American Library Association (ALA) Liaison Report
October 2026
Submitted by Melody Scagnelli-Townley

- National Friends of Libraries Week
  - **Sunday, October 18th through Saturday, October 24th**
  - The celebration offers a two-fold opportunity to celebrate Friends. Use the time to creatively promote your group in the community, to raise awareness, and to promote membership.
  - This is also an excellent opportunity for your library and Board of Trustees to recognize the Friends for their help and support of the library.
  - Sign up and receive editable PR and Marketing materials, including a sample press release, promotional graphics for Facebook and Instagram, and more.
- 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.
- Core Forum
  - Core is ALA's newest division. It represents "leadership, infrastructures, futures".
  - The division brings together "decision makers and practitioners that focus on the following areas: Access & Equity, Buildings & Operations, Leadership & Management, Metadata & Collections, Preservation, and Technology."
  - The Core Forum is a new annual event that is "structured around these seven topics, particularly the ways in which they interact with and complement each other."
  - The next Core Forum will be **Wednesday, November 18th through Friday, November 20th** at The Galt House Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky.
  - More information about the Core Forum can be found here.
- 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.
- 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.**
    - Find out more information about discounted lifetime membership 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.
- New Membership Round Table (NMRT) Mentoring Program
    - Are you looking to mentor someone who is newer to the field? Are you looking to be mentored by someone with experience in the field? Join the NMRT Mentoring Program!
    - The mentorship program will run February through July 2027.
    - The mentor volunteer form is open now and responses are due by **Friday, October 30th**.
    - The call for mentees will go out in November. Final pairings will be announced in January 2027.
    - Questions? Contact the Co-Chairs, Zac Grisham zgrisha@ksu.edu or Amanda Gray Perry agray3@nd.edu

- New ALA volunteer application
    - The new Volunteer Application went live this month!
    - 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
- 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.
- 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.
- 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:
            - November 16th
            - December 14th
    - Sustainable Libraries Certification Program (SLCP) meet-ups
        - Everyone is welcome to join these meet-ups.
        - SLCP membership is not required.
        - Water Meet-up
            - Thursday, November 12th at 1 pm EST
            - This month's meetup topic discusses the use of water in the library space! Whether it's finding ways to reduce your water use, make the swap to more efficient fixtures, or investigate alternatives to irrigation - using water more sustainably can be a challenge.
            - Register here for water meet-up
        - 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.