***ALA Annual Report***

Anaheim, CA

June 22nd - June 26th

Dora U. Sims, Trustee

The theme of this year’s Conference “Transforming Our Libraries, Ourselves.” All workshops, sessions throughout the conference rallied around this theme. As a trustee, and also with the position of Trustee at Large, I attended workshops and sessions sponsored by ALTAFF, the division of ALA that serves the trustees.

*Friday, June 22nd*

The first workshop *“Nuts & Bolts for Trustees, Friends and Foundations”* presented a series of speakers that addressed issues relative to trustees, Friends and Foundation organization. Key points shared relevant to effective transformation of our libraries:

* There must be a diversity of opinions by developing the art of listening to stakeholders, grassroots, individuals who are the best advocates the library serves.
* Public libraries are government funded and no groups can be denied the use of the meeting rooms; libraries must have a non-discriminatory Meeting Room Policy that clearly states the policies that govern the use of their meeting rooms.
* Libraries continue to see significant cuts in government funding, and we must work to get stakeholders/grassroots individuals involved in volunteering. The author of the book, “Everyone Helps, Everyone Wins” distributed and testified of its relevance.
* Trustees, advocates, Friends, Foundation groups who did not participate in the “Turning the Page Advocacy Program” sponsored by the Gates Foundation, are encouraged to participate in the new revised version of “Turning the Page 2.0 Advocacy Program.” This is a free online six-week program sponsored by PLA. (See handout for details).

*Saturday, June 23rd*

“*ALTAFF in Action: Leadership Training at its Best.”* This workshop covered several topics of relevance for existing and new members. Qualities of Leadership & Networking Activity for all attendees, Basics of Parliamentary Procedures, Mechanics of Committee Involvement, and Ms. Gail Griffin, incoming president-elect shared her vision for ALTAFF in the coming year. \**She pledged that members will be informed of board actions, opportunities to serve, board vacancies as they occur. She encouraged interested members to submit their resumes and committee interest for appointment*.

*Specialized Outreach Services Luncheon* is an Annual Program benefit sponsored by ALTAFF for the purpose of developing, coordinating and implementing programs that specifically address collectively and separately the issues and concerns of library Trustees, Friends and Foundations. This year’s guest was Mr. Keith Fiels, ALA’s Executive Director. Mr. Fiels briefed attendees of the new trends effecting ALA, encouraged members of ALTAFF to work together to build unity in the new division which will become “United For Libraries” in September.

Workshop, “*Intellectual Freedom and the Library Trustee* *Program*” sponsored jointly by ALTAFF and PLA. This program presented three panelists who shared some pointers from the Freedom to Read Foundation.

* Adopt clear policies and procedures that regulate governance.
* Regular review & train new employees on Intellectual Freedom guidelines.
* Be aware that some patrons will not agree to some Collection Items.
* Intellectual Freedom guidelines should be reflective in the Library’s Bill of Rights.
* Every person has the right to secure information from the library without being imposed upon by another.
* Review ALA’s web database of challenges imposed on libraries.
* Make sure there is a procedure in place for “challenged material” to minimize lawsuits, sexual harassments of seeing something on the internet.
* Make sure at least one person is knowledge and responsible for giving information in event of a challenge.
* Make sure a Policies & Procedures Manual is available to staff and employees, and they are knowledgeable of how to communicate.
* Libraries should have a copy of Intellectual Freedom Handbook on shelf.

Sunday, June 24th

Attended the 43rd Coretta Scott King Book Awards.

Attended ALTAFF Board Meeting; shared of some items of concern relative to the Operational Budget Report, and made suggestions and recommendations. Request a report at the next Board Meeting. Mrs. Barbara Jones, Freedom to Read Foundation, spoke to the board regarding some items on board issues are to be kept confidential. There has to be a balance between confidentiality and transparency. When communicating, make sure information is clear. When dealing with court cases, the board must speak with one voice.

Attended workshop, “*How Libraries Are Serving the Evolving Needs of Baby Boomers and Older Adults”* co-sponsored by ALTAFF. The session begins with a question, “Are Libraries Meeting the Needs of Baby Boomers and Older Adults? The Institute of Museum of Library Services provides grants for research & policy making. Some grants are funded by LSTA, other sources recommended was website [www.transforminglifeafter50.org](http://www.transforminglifeafter50.org). It was stated that statistics show 83% use the library to learn about a disease, illness or medical condition. A high percentage use the library to seek employment after retirement, and while many may not volunteer, statistics show they most often will donate if asked if the library provides services for this aging population.

Some key pointers in providing services are: Recruit skilled facilitators such as counselors or social workers who are familiar with aging, partner with your local area agency on Aging, low attendance is not a failure, keep it informal, and do keep in touch.

Attended ALTAFF President’s Program that featured Dan Rather. He spoke of his life and works in his new book, “Rather Unspoken.” He shared briefly about the Watergate Scandal as one story he covered in which the president had to leave office.

Attended a workshop on “The Librarian has left the Building.” The workshop involved “Succession Planning.” Some elements of succession planning: Managing the present and future workforce, identifying competencies for future leaders, supporting national efforts for leadership developments, building a pool of individuals who are looking for leadership roles, etc.

For succession planning to be effective, it’s important that there is commitment from the top, it should not be done to encourage someone to retire, but it’s having staff trained to step up if the opportunity presents itself.