



**2009 Leadership Retreat
Burbank Public Library, Buena Vista Branch
September 26, 2008**

Host: Vice President/President Elect, Barbara Roberts

Each year, the CLA Vice-President/President Elect holds a retreat with as many of the current year and upcoming year CLA leadership members as possible to set the theme, strategies, and challenges for the year ahead. This year the following were able to come to the retreat to discuss these issues for 2009.

PRESENT: *Monique le Conge, President and 2009 Nominating Committee Chair; Margaret Donnellan Todd, Past President and 2008 Nominating Committee Chair; Annette Milliron DeBacker, Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair; Les Kong, ALA Chapter Councilor; Ellen Fusco, Executive Committee; Lynne Price, Executive Committee; David Dodd, Executive Committee; Penny Peck, Executive Committee; Ken Haycock, 2010 Vice President/President-Elect; Stephanie Beverage, 2008 Assembly; Mark Smith, 2008 Member of the Year/President's Award Committee chair, 2008 Finance Committee; Kathy Gould, 2009 Legislative Committee Chair; Christina Wainwright, 2009 Mentoring Committee chair; Cindy Mediavilla, 2008 Publications Chair, 2008 Library History Round Table Chair, and 2009 Conference Committee Chair; Rosario Garza, 2008 Fund Development Committee, 2009 Nominating Committee; Yu-Lan Chou, 2008 Access, Collections and Technical Services Section president; Ginny Evans-Perry, 2008 Academic Section president; Barbara Quarton, 2009 Assembly, 2008 Finance Committee, and 2009 Academic Section president; Cora Forcell, African American Round Table chair; Christina Wainwright, 2009 Mentoring Committee chair; Barbara Flynn, Marketing and Public Relations Round Table chair; Tracie Carignan, 2008 Student Round Table chair; Molly Molloy, 2009 Reference Services Section president; Susan Negreen, CLA Executive Director*

Facilitators: Paul Meyer, Tecker Consultants and Claudia Foutz, Foutz & Young Group



I. Welcome and Introduction

VP/President Elect Barbara Roberts welcomed this very upbeat group and thanked them all for traveling and spending the day in leadership development in order to learn to become change agents to accomplish the work needed in the next year. ***Barbara emphasized that the results of the recent CLA elections clearly indicate that members want a change with the passage of the Bylaws changes which will streamline CLA's structure. She also said that while the structure changes will take place in June of 2009, we must also work on CLA's image, create stronger partners with competing organizations, and change our operating model. Otherwise we will simply have "rearranged our internal furniture" rather than addressing the relevance and vibrancy of the organization which is what members are looking for and expect. This means a busy year ahead.***

II. SWOT Analysis

In order to prepare for and address this work, Claudia Foutz of Foutz & Young Group led the participants in a "SWOT" analysis that would help clearly identify what in CLA's environmental world would facilitate their year of work. She mentioned that Barbara's theme for her year as president is "Reach Out!" reflecting a time of unprecedented transformation and relationship building. After a lively discussion of our internal and external strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats, attendees independently weighted the list of responses. Those that received the most votes were:

Internal Strengths

- Legislative advocacy
- Financial health
- Passionate core volunteers and staff

Internal Weaknesses

- New professionals view CLA as irrelevant
- Lack of visible products and services
- Internal communication



External Opportunities

- Influx of new student members
- Advancement of technology
- Increased use of public libraries

External Threats

- Fragmented association landscape (so many associations and specialty groups)
- Perceived relevance of associations generally
- Declining regular membership in the current year

III. Change Leadership

Paul Meyer of Tecker Associates then led an invigorating presentation on change leadership and innovation. With the opportunities and challenges facing CLA for the next few years, the leaders must be dedicated and ardent supporters of change, innovation and transformation. The CLA Bylaws changes signal the beginning of a transformation that strong change leaders can use to re-establish the vibrancy and relevance of CLA to our members and potential members.

Paul provided an overview of the CLA structural changes that will take effect in June 2009:

- New Board of Directors will replace the Executive Committee and the Assembly.
- Creation of a Leadership Development Committee responsible for developing future leaders and nominating the slate of candidates for each year's election.
- Finance committee with members who have financial expertise.
- Dissolution of Sections, most Committees and all Round Tables
- Creation of a Membership Meeting as a forum for members to come together and discuss important association issues
- Creation of task forces, or working committees, to do specialized work as needed or directed by the Board of Directors.



- Creation of Interest Groups in place of Sections, Committees and Round Tables. The groups will be supported through on-line technology, must have a chair but are free to meet in person or virtually and form and dissolve as the groups wish.

There was brief discussion by the group of whether or not members might need a "grief" period for the changes taking place, particularly for those who opposed them. Consensus was that even those in attendance who were against the changes, preferred to "just get over it and get on with it." Moving forward was most important.

Paul Meyer then asked the group what issues needed to be resolved before the new bylaws go into effect next June. What committees might need to be changed to task forces rather than dissolve etc.? The following were identified:

- Summer reading committee will become a yearly task force
- Intellectual freedom will remain as a committee and have a research and respond function
- Conference committee will be a new task force each year
- Placement/Job Center at conference will be enveloped by the Conference Task Force
- Membership recruitment will be the function of an as needed task force
- All the Awards committees will be combined into one Awards Committee with subgroups
- Mentoring committee will be a task force as needed
- Diversity committee will dissolve as the issue is a core value of the organization
- Organization and bylaws committee will become a task force as needed

IV. First Steps

In order to be highly effective in preparing for transformation it was agreed that several short term projects should take place this coming year within the current CLA structure which include:

- Help the Assembly understand that there is a benefit to discussing the transformational changes in order to "rally" around
- Identify all technology available to enhance the formation and success of new Interest Groups
- Develop a tool kit for new Interest Groups to get them started



- Make sure all members understand the changes that will take place in 2009 by creating a communications plan
- Investigate the creation of a new Career Development Committee to address one of the major reasons some people join CLA
- Address student involvement
- Hold a summit of leaders from competing library organizations to discuss collaboration

Finally there were a few issues that were identified as important to do before this year's conference:

- Assess the Return on Investment (ROI) of the programs within the association
- Assess the current association communications methods and systems
- Rethink the entire organization to wit:
 - expose all the "sacred cows" and/or organizational myths
 - rethink and identify current member benefits
 - identify current best practices of associations

In closing, Barbara Roberts thanked all of the participants for their willingness to be open and honest and deal with some hard issues. The combined intellectual power in the room made great strides in creating next steps that reflected the ability to understand and incorporate the big picture. Barbara said she is very much looking forward to working all of them during her year as president beginning after this year's conference.