



President's Column

Andrea Lapsley

As I write this column one word keeps coming to mind—"fortunate." First, it seems strange that I am writing this long before I am even inaugurated as LAMA president. As you read this, it will be three months into my term.

As I reflect on the position and the trust that you, the membership, have placed in me, I realize just how fortunate and honored I am to have been elected to this position. LAMA has been privileged to have many talented leaders who have preceded me in this position. There certainly is a long legacy of strong leadership that has been passed on to me. I also know that within the current membership there are talented people who will be LAMA's future leaders. It is my hope that during my term those starting out in the library profession and those new to management will find LAMA's programs, educational opportunities, and publications especially helpful. I encourage all members to become active within a LAMA section—it is rewarding, invigorating, and inspiring to see your colleagues in action. LAMA is about building future leaders. Don't be on the sidelines, join in and be a part of it.

I am especially fortunate that I am the fiftieth LAMA president. Our organization's fiftieth anniversary is something we can all be proud of. A special committee has been formed to oversee the activities planned throughout the next year. Working with each section, this group will shepherd programs, publications, an increased Web presence, fund-raising opportunities, and much more. You will be hearing more about these activities over the next year through *LAMA LEADS*, *LA&M*, and the Web site.

What would you like to see happen during this important year? What would be a meaningful way to celebrate LAMA's rich history and accomplishments and pave the way for the next fifty years? This is your organization, so please free to share your thoughts and ideas with the LAMA office. I would like to know what you think. Send e-mail to [lma@ala.org](mailto:lama@ala.org). I promise that your input will be shared with the committee and appropriate sections. Remember, this is your organization and your opinion matters.

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Second, as I write this, I am just five days away from starting a new job. This exciting new opportunity at Colorado State University was possible because of people in LAMA. Through the friendships made within LAMA this new position became a reality for me. How fortunate for me, but this is true for the entire membership. LAMA continually provides networking opportunities, whether you are a seasoned veteran or new to the profession. Whether an academic, public, special librarian, or a vendor, LAMA has always welcomed you and been a place for you to contribute. My story is not unusual, and has been repeated often. Even if you are not changing positions, LAMA provides opportunities for growth and advancement in a variety of ways. Annual Conference programs, regional institutes, publications, personal interactions, and working on committees all help make us better at our jobs.

Third, I have just returned from a vacation in Africa, where I visited a library in rural South Africa. As I watched and spoke with the library staff of this fledgling library, I thought about how extremely lucky I was to have LAMA, a strong professional organization, to serve membership. The LAMA board has just adopted a new strategic plan that focuses on giving greater value to our membership by aligning programs, services, and dollars to support what you want and need to succeed in your institution. This is the result of the hard work of the Strategic Planning Task Force and you, the membership, who shared your ideas through surveys. We listened to what you were saying and have created a plan that is responsive to your needs and creates a more flexible organizational structure. The next president's column will focus on the plan so everyone will be aware of our future direction.

Finally, on a different note, but one that can be considered in the "fortunate" theme, this is the last issue of *LA&M* that is appearing only in a print format. As leaders we must look ahead and adapt ourselves and our organization to move in a new direction. We must be willing to take risks and innovate. LAMA is taking a leap into the twenty-first century, and starting with the winter issue (volume 21, number 1), *LA&M* will be electronic. (Subscribers will continue to get a print copy during the transition period.) We are fortunate to have the technology to make this significant publication available electronically. We will try to make the switch as painless as possible. At this time you do not need to do anything. You will receive an e-mail or

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other notification when the new issue of *LA&M* is available on the Web. We will also begin mounting back issues on the site later this year.

I hope that you too believe how fortunate you are to be part of LAMA and able to share in the excitement of this cel-

ebratory year. I am proud and fortunate to be able to serve you as the fiftieth president.

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and she documents the similarities and differences between the two positions.

As I have done in most issues, I urge you to contact the authors, get involved, and speak your mind. Many of the articles in *LA&M* had their beginning as conference

or preconference presentations. The reverse is also true. Articles that have appeared in *LA&M* have become books, formed the basis of later presentations, and have led to successful collaborative projects. All part of the ongoing conversation!