

## **IFRT & Council**

Carolyn Caywood, IFRT Councilor

Council I completed its regular agenda but did not get to New Business. The main point of interest was the report of the Task Force on Rural School, Tribal, and Public Libraries that suggested many actions but did not bring resolutions. They were told to come back with resolutions at Council III.

At the APA Council meeting, relations between mirrored committees were discussed, as was the APA business plan, e.g. selling subscriptions to *Library Worklife*, selling *For Love or Money*, a new video about how badly we're paid.

Again, at Council II the old business was completed, but not the new resolutions. After the Treasurer's report, I brought up the discontinuance of the *ALA Handbook*, which started a landslide of protest. Others asked about the plan to buy property in D.C. as a home for the Washington office and a revenue generator. Council adopted as Core Values, Access, Confidentiality/Privacy, Democracy, Diversity, Education and Lifelong Learning, Intellectual Freedom, Preservation, The Public Good, Professionalism, Service, and Social Responsibility. The Task Force on Library Closings was reappointed but its charge remains focused on Georgia. Proposals from the Committee on Diversity were referred.

Council III began with a proclamation of lifetime achievement for David Cohen included among the Memorials and Tributes. The Resolution on Privacy and Library Use (actually on misuse of patron databases) was withdrawn from the agenda, pending work by IFC. Five resolutions brought by the Committee on Legislation were passed. The three with IF aspects were to provide access to "sensitive" information, to protect whistleblowers, and to assure public access to government information. The Committee on Organization authorized a "Libraries Fostering Civic Engagement Membership Initiative Group." They also protested the end of the *Handbook*.

IFC brought a resolution on the FCC's new policy on broadcast indecency, which passed. Also passed were 8 revised Interpretations. One Councilor fussed that she hadn't had time to read them prompting several others to thank Nancy Kranich for her efforts to distribute the revisions so that they did have time to read them. Other revisions will be presented at Midwinter 2005.

## **REVISED POLICIES ADOPTED BY THE ALA COUNCIL AT THE 2004 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

- Access for Children and Young People to Videotapes and Other Nonprint Format
- Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Gender or Sexual Orientation
- Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards
- Free Access to Libraries For Minors
- Policy on Government Intimidation
- The Freedom to Read Statement
- Restricted Access to Library Materials
- Policy Concerning Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information about Library Users

## **POLICIES STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION**

- Access to Electronic Information Services and Networks
- Access to Resources and Services in the School Library Media Program
- Libraries: An American Value
- Statement on Labeling

The International Relations Committee Report was met with mutiny by committee members. Chair John Berry, (ALA past-president), had added documents about Cuba (letter pleading for support and his draft response, resolution from a South Dakota library board) for information, but committee members said they had not known he would include the documents. A resolution was introduced to delete the documents and forbid the committee chair from writing anything but "thank you for your letter - here's our policy." This was a bit too Orwellian for Council to stomach, however much they didn't want to re-discuss Cuba. Although sympathetic to committee members' feelings that they had been misrepresented by the report, I voted against the resolution which did not pass.

The Rural Task Force returned with specifics that were referred to other committees for study, and a new permanent committee on rural library issues was approved by Council.

In view of the lack of a quorum at both Membership meetings, the Committee on Membership Meetings proposed lowering the quorum to 75. Many, myself included, protested that the number was so low as to be meaningless, but the resolution passed 70 to 68. It will return at Midwinter before being put on the Spring ballot.

Finally we got to part of the New Business. After considerable debate, the resolution on torture passed. I informed Council that it had been endorsed by IFRT and spoke in favor of it. The resolution on accessibility for the ballot and the website passed and again I presented IFRT's endorsement. The resolved portion of the resolution on Iraq was completely reworded but there were no print copies of the new wording. It failed. Council did not get to the resolutions on health care, ALA partnerships, workplace speech, reinstating the *Handbook*, or attacks on two Jewish libraries. I have no documents for the partnerships resolution, but I am one of the seconders of the *Handbook* resolution.

Since I had a very late flight, I sat in on part of the Executive Board meeting. What I heard was that ALA's budget is very tight and Council's desires on rural libraries, accessibility and the *Handbook* will strain it.

Of those topics I raised before the Conference,

- US use of torture – resolution passed.
- Misusing patron data for library promotional messages - withdrawn till the results of IFC's work are reviewed at Midwinter.
- Neither RFID, CIPA, the USAPATRIOT Act, the Archivist nominee, nor publishing as contraband came up.
- No resolution on Fahrenheit 9/11.
- The Core Values list was adopted.
- Accessible ALA electronic ballots and ALA web site was passed.
- No resolution on 501 (c) 3 limits on speech, or "One Voice" or Opt-out."
- After some back and forth, a resolution on how ALA chooses partners was added to the final agenda but we ran out of time. This was prompted by the ALA/Walgreens

partnership to distribute government Drug Card brochure.