

Memorial Resolution Honoring Virginia Mathews

Whereas, Virginia Winslow Hopper Mathews, member of the American Library Association for 50 years and recipient of the ALA Honorary Life Membership Award in 1994, died on Saturday, May 7, 2011; and

Whereas, From 1954-1974, she was an active member of the National Book Committee and, from 1977-1985, a member of the executive committee of the Center for the Book's National Advisory Board; and

Whereas, From 1978-2008, she was a consultant for the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, specializing in projects related to early childhood development, family literacy, and library promotion in partnership with ALA and its units, especially the Association for Library Service to Children; and

Whereas, She served on many ALA and divisional committees including the first ALA Committee on Outreach and Service to the Disadvantaged and later the Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS) Advisory Committee; and the 1989 ALA Youth Divisions Task Force that wrote the policy paper, *Kids Need Libraries*. This document provided the groundwork for the *Omnibus Children and Youth Literacy Through Libraries* initiative voted on by delegates to the 1991 White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services as the conference's number one priority; and

Whereas, She was the first American Indian to seek candidacy for the ALA Presidency and was a proud member of the Osage Nation, daughter of well-known Osage scholar, John Joseph Mathews; and

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Whereas, In 1971, Virginia Mathews, Lotsee Patterson and Charles Townley formed a Task Force on American Indians within the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association and, in 1972, she was a member of the first OLOS Subcommittee on Library Service for American Indian People (1972), which led to the founding of the American Indian Library Association (AILA) in 1979; and

Whereas, Her work with the US Office of Education resulted in the funding of The Library Project at the National Indian Education Association, which supported three demonstration library projects—Akwesasne Library and Cultural Center, the Rough Rock Demonstration School and the Standing Rock Tribal Library—and all three served as models for the early development of tribal libraries on reservations; and

Whereas, She worked tirelessly with the National Council of Library and Information Services (NCLIS) to create the first White House Pre-Conference on Indian Library Services (1978) whose delegates attended the White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services (1979); and

Whereas, She was responsible for inclusion of Title IV for tribal libraries in the Library Services and Construction Act Reauthorization, 1984. This special status and funding for tribal libraries is retained in current Library Services and Technology Act legislation; and

Whereas, She was the author of several books and numerous articles published in library literature; editor of *Library Services to Children and Youth: Dollars and Sense* (Neal Schuman, 1994); and, involved in the development of the television series, *Reading Out Loud*, and other media productions related to library service, including the multimedia kits, *Helping People Cope: Making Libraries Work for the Economically and Socially Deprived and Developing Indian Libraries*; and

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Whereas, She was instrumental in planning *Learning Opportunities for Children: Libraries and Their Partners*, co-sponsored by the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress and the Association for Library Service to Children. This final event of the 1989 *Year of the Young Reader* campaign began with a White House reception hosted by first lady Barbara Bush, honorary chair of the *Year of the Young Reader*; and

Whereas, She researched and wrote, *Kids Can't Wait: Library Advocacy Now!* an ALA President's paper that formed the basis for the 1996/97 ALA President's initiative; and

Whereas, She extended her library advocacy across the country, including significant efforts in the state of Connecticut where she was recognized with honorary membership in the Connecticut School Library Association (now CASL), 1963 and the Connecticut Library Association in 2000; and

Whereas, From 1992-1997, working with ALSC, she initiated a collaboration with the National Head Start Association and developed and coordinated a nationwide training program that brought librarians and Head Start staff together to share expertise around early learning that facilitated partnerships at the local level; and

Whereas, She was the recipient of numerous awards, including a 1967 AASL citation for Outstanding Contribution to the Development of school libraries; the 1993 American Indian Library Association Award for Distinguished Service to Indian Libraries; the 1994 Head Start Bureau citation for Devoted Services to Children and Families; the Association for Library Service to Children 1995 Distinguished Service Award; the ALA Washington Office Fiftieth Anniversary Special Honor Roll for outstanding notable service to library legislation through five decades, 1996; the Women's National Book Association Outstanding Contribution Award , 1965, etc; and

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Whereas, She was an editor, mentor, colleague, and inspiration to thousands of librarians, teachers, and childcare workers who, in turn, influenced hundreds of thousands of children and the people who care about those children and was guided in her support of library service to young people and underserved people of all races, ethnicities, economic and educational status by passion, perseverance, and purity of purpose; therefore be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members;

1. Recognizes the remarkable achievements of Virginia Winslow Hopper Mathews; and
2. Expresses its sincere sympathy to her family, including her brother and sister-in-law, John and Gail Mathews, and their family.

Adopted by the Council of the American Library Association



Keith Michael Fiels
ALA Executive Director and Secretary of the ALA Council
Tuesday, June 28, 2011
In New Orleans, Louisiana

Cosponsored and adopted by:

American Indian Library Association
Association for Library Service to Children Board of Directors
Committee on Literacy
Office for Literacy and Outreach and Services Advisory Committee