

From the Editor

Plummer Alston "Al" Jones, Jr., Editor

As editor of *North Carolina Libraries*, I represent the North Carolina Library Association on the Editors' Interests Subcommittee of the Chapter Relations Committee of the American Library Association (ALA). I attended the meeting of this subcommittee at the ALA Midwinter Conference in Philadelphia on Saturday, 25 January 2003, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

The meeting was convened by Frank R. Allen, University of Central Florida Libraries, who is editor of *Southeastern Librarian*, the journal of the Southeastern Library Association (SELA). State library journal/newsletter editors attending the session were Gloria Colvin, editor of *Florida Libraries*, Barbie Selby, editor of *Virginia Libraries*, Mary Cosper LeBoeuf, editor of *Louisiana Libraries*, Laurie Hews, editor of *Catalyst*, the newsletter of the Iowa Library Association, Patricia Tumulty, editor of *New Jersey Libraries Newsletter*, and Marie Jones, editor of *Tennessee Librarian*. Also in attendance was Beverly Laughlin, executive director of the Louisiana Library Association.

State Library Association Journals: Some Observations

Although the nine of us, representing four state library association journals (FL, LA, NC, TN), two state library association newsletters (IA, NJ), and one regional library association journal (SELA), enjoyed a free-wheeling discussion that touched upon frequency of publication, journal versus newsletter publication formats, electronic versus print versions, refereed versus non-refereed manuscript selection, and advertising. Producing the newsletter was part of the job descriptions of the directors of the Iowa and New Jersey Library Associations. The North Carolina Library Association was the only state library association represented at the discussion that publishes both an electronic journal and an electronic newsletter, *E-News*. Some of the publishers represented did not referee articles before publication as do *North Carolina Libraries* and *Virginia Libraries*. *Florida Libraries* referees articles for only one of the two print issues published annually.

All present have considered electronic publication of either journal or newsletter or both, but none but *North Carolina Libraries* has taken the plunge for both journal and newsletter. Most are on the verge of moving to electronic format and anxious to hear my praises of what we have done with our state library association journal. The main reason given for not going electronic was the fear of losing contact with state library association members, particularly trustees of public libraries, who might not have computer access. The group was very interested in knowing the success of our annual print version that cumulates the quarterly electronic issues. There was also some discussion about whether a print or an electronic publication would be read more. The prevailing thought is that print publications are read more because of the more convenient format. Although we will never be able to know how many actually read print versions of our journal, we will be able at least to keep a record of the number of hits or times that the journal Web site was visited.

By now I hope that you have received your annual print cumulation for 2002. I arranged for extra copies to be printed to share with other state library associations, library advocates, and political decision makers. I also would like to calculate the cost of a single copy of the annual.

Editors and library association directors in attendance at the Editors' Interests Subcommittee of the ALA Chapter Relations Committee meeting in Philadelphia were very enthusiastic about continuing to meet at annual and midwinter conferences in the future. Our next meeting will be at the ALA Annual Conference this summer, which will convene jointly in Toronto with the Canadian Library Association (CLA). I plan to attend and hand out samples of our first print annual with great pride.