select the class date and location that is most convenient. These classes are available to all, not just SOLINET member librarians and staff.

SOLINET AND PARTNERS EVALUATE RECOVERY NEEDS AT LIBRARIES AFFECTED BY HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA

In partnership with libraries, state agencies, and library consortia throughout the region and with support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, SOLINET will perform a two-month evaluation of the libraries impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and, in February 2006, present a set of recommendations for long-term recovery. Partners in this effort include state libraries and archives in all affected states (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas), Amigos Library Services (TX), the Louisiana Library Network (LOUIS), and other state-based consortia serving impacted libraries. In addition, SOLINET will be coordinating evaluation efforts with those underway on behalf of other cultural organizations to share information and identify opportunities for joint recovery activity.

The 2005 hurricanes affected libraries throughout a large geographic area along the Gulf Coast. Travel restrictions and health hazards in the hardest hit areas meant it was sometimes weeks before staff could begin to assess damage at their libraries. Although they are individually at various stages of response, most libraries and archives have by now completed damage assessment and are working on collection stabilization and recovery. According to SOLINET Executive Director Kate Nevins, "A regional evaluation at this time will be valuable for identifying needs for long-term recovery, needs that libraries will still be struggling to address long after the initial outpouring of support has faded."

The evaluation will seek to identify: (1) needs and strategies for short-term and long-term collection recovery, (2) support and services that would better assist libraries in immediate response to future disasters, and (3) opportunities for improving hurricane preparedness and response planning in libraries. Project partners, representatives from impacted libraries, and preservation and disaster recovery experts will meet to develop recommendations in all three areas based on information gathered through damage assessment reports. A report on the evaluation effort will be made available through SOLINET's website.

BARRON PRIZE AWARD NOMINATIONS

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes, founded by young adult author T.A. Barron, seeks nominations for its 2006 awards. The Barron Prize honors young people ages 8 to 18 who have shown leadership and courage in public service to people and our planet. Each year, ten national winners each receive \$2,000 to support their service work or higher education. Nomination deadline is April 30. For more information and to nominate -- as well as to request or download free heroes educational materials -- visit <http://www.barronprize.org/>