

ALA Councilor Report – 6
Quarterly Report – Dec. 2008
By Shelby E. Harken, ALA North Dakota Chapter Councilor

I sent out several informational announcements to the NDLA listserv.
Sent to NDLA list
2008-9-29: Scholastic Library Publishing National Library Week Grant
2008-10-13: Top 10 things to know about [ALA-APA](#)
2008-11-19: Grassroots Programs at 2009 ALA Annual Conference

I requested a carton of copies of a book being published by Triumph Books after the conclusion of the election, America speaks: the historic 2008 election. I had hoped they would come in time for the board meeting. I will let you know when I get them.

President, Jim Rettig has offered a new way for members to propose a program to be held at annual That is unusual compared to the year and a half planning that is generally required. See: <http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/governance/officers/grassroots/grassrootsproposal.cfm>

American Libraries content became an open access in October. American Libraries Direct is available to anyone for the asking. See: <http://www.ala.org/alonline>. Discussion of issues may be conducted via a forum: <http://al.ala.org/forum>

New online edition of Guide to Reference is available for subscription.
<http://www.guidetoreference.org>

ALA has notified Council of several letters sent out since NDLA.

1. Financial crisis

ALA signed onto this letter this weekend 2008-9-24 We the undersigned, as advocates for open and transparent government, strongly oppose section 2(b)(2) and section 8 of the Legislative Proposal for Treasury Authority to Purchase Mortgage-Related Assets. While we hold many different views on the causes of and remedies for the current turmoil in financial markets, we are united in the belief that the legislation confers unacceptably broad powers upon the Treasury to conduct activities without transparency and accountability to the public. As written, the proposal would make any decisions by the Secretary non-reviewable by courts or administrative agencies – a certain prescription for the very kind of opacity that has contributed to the financial policy woes we face today. Equally troubling, public contracts associated with the proposal could be created outside of existing laws normally governing such actions. esheketoff@alawash.org

2. Google

On October 28, 2008, Google, the Authors Guild, and the Association of American Publishers announced the settlement of the litigation concerning the Google Library Project (<http://books.google.com/booksrightsholders/agreementcontents.html>). Under the project, Google has been scanning into its search database millions of books provided by major research libraries and other sources. For those books not in the public domain, the publishers and authors claimed that Google's scanning infringed their copyrights. The settlement still requires the approval of the presiding judge in the US district court in New York because the case was brought as a

class action on behalf of all affected rightsholders.

The settlement presents significant challenges and opportunities to libraries.

This paper does not explore the policy issues raised by the settlement. Rather, it outlines the settlement's provisions, with special emphasis on the provisions that apply directly to libraries.

3. To President-elect

Dear President-Elect Obama and Vice-President-Elect Joseph Biden

On behalf of the American Library Association (ALA) and its 66,000 members, it is an honor and pleasure to congratulate you on your election as President of the United States.

The ALA is dedicated to enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all citizens of this nation. We stand ready to partner with you in your plans to revitalize our nation's economy, including efforts to help unemployed and underemployed Americans become part of the 21st Century workforce.

In order to compete effectively in the global market, all our citizens must possess modern-day literacy skills and be able to participate fully in the challenges and demands of a complex information society. Everyone must have access to the ever-expanding universe of tools, services and resources available on the Internet. Yet, in 73 percent of our communities, the public library provides the only no-fee access for Internet service. In rural America, the rate goes up to 83 percent.

We share your commitment to making broadband available to every community in America through a combination of reform of the Universal Service Fund; better use of the nation's wireless spectrum; promotion of next-generation facilities, technologies and applications; and new tax and loan incentives. We are actively working in these areas already and look forward to helping make them reality under the Obama Administration.