



### **Board Officers' Reports:**

President – submitted by Wynter Giddings, p. 2-3  
Vice President - submitted by Sonya Durney, p. 4-6  
Past President – submitted by Jen Alvino, p. 6-7  
Treasurer – submitted by Amy Wisehart, p. 7  
Secretary - submitted by Anna Faherty, p. 7-8  
Member At-Large – submitted by Kate Wing, p. 8-9  
Member T-Large – submitted by Meg Gray, p. 9  
ALA Councilor – submitted by Kara Reiman, p. 9-10

### **Liaison Reports:**

NELA Representative – submitted by Michelle Sampson, p. 9-12

### **Committee Reports:**

Communications Committee – submitted by Jess Hovey, p. 12-13  
Intellectual Freedom Committee - submitted by Samantha Duckworth, p. 14-15  
Legislative Committee – submitted by Savannah Sessions, p. 15-18  
Membership Committee - submitted by Sarah Skawinski, p. 18-21

### **Interest Group Reports:**

Academic Interest Group – submitted by Sarah Lucchesi, p. 22  
Archives & Special Collections Interest Group – submitted by Sharon Pietryka, p. 22-23  
Genealogy Interest Group – *No report submitted*  
Small and Rural Libraries Interest Group - submitted by Lee Koenigs, p. 23-24  
Youth Services Interest Group - *No report submitted*



## **President - Wynter Giddings**

My second year as MLA President has been even busier than the first. Our present situation is both exciting and challenging, in terms of our capacity as a volunteer-run organization.

The year began with our annual planning retreat, on August 12th. It was a productive day with almost all board members in attendance, as well as some committee and interest group vice chairs. We did some onboarding for new board members and vice chairs, and established some norms and expectations for meetings. We spent the bulk of the day in two breakout sessions, with groups reporting back from both sessions. The first session had discussions on membership engagement, intellectual freedom and legislative advocacy priorities for the year, and strategic planning- this last group was the start of the strategic plan that we have just completed. In the second session, groups discussed communications/social/marketing, financial sustainability, and committee and interest group expectations and procedures.

One of the projects this year was serving on the Wage Study Committee chaired by Kate Wing. We produced an RFP to contract a consultant, and the cost came in higher than expected. The MLA board voted to add additional funds to the amount that had been approved in the 21-22 fiscal year, and MLA also received a \$5k grant from the John T. Gorman Foundation, which got us to the \$25k needed to fund the study, which is currently underway and is expected to be complete sometime this summer.

Another project was writing the first strategic plan in MLA's recent history. This was a goal for my term and I think it is an important step in our development as an organization. The initial discussion at our August retreat led to a committee being formed, which went through the process of developing the plan between November 2022 and May 2023. Deb Clark from the Maine State Library facilitated two of our meetings, including our SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) analysis, which is a more positive alternative to SWOT analysis. Deb did a fantastic job facilitating those activities and we are very grateful for her guidance.

This will be discussed in other board members' reports but I do want to mention the spike in book challenges around the state in school libraries this year, as well as several attempts at censorship legislation. My role in this has been fairly limited, as our



Intellectual Freedom and Legislative Advocacy committees have taken the lead on this, along with our partners at MASL, MSL, and other organizations who have joined us in our efforts. I signed many letters to school boards (which were written by the members of the committees I mentioned) and submitted written testimony on behalf of MLA, opposing LD123. I have spoken to several local news outlets over the course of the past year on the topic of intellectual freedom and leveraged my own library's Banned Books Week activities to speak out about this issue to 3 local news stations and 2 newspapers. My closing thought on this is that as this problem increases in Maine, we are going to need to build our advocacy capacity and improve our coordination with other organizations to make sure that we are able to use every opportunity available, without causing burnout for our volunteer committee members.

This was my second year chairing the Conference Committee. We convened in December and my role was to schedule and run the bi-weekly committee meetings, be the point person for Sunday River (catering and AV orders, space usage, hotel rooms, etc.), handle keynote and book signing details, event registration setup, communication with the Kings' assistant, and helping to promote both events. Our committee and also the Programming Subcommittee (led by Sonya) worked really hard and have done an amazing job.

In addition to all of this was the usual day-to-day MLA business, which included putting together board meeting agendas, meeting with Sonya Durney and Jen Alvino Wood regularly to handle admin issues, recruit and nominate prospective board members, help Amy Wisheart in the budget planning process, and other items.

One last item of interest is that in July 2022 I was appointed to the Maine Library Commission as the "Special/Institutional" representative. As I work at a public library, this designation was assigned to me due to my role with MLA. This is very positive, as MLA has not had a seat on the commission in the past. My term ends in 2025 and I have the option of serving a second term.

Finally, my plan for my 2-year term as Past President is to serve as an advisor to the incoming President (Sonya Durney) and Vice President/President-elect (Sarah Lucchesi), and to work on forming a development committee and annual fund cycle, to help ensure the financial sustainability of MLA.



## Vice President - Sonya Durney

- **MLA Nominations.** The MLA VP is responsible for nominations. Please join me in welcoming our elected officers from the 2023 ballot:
  - Sarah Lucchesi - Vice President / President-Elect (2022-24) and Coordinator of Research and Instruction Services at the Glickman Library at USM.
  - Meg Gray - Member at Large 2 (2023-25) and Meg Gray Head of Reference Services at Bangor Public Library.
  - Jen Alivino- American Library Association Councilor (2023-25) and Director at the Windham Public Library.
  
- **Appointment**
  - Holly Williams will take over as the New England Library Association Chair (2023-2026) and is also Head of Circulation at Bangor Public Library.
  - Michelle Sampson - Director of the York Public Library has filled this role for the past four years - thank you, Michelle!
  
- **SHOUT OUT TO WYNTER GIDDINGS!!!**
  - As Wynter transitions from President to Past-President please join me in thanking her for her leadership. She accomplished a great deal during her term: MLA's first strategic plan, MLA's first impact report, two successful conferences, and truly moving the board in strong, sustainable directions. It has been an honor working with you Madam President, thank you.
  
- **Library Wage study**
  - The Library Wage Study has been sent out. We look forward to the responses and will share those with the MLA community. The Wage Study Committee considered of Kate Wing as chair (Bowdoin College), Steve Norman (Belfast Free Library), Lee Koenigs (Libby Memorial Library, Michelle Connors (Kennebunk Free Library), Wynter Giddings (Curtis Memorial Library), and myself (University of New England). The deadline to fill out the survey is May 30th. We are hopeful the results will empower librarians in Maine to advocate for fair wages.



- **Policy Corps**
  - ALA Congressional Fly-In - In March delegates from around the country were invited by ALA to visit the Hill in DC and advocate for Libraries. Lori Fisher and Marijke Visser from the Maine State Library and myself visited federal legislative offices and requested federal funding for libraries. Thank you to all who also reached out locally. I am pleased to say that all four ME legislators supported both LSTA and IAL funding.
  - Later in March Lori Fisher and I once again visited the ALA office in DC to join a cadre of policy corps fellow who are working with ALA on the United Against Book Bans Campaign. FMI: See [ALA Launches Policy Corps Cadre for Proactive Advocacy on Book Banning](#)
  
- **MLA Annual Conference** - a HUGE shoutout to all on the conference planning committee who pulled this amazing event together. The conference committee consists of MLA Board Members Wynter Giddings, Jen Alvino, Meg Gray, Sarah Skawinski, Sarah Lucchesi, Jess Hovey, and myself.

I would also like to thank the wonderful **conference programming subcommittee**: Sarah Lucchesi, Brandie Burrows, Sharon Pietryka, Lynn Harlan, Heather Logan, and Savannah Sessions. We compiled a really stellar lineup of speakers for MLA Annual 2023. Of course, the real credit goes to all of the wonderful speakers who have volunteered to share their expertise at the conference. Maine librarians and library partners - you do not disappoint. Thank you!

- **Weekly MLA Administration meetings** with Jen Alvino (MLA Past President) and Wynter Giddings (MLA President). These weekly admin meetings are a great opportunity for us to touch base beyond email and discuss what needs our attention that week. These meetings are a great time to join us if you have something MLA-related you would like to discuss.
  
- **Intellectual Freedom and Legislation** It has been a very busy couple of months for both intellectual freedom issues (calls for censorship) and adverse legislation. MLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee and Legislative Committee have been on the front lines. Please be sure to read those reports to see the work that has been done.



- **MLA Budget 2023-2024.** Thank you to Amy Wisehart (MLA Treasurer) and Bob Scheier (MLA) for their leadership through the budget process. MLA is in solid financial shape as we enter FY 24.

### **Past President - Jen Alvino Wood**

As I reflect on the last year and my final one as part of the MLA Leadership team, I see so much to be proud of. My second year as Past President began July 1, 2022. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the annual retreat. However, in my last year in this admin role I've been able to support the President and Vice-President in a variety of ways, as the admin positions change to new board members, and wrap up any loose ends. I participated in semi-weekly meetings with Wynter and Sonya and other invited guests throughout the year. These weekly Wednesday meetings were a good opportunity to catch up and discuss important issues facing the association. I worked on writing a few different procedural policies that were approved by the board and participated in planning the 2023 Annual Conference.

During my tenure as VP/President/Past President there was a lot of work to be done. I feel good about what was accomplished. The Leadership team worked hard to stabilize the association's finances and make them more transparent. With good documentation of our finances we transitioned to a 501c3 so that we can fundraise as needed. Wynter and I spent a year running the association ourselves in order to better understand the Business Manager position. We hired Bob Scheier, through NELA, as our Association Administrator. This new relationship has helped us to streamline and clarify our finances even further through reporting and guidance that Bob and his partner, Michelle, have given us.

Overseeing the Association and the Conference through COVID was a challenge. However, MLA has made it through financially and board members were able to accomplish some goals through difficult circumstances. Our relationship with Sunday River allowed us to not take a financial hit when canceling our 2020 in person conference and when we made the move to Spring.

With our transition to a 501c3 we became eligible for a Google Drive through our non-profit status. Important Association documents and financials are now organized and archived for future use. This has made conference planning more manageable as



well as made the historical records more accessible. In addition, our bylaws were reviewed by an attorney and updated prior to his assistance with the 501c3 paperwork.

Finally, I continue to participate in ALA as a member of the Committee on Library Advocacy Statewide Ecosystem subcommittee and I'm not going anywhere! I look forward to continuing to serve MLA with my upcoming term as the ALA Councilor.

I want to thank Wynter and Sonya. It has been a blast leading the association with you two! We are in great shape and in awesome hands!!

### **Treasurer - Amy Wisehart**

MLA is moving toward more financial sustainability, after a couple of years of COVID-related reduced revenue. Conference attendance is up this year, and our membership numbers have also increased – these two items comprise the bulk of MLA's revenue. We are a very small organization and have worked to keep our expenses minimal and focused on our mission.

Now that we are a non-profit organization, we are in a good position to fundraise to further support our mission. We will develop a financial plan that will complement our strategic plan and outline the ways we can support our goals through sustainable finances.

In addition to my ongoing treasurer duties, this year I served on MLA's strategic planning committee and the scholarship and grants committee. We awarded several conference grants, and an Ainsworth scholarship for graduate education.

It is a pleasure to serve on the MLA board with a great group of library leaders. I welcome any questions from members about our finances.

### **Secretary - Anna Faherty**

My first year on the MLA board has been a wonderful experience! I've enjoyed learning more about the different committees and interest groups of the association, as well as what MLA has to offer to our wider membership. I participated in the scholarship and conference grant committee, in which we revamped the requirements and what we are



able to offer to those applying for grants to attend the conference. As you will see in Meg's report, we were able to offer 3 participants full grants including both conference registration and hotel accommodations, and another 2 participants grants for conference registration. I had to recuse myself from the Ainsworth Scholarship portion of the committee, because one of my volunteers applied and wanted me to write him a letter of recommendation. I also served on the strategic planning committee, which worked on developing a new strategic plan for MLA, to be unveiled to our membership at the conference this year. I also worked with a small group to develop a set of guidelines for naming conventions on the MLA Google Drive, found [here](#).

### **Member at Large - Kate Wing**

In the 2022-2023 year my work was focused on library wage advocacy.

In April 2021 the Library Wage Subcommittee was formed to address library wages in Maine. The committee defined the scope of the project and determined that retaining a consultant would be necessary. At the beginning of this fiscal year, the Library Wage Subcommittee met and devised a plan to produce an RFP for examining the library wage situation in Maine. We took on two additional committee members in September and the Subcommittee was composed of the following people:

Kate Wing  
Sonya Durney  
Wynter Giddings  
Steve Norman  
Lee Koenigs  
Michelle Connors

The six of us pooled our expertise and wrote the RFP, which we finished in early Fall and submitted to three targeted firms who had recently worked on similar projects in Maine and New England. We also cast a wider net to publicly solicit proposals. In December the Subcommittee decided to meet for further conversation with Carol Grandin of Municipal Resources, Inc. After that meeting we worked with the Executive Board on how to fund the proposed cost. Thanks to a surprise grant and supportive votes from the MLA Board, we signed a contract with MRI and worked with Carol to shape the project in February, March, and April. The survey that will generate data for





the job categories and wage benchmarks was sent out to MELIBS, to director email addresses, and to the directors listserv. The Subcommittee looks forward to continued work with Carol and the team at MRI, with the goal of reporting back to the membership by the end of summer.

### **Member at Large - Meg Gray**

I started my second year as a Member at Large attending the annual MLA retreat that was held at the Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick. In a breakout session, I had the opportunity to participate in strategic planning discussions for the organization. This work was continued throughout the year with a sub-committee and assistance from Deb Clark, who ran a SOAR analysis, some survey work, and periodic meetings. The new draft strategic plan will be presented to membership at the conference and contains Mission, Vision, and Values section and a list of strategic priorities for the next two years.

I attended all the monthly virtual and in person meetings and served on the 2023 conference committee where I was involved in the King Dinner subcommittee and served as the lead on the conference survey. I've also been working on a fun and library centric trivia game as a conference activity.

The Scholarship & Conference Grant Committee was active again this year and we awarded registration and two nights of lodging to three participants who live 250+ miles from the conference venue. Two additional participants were awarded registration to offset their costs. The committee also reviewed applications and awarded the 2023 Phyllis E. Ainsworth Scholarship.

In December 2021, I was nominated to serve on the InforME Board as an MLA representative, but Governor Mills wasn't scheduled to review board appointments until the end of that legislative session. I haven't received an update from the InforME staff since the summer of 2022, when they informed me that they reached out to the Governor's office for an update and that they would be in touch with me once an update became available.

### **ALA Councilor - Kara Reiman**

With 2022 becoming a year with record high numbers of book challenges, much of ALA's work has been committed to helping us fight them. They also ramped up [Unite Against Book Bans](#) as a resource.

Highlighted actions of council in the past year:



- Approved [LiteracyNation, Inc.](#) as a new affiliate of ALA
- Endorsed the most recent [Transforming ALA Governance](#) recommendations for new makeup of council and executive board.
- Sent updated bylaws to membership to vote on. (Membership approved.)

You may find full lists of actions for the 2022 [Annual Conference](#) and [2023 libLearnX conference](#) online.

Highlights from the year are that [Dolly Parton was named an Honorary Member of the association](#), Executive Director [Tracie Hall was named one of Time's annual list of 100 most influential people in the world](#), and [Cindy Hohl was elected the latest President](#).

I will attend my final round of ALA Council meetings at the Annual Conference in Chicago in June. That wraps up my 6 years of service in this position.

### **NELA Representative - Michelle Sampson**

New England Library Association (NELA)'s mission is to lead, educate, convene, and advocate for the advancement of New England libraries and library workers.

The responsibilities of the state liaison to NELA include collaborating with and sharing reports between NELA and MLA. The ME rep also serves on NELA's Nominations Committee (annually); the NELLS Selection Committee (biannually); and the Emerson Greenaway Award Committee (annually).

\*\*\*

As with Maine, other New England states experienced book challenges and the introduction of bills to their legislatures that would challenge and/or curtail intellectual freedom. Each state library association addressed censorship in some form whether it was issuing formal statements, putting together resource lists/ press kits for book challenges, and/or partnering with Unite Against Book Bans.

This fiscal year, NELA held both the **NELLS/Emerging Leader program** as well as the **NELLS II Mid-career Leadership Symposium** (mid-career defined as 3-15 years). The Emerging Leader program met every Thursday, starting August 11, 2022 and culminated in a 1.5 day in-person event at the Annual NELA conference held October 23-25 in Manchester, NH. Representing Maine: Jeff Eastman; Meghan Fogg; Catherine Preston-Shreck; and Sara Turner. **The NELLS II Mid-career Leadership Symposium**



took place April 24-27, 2023 @ the Von Trapp Family Lodge in Stowe, VT. Maine was represented by Lee Koenigs and Ben Treat graciously agreed to serve as Maine's mentor. I would really like to see more representation from Maine in the future!

As mentioned, **NELA's 2022 conference** was held in October in NH with the theme "**Back Together Again.**" During the conference Michael York, NH State Librarian, was awarded the **Emerson Greenaway** Distinguished Service Award for Librarianship.

NELA sponsored two legal seminars this fiscal year. One, "Privacy, Spaces, Patrons, & Content" served as a pre-conference session and the other, held in August, focused on "Licensing Library Resources and Services."

Though NELA's Intellectual Freedom Committee is currently on temporary hold, they typically meet bimonthly and in the past year discussed issues of free speech, book challenges, and collection *omissions* as censorship.

SECTIONS (for more info: [www.nelib.org/sections](http://www.nelib.org/sections))

- **Academic Librarians' Section (ALS)** has not been active but when they are active, ALS encourages communication among academic librarians on topics of mutual interest and provides opportunities for professional development and increased cooperation among college and university librarians in New England.
- **Information Technology Section (ITS)** has monthly, drop-in meetings each one of which focuses on a technology trend(s) or issue(s). **You do not need to be a NELA member to attend!!** You need only be interested in hardware, software, social media, and emerging technologies.
- **New England Roundtable of Teen & Children's Librarians (NERTCL):** Meets bimonthly. They host a biennial spring conference; the next one will be virtual and take place on Friday, June 30: "**TikTalk: Find Your Niche.**" NERTCL consists of youth services librarians dedicated to providing continuing education programs for librarians working with children and young adults.
- **New England Technical Services Librarians (NETSL)** held their annual spring conference in April: "**Passion into Action: Initiative in Technical Services.**" During the conference, this year's winner of the NETSL **Award for Excellence in Technical Services** was announced as Chew Chiat Naun (Harvard University, MA). NETSL fosters the exchange of ideas and discussions about tech services issues among tech service librarians in the region.
- **NELA 2022 Impact Report:**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-uq1vGzFWd1udxXu-GzfNrWe\\_9BQnhIM/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-uq1vGzFWd1udxXu-GzfNrWe_9BQnhIM/view)



**Coming up: NELA 2023 Conference** will be held in Springfield, MA October 15-17, 2023. This year's theme is "Everyone can be a hero." For more information or to submit a program proposal: <https://nela2023.godaddysites.com/> .

## **Communications Committee - Jess Hovey**

Current Communications Committee Members:

- Jess Hovey, Chair
- Kelly Greenlee, MLA to Z newsletter layout
- Kristi Favaloro, social media content writer
- Danie Fortin, social media
- Amanda Leen, MLA website support
- Shavaun Rigler, social media
- Amy Stone, Communications Plan draft

Jeff Eastman stepped down as Communications Committee Chair in November of 2022. Jess Hovey stepped in as Chair in November of 2022 and will carry on until her term ends in June of 2024. Two new committee members were added in 2023: Shavaun Rigler of Bangor Public Library and Kristi Favaloro of Skidompha Public Library. Shavaun Rigler is considering stepping in as Vice Chair. The Committee meets quarterly via Zoom and checks in via email as needed.

Current apps:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- Canva Pro
- Linktree page (can be accessed in IG bio).
- [LinkedIn](#)
- Slack (2023 conference)

Instagram, Linktree, LinkedIn, Slack, and a team Canva Pro account were added in 2023. Instagram and Facebook can now be managed seamlessly using Meta Business Suite. Engagement statistics for Facebook and Instagram have been on the rise. Some notable numbers are:



**Social Media Statistics: May 2022 - May 2023**

<b>Total Followers:</b>	<b>Page and Profile Visits:</b>	<b>Reach:</b>
Facebook: 1,587	Facebook: 1, 776 (up 276.3%)	Facebook: 29, 413 (up 534.6%)
Instagram: 332	Instagram: 304 (up 100%)	Instagram: 956 (up 100%)

Twitter (3,160 followers) may need to be evaluated for usefulness in the year ahead, as many desire to terminate the account due to the decline of the platform.

A [social media policy](#) and [procedural document](#) have been drafted.

The *MLA to Z* newsletters continue to be released quarterly (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter). All editions are available for download as a PDF on the MLA website, and are also backed up in Canva (where the design templates exist). The newsletter is announced through the Wild Apricot mailing list and ME-LIBS, which are proving to be the most effective means of remote communication with the greater MLA audience.

The annual conference will occur May 22-23, in person, at the Sunday River Resort in Newry. Whova has been discontinued as an online conference management tool due to its cost, and this is a trial for Slack. The Slack platform is not as adaptable as we had hoped, and we will try to find a more versatile virtual option for next year.

The Conference Committee has overseen the Awards nominations for Librarian of the Year and Library Advocate of the Year, which will be announced at the 2023 conference. This year we have opted not to contact the awards nominees prior to the conference, and honorable mentions will be given during the awards ceremony for nominees who were not selected for awards.

As for the year ahead, we hope to confirm a Vice Chair for the Committee and finalize the MLA Communications Plan document.



## **Intellectual Freedom Committee - Samantha Duckworth**

### **Committee**

Our group consists of: Pamela Bobker, Joanna Breen, Jim Campbell, Lindsey Decker, Samantha Duckworth, Lynn Harlan, Cathleen Miller, Harley Rodgers.

Chair: Samantha Duckworth

Vice-Chair: Cathleen Miller

Secretary: Lynn Harlan

In July 2022 we instituted regular monthly meetings on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month. These have been well attended, and minutes are in a shared folder. We've increased our membership by 3 people throughout the year, and are happy to have long-serving members of the association and committee still in the group.

### **Projects, Activities, and Letters**

2022 brought many materials challenges, and we have a process in place for sending letters of support to retain the material.

MLA/IFC fielded 14 challenges in 2022. We sent three letters in response (timing, many of the challenges had passed by the time we had a new chair).

2023 has seen many challenges too. As of May 11<sup>th</sup>, we've heard of 8 separate school districts facing challenges. The number of titles is harder to quantify, as many are bringing entire collections under review. A fair number for titles is 15, as the blanket challenges are not following school policy for review, titles must be challenged individually. We have sent 5 letters this year.

We developed a [tips sheet](#) for discussing materials challenges at board meetings.

We developed a [security checklist](#) for libraries to review and ensure they're staying on top of network safety and privacy.

### **Additional activities include:**

- September: Letter to the editor (Sun Journal)
- November: MLA coffee chat on Banned Books and responses



- January: Bangor Public Library/Mechanics Association presentation
- March: Maine chapter of the National Association of Social Workers presentation on Student First Amendment Rights
- April: Maine Family Planning Conference presentation and tabling
- Spoke with reporters on various book challenges in the news
- Began work with Rhode Island and Virginia associations on a book resume project

### **Goals**

- Develop and deliver quarterly IFC news
- Stay better on top of new challenges when they arise and respond to front line reporters/librarians & techs faster
- Coordinate responses with MASL
- Offer 3x presentations to outside groups or library boards
- Recruit 2 more members for the committee

### **Legislative Committee - Savannah Sessions**

The past 12 months have been a potpourri of joy, frustration, and everything in between for the Legislative Advocacy Committee. While it's easy to focus on more recent events (which have leaned toward the frustrating side), we have a lot to celebrate from the 2022-2023 year in MLA. As we did last year, we collaborated frequently with MLA's Intellectual Freedom committee. On the advocacy front, we hosted our first Library Snapshot Day, worked with Unite Against Book Bans and ALA more generally, presented about broadband and library funding, and more. It was a busy year for legislative work too. We partnered with the Maine Association of School Libraries, EveryLibrary, and a coalition of organizations from around the state to oppose LD123 and also worked to oppose LD 1008. As always, we are preparing, training, advocating, learning, reading, researching, and teaching to help strengthen Maine libraries of all kinds.

**Maine Library Legislative Day** – LLD2023 is coming up on June 15th at the State House. We plan to table in the Hall of Flags until noon and then zip over to UMA for afternoon sessions on legislative advocacy. The afternoon will be a joint event with Maine Academic Libraries Day and are very excited about this collaboration! We are also thrilled to have Deborah Caldwell-Stone of ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom speaking about advocacy.



You'll probably notice this date is a lot later in the year than past iterations. There was a bit of a scramble among groups to secure dates for the Hall of Flags now that things are back to taking place in person. Lesson learned! We will be requesting a date in the third week of February as close to Labor Day as possible (Labor Day is when booking opens).

**Library Snapshot Day** - Library Snapshot Day (Week) was a big success. We had nearly 50 libraries participate! Each library chose a day during the week of 9/26 - 10/1 and collected basic stats (visitors, circulation, check outs, etc) which they submitted to us. Amy Stone compiled the data along with logos and photos (if provided) into handy one-pagers libraries can use in their advocacy efforts. We plan to host Snapshot Day again this fall!

**#FundLibraries** – We submitted requests for funding to our federal elected officials, as we normally do. We asked Senator King and Representatives Pingree and Golden to support both IMLS/LSTA as well as IAL funding. Senator Collins is now a ranking member of the Appropriations Committee, and therefore did not sign any Dear Appropriator letters. We did correspond with Senator Collins' office to thank her for her years of leadership on the IMLS/LSTA letters and for continuing to be a library champion. All signed both letters this year which was very exciting! In addition, Sonya Durney, Marijke Visser, and Lori Fisher were part of ALA's Congressional Fly-In program this spring and had the chance to meet with Collins, King, and Pingree's offices.

## Legislation

**LD-123:** *An Act to Eliminate the Educational Purposes Exception to the Prohibition on the Dissemination of Obscene Matter to Minors.* This bill initially aimed to simply strike the exemption from public schools, but has been amended so that instead of eliminating an exception, "it enacts a new subsection that provides that if a matter is declare obscene under existing procedures and the Attorney General or district attorney finds that any public school is disseminating that obscene matter, they shall issue a cease and desist order prohibiting the public school from disseminating the obscene matter."

MLA partnered with EveryLibrary and a coalition of other Maine organizations to oppose LD 123. Over 1500 emails were sent to Maine Legislators through the EveryLibrary action page: <https://action.everylibrary.org/ld123>. Coalition partners include MASL, Maine Humanities Council, Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance, National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Maine Chapter, MCELA, Maine ACLU, and The Telling Room. Over 100 pieces of testimony were submitted in writing and the public hearing lasted 5 hours for this bill (along with LDs 1008 and 618).





There was a lot of media coverage/activity around this bill as well. The Press Herald opposed the bill in an Our View editorial which was prompted by an email from Sonya Durney. Links to press coverage are below:

- [Maine LD 123 Debate](#)
- <https://www.pressherald.com/2023/03/01/school-librarians-fight-legislation-to-ban-books-considered-obscene/>
- <https://www.newscentermaine.com/video/news/politics/maine-politics/bill-aims-to-crack-down-on-obscene-material-in-maine-schools/97-61c63c3b-289b-407b-86af-c9f1c1cc0e99>
- <https://www.pressherald.com/2023/04/02/our-view-attempts-at-book-banning-must-be-shut-down/>

**LD-1008:** *An Act to Establish a Rating System for Books in School Libraries.* “The bill requires that publishers that distribute books or written materials to a school administrative unit or public charter school for placement in their libraries assign such ratings to each book or materials.”

MLA joined MASL in opposing this bill. LD1008 did not get as much attention in the press, but it has equally disturbing potential consequences, especially the chilling effect it would have on intellectual freedom. In addition to the threat to IF this bill poses, it is also unrealistic to expect publishers to rate every book. Additionally, questions abound: would materials be rated retroactively? Nationwide? What criteria would be used? What about local control? etc.).

#### **Other Legislation we were/are watching:**

**LD618:** *An Act to Eliminate Critical Race Theory, Social and Emotional Learning and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion from School Curricula.* SUMMARY: “This bill prohibits school administrative units from providing instruction in critical race theory, social and emotional learning and diversity, equity and inclusion in any school curricula”

**LD1199:** *An Act to Provide Transparency in Public School Curricula.* SUMMARY: “This bill requires each school board to publish curriculum and library-related materials by October 1st of each school year for review by parents.”

**LD1800:** *An Act Regarding Parental Rights in Education.* SUMMARY: “This bill removes a provision that parents are jointly entitled to the care, custody, control, services and earnings of their children. The bill provides that each parent has the fundamental right to make decisions regarding the upbringing, education and well-being of the parent's



children and that a parent is entitled to access all information regarding the school activities of the parent's minor child. The bill requires school administrative units to notify parents of certain activities relating to student health and well-being and also to adopt procedures related to parental notification about, involvement in and addressing concerns about a student's mental, emotional or physical health or well-being."

## **Membership Committee - Sarah Skawinski**

### **2022-2023 Activity Overview**

- Increased membership by 85 (see below).
- Recruited Kelley Blue to serve as Membership Vice-Chair.
- Attended Board meetings on 9/6/22, 10/7/22, 11/4/22, 1/27/23, 3/24/23, 4/21/23, & 5/23/23.
- Served on the Strategic Planning Committee & attended meetings on 2/3/23, 2/17/23, & 4/28/23.
- Conducted bundle membership fee study, led focus group discussions, & created membership fee increase proposal (see below).
- Planned, scheduled, promoted, and hosted 8 Coffee Chats with a total of 237 attendees (see below).
- Served on the Conference Planning Committee & attended meetings on 12/2/22, 12/16/22, 1/27/23, 2/10/23, 3/10/23, 3/24/23, 4/21/23, 5/5/23, & 5/10/23.
- Coordinated "Bottle Toss" fundraiser for MLA Annual Conference (see below).

### **MLA Membership**

Membership has increased by 85 since May 2022. In addition to promoting membership through Coffee Chats, I sent "MLA Wants You Back" emails to people with lapsed memberships on 10/5/22 & 3/22/23. I hope to increase the frequency of these emails and create a promotional handout to recruit even more members next year.

- As of 5/24/22 there were 689 Members:
  - 641 active;
  - 13 pending new;
  - 35 pending renewal.
- As of 5/23/23 there are 774 members
  - 748 active;
  - 1 pending level change;
  - 11 pending new;
  - 14 pending renewal.



**Bundle Membership Fee Study**

Conversations about an increase to the MLA bundle membership fee started with a focused group discussion at the MLA planning retreat on August 12, 2023. I led additional focused group discussions during the November 2022 & January 2023 Board meetings. We agreed to increase bundle membership levels 1-4 by 20 percent and Level 5 by 50 percent. The new pricing structure was voted into place during the February 2023 Board meeting, and this change went into effect Tuesday, April 25, 2023.

Level	Term	Number of Staff	Current Cost	Increased Cost (Effective 04/25/2023)
Library Level 1	1 year	5	\$100.00	\$120.00
Library Level 2	1 year	10	\$175.00	\$210.00
Library Level 3	1 year	15	\$225.00	\$270.00
Library Level 4	1 year	30	\$300.00	\$360.00
Library Level 5	1 year	31+	*\$10.00/per person	*\$15.00/per person

\*This fee is determined by multiplying the number of staff by the member fee.

**Coffee Chats**

I planned, scheduled, promoted, and hosted 8 Coffee Chats for members this year with the help of many Board members and partners. Thank you to all who participated! A grand total of 237 MLA members attended across all events. I promoted the coffee chats as a membership benefit this year to help answer the question, “what do I get out of my MLA membership?” I hope to keep content relevant and timely next year to maintain the value of this benefit.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM & STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING BOOK CHALLENGES  
 Thursday, September 22, 2022  
 12-1pm via Zoom



with Samantha Duckworth  
57 registered, 40 attended

COFFEE CHAT: HOW TO HAVE HARD CONVERSATIONS  
Thursday, October 20, 2022  
12-1pm via Zoom  
with Courtney Sparks  
57 registered, 23 attended

COFFEE CHAT: DESIGN THINKING  
Thursday, November 17, 2022  
12-1pm via Zoom  
with Sonya Durney  
42 registered, 20 attended

COFFEE CHAT: DIGITAL MAINE LIBRARY RESOURCES  
Thursday, December 15, 2022  
12-1pm via Zoom  
with B.J. Jamieson  
48 registered, 28 attended

COFFEE CHAT: CRISIS & BOUNDARY WORK IN LIBRARIES  
Thursday, January 19, 2023  
12-1pm via Zoom  
with Ann Price & Kaylena Spears  
44 registered, 26 attended

COFFEE CHAT: DIGITAL MAINE LIBRARY RESOURCES PART II  
Thursday, February 16, 2023  
12-1pm via Zoom  
with B.J. Jamieson  
54 registered, 29 attended

COFFEE CHAT: ChatGPT  
Thursday, March 16, 2023  
12-1pm via Zoom  
with Marc Ebenfield  
67 registered, 40 attended

COFFEE CHAT: CONTINUING EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
Thursday, May 4, 2023  
12-1pm via Zoom



with Deb Clark & Jared Leadbetter  
58 registered, 31 attended

### **Bottle Toss Fundraiser**

I sent out 20 letters requesting donations of alcohol for the bottle toss fundraiser at the MLA Annual Conference this year and received a positive reply from 5 businesses:

- Allagash Brewing Company donated six 375ml bottles of their seasonal sour beer;
- Maine Beer Company donated two mixed cases of beer;
- Urban Farm Fermentory donated two mixed cases of hard kombucha;
- Nappi Distributors donated a mixed case of wine.
- Bluet donated 3 bottles of blueberry wine.

I hope to develop a better system for donation requests if we do this event again next year. The goal is \$1,000 raised for conference scholarships. Actual amount raised is still TBD.

### **Goals for 2023-2024**

- I would like to send “MLA Wants You Back” emails to people with lapsed memberships every 3 months: July, October, January, April.
- I would like to send out reminders to all members to update their accounts and interest group information and share with interest group chairs in October & April.
- I would like to update automatic emails that are sent to new members and make sure this is active/working for bundle members.
- I would like to create a handout to promote MLA membership.
- I would like to host 8 Coffee Chat programs: September, October, November, December, January, February, March, & April. We will take May off for the Annual Conference, and June/July/August off for summer break.
- I would like to have Coffee Chat programs scheduled at least 2 months in advance for publicity.
- I would like to create a succession plan for the Membership Chair

### **Academic Interest Group - Sarah Lucchesi**

This year the Academic Interest Group has focused on the following:



### **Succession planning**

The group's Vice Chair, Elizabeth Bull is scheduled to become the chair in August of 2023. Elizabeth has participated in board meetings and taken on the leadership of planning for Maine Academic Libraries Day in preparation for this transition. Ideally a few other members would be identified to form a leadership team, but other members have volunteered to lead specific initiatives such as informal monthly chats, a journal article discussion group, etc.

### **Participating in planning MLA Annual Conference**

The AIG chair participated in the overall conference planning committee, the programming planning committee, and was in charge of vendors and exhibitors.

### **Planning Maine Academic Libraries Day**

A 5-person team, led by the AIG Vice Chair, is planning MALD 2023, scheduled for June 15th. After last year's very successful hybrid MALD, we are offering the same format again this year. The in person symposium will take place at UMaine Augusta with remote attendees able to participate live.

### **Archives & Special Collections Interest Group - Sharon Pietryka**

This will be my last report for the Archives & Special Collections Interest Group, as my term has come to an end. I have truly enjoyed my time on this board—this amazing group of professionals and the work they do is so inspiring. The interest group's Vice Chair, Anastasia Weigle, will be taking over in July, and I am confident that she will be successful in this position.

In the last year, our group agreed to some succession plan updates for the MLA handbook. We agreed to the following:

- Allow the Chair to be able to serve up to two consecutive two-year terms (as stated in the bylaws).
- The Vice-Chair should expect to become Chair after the current Chair terms out or decides to step down.
- When a Chair steps down, the Vice-Chair becomes Chair, and then the recruitment for a new Vice-Chair begins.



These guidelines will help to ensure the sustainability of this interest group going forward.

Since my last annual report, we had a meetup at last year's conference. Having time carved out to get together with other group members at our annual conference is a great way to touch base and meet everyone in person.

We met virtually via Zoom on October 25 and discussed our takeaways from the Maine Archives & Museums Conference that had taken place on October 7. There is a fair amount of crossover between MAM and this interest group, so there is definitely the potential for future collaboration. We also made time for general updates and feedback.

As Chair, I served on the conference programming subcommittee and was so pleased that there was a nice array of session proposals dedicated to archives and special collections, highlighting the great and varied work of our members.

### **Small and Rural Libraries Interest Group - Lee Koenigs**

#### **State of the SRL IG:**

- Membership has requested that the SRL Zoom chats be offered every other month, rather than quarterly.
- SRL IG track was planned and will be offered at the 2023 MLA Annual Conference.
- The SRL IG Vice-chair, Heather Logan, will become the Chair, June 2023. I will continue as past Chair to support Heather for the coming year.

#### **Goals**

- To set up a smooth and successful leadership transition June 2023.



Maine Library Association  
22-23 Annual Report  
MLA Annual Business Meeting and Conference, May 23, 2023