

The Alabama Library Association (ALLA) is a non-profit corporation formed to encourage and promote the welfare of libraries and professional interests of librarians in the State of Alabama. The Mission of the Alabama Library Association is to provide leadership for the development, advocacy, and improvement of library and information services and to promote the profession of librarianship, in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.

ALLA COMMUNICATOR

From the President:

Hello ALLA Members and Friends!



It has been over a month since the 2022 ALLA Convention in Montgomery, and I am still elated about all the incredible programs, sessions, and events. Because pulling an in-person convention back together after more than THREE years was a group effort, I want to start with some gratitude. The convention would not have been possible without Paige Crumbley, the hardworking convention planning committee, and the diligent effort of the ALLA Executive Council. I was more involved this year than ever before, and I have a new level of respect for all the work that goes into this planning. We welcomed over 200 attendees, including members and presenters, association and author award winners, awardees families, and vendors. Our program presenters did a phenomenal job; their presentations were interesting, professional, and well-researched.

With the convention wrapped up, it is time to build on that momentum and look to the future. It is my honor and pleasure to serve as ALLA President. I hope to continue the great work of past presidents and highlight the amazing work librarians and paraprofessionals are doing across the state. For my presidency, I'd like to build on the convention theme of Social Justice by centering voices that have historically and are currently being silenced. COVID-19 has not been the only challenge libraries are facing. Across the country, libraries are under fire. The recent inundation of book challenges and bans goes beyond the normal patron discourse. Librarians are life-long learners and at our core, we promote fairness and equity in our communities. If you have any ideas on ways we can further this work, I would love to hear from you.

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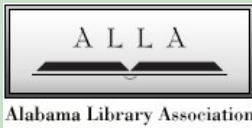


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2022

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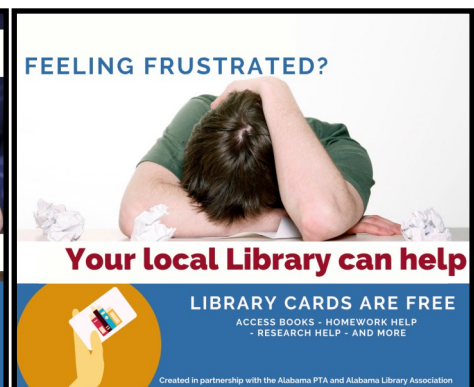
From the President (continued):

Another focus of this year will be to reimagine the possibilities of future ALLA conventions. Because we will not have a “conventional convention” in 2023, we have an opportunity to evaluate what has worked great and what could be improved. I will create a representative ad hoc committee to review current convention procedures, survey the membership, and make recommendations for the future. If you have ideas/suggestions, please forward them to me until the committee is convened.

I am so grateful to our members, you are essential to ALLA. My sincerest thanks also goes out to all division, roundtable, and committee leadership and members. I look forward to collaborating with each of you.

Amanda Melcher
ALLA President

Promote Your Library!



Share these hashtags on your social media accounts:

#HowWePTA

#OnlineLearning

#AlabamaLibraries

Nonprofits and Competition:

The Struggle for Relevance and Financial Support



By Rodney C. Lawley

Competitive strategy is rarely a topic of conversation between leaders in nonprofit library organizations, but perhaps it should be. Like it or not, competition between library nonprofits is ongoing and intense, and recognizing the significance of this environment is imperative to an organization's future success. Research conducted over 15 years ago by La Piana and Hayes (2005) stressed the importance of being a good competitor in this arena by suggesting a direct relationship between a competitive business approach and a nonprofit attaining its goals.

In Alabama, the competition for a librarian's time, interest, and money is deceptively fierce, as demonstrated by the large number of organizations seeking new members or increased attendance at their conferences and meetings. Some of the regional and state organizations competing in this market are: the Alabama Library Association (ALLA), the Southeastern Library Association (SELA), the Alabama School Library Association (ASLA), the Alabama Health Libraries Association (ALHeLA), the Law Libraries Association of Alabama, the Alabama Two Year College Library Association, the Alabama Chapter of the Association of College & Research Libraries (AACRL), the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries, the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries, and even the Society of Alabama Archivists.

Unfortunately, these organizations often share the same pool of membership candidates, and this results in a natural and unavoidable conflict of interest. Many librarians would argue against this statement by pointing out the service-based nature of librarianship and the team approach to providing information services for the public good. Despite this perception of *esprit de corps*, the number of librarians who are capable and willing to participate in Alabama library organizations is finite. For this reason, the success of one organization can—and often does—lead to less-than-ideal circumstances for another.

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GET INVOLVED

ALLA Divisions:

YSSLD
*Youth Services & School
Library Division*

CUS
*College, University and
Special Libraries*

PLD
Public Library Division

ALLA Roundtables:

ALIRT
Alabama Library Instruction

CDMRT
*Collection Development and
Management*

GODORT
Government Documents

MCRT
Multicultural Information

PART
Paraprofessional

RASRT
Reference and Adult Services

TSSRT
Technical Services & Systems

YASRT
Young Adult Services

ALLA Committees:

Association Awards
Authors Awards
Bibliographic
Budget & Finance
Bylaws
Convention
Education
Emeritus Council
Employee Evaluation
Handbook
Intellectual Freedom
Legislative Development
Membership
Nominating
Planning
Public Relations
Publications

To get involved with an ALLA
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[https://goo.gl/forms/
tS79Dg6YqFbjiS812](https://goo.gl/forms/tS79Dg6YqFbjiS812)

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TSSRT

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YASRT

Young Adult Services

ALLA Committees:

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Authors Awards

Bibliographic

Budget & Finance

Bylaws

Convention

Education

Emeritus Council

(Formerly Past Presidents)

Employee Evaluation

Handbook

Intellectual Freedom

Legislative Development

Membership

Nominating

Planning

Public Relations

Publications

Get involved with an ALLA
Committee today:

[https://www.allanet.org/
committees](https://www.allanet.org/committees)

Nonprofits and Competition (Continued):

The Struggle for Relevance and Financial Support

Piana and Hayes (2005) define *competition* as “the process of different entities vying for an optimal share of a limited resource.” In this respect, the ALLA and other library entities are competing for the limited resource of a librarian’s time, interest, and money. In order to be successful in this environment, Piana and Hayes (2005) suggest an organization first recognize this competition and then implement a competitive strategy to distinguish itself from the field. They define *competitive strategy* as: “A pattern of thoughtful action through which a nonprofit’s leaders seek an increased share of limited resources, with the goal of advancing their mission.”

Research by Hopkins and Hyde (2002) also supports this perspective by suggesting that non-profit organizations have become too inwardly focused and are not paying enough attention to the external environment and the constantly changing threats and opportunities which it presents.

So, what does this mean for organizations like the ALLA? Will nonprofits engage in marketing strategies and other methodologies to leverage and increase their share of the library-world dollar? Such commercialism is interesting to envision, but unlikely to occur. Piana and Hayes suggest “the traditional nonprofit cultural values of inclusivity and collaboration will remain strong” because “nonprofit leaders are, as a group, intrinsically motivated people who seek social change.” Despite this opinion, the authors do make suggestions for nonprofits facing increasing competition.

One recommendation is to conduct a “competitiveness review” instead of a strategic planning process. The goal of this review is to determine why a user of an organization—a librarian in this context—chooses one organization over another. With this knowledge, an organization can then build upon known success.

A second suggestion from Piana and Hayes (2005) is to simply talk about competitive strategy in the context of nonprofit organizations. Executive conversations must increasingly focus on strategic thinking that views external change as an opportunity for increased organizational success.

References:

Hayes, M., & La Piana, D. (2005). *Play to win: The nonprofit guide to competitive Strategy: Vol. 1st ed.* Jossey-Bass.

Hopkins, K., & Hyde, C. (2002). The human service managerial dilemma: New expectations, chronic challenges and old solutions,” *Administration in Social Work*, 26(3), 1–15.



Alabama Libraries

The Journal for Librarians

Alabama Libraries is seeking articles relevant to librarianship in Alabama. The Alabama Library Association's peer-reviewed journal publishes scholarly articles biannually in an open access format.

Guidelines for Submissions of Articles:

- All manuscripts must be submitted to AlabamaLibrariesJournal@gmail.com as attachment to an email, preferably in MS Word.
- Manuscripts must be written in APA style and include an abstract and keywords.
- Although longer or shorter works may be considered, 2,000- to 5,000-word manuscripts are preferred.
- The name, position, and professional email address of the author should appear in the bottom left-hand corner of a separate title page. The author's name should not appear anywhere else in the document.
- Submissions will undergo a double blind peer review process.
- Photographs and other images relevant to the submission will be accepted for consideration but cannot be returned. Digital images are preferred.
- No other publisher should be simultaneously considering a manuscript submitted to *The Alabama Librarian*.
- If the manuscript includes analyses of survey results, please acknowledge approval by the appropriate Institutional Review Board either through direct reference in the manuscript or acknowledgement as part of the manuscript submission.

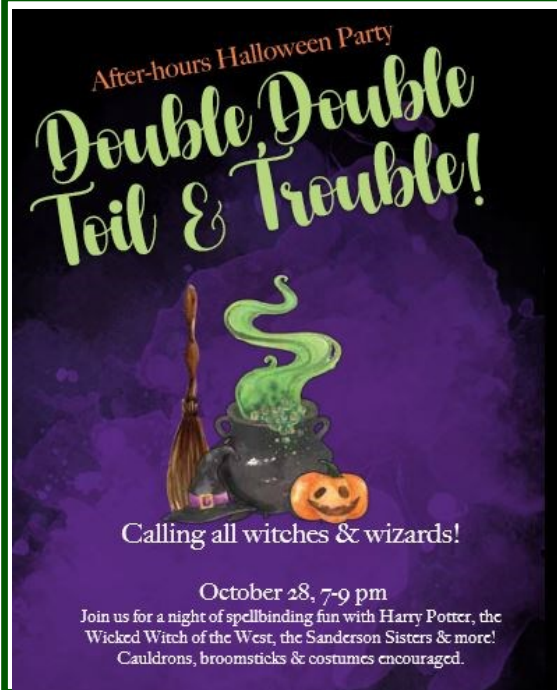
Upon receipt, manuscripts will be acknowledged by the Editor-in-Chief, who will then assign manuscripts to two reviewers. The reviewers who receive the manuscript will have no direct information on the author or the author's affiliation. Following the review, a decision will be communicated to the writer.

Upon acceptance, publication can be expected within six months.

Please visit the [Alabama Libraries](http://AlabamaLibraries.org) website for more information, or contact the editor, [Jessica E. Platt](mailto:Jessica.E.Platt@alabamalibrary.org).

CALL FOR PAPERS

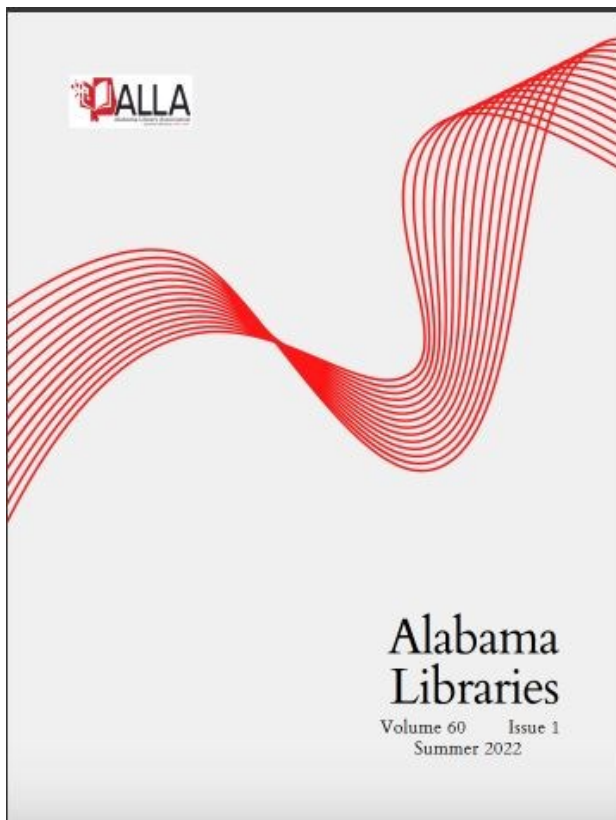
Alabama Library Happenings



The Hoover Public Library will be celebrating Halloween early this year with their “Double, Double, Toil & Trouble” program on October 28th.

Please visit the library’s website for more information on this fun filled children’s event:

[Hoover Library](#)



Alabama Libraries!

The summer issue of Alabama’s peer-reviewed journal for librarians is now available for [free download](#). Inside, you will find insightful articles by Alabama librarians Lacie Sutherland and Lisa Vardaman, along with a special guest editorial by Laura Pitts.

Read it today!

[Alabama Libraries](#)

Alabama Library Happenings



Homewood Library Appoints New Director: Judith Wright

The [*Over The Mountain Journal*](#) recently published an interview with Ms. Judith Wright, Homewood Public Library's newest Director. Wright has an extensive background working for the Homewood Library. She began as a part-time employee in 2010, then moved to the teen librarian position in 2014. She was later promoted to assistant director in 2019. Wright worked under the highly-regarded mentorship of former director Debbie Fout, who served Homewood's library for 37 years.

Congratulations from the ALLA Judith! We value and appreciate all that you do.



Alabama Professors Win Diversity Grants

Dr. Bharat Mehra (photo left) and Dr. Robert Riter (photo right), from the School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) at the University of Alabama, have been awarded a significant portion of grants promoting racial and social justice in public libraries and community-based archives. A grant for \$463,237 was awarded by the IMLS Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program to recruit and train minority paraprofessionals from community-based archives and lead them into professional careers through an MLIS degree. A second IMLS National Leadership Grant of \$332,939 was awarded to study and build librarians' capabilities to advance racial justice and build productive social change in this regard.

Libraries and communities in our state will certainly benefit from these exciting projects. Our thanks are extended to both professors for the vital and necessary work that they do in promoting and improving Alabama libraries.

Please review this exciting news in more detail at the [SLIS website](#).



Language Professors and Librarians *Juntos*

By Lisa Vardaman, MLIS

Education/Instructional Media Librarian
Troy University

Juntos, or working together, is something that most librarians are familiar with, regardless of the language used. Librarians are constantly working with colleagues, professors, teachers, or patrons to provide information. This information can take on many forms, such as research assistance, reading materials, or learning activities for patrons.

Foreign language professors can feel isolated when teaching, because they often work alone with students, faculty, or instructors in small campus departments. This is understandable, but things do not have to be this way. They can interact and work with librarians through productive collaborations. Examples of such collaborative work include helping librarians with research, providing foreign-language books and instructional materials, or by directly assisting foreign-language students with their library research for improved learning outcomes.

So, what are some of the ways that librarians can initiate shared projects with language professors? At Troy University the library and the Modern Language Department have worked together on several events and activities. One of the main activities is the Spanish Club Film Festival held every semester. It is made possible through a grant available from Pragda in the fall and spring semesters. Pragda is a distributor for the newest Latin American, Spanish, and Latinx cinema. They cover a wide array of the Latino and Hispanic region's hottest topics, including the global economy, DACA, immigration and exile, feminism, education, modern politics, and more. With students and educators in mind, they work to ensure that the highest educational standards are upheld.

The Spanish Film Festival grant is comprised of a five-film series that takes place on campus for Spanish students. The students are able to stream view a Latin or Spanish film online for extra credit and in-class discussion. This festival gives the students the experience of listening to a language without leaving the comfort of their dorm room.

The film festival has been going strong for five years now, and the professors enjoy it because it gives their students exposure to the Spanish language and different cultures they are discussing in class.

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Language Professors and Librarians *Juntos* (continued):

One other project the library and the Modern Language Department approach together is the Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, with reading, films, food events, and displays all taking place in the library. This collaboration was so successful, it soon led to another partnership with the Study Abroad Office at Troy University.



The Study Abroad Office held a workshop in the library where Spanish professors and students came together to discuss study abroad opportunities for students.

Of course, you cannot talk about working together without mentioning the “normal” library experiences, such as providing basic bibliographic instruction and working with professors to provide new reading and research materials.

So, as you can see, collaborations can be an easy way to provide enriching experiences for your students and patrons while increasing opportunities for language and cultural diversity. Librarians just have to research the opportunities that are available and *think outside of the box*, like librarians know how to do. Academic librarians can kick start this process by visiting other departments and introducing themselves. Public Librarians can reach out to ESL programs or University Language Departments in the communities to work on offering workshops and programs for their patrons.

Lisa Vardaman
Troy University

GODORT CORNER

By Tim Dodge,
GODORT Moderator

GODORT Moderator's Column [Sept. 2022]

The 2022-2023 membership year started off very well for GODORT with a program featured at the recent ALLA annual convention held in Montgomery on August 1. Piper Cumbo, Instruction Coordinator, Auburn University), gave an engaging presentation on “JFK and Twitter: Engaging Undergraduate Students in Primary Source Research Using Media Sources and Government Documents.”

I am pleased to note that Liza Weisbrod (Auburn University) is contributing an article here concerning financial databases from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. The topic of the Federal Reserve (often referred to as “the Fed”) is of great importance at any time but, in this era of economic uncertainty and high inflation, is especially pertinent. We all have heard news stories in recent months about the Federal Reserve Bank raising interest rates to counter the inflationary pressures arising from the (still not ended) COVID-19 pandemic and how the stock market keeps (over) reacting. There is some truth to the phrase, “fear and greed,” as it applies to Wall Street stock brokers, but I digress from Liza’s article.

In the near future we will start making plans for at least one webinar. I say “at least one” because, in the absence of an ALLA annual convention in 2023, it means there will be no annual convention program for GODORT this time around. Hosting a possible second webinar in early 2023 might be both a good way to continue fulfilling GODORT’s objectives such as providing “a forum for librarians working with government documents... and to provide communication between documents librarians and other librarians”(see GODORT By-Laws, <https://www.allanet.org/assets/docs/godortbylaws.pdf> and we can also hope a webinar or two might encourage attendees to join this round table as a member.

Tim Dodge
GODORT Moderator

Financial Databases from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

By Liza Weisbrod, Auburn University Libraries



[FRASER](#), produced by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, is a digital library of United States banking, economic, and financial history. Containing over a half million items, the collection provides documents dating back to the founding of the republic.

Most of the materials in FRASER are produced by the U.S. government. They come from a wide range of government agencies and include a variety of publications about financial topics. The collection includes runs of such well-known publications as the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (1878-1950), the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (1949-2010), the *Monthly Labor Review* (1915-2022), and the *Budget of the United States Government* (1921-2022). While these are sometimes available on other websites (for instance, the HathiTrust), the search capabilities of FRASER make accessing these publications easy. For example, in the *Budget*, links to selected statistical tables allow users to track budget outlays for individual agencies across a range of years.

FRASER also selectively includes other publications that relate to financial topics. Congressional hearings, Census publications, and publications from government agencies such as the Works Progressive Administration and the Women's Bureau are included when they address financial matters. While the focus of FRASER is on financial, economic, and banking history, this charge is interpreted liberally and FRASER abounds with odd and unexpected documents. *Anthrax as an Occupational Disease* (1917) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics presents a worldwide overview of this now

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Financial Databases from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis (Continued):

rare disease. The subject 'Convict labor' turns up twenty-seven items, including *Wartime Production in State Prisons* (1944) and *Establishment of Convict Labor System in Utah* (1924). Along with congressional and agency publications, a number of archival collections are also available.



For example, the Records of the War Relocation Authority document the disposition of interned Japanese Americans' property during World War II.

Along with FRASER, the St. Louis Fed maintains several other databases including [FRED](#) (Federal Reserve Economic Data), where users can download, graph, and track over 800,000 time series, and [ALFRED](#) (Archival FRED), which provides legacy economic data. Along with FRASER, these databases provide a valuable source of historical statistical data.

The St. Louis Fed provides extensive resources to help teachers, students, and librarians use its materials. [Econ Lowdown](#) is an economic education portal for teachers and students and supports lessons, videos, podcasts, and online courses. FRASER offers [learning resources](#) for teachers, students, and librarians, including lesson plans and classroom activities. FRED has tutorials about how to use its data and has created an online [data literacy program](#) for librarians. Participants can earn digital badges and a digital micro-credential after completing the program.

For historical financial information, FRASER is an excellent resource. It is a user-friendly, freely available database and provides support for users of all levels. Take advantage of these resources when researching financial topics.

Photo compliments of the National Archives: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/537655>, Lange, Dorothea, 1895-1965, Photographer.

Building the Library of the Future

By John A. Jackson

Director Foley Public Library

If asked, most public library directors can describe, in detail, their idea of the perfect library for their community. Through interacting with their patron base they develop an instinctive understanding of their community's needs. An intuitive director can discern how best to help their community in a relatively short period of time, whether it's a focus on education, technology, children's services or all of the above. And while many can install programs, seek out grants, find local funding, or garner support from their Friends group, seldom is there opportunity to build the dream from the ground up.

When I arrived as the Director of the Foley Public Library in 2013, I soon came to appreciate the great potential for the library in meeting the needs of a growing community. The opportunities included partnering with local groups like the Literacy Council to provide space for enhanced education for local residents, working through local businesses to provide educational opportunities for their staff, improving services within the Children's Department, and outreach to underserved communities. All of the opportunities could be realized to a certain degree in the current facility. However, to meet the challenges in full we needed a bigger library. And that conclusion was the only one I could reach based on the space constraints that plagued us then and even more so now some 8 ½ years later. With an idea in place all we needed was a city government willing to move forward with an innovative concept and the funding to make it a reality.

Fortunately the Foley Mayor and City Council are forward thinking and understand the need for infrastructure expansion including public facilities like the City Hall/Civic Center complex, sports facilities, public works, and the library. All of the city occupied buildings were originally built to serve a population of 10,000, which has now become 25,000. The Foley Public Library is no different. The move to build a new library gained momentum about a year ago with informal discussions among staff members and the city administration. We learned from COVID that we could passively hope that our patrons would organically

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Building the Library of the Future (Continued):

return for the same services as they always had or we could find an innovative way to serve a changed patron base.

The pandemic gave rise to certain patron needs such as online educational and entertainment media while it almost destroyed our DVD checkouts and altered how our community's children used the facility. It also changed the needs of computer users that came to our lab on a regular basis and transformed the way in which we provided activities and events. Two years later we are stronger, yet different in how we fit in our community. COVID changed us and our patrons. And yet, both are stronger because of the experience with expanded needs intermixed with the desire to return to normalcy that is served through a visit to the library.

Our goals, transformed by COVID, and enhanced by the population explosion in our area, involves connecting to a larger segment of the Foley community with the goal of increased inclusivity of the Black and Latino neighborhoods at the heart of our expansion effort. Our first directive when initially considering the construction of a new library was that we wanted to enhance what we do well now and to include what we haven't been able to do because of space limitations. In addition, we sought the input from staff, city administrators and area residents as to what they would like to see the Foley Library offer in a new facility. Our research and the years of experience serving the Foley community led us to engineer a plan that would enhance our present offerings and allow us to add educational and entertainment elements to our facility that we could never do within our present limits.

All of our planning and fore thought would have been just a dream without the forward thinking city government in Foley. The Mayor and Council agreed that with the increase in residents and the growth in tourism along our coast we needed to begin improving the city's infrastructure now in order to be able to meet the growing needs over the next ten years. As part of the city's ten year plan the library offered the move to a new, larger facility as a means of expanding our educational role, in general, and to meet the needs of the black and Hispanic community in particular. In this past year's budget cycle the City of Foley dedicated funding to locating and securing an architectural firm to begin the plan for a new building that would double the square footage of our current facility. Based on our traditional successes we asked for a design that incorporates a larger multi-purpose room to accommodate sizeable gatherings for events/activities, an expanded computer lab for classes and individual instruction, a substantially larger space for physical books, and

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Building the Library of the Future (Continued):



a much more open and inviting space for our Children's Department. As a means of introducing new elements of the library to the residents of Foley, our plan incorporates a STEM/STEAM lab to enhance the education received at our local schools and to offer more for home school families. Furthermore, we realize the need for numerous study and meeting rooms to accommodate any size group from one on one tutoring to small conferences. Finally, we plan to involve our staff more closely with local groups like the South Baldwin Literacy Council to better reach an underserved population. This collaboration will also provide space for them to tutor, teach, and instruct in larger groups for residents seeking their GED or hoping to improve their communication skills.

At present we are in the planning phase of our library development, interviewing architectural firms to find the one that can turn our vision into a reality. This phase should be completed by winter 2022/23 with construction beginning in 2023. Our goal is to be open for patrons by late summer or early fall of 2024 with a facility that will serve our patrons well into the future and be the educational hub of Foley. Our community is growing and changing at a lightning fast pace. For our community to meet that challenge we have to give Foley residents the educational opportunity to grow in a space that builds their community spirit. Our new facility will meet that challenge and provide the residents of Foley the opportunity to expand their horizons and better their world and that of their children.

John A. Jackson
Foley Public Library

ALLA COMMUNICATOR SUBMISSIONS

Please feel free to submit your library-related news to:

communicator.alla@gmail.com

Submissions must include:

- Your Name
- Job Title
- Library or organization name
- Contact Email and Phone
- Article in PDF or Word
- .jpg images may be attached
- Description of images

ALLA COMMUNICATOR PUBLISHING SCHEDULE

Edition	Submission Deadline	Publication Date
Jul/Aug/Sep	Mid-June	July
Oct/Nov/Dec	Mid-Sept.	October
Jan/Feb/Mar	Mid-Dec.	January
Apr/May/Jun	Mid-March	April

The Alabama Library Association

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From the Editor

Rodney C. Lawley,
Troy University Archivist



Friends,

Greetings to all, and thank you to our wonderful members who participated in the ALLA convention this year. The facilities were outstanding, the presentations were amazing, and the weather was beautiful for our gathering.

In this issue, I asked Troy University Librarian Lisa Vardaman to write about her experiences working with foreign language professors. One of our goals at ALLA is to increase diversity in our field, and Lisa's work is an excellent example of one route librarians can take to expand our base culturally and reach more talented individuals interested in librarianship.

Also opening new avenues of learning is Auburn librarian Liza Weisbrod's contribution pertaining to financial databases. Government documents are vital to our state and local histories, and in this regard, they are vital to the family histories of our library patrons. Thanks to Liza for sharing her knowledge in this area.

John A. Jackson, Director of Foley Public Library, follows up with his article offering ALLA readers an early glimpse of Foley's plans for a new and improved library. These plans incorporate strategies to increase the library's service capacities for underserved populations. Thank you John.

My contribution this week pertains to competitiveness in nonprofit arenas and how this competition affects library nonprofits here in Alabama. It is an important topic that addresses questions pertaining to collaborative partnerships and strategies for future growth and productivity of our organization. I hope you enjoy the article and will consider submitting your own ideas for our organization's future to President Melcher, as she has requested in her uplifting and forward-thinking article this month.

My time as editor is near its end, and I will be working with Troy University Science Librarian, Cha Webster, for the January 2023 issue. Cha has agreed to take on editorial responsibilities next year, and I know everyone will enjoy her fresh perspective and positive outlook.

All the best,

Rodney C. Lawley

Thank you to Mr. Kelly Reeves (Troy University) & Ms. Cha Webster (Troy University) for their generous service in proofreading this month's issue.