

## What's Rowing Got to Do With It?

This is my first president's column. I am excited and honored that you have entrusted me with this large responsibility. Having just returned from the Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, I am energized by what I observed there—the enthusiasm, creativity, hard work, and leadership that emanate from you, the AALL members.

Some of you may recall that I used a rowing analogy in my statement when I was a candidate for vice-president/president-elect. At that time, I wrote the following:

Most of you probably don't know that I am a rower. I have been a member of a rowing team for seven years. As a rower in an "eight," each rower is equally valuable to the success of the boat. No one rower is more important. The boat's success depends upon true teamwork—where the rowers move together with their bodies and their minds—supporting one another throughout both practices and races. Similarly, as members of the American Association of Law Libraries, we are reliant on one another. Our individual successes are the success of the whole. To continue the analogy, the one unique member of the rowing team is the coxswain. She steers the boat and provides support and guidance for the team members. If elected, I will be fortunate to act as the coxswain during my presidential year. It will be my chance to provide direction, leadership, coaching, and support to you the members of AALL. The president of AALL takes part in a continuum of past and future presidents, steering the association for one year, building upon previous projects and plans and laying the groundwork for future projects and plans.

So, I am pleased to be stepping into the AALL boat as the coxswain for 2011-2012. I hope to have the steady hand needed to maintain a good rhythm for our row down the river. Hopefully, we will avoid obstacles, have good weather, and build a solid team together that will allow us to be successful in our goals as we head from bend to bend along the river. Without you, we will go nowhere; without me, we may not go in a straight line. We are a team. We need each other.

### My Goals

So, what are my goals as we head along the river? My first goal is to continue the work of Joyce Janto, the now immediate past president. During her year as

president of AALL, Joyce began an evaluation of our vendor relations policies and programs. She held a Vendor Colloquium and hired a vendor liaison, Margie Maes. A task force was appointed as a result of the Vendor Colloquium, which made recommendations to the AALL Executive Board for the July 2011 board meeting for further work to be done. I am currently in the process of appointing some of you to help me with this ongoing work.

My second goal is to improve and increase communication.

We have a newly released AALLNET that will provide many new avenues for communicating within AALL "communities"—special interest sections (SISs) committees, chapters, and caucuses. (Also watch for my first *Members Briefing* that will tell you more about the new AALLNET in December.) Transparency continues to be an issue for AALL members, so I plan to provide as much information to members as possible, in as timely a fashion as possible, as well as to allow for member input. I also look forward to hearing from you individually if you have concerns that I might help address.

My third goal is to begin a discussion about the future of law librarianship and AALL. As you have probably read by now, I am planning a Futures Summit to be held in conjunction with the fall Executive Board meeting November 3-4. The summit will bring together AALL leaders with an invited group of AALL members to discuss what is needed to engage newer members and prepare them for their future as law librarians and leaders in the Association and profession. Although the attendance will be limited, we will find ways to share the discussion with AALL members and to allow for some concurrent member comment and input. I hope that the summit will lead to multiple projects to meet the needs of our members going forward. And I hope that you will be energized by the discussion and outcomes of the summit and will want to become involved in one or more of those projects.

The final goal will be planning for next year's Annual Meeting to be held in

Boston in July 2012. The theme for that meeting, "Learn, Connect, Grow," is central to the many reasons that AALL members attend the Annual Meeting. They go to **Connect** with their friends and colleagues, **Learn** from the many educational programs, and **Grow** through both **Learning** and **Connecting**. The Annual Meeting Program Committee has established a site to share program ideas in anticipation of the program proposal deadline in

September. We hope that there will be programming in many different formats, including some that are more interactive.

### Opportunities for All

In addition to the Annual Meeting, there will be many other opportunities throughout the year for you and other members of AALL to **Learn, Connect,** and **Grow** with one another. Our webinars will continue to educate you and allow you to share ideas with other members.

Members of the AALL Executive Board will attend your chapter meetings. That is an opportunity for you to spend one-on-one time with a board member and share your ideas and concerns regarding AALL.

Some of our members will represent AALL at meetings of other related organizations. Those AALL representatives will bring word of what AALL is doing to those groups and will share what they learned with us. (Watch for a *Members Briefing* next spring on AALL representatives.) The Leadership Academy will be held again this fall, providing an opportunity for our rising leaders to learn together about leadership skills. Finally, AALL committee work and SIS work will continue via conference calls, AALLNET "communities" conversations, and the occasional face-to-face meeting.

At the passing of the gavel next July, we will have reached the end of our journey down the river. I look forward to working with all of you as I guide the boat and our team this coming year. Please keep in touch. ■

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