From the President

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From the PRESIDENT

With some trepidation and assurances of help from reliable friends, I happily accept the role of your GLA president for 2012. Members of the Southeastern Library Association will be joining us at the COMO conference in Macon on October 3-5, 2012. I am very grateful to all who presented, attended, or volunteered at COMO 2011.

Now is an opportune moment to reflect on what may have been missing at the Athens conference and to work toward filling in gaps. Let’s put on an epic event for our region next fall! The COMO Planning Committee will meet on January 7 to discuss survey feedback from the recent conference and to begin laying groundwork for Macon. As you know, COMO programs are “homegrown” and “organic” – the committee can’t buy them from the ALA Store (wouldn’t that be a nice app?). We count on you to share your expertise and best practices, to brainstorm about panels with broad appeal or sessions on current trends. Start talking with colleagues now; let’s craft some more first-rate Georgia professional development. We have great examples from the Carterette Webinar Series team and the Atlanta Emerging Librarians, among others.

Several themes were evident in 2011 COMO survey comments. Some attendees wished for more sessions targeted at these work environments: archives and special collections, cataloging/tech services, and public libraries, especially children’s programming. So, I encourage GLA members in those arenas to propose a session for 2012. Of course, we want and need representatives of all library types at COMO and throughout our GLA year!

We’ll have an opportunity to gather at GLA’s Midwinter Conference / Annual Planning Day on Friday, January 27, 2012 at the Downs Continuing Education Center at Clayton State University. Bring a friend who’s new to Georgia or GLA, join a committee that’s new to you, and tell me and other GLA Board members how we can better serve you. We’d love your suggestions for a catchy conference theme too!

I invite you to think back to “what I learned in library school” and the standard library employee toolkit of at least ten years ago. What skills are needed for libraries as we embrace open access, patron-driven e-book acquisition, methodical assessment, repurposing library space designs, or risk taking? How do we get buy in on restructuring library priorities and activities when human nature clings to maintaining the status quo?

What’s your mobile status? Is your library civically engaged? How should we engage faculty in ways that meet their pedagogical needs and habits? Cope with discovery technologies such as Summon that transform information gathering and flow for our users? Shake up our organizations to welcome younger staff? Deal with midcareer angst or non-traditional patron populations?

Each of these areas is ripe for programming, so ponder a panel or submit a session bid! I pledge to form a committee from a variety of library fields to review proposals and scheduling for
COMO, in order to address some past concerns. We’ll also add an indicator for target audience on the proposal form. Watch for those in late spring.

Many thanks to the GLA Scholarship Committee, to those who donated items to the raffle, and to those who bought tickets. The 2010 raffle cleared $3,570.33, benefiting newcomers to our profession.

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