

ALA Councilor's Annual Report

In 2002, I served my first year (of a 3-year term) as Missouri chapter councilor at ALA both at Midwinter and Annual conferences. This was an exciting year to be there because of the development of the APA (Allied Professional Association) advocacy arm for the profession. This bold and important association can undertake advocating for improved librarian salaries and benefits, lobby and donate campaign contributions, and deal with librarian certification and a broad range of accreditation activities. There is an APA toolkit on the ALA website.

At the recent MLA Conference in Kansas City, all attendees had the opportunity to hear a keynote presentation by current ALA President Maurice J. (Mitch) Freedman. Mitch also heads up ALA's task force on pay equity, so his main topic was increasing salaries for librarians and library workers. Afterwards, I had the pleasure of helping him conduct an open Q & A session on ALA Council issues. We talked about the newly created APA, certification, compensation, benefits, and a few library legislative issues.

Mitch Freedman is adamantly against the current suggestion that the issue of salaries and pay equity be taken off the table because of the recession and budget difficulties. He says that's a "tired argument" that should "be put to sleep permanently" or "sent to the Smithsonian." Freedman hopes that libraries will adopt policies of pay equity for their staffs. It costs nothing and acknowledges that inequity exists. He then recommends that libraries prepare a comparable worth study of library staff and those in other community departments. Finally, he calls on us to commit to the policies and create a plan to address equitable pay over a period of years. Mitch will also voice these concerns in his forthcoming column in *American Libraries*.

On the legislative front, the TEACH (Technology Education and Copyright Harmonization) Act has passed both houses and awaits the President's signature. It allows teachers and faculty to use copyrighted works in the "digital classroom" without prior permission from the copyright holder. See the TEACH Web site at www.ala.org/washoff/teach.html. Legislative actions are largely pending on other issues like the e-government bill.

I look forward to representing you at the ALA Midwinter Conference in January 24-29, 2003, in Philadelphia. Please contact me with any concerns or issues.

Pat Gregory
ALA Councilor