American Library Association (ALA) Liaison Report
November 2026
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- ALA Budget Update
  - Dina Tsourdinis, Chief Financial Officer, provided the following updates:
  - September 2025-June 2026:
    - Revenue was $2.6M below budget
    - YTD deficit of $4.6M was $1.9M more favorable than the $6.5M budgeted deficit
  - Loan balance (August 31, 2026): $5.8M
  - FY 2026 July Summary:
    - Net deficit of $5.2M vs. $7.7M budgeted, a $2.5M favorable variance
    - Revenue was $40.4M and expenses were $45.6M
  - FY 2026 Year-End Projection:
    - Revenue of $42.9M; expenses of $48.9M;
    - Projected deficit of $5.9M
- ALA Endowment Update
  - Brett Bonfield, Senior Endowment Trustee, provided the following updates:
    - Endowment Trustees will recommend two new members and a Senior Endowment Trustee in the Spring
    - As of August 31, 2026, ALA's portfolio was valued at $69M
    - As of July 31, 2026, the Future Fund was valued at $15.4M and the donor designated funds were valued at $52M.
    - Informational documents are being updated and they will make recommendations to update the ALA Policy Manual to ensure harmonization.
    - Merrill Lynch has been an advisor to ALA for more than 30 years. There is a current project on re-evaluating advisor partners to review their performance.
- ALA Demo Day
  - **Wednesday, November 18th** from 11 am to 3:30 pm EST
  - Explore innovative games, puzzles, toys, and play-based learning resources through live vendor demonstrations. Discover products that can enhance library programming, engage users of all ages, and support learning through play.
  - Attendees will have opportunities to ask questions and learn about product features and purchasing options.
  - Free registration required.
  - Learn more and register.
- 2027 National Library Legislative Day
  - **Wednesday, February 24th & Thursday, February 25th, 2027**
  - The event takes place in Washington D.C. and combines advocacy education, networking, and in-person meetings with legislators and congressional staff on Capitol Hill.

    - Registration for National Library Legislative Day (NLLD) 2027 is now open.
    - The deadline to register is **Wednesday, November 25th**, subject to available space.
- "Building AI Skills and Agency Through Libraries" Initiative
    - The Public Library Association (PLA) and Microsoft announced a collaboration to expand resources and no-cost AI skills training for public library workers and their patrons. This training will help community members better understand emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, and make informed decisions about their use.
    - This collaboration responds to demand from public library professionals and community members for the knowledge, skills and resources to understand AI, use it confidently & responsibly, and apply it in ways that support learning, career readiness and opportunity.
    - A free webinar series and virtual training workshops will be available beginning in **December 2026 through Spring 2027**. Webinars, led by library workers, will focus on how public libraries are addressing AI literacy and share lessons learned. Training workshops will be interactive and provide a practical introduction to generative AI, along with patron training resources and guidance.
    - The first webinar in the series, Building AI Agency with Libraries**,** will be held on **Thursday, December 3rd**, at 2 pm.
    - Register, learn more, and view resources at the Building AI Skills and Agency Through Libraries webpage.
- 2026 Public Library Technology Survey now open
    - Take the 2026 Public Library Technology Survey
    - PLA administers a survey to U.S. public libraries each year in the fall, followed by a free report examining the results.
    - This year's survey focuses on technology in public libraries. Your library's participation will allow us to better understand technology capacity, resources for patrons, infrastructure, digital literacy, and staffing.
    - Survey responses are due by **Tuesday, December 15th.**
    - Participate through your library's free account at librarybenchmark.org to submit your response.
    - Explore past PLA surveys and free reports on the site and PLA's data tool, Benchmark: Library Metrics and Trends.
- "I Love My Librarian" Award nominations open
    - The American Library Association (ALA) invites library users nationwide to nominate their favorite librarians for the prestigious I Love My Librarian Award.
    - This national award recognizes the outstanding public service contributions of librarians working in public, school, college, community college or university libraries.
    - Nominations are accepted online now through **Friday, December 18th**.
    - Ten librarians will each receive $5,000 in recognition of their outstanding achievements.

    - Awardees will be honored at the I Love My Librarian Award ceremony at the 2027 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans; honorees will also receive free full conference registration and a travel stipend to cover expenses as part of their award packages.
    - Full eligibility criteria, as well as tips for writing a strong nomination, are available on the award website.
- Discounted Lifetime ALA Membership
    - Whether you're a student, long-time member, or a dedicated library advocate who values our mission, this special $1,500 lifetime membership is your chance to show your support for libraries and help shape the next 150 years of ALA.
    - No hassle. No age requirement. Just complete one simple ALA150th Life Member Interest form and call 800-545-2433 (option 1) to make one payment of $1,500 or two payments of $750 before **Thursday, December 31st.**
- New ALA volunteer application
    - The new Volunteer Application is now live!
    - It gives you one simple place to browse volunteer opportunities across ALA, Divisions, Sections, and Round Tables, and apply through a single, streamlined application.
    - A few things worth knowing:
        - Applications stay open year-round, so you can apply whenever.
        - To be considered for the 2027-2028 committee term, please submit your application by each ALA unit's designated deadline. Check unit timelines for specific dates.
        - For ALA Standing Committees, the deadline to submit is **Monday, January 4, 2027.**
        - Already started an application? If you submitted a volunteer application in the current system, you do not need to reapply. Your submission has been captured and will still be considered for the upcoming term.
        - If you have any questions, reach out to the ALA Governance Office governance@ala.org
- Games & Gaming Round Table Call for Presenters
    - The Games & Gaming Round Table (GameRT) of the American Library Association is looking for presenters for its 2027 one day mini conference to be held on Friday, March 26th, 2027.
    - The conference will be virtual and free (presenters will join a Zoom webinar session that will be livestreamed and recorded on GameRT's Twitch and YouTube channels).
    - This year's theme is "Building Community Through Games".
    - They are interested in presentations on
        - how libraries engage their patrons through gaming programs, collections, and services
        - how libraries make connections with game developers, publishers, and retailers

        - how libraries become integral parts of their local gaming communities through partnerships, projects, and advocacy
        - Any other ways you build community through games of all kinds, including video games, board and card games, tabletop games, and more
    - Proposals should explicitly state their relevance to libraries, but presenters don't need to be a librarian or GameRT member to present.
    - To submit a session proposal, please complete this form by **Monday, January 18th, 2027**.
    - More information on the submission process and conference can be found here.
- 2027 Youth Media Awards Public Announcement
    - This celebration will be held on **Monday, January 25th**, beginning at 10 am CST. The announcement will take place at the Hilton Chicago (720 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60605).
    - The Youth Media Awards recognize the top books, digital media, video and audio books for children and young adults – including the Caldecott, Coretta Scott King, Printz and Newbery awards.
    - The event will be free and open to the public, but registration is required for in-person attendance.
    - The deadline for registration is Wednesday, January 21st.
    - The announcement will also be live-streamed at ala.unikron.com and on the ALA Facebook page. No registration is required to view the livestream.
- ALA Winter Council Meetings
    - **Tuesday, January 26th, 2027, 3-4:30 pm EST**
    - **Wednesday, January 27th, 2027, 3-5 pm EST**
    - **Thursday, January 28th, 2026, 3-5 pm EST**
    - All meetings are via Zoom.
    - The agenda and all associated documents for these meetings can be found here.
    - Find out more information about discounted lifetime membership here.
- 2027 PLA Leadership Academy
    - **Monday, March 15th to Friday, March 19th** in Chicago, IL.
    - This is a unique career opportunity for mid-career leaders to learn to lead in an intensive, in-person program for public library staff on the rise.
    - Guided by an experienced coach, participants from public libraries around the country will attend four days of immersive workshops, meaningful networking, personal reflection, and special events.
    - Applications will open and information will be released about scholarship opportunities soon!
    - Find more information about the leadership academy here.
- “Americans and The Holocaust” Traveling Exhibit
    - ALA, in collaboration with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, announced the continuation of its traveling exhibition Americans and the Holocaust, an exploration of the motives, pressures, and fears that shaped Americans’ responses to Nazism, war, and genocide in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s.

    - Following a highly successful tour to 100 libraries from 2021 to 2026, the exhibition will travel to 50 additional public and academic libraries across the United States.
    - Interested libraries are encouraged to sign up to learn more about the exhibition and receive email updates about the tour and application deadlines.
    - Applications for the 2028 to 2030 tour will open in **Spring 2027**.
    - Check out a short trailer video for the exhibit.
- ALA Annual Conference 2027
    - **Thursday, June 24th to Monday, June 28th, 2027** in New Orleans, LA.
    - Registration is not open yet, but typically opens in mid-to-late January.
    - Registration rates are based on your membership status (i.e.individual member, supporter, student, non-member, etc.) and full conference rates vary from $290 for early student registration to $450 for early individual registration.
    - Full conference, single day, and exhibits only registrations will be available.
    - To register for a discounted-rate hotel room, you will need to first be registered for the conference.
    - More information about the annual conference can be found here.
- Auto-Renewal for ALA Membership
    - Starting today, you can enroll in AutoRenewal when you check out in the ALA shopping cart. With AutoRenewal, you'll avoid missed expiration dates and won't need to log in to renew.
    - How to enroll:
        - Add your membership renewal or purchase to the ALA shopping cart.
        - At checkout, select “Yes, Annually” or “Yes, Semi-Annually” for AutoRenewal.
        - Review the AutoRenewal Terms and Conditions and complete your purchase.
        - *Coming soon:* You'll also be able to turn on AutoRenewal anytime from your account in my.ALA.org. We'll let you know as soon as it's available.
    - What to expect
        - ALA will charge your saved payment method the amount shown on your renewal statement on the 15th of the month that your membership expires.
        - If you enroll in installment payments and elect AutoRenewal, you’ll be charged semi-annually for all active memberships, typically halfway in your membership year.
        - If dues increase, your automatic payment will be adjusted to reflect the current rate, with no action needed on your part. ALA will notify you of any Dues changes before your next scheduled draft.
        - If the payment doesn't go through, they will try up to two more times before removing you from AutoRenewal.
    - You're in control
        - You can update your payment method anytime in the my.ALA.org Member Portal.

        - To cancel AutoRenewal, contact Member Relations & Services at least two days before your scheduled payment date.
        - Keep in mind that canceling your membership doesn't automatically cancel AutoRenewal.
        - For answers to common questions, visit the AutoRenewal FAQs or contact us at membership@ala.org or 1-800-545-2433 (option 1).
- Free PressReader Access with ALA Membership
    - PressReader gives libraries access to more than 8,400 newspapers and magazines from 120 countries, plus a growing collection of books and daily puzzles.
    - As an ALA member, you can try it free for 12 months with an individual trial of a curated catalog, so you can see the platform for yourself.
    - **What you get:**
        - Leading newspapers and magazines from around the world
        - Trusted local, national, and international titles
        - News, lifestyle, culture, business, and more
        - Easy reading on web, mobile, or tablet
    - Start your free trial here.
    - Looking for more perks like this one? Find more information about ALA member discounts and benefits here.
- ALA "Forward Together" updates
    - ALA Forward continues to serve as ALA's roadmap for the future, aligning resources where they create the greatest impact, strengthening its foundation, and ensuring ALA remains a trusted leader for libraries nationwide.
    - Members can continue following progress, updates, and our new ALA Forward visual roadmap on ALA's dedicated webpage.
    - Read the ALA Forward Together FY26 One-Year Summary.
- Completion of ALA's IT Landscape Assessment and Digital Roadmap
    - One of the most significant ALA Forward milestones over the past year was the completion of ALA's IT Landscape Assessment and Digital Roadmap: an extensive look at the technology members and staff rely on and how we can modernize those systems over time.
    - The roadmap prioritizes the systems members use most while sequencing improvements in a way that is deliberate, affordable, and aligned with ALA's Strategic Plan.
    - That work is already translating into improvements. ALA is moving forward with a multi-year technology roadmap that includes improvements to our membership and financial systems, websites, online giving, learning platforms, conference technology, communications tools and more.
    - The work will take place in phases through FY29, beginning with strengthening the systems at the foundation of the member experience before moving into broader modernization and integration.
    - Explore ALA's IT Landscape Assessment and Digital Roadmap
- Public Library Association (PLA) task force launches AI resources

    - Building on insights from a January 2026 town hall, the PLA Transformative Technology Task Force has curated AI guidance, sample policies, and resources for public library workers.
    - The resource lists are organized into the categories public library staff most often ask for information on: policies, training for staff, and training for patrons.
    - Explore and contribute here.
- ALSC and YALSA Merger
    - The Association of Library Services for Children (ALSC) and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) are reunited, effective September 1st.
    - What happens now?
        - All YALSA memberships will transition to ALSC memberships, bringing the members together within one division.
        - The division will operate under the ALSC name during this initial transition period while work continues on a new identity and name that reflects the combined community and expanded focus.
        - Members will also begin to see other aspects of the reunification take shape, including the transition to the new committee structure and the continued integration of online resources and content.
        - Not everything will change overnight. Rebranding, website integration, bylaws and policy development, and other aspects of the reunification will continue over the coming months.
        - Most importantly, there will be additional opportunities for members to provide input and help shape what comes next.
    - Have questions? Please consult the Reunification FAQ or reach out to YALSA staff at yalsa@ala.org.
- 2028 PLA Conference
    - **Monday, March 13th to Wednesday, March 15th, 2028** in San Francisco, CA.
    - Mark it on your calendars!
    - The call for program proposals will open in “early 2027”.
    - Sign up to be alerted when the call for proposals opens.
- SustainRT Ambassador Update
    - What is SustainRT?
        - It is the Sustainability Round Table in ALA.
        - The mission of the organization is to provide resources for the library community to support sustainability through curriculum development; collections; exhibits; events; advocacy, communication, library buildings and space design.
        - SustainRT is open to all ALA members and includes both individual members and organizational members.
    - Monthly SustainRT Meetups
        - Second Monday of each month via Zoom from 1-2 pm EST.
        - The meetups are led by Binghamton University librarian Neyda Gilman and they are open to anyone who wants to chat about sustainability, ask questions, or just listen in!

        - Upcoming meeting dates:
            - **Monday, December 14th**
    - Sustainable Libraries Certification Program (SLCP) meet-ups
        - Everyone is welcome to join these meet-ups.
        - SLCP membership is not required.
        - Materials and Waste Meet-up
            - **Thursday, December 3rd** at 1 pm EST
            - This month's meetup topic discusses properly managing waste and materials in the library space! Whether it's finding ways to reduce your resource consumption, find sustainable waste disposal solutions, or write new purchasing policies - proper waste management can be a challenge.
            - Register here for materials and waste meet-up
- Online Archive of ALA Liaison Reports
    - An archive of ALA Liaison reports from 2020 through present can be found on the "ALA Councilor" page of the NJLA website.
    - This page is updated monthly with each new ALA Liaison report.