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From the President

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From the PRESIDENT

This year began with two important events for GLA members. The Mid-Winter Conference was Jan. 25. Kate Nevins, executive director of SOLINET and keynote speaker, reported on the findings from SOLINET's scenario planning discussions. She raised some interesting issues on future developments in libraries. With these issues in mind, members met in division, interest group and committee meetings to discuss plans for 2008. Ideas for programs were shared, and I hope to see many of these ideas developed into program proposals for COMO.

On Feb. 14, members attended Georgia Library Day. I would like to thank Jim Cooper for coordinating this event. It takes a lot of time and work to schedule speakers for the morning briefing session. Afterward, attendees walked across the street to the Capitol to visit with their legislators. Lunch in the Floyd Room provided additional time for conversation with legislators. As you know, it is important for legislators to see a large delegation of librarians and library supporters, and it is vital to continue to communicate with your legislators after Library Day. E-mail them concerning library issues. Let them know about your services and programs. Invite your legislators to visit your library.

The latest reports, articles and Web pages confirm that library use is increasing. Hopefully, those responsible for funding will take note. The Pew Internet and American Life Project joined with the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science to survey how people use the Internet, libraries and government agencies. *Information Searches that Solve Problems* (www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/Pew_UI_LibrariesReport.pdf) found that people are using the Internet to find informa- tion and are satisfied with the results, especially if govern- ment agencies and librarians were consulted in addition to the Internet. Fifty-three percent of adults reported using a public library in the last year, and adults in Generation Y (age 18-29) were found to use the library most often.

Using surveys, focus groups and site visits, the American Library Association and the Florida State University

Information Institute of the College of Information gathered data on access to computers in public libraries. The report, *Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2006-07* (www.ala.org/ala/ors/plftas/ finalreport.pdf), confirmed that technology is increasing public library use. In most communities, the public library is the only source of free public access to the Internet. This increased usage is stretching the infrastructure of libraries and creating the need for additional funding for staff training and technology upgrades and maintenance. The American Library Association is also partnering with *Woman's Day* to sponsor articles on how the library is positively impacting individuals. The March issue contains four essays on how libraries helped entrepreneurs succeed in their businesses. In addition, ALA developed the www.ilovelibraries.org Web site to share information.

In Georgia, public library visits continue to increase. In FY07 there were 35.7 million visitors and almost 41 million items checked out. Each week almost 257,000 individuals used the public access computers. These statistics appear on the Georgia Public Library Service site, www.georgialibraries.org. Refer others to this site. It is attractive and well-designed. The Web pages catch your attention and, as you read about Georgia libraries, you will continue to click through the pages to learn more about them and discover many library resources.

The program proposal forms for COMO XX are out. Celebrating 20 years of COMO and looking toward the future, the theme is COMO 2.0. Program proposals for concurrent sessions are received from divisions, interest groups, committees and individuals. On the 2007 COMO evaluation forms, participants listed as the best programs many concurrent sessions where individuals shared best practices, research or innovation. I encourage you to complete a program proposal and mark your calendar for COMO XX at the Classic Center in Athens Oct. 15-17. ▶▶

— **Betty D. Paulk**
President
Georgia Library Association

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