

In Anticipation of Inspiration

I know I've mentioned (ok, whined) before about the difficulty of writing a magazine column months before it will be read. The struggle to find inspiration in January that will still resonate with readers—heck, that will still resonate with me—when this issue of *Spectrum* hits the mailbox in March was, for once, a bit easier. Why? Because, to me at least, these two months share a strong connection.

I can hear you now. "What in the hell is she talking about this time? What does January have to do with March?"

The commonality of the two months is quite simple. They are both about new beginnings. January is the beginning of a shiny new year, ripe with possibilities. March (at least in our hemisphere) is the beginning of spring, a time when nature begins its annual renewal.

Both are months of hope, moments to reflect on what has been and what is possible. By the time you read this column, the AALL Vendor Colloquium will have passed, but, here in January, I am looking forward to this event with hope. Right now, I hope that the participants in this colloquium—librarians, vendors, and library stakeholders—will come to some common ground on issues related to the publishing industry. By the time you are reading this, I hope we will all have something to look forward to—a better understanding and better working relationship between vendors and librarians as we all strive to accommodate the new realities of the publishing industry while serving our patrons.



The purpose of the colloquium was never to call the vendors to task for their perceived "bad behavior." Rather the purpose was to open up a dialog about the whole new world of information collection, processing, and dissemination. Its purpose was to bring in our stakeholders so they can tell us and the vendors what is important to them as users of information. Will we have solved all the problems of the world? I highly doubt it. Will prices suddenly cease increasing by double digits every year? I highly doubt that as well, although, to quote Will Shakespeare, "'tis a consummation devoutly to be wished."

There are other things we have to look forward to and be hopeful about. Next month in April, in Santiago, Chile, the Chilean law librarians will meet for the first time as a formal national organization. Led in part by AALL member Ellen Schaffer, this is a major landmark for the librarians of that country. They will now have the opportunities that we sometimes take for granted: to meet with and learn from their colleagues, to realize that their problems are not parochial, and to discover that there are people willing to lend them a hand when one is needed. It is a new chance for our members to connect with our colleagues in the southern hemisphere.

Spring is a time of renewal and new growth, and we in AALL will be sharing those new beginnings. The Management Institute, to be held April 7-9, will help members learn new ways to deal with the challenges that arise in their work lives. In April we will also begin to accept applications for the 2011 Leadership

Academy, to be held in October, thus helping to develop the next generation of AALL leadership. And speaking of AALL leadership, the Executive Board will soon begin making preparations to welcome our new board members and training our new committee vice chairs, chairs, and our official AALL representatives—people without whom AALL would not be able to accomplish its work.

Spring is also a time of anticipation. We have much to look forward to within our organization, not the least being the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. This year, you have not only 64 excellent programs, four fabulous workshops, and a myriad of special interest section offerings but also the second Private Law Libraries Special Interest Section summit and the Conference of the Chinese and American Forum on Legal Information and Law Libraries to look forward to. I hope that you will be able to participate in the rich educational and cultural offerings that this year's Annual Meeting will provide. If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting, don't forget that you will still be able to view some of the programming streamed live from the Philadelphia Convention Center on AALL2go (www.soft-conference.com/aall).

So, I invite you to join me as I sit here shivering on a cold January morning in looking forward with hope to the warmth, the renewal, and the new beginnings that await us this spring! ■

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