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# TMLDA COMMUNIQUE

Winter 2008

Texas Municipal Library Directors Association is an Affiliate of the Texas Municipal League

## FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Kerry McGeath

Libraries in Texas and around the country face a number of daunting challenges as we move into an uncertain future. Uncertain futures generally reveal a number of dynamic opportunities and should not be viewed with disdain, rather as a chance for us to strengthen library service in a manner that may not have revealed itself to us at this point.

Public Libraries are similar to other institutions in which inertia develops that may not be in the best long term interest of the organization. A part of the allure of libraries for many that work in them is that they are considered a safe haven from the world at large.

Libraries generally don't close and in many instances are not held to any specific performance standards so there is a tendency to develop habits that would not be healthy for an organism, but persist because the organism continues to live, albeit in not a particularly healthy state. The result is that we have a workforce that is very resistant to change in a world where technological innovation drives forward at a dizzying speed, and the citizens we serve are much more adept at integrating those innovations than library folk, creating a gap that grows wider and wider as time inexorably marches on.

The Texas Library Association and State Library have worked together to create the Transforming Texas Libraries Task Force that

had meetings in December to try and get at what would be necessary components of creating a framework for Transforming Libraries in Texas, and the strand that ran through it all was the libraries had to change their focus to satisfy user needs.

The Task Force will continue and is a very good first step, but we need to make sure we are not waiting around for others to transform libraries for us – we all have to get our hands dirty and become change agents if we want libraries to be viable into the future. It is not easy being a harbinger of change in a culture that is not driven by any urgent need to do so, even though objective reality suggests that we are not positioning ourselves for the future effectively. An inevitable downturn in the economy has seriously hurt library funding in the past, but as the service we provide becomes less and less relevant to the majority of potential users then cuts in funding may cause the organism irreparable harm – which is not good for us or our users of the future.

Libraries are an important and unique component of democracy as it has developed in the United States, but there is nothing inevitable about their continued relevance or even their existence unless we make them effective resources for the coming community of users. It is not a “sky is falling” scenario, but it is one in which many opportunities will present themselves and we need to be in a position to take full advantage when they become available. It will take some work to do it, but nothing worthwhile comes about without a little work, I always say.



## TMLDA Director's Report

Joyce Baumbach

The TML executive board met on November 7, 2007 at the TML Conference. Action taken included approval to pay membership dues to the Texas Civil Justice League and to the National Association of Towns and Townships. TML has been affiliated with both organizations and has encouraged their members to join. Now TML will pay dues to solidify the relationships with the two organizations. TML is also gearing up for the next legislative session as they believe appraisal and revenue caps issues will be addressed again. On Friday, November 9, 2007, The TML executive board approved the nomination committee's recommendation to elect Todd Pearson, Rockport, as TML President and John Cook, El Paso, as TML President-elect. The board also approved the endorsement of Jungus Jordan, Fort Worth, Steve Salazar, Dallas, and Audwin Samuel, Beaumont, for positions on the National League of Cities Board of Directors.



**TMLDA Newsletter Editor**

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## Achievement of Excellence in Libraries Award

Congratulations to the following libraries on meeting the criteria for the TMLDA Achievement of Excellence in Libraries Award for 2007:

Rowlett Public Library  
Nicholson Memorial Library System (Garland)  
Haltom City Public Library  
Farmers Branch Manske Public Library  
Flower Mound Public Library  
Bedford Public Library  
Sachse Public Library  
Euless Public Library  
Hurst Public Library  
Harker Heights Public Library  
Mansfield Public Library  
Aubrey Area Public Library  
Richardson Public Library  
Zula Bryant Wylie Public Library (Cedar Hill)  
Plano Public Library System  
McKinney Memorial Public Library  
Lewisville Public Library  
William T. Cozby Public Library (Coppell)  
Richland Hills Public Library  
Burleson Public Library

Here is the timeline for receiving these awards:

Plaques will be ordered by 2/8/08 and should arrive mid March or first of April, if there are any unexpected delays.

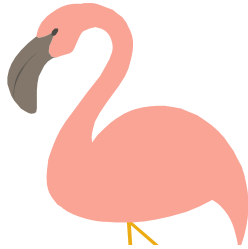
Letters will be sent out the week of February 25.

As soon as the plaques arrive they will be mailed with the binder to the "attention of", and location, that you have indicated in the cover letter with the binder.

By the end of April or first of May we can begin scheduling the presentations of the plaques to City Councils.

For questions or additional information please contact Kerry McGeath at

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped staff the TMLDA booth at the TML Conference!! It was a huge success!! We talked to appointed and elected officials about libraries as they tried to “ring the flamingo’s neck”!



Mark your  
calendars:  
2008  
TML  
Conference  
Oct. 29-31  
San Antonio

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2007-2008**

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