

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This issue of NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES contains reports of various sections and committees of NCLA — those agencies of the association which do its work month in and month out. Some of the committees have been more active than others during the past biennium, but each member of every committee has contributed in some fashion to the promotion of better library service to our state's citizens. All of the reports deserve your attention.

Favorable comments were heard frequently during and shortly after the biennial conference of NCLA in Charlotte last October. Some librarians expressed disappointment because of the absence of Dr. Louis Shores, who was scheduled to speak at the first general session of the conference. Dean Shores was unable to make an appearance because of illness; however, his place was ably filled by Dr. Walter Sedelow, recently-appointed dean of the UNC School of Library Science. The banquet speaker — Dan M. Lacy, publishing executive and member of the National Advisory Commission on Libraries—drew praise from all sides for his address on the significance of libraries in today's knowledge-oriented society. A shower of auspicious comment concerning the talk of Augusta Baker, speaker at the Association of School Librarians luncheon, came from those who heard her. The sole complaint heard by this observer during the conference came from a special librarian who was distressed because no session had been planned for individuals representing special libraries. Her view may have some validity; at any rate, it merits thought by the program chairman of the 1969 conference. The major addresses delivered at the 1967 conference will appear in the Spring issue of this journal.

Unquestionably the most far-reaching decision taken at the conference was approval of amendments to the NCLA constitution and by-laws authorizing establishment of a central office for the association and appointment of a full-time executive secretary to serve at the pleasure of the Executive Board. Members of the board devoted considerable time to a discussion of these matters at their last meeting December 15 and agreed that creation of the office and appointment of a competent executive secretary, who need not necessarily be a trained librarian, are priority items and will be treated accordingly.

Your attention is called to the news item on page 39 of this issue. The recent mail vote of ALA members to retain ALA headquarters in Chicago raises two basic questions; namely, (1) Should proximity of a state to Headquarters be the primary factor in a decision to move or not to move the central office? and (2) Should members give more weight to recommendations of the ALA Council on issues of such magnitude? It should be noted that of the 48 states, excluding Alaska and Hawaii, members in only 13 voted to sustain the Council's recommendation to move from Chicago to Washington. Without exception, these 13 states are located east of Chicago. Members in all states west of Chicago, excepting Alaska and Hawaii, voted to stay in the Illinois city. North Carolina was one of the states whose members favored the move to Washington.

With this issue a new feature is launched in NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES: it is called SOUNDING OFF. As the name implies, this page will be devoted to a candid, straight-from-the shoulder expression of personal views relating to one or more professional issues. Some of the views expressed on this page may be controversial. Such views are encouraged by the editor, for controversy often leads to re-examination of policies and practices, and this, in turn, sometimes leads to improvements in services rendered. If you agree with the views expounded in SOUNDING OFF, let me and the writer hear from you. If you disagree with these views, let us hear from you too.

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