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## From the President

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## *From the* PRESIDENT

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*Karen Manning*

Happy Summer, everyone! The season of long, hot days when the sun is most active and beautiful rainbows. So, let the sunshine in!

In June, I attended the American Library Association's (ALA) Annual Conference in

Washington, DC. Being among library professionals of different ethnicities, races, and genders spoke volumes of who we are and how much is being accomplished together. I participated in sessions that contributed to my professional development and provided more leadership interaction. Spending time with other chapter leaders from across the nation was a learning experience for us all. We discussed objectives, goals, strategies, as well as favorable and unfavorable outcomes that were taking place within our respective associations. Shared tips were received enthusiastically, with some likely to be implemented. It was a pleasure meeting ALA's 2021–2022 Outgoing President Patty Wong, 2022–2023 Incoming President Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada, 2020–2021 Past President Julius Jefferson, Jr., and the Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden in person. The aspiration to become more unexpectedly filled me in those moments. I felt a sense of belonging at ALA and was reassured that our 2022 Georgia Libraries Conference (GLC) theme, "You Belong: Because We're Better Together," is relevant and meaningful.

It was a pleasure to see some of our GLA members in person at ALA! We experienced camaraderie outside of Georgia and joked about traveling all the way to Washington, DC, to see each other in person.

In other news, I am serving on a Project Advisory Committee (PAC) for the Georgia Technology White Paper Project. Broadband access is an essential utility that improves the lives of people in communities near and far. This can be problematic in areas of Georgia with broadband access issues, and for people with disabilities or others who do not have the hardware or income to afford access. The purpose of the project is to create a set of recommendations for the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities to use over the next five years to enhance the use of technology by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Libraries have an essential role in providing access to the internet. I will reach out to our Library Services for Persons with Disabilities Interest Group and others who can share knowledge or information that may be beneficial in this effort.

Let's "dive" into the goings-on of the Georgia Library Association (GLA).

The 2022 Georgia Libraries Conference Committee is exuding a lot of energy and diligently planning to make a splash in Macon, GA. An abundance of topics was received as program proposals. Stay tuned for many opportunities to gather and network through learning sessions and informal gatherings at the conference. It is a "shore" thing that many will attend! See you in Macon!

Surfing for some interest group activities, here is the lineup of recent activities and events:

- Black Caucus Interest Group presented a workshop titled "Preserving Your Treasures" and had a Juneteenth lecture. The group also produced robust and informative newsletters.
- Distance Learning Interest Group had an online show-and-tell to share information

about technology tools useful for online instruction.

- Gender & Sexuality Diversities Interest Group invited all to join them in a fun-filled game night in their Rainbow Café.
- Professional & Continuing Education Interest Group invite all to join them in their Adult Programming Paloozas: “It’s Your Library. All Grown Up.”
- Programming Interest Group’s “Learn and Share” programs are planned with quarterly topics.
- Reference & Instruction Services Interest Group Round Table series are held each month in their Google Meet space.
- In June, Carterette Webinar Series presented a webinar titled, “Am I Doing This Right? Advice for First Time Managers.”

The oceans of possibilities for gaining knowledge are vast through qualitative GLA output. If you have not taken advantage of the great learning opportunities and fun events offered by GLA divisions, committees, or interest groups, you are missing out on relevant, informative, educational resources. These are wonderful ways to network and socialize. Take the time to occasionally refresh or add to your knowledge by attending.

I am very excited about GLA’s and the Society of Georgia Archivists’ interest in building a more collaborative partnership. Open ideas from both groups will potentially become a joint, multivarious expression of collaboration. This effort harnesses collective and thorough knowledge of both professions and supports belonging. We are better together!

Strategic planning implementation is ongoing. Our members are making great strides to fulfill several of GLA’s strategic goals: community, accessibility, and inclusion and collaboration. The Advocacy Committee and Georgia Library Trustees and Friends Group are poised to merge, forming the Advocacy Division before or by early 2023. This new strategic pathway where resources are pooled together is a leap

towards providing effective advocacy for libraries in a greater capacity. A diversity grant to increase Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) involvement with GLA and to fulfill another strategic goal has been presented. More work on developing the grant is in process and should be active for the 2023 awards. Additionally, our webmaster added an accessibility feature to assist and enhance how viewers engage with the GLA website. Addressing our technology tools and platforms will also be reviewed for accessibility enhancements.

The GLA membership portal has been updated to include an option for gifting a membership. We can strengthen and diversify our membership by introducing people to our association. Enrich and expand someone’s horizon through an introduction to GLA.

While meditating and watching the specks of light illuminating from the night fireflies, I am reminded that you all are the light that shines brightly upon the Georgia Library Association. It is your commitment and dedication that keeps us afloat and sailing along.

The song “Summertime,” recorded by multiple artists, reminds me to reflect on possibilities. Taking advantage of the lazy, hazy days of summer, I will pause to catch some rays and enjoy some of my summertime favorites: seashores, rolling waves, sailing, feet in the sand, ice cream cones, beach reading, blue water, and palm trees. Whether vacationing or not, enjoying the outdoors or staying inside, take time to unwind, refresh, and keep cool! Let the summer sun be a beacon that illuminates your **inspiration**, ignites energy and **motivation**, and sparks new ideas for **collaboration**! Have a sun-sational summer everyone! Please reach out to me or any board members with additional ideas, suggestions, or comments.

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