

# The TLA Newsletter

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## Proposed Changes to the Bylaws

Currently, the Bylaws Committee is discussing changes such as voting by proxy, the ability for a member to serve in two offices at once, and the number of votes afforded per position. If you would like to express an opinion on this discussion, please visit [www.tnla.org](http://www.tnla.org). Click on the Discussion Forums tab on the left, followed by Forums. You will need to log-in to the site using your username and password. Members discussed this proposal at the last TLA Board Meeting in May at Montgomery Bell State Park. The Board expects the Bylaws Committee to present a final proposal at the August board meeting in order that proposed changes may be voted upon during the spring elections.



Participants in the TLA Board Leadership Conference held May 29-30.

## Leadership Conference—A Success!

The Second TLA Board Leadership Conference was held May 29-30 at Montgomery Bell State Park. Outgoing and incoming TLA Board members (38 attendees) worked together to review the past year and plan for the next. Highlights of the two day event included:

- 2008/09 President Sue Szostak and 2009/10 President Kevin Reynolds shared their thoughts and aspirations for the organization
- TLA Affiliate organization member representatives formed a panel to discuss the history and goals of each organization and presented ideas as to

how each organization could interact with TLA for the betterment of the library community within Tennessee

- Attendees “brainwalked”
- Outgoing / incoming counterparts for Committee Chairs/Section Chairs/Roundtable Chairs/Officers met to develop strategic plan initiatives for each
- 2008/09 TLA Board members for the final time
- Friday night’s “Board” game event saw over 20 attendees playing board games, eating popcorn, and celebrating Martha and Jim Gill’s 50th wedding anniversary!

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## President's Point of View

During the TLA Leadership Conference held at Montgomery Bell State Park, I outlined three primary areas on which I would like TLA to focus our collective effort this year: advocacy, lifelong learning, and membership. These are three very simple terms for some rather far-reaching goals. The single thing that will make efforts in these areas successful is our collaboration. Collaboration may be the overarching focus of the year ahead.

### Advocacy

I would like for TLA to make advocacy a high priority this year. Advocacy is far more than simply trying to convince decision makers that libraries need more money. Effective advocacy involves some education and marketing. Our best and most effective advocates are sometimes not those of us who work in libraries day in and day out, but library patrons who have stories to tell about what libraries have done for them. Unfortunately, people may not be aware that their stories need to be told. What's more, some people may not be fully aware of the total value and impact the services and dedication our libraries and library staff have in our communities, schools, colleges and other constituencies across the state.

Our goal should be that everyone in the state would readily acknowledge that the work libraries do is fundamental to our society. Therefore, the efforts to promote our libraries and to educate the public about what we do are more important than ever. Once we begin to develop that grassroots understanding and support, we should find that our efforts to improve our libraries' services and funding will be better received. In our current environment, where resources are scarcer than ever, the greater support our libraries have,

the more likely we will be seen as a high priority.

We need to work to ensure that state and federal library-related legislation will positively rather than negatively affect libraries. We need to be aware of legislative issues and, when necessary, we need to act together to educate decision-makers as to what is best for libraries and library users.

### Life-long Learning

One of the things that we all have in common, regardless of the type, location, or size of the libraries in which we work, is our dedication to life-long learning. As individuals develop throughout life, they will often make use of various libraries—school libraries, then college and university libraries, perhaps special libraries later, all the while often maintaining a relationship with one or more public libraries. I would like for TLA to focus this year on ways in which we can all work together to support life-long learning. This is not a unique idea and there have already been efforts in the state to promote this type of collaboration. I would like for there to be a broad dialogue to encourage more collaboration across the types of libraries in the state. As our libraries face shrinking operating budgets,

staff, and hours of operation, we have much to gain by seeking cooperative efforts that have our patrons' lifelong learning at heart.

### Membership

There are two broad membership issues on which I would like TLA units to focus. The first is the perennial effort to add new members. We need to be able to illustrate to potential- and renewing- TLA members why it is worth paying TLA dues. I would also like for TLA to build on the success that we've seen with the Leadership Conferences and make an effort to nurture future TLA leaders.

Secondly, I would like for us to consider how we can encourage our current members to be more active. We can start by allowing alternative forms of participation at conferences, meetings, workshops, and other events that TLA or its units carry out. Increasingly, other professional associations are finding ways to allow, even encourage, active participation in their organizations in ways that transcend geography and travel.

### Moving Forward

All of these items amount to quite an aggressive agenda for the year!

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Pictured left to right, Vice-President / President-Elect: Susan Earl; President: Kevin Reynolds; Past President: Sue Szostak; and Recording Secretary: James Staub.

## Get More out of ALA with ALA Connect!

ALA now provides a new networking and communication tool called ALA Connect (<http://connect.ala.org/>). Using ALA Connect, members can participate in two different kinds of groups. First, there are the formal units such as committees, round tables, divisions, and the like. Second, there are informal, user-created groups that anyone can create and join. ALA Connect will certainly be a beneficial tool to foster communication and collaboration for the formal ALA units, but, in my opinion, the user-created groups are one of the greatest benefits of ALA Connect. Now, we can create groups that transcend formal ALA units to promote networking surrounding any issue or subject, no matter how broad or focused. Additionally, ALA Connect provides ways for individuals to stay in touch and in tune with each other and events all across ALA.



To use ALA Connect, you will need to log in using your ALA user name and password. Once you are logged in, you can add information to your profile, which will already exist, and begin browsing to see what ALA Connect has to offer. Also, you will see that when you log into ALA Connect, you will already be a member of all the formal ALA groups to which you belong. ALA Connect will allow additional opportunities for networking and collaboration at many different levels. And, as mentioned above, if there is not a formal group that

quite fits your niche or your need, then create your own group and begin connecting with other members who share your interests. What's more, individuals who are not members of ALA can join ALA Connect and enjoy the benefit of being a part of the hundreds of open communities in ALA Connect.

Because ALA Connect is new, it will undoubtedly evolve as we make more use of it. So far, my use of ALA Connect has shown that it is a robust tool with much potential. I believe it will open new avenues to network with individuals that we otherwise may not be able to meet. I am looking forward to seeing how it complements and improves our ability to work together throughout ALA. See you there!

—Kevin Reynolds  
ALA Councilor

## President's Point of View (continued)

None of us can make these things happen single-handedly. It is going to take a considerable collaborative effort throughout TLA and with our affiliates, to whom I have also turned my attention this year. I know the members of TLA and our affiliates are extraordinarily dedicated and talented—I see evidence of this almost daily. I am looking forward to the year ahead because I know that when we pool our collective energy, dedication, and talent we can achieve anything to which we set our minds!

—Kevin Reynolds  
TLA President

## TLA Honor and Lifetime Membership Awarded

State Librarian, Jeanne Sugg received the Lifetime Membership Award at the annual conference in April. This award recognizes an individual who has made significant, sustained contributions to librarianship in the state of Tennessee.

Director of Jackson State Community College, Scott Cohen received the Honor Award, which recognizes a significant contribution to the furtherance of librarianship on a statewide or national level.

Pictured at right, Scott Cohen,  
Director of Jackson State Community College;  
and Jeanne Sugg, State Librarian



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## **Edwin S. Gleaves Scholarship and TLA Conference Internship Program**

The Tennessee Library Association offers two types of scholarships to its members. The Edwin S. Gleaves scholarship awards \$1500 to a graduate student enrolled in an ALA or NCATE accredited master's level program in Library & Information Sciences. This scholarship is named in honor of retired State Librarian & Archivist, Dr. Edwin S. Gleaves. The Conference Internship Program provides conference expense assistance to TLA members who apply. The CIP offers a stipend of \$100, plus waived conference registration, one ticket to the All-Conference Reception, and recognition at the General Session, in exchange for four hours of volunteering.

The TLA Scholarship Committee established recognized levels of giving this year. Individuals, groups, or companies are welcome to give money to help support these two scholarships. Our goal is to add another scholarship for each \$10,000 level reached. Currently the scholarship committee is seeking funds to help us create an endowed scholarship. Donations are accepted by check and credit card and should be sent to the TLA Executive Director, Annelle Huggins. More information about the scholarships and opportunities to donate are available at [www.tnla.org](http://www.tnla.org).

—*Tiffani Conner*  
*Scholarship Committee Co-Chair*

**Dr. Edwin S.  
Gleaves  
Scholarship**

**TLA Conference  
Internship  
Program**