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## From the President

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## *From the* PRESIDENT

Welcome to Spring! We have had a busy season since the last installment of the president's message.

On February 21, 2017, Georgia Library Association (GLA) volunteers distributed matted limited edition prints to all Georgia legislators. The prints are always well anticipated and many legislators have the prints lining the walls of their office suites. How nice to have a visual reminder of libraries right on the wall for our legislators! Carolyn Fuller, GLA's past president, coordinates this project each year with Mumford Books, the project funder, and artist Debi Davis, who has created prints of our state landmarks for more than twenty years. This year's print was "Dungeness Mansion Ruins on Cumberland Island."

The Georgia Libraries Conference will be held October 4–6, 2017, in Columbus Georgia. Planning by the conference committee is in full swing. We have adopted a new logo to go along with our rebranded conference. The committee will maintain some of our most valued traditions while incorporating some new ideas with input from the newly formed Conference Advisory Task Force. The task force is charged with reviewing past feedback and making recommendations to the conference committee on an ongoing basis. This year's theme is "Different by Design."

Representatives from the Columbus Convention and Trade Center, the Columbus Conventions and Visitors Bureau, and our library colleagues from the Columbus Area Library Association (CALA) are rolling out the red carpet for us this year. Watch for information on conference

proposals and events in the coming weeks. This will be a conference you don't want to miss!

The GLA Executive Board meeting was held at Kennesaw State University on April 18, 2017. Sofia Slutszkaya, GLA webmaster, and Heck Yeah! Web Design presented the wireframe for the new Georgia Library Association website. The board gave input on development and was pleased with the general direction and progress of the project to date.

During this time of the year, our public librarians are preparing for summer reading programs. This is a wonderful opportunity for our libraries to inspire children with library activities and programming that will hopefully make them lifelong readers. This year's theme is "Build a Better World."

The Georgia Library Association was one of nine sponsors of the American Library Association (ALA) National Library Legislative Day. Georgia's twenty-two representatives attended a briefing day on May 1, 2017. The Georgia delegation, coordinated by Wendy Cornelisen of the GLA Governmental Relations Committee, included twenty-two representatives from Georgia. Visits to all of Georgia's senators and congressmen were scheduled on Tuesday, May 2, 2017. The key topic for discussion was to save the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) by fully funding the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL).

For the first time in a few years, Congress was in session, so attendees were able to visit with most our congressmen personally. Our teams were able to discuss the many ways we use our

LSTA funding in statewide efforts that benefit our state. We received many compliments on our many programs and use of federal funds.

At the time of this writing, the current federal budget proposal includes plans to eliminate IMLS and virtually all other library funding sources, totaling over \$210 million in library support. Georgia's libraries currently receive \$4.5 million in federal funding. The recently released omnibus spending bill included a \$1 million increase in funding for IMLS funding for the remainder of the federal fiscal year, FY17. It

is uncertain what will happen with IMLS in the FY18 budget.

ALA advises us that individual letters and emails (not form letters) and in-person visits make the biggest impact. Please consider communicating with your congressmen and senators about the importance of LSTA funding here in Georgia. Now more than ever our advocacy efforts are vital.

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Pictured from left to right are: Julie Walker, Darla Chambliss, Pat Herndon, Thomas Brooks, Dan Aldridge, Maggie Murphy, Angela Stanley, Elizabeth McKinney, Jo Lahmon, Susan Del Rosario, Stephen Houser, Jennifer Lautzenheiser, Stacy Brown, Jean Blakely, Brenda Poku, and Wendy Cornelisen.