

Public Library Association Membership Survey

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October 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose and scope

The purpose of the PLA membership survey is to assess member awareness, attitudes, and use of PLA services and products. The results of the survey were also compared to the results from the 2000 membership survey, where survey items remained constant. The results discussed in this report will be used to make quality recommendations to help the PLA increase or maintain member satisfaction.

Methods

- A statistically random sample of 1500 respondents, selected from the current PLA membership directory file, was invited to participate in the on-line PLA membership survey.
- Three follow up reminders were mailed out to survey non-respondents.
- On October 7, 2005, the final deadline, 614 completed questionnaires had been collected for a response rate of 40.9%.
- Final data analysis included frequencies, cross tabulation by demographic data, and cross tabulations by corresponding survey items from the 2000 membership survey.

Results

- Overall, members are very satisfied with PLA.
- Generally, new PLA members would like to become more involved in PLA.
- New PLA members indicate they lack information regarding how PLA works
- New PLA members lack general information on a number of PLA services (as compared to long term PLA members).
- In general, awareness of PLA publications is lower for newer members and newer librarians.

Recommendations

- By providing new PLA members with all the information they need regarding PLA services, they may be more inclined to take a proactive role in their membership.
- In order to increase awareness (and subscription) of PLA publications it would be advisable to target new members (who are also more likely to be newer librarians).
- PLA should focus on increasing awareness of PLA conference components, PLA publications, and technology services to its newer members.
- PLA may also consider making a special outreach movement towards new members, or new librarians in general, considering most new members are also new librarians.

Suggestions for Future PLA Membership Evaluation Studies

Considering the decreased response rate (from 53.1% in 2000 to 40.9% in 2005), despite three reminders and a financial incentive, PLA may want to consider supplementing the survey analysis with a focus group of PLA members. A focus group may be able to gather more robust data regarding member views and suggestions. It is also possible to tailor a focus group sample, as well as questions, to gather additional information on how to increase membership response to the survey instrument.

PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

In Summer 2005, the Public Library Association (PLA) conducted a survey of its members, to assess their professional interests and opinions about PLA services and programs. Data were collected regarding awareness and use of specific PLA programs and materials, topics and issues for future PLA programs, and overall feelings about being a member of PLA. The study was administered by the Library Research Center (LRC) of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. At the end of May, a statistically random sample of 1500 respondents, selected from the current PLA membership directory file, were invited to participate in the on-line PLA membership survey. To encourage cooperation, a follow-up reminder postcard, with a deadline extension to July 25th, was mailed out six weeks after the initial mailing to all non-respondents. On July 25th, the response rate was still only 24%. It was decided by PLA to extend the deadline to August 22nd, with a second reminder mailing via postcard. With little change in the response rate by August 25th, a third reminder mailing with a deadline extension to October 7th was proposed. The third reminder had two major alterations from previous reminders: a cash incentive of \$300 for one lucky respondent and a change from a postcard reminder to a letter on PLA letterhead sent by first-class mail. On October 7, 2005, there were 614 completed questionnaires, for a response rate of 40.9%. The survey questionnaire, together with a detailed summary of responses, is presented in Appendix A.

SURVEY FINDINGS

“Member attitudes” consist of responses to Q.2, Q.3, and Q.11 of the survey (see Appendix A). Only these responses are considered in this section. Overall the results suggest that members hold PLA in high regard:

- A majority (69.4%) say they will continue membership because it is helpful, while an additional 5.4% hold that PLA membership is “the best \$50 I’ve spent this year.”
- Nearly all respondents (97%) found “PLA conferences to be very rewarding” and feel that “PLA does a good job of addressing concerns of public librarians and libraries.”
- More than nine in ten feel that the PLA covers issues important to them (95.9%), PLA membership is useful to them (95.2%), that PLA is responsive to their needs and requests (93.9%), and that they were satisfied with the results of their most recent PLA contact (94.2%).
- A majority (65.1%) found PLA to be their main source for “keeping up with current developments in librarianship.” They also found it easy to get involved with PLA, and the majority (69.6%) expressed a desire to be more active in PLA than they are now.
- More than three in four (78.2%) feel that PLA helps advance their career.
- A little more than one third (34.4%) do not understand how PLA works and found PLA to distant and impersonal (35%).

- Less than one third (23.9%) felt they did not receive enough information from PLA. Far fewer (12.7%) felt that programs and materials offered by PLA were not relevant to their libraries' situation.

Comparison to 2000 Survey

Only one statistically significant difference¹ was found between member attitudes assessed in the present survey and those from the 2000 PLA membership survey. As shown below,

<u>Percent agree that:</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>
PLA does a good job of addressing concerns of public librarians and libraries	93.2	65.1

there was a large decrease in the percentage of respondents who believe PLA does a good job of addressing concerns of public librarians and libraries. Otherwise, attitude items that were common to both surveys did not differ significantly.

Differences by Subgroup

Tests were performed to see if responses (specifically, responses to Q.2, Q.3 and Q.10) vary with respect to demographic characteristics of PLA members (also assessed in the survey), including: the number of years employed in the library profession, years of membership in PLA, possession of Masters of Library Science (MLS) degree, and size of population served by members' libraries.

TABLE 1
Attitude of PLA Members
By Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession

<u>Percent agreeing that...</u>	<u>Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession</u>			
	<u>Under 5</u>	<u>5 to 9</u>	<u>10 to 15</u>	<u>15 +</u>
I find PLA conferences to be very rewarding	86.2	98.5	97.4	97.5
I would like to be more active in PLA than I am now	85.7	76.0	76.7	65.5
I don't receive enough information about PLA	40.0	24.0	34.1	19.4
Base=	42	76	90	392

¹ In this report, a difference between percentages is considered to be “statistically significant” if the probability is less than 5 out of 100 (p<.05) that the difference arose from random sampling fluctuations—i.e., is merely due to chance.

Newer librarians find PLA conferences to be less rewarding than librarians with more years of experience; however, younger members have a stronger interest in becoming more active than they are now. Newer members also feel they do not receive enough information about PLA, as compared to their older counterparts.

TABLE 2
Attitude of PLA Members
By Number of Years as A PLA Member

Percent agreeing that...	Number of Years as A PLA Member				
	Under 2	2 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
PLA is my main source for keeping up with current developments in librarianship	49.4	64.0	67.9	68.0	70.1
I would like to be more active in PLA	77.6	77.7	71.3	61.7	62.2
I don't receive enough information about PLA	41	30.8	18.4	24.8	12.9
Base=	88	114	162	122	128

Similar to years of experience, the number of years a librarian is a PLA member has a similar effect on their opinions about the information received and their desire to be more active in PLA. Newer members feel they do not receive enough information and would like to be more active in PLA than their older counterparts.

TABLE 3
Attitude of PLA Members
By Size of Legal Service Area

Percent agreeing that...	Size of Legal Service Area		
	Under 25,000	25,000 to 100,000	100,000 over
PLA covers issues that are important to me	91.4	97.0	98.1
Base=	143	206	217

Overall, members feel the PLA does a good job of addressing issues that are important to public librarians. However, librarians from smaller legal service areas agree that PLA covers issues important to them significantly less often than librarians from larger legal service areas.

Awareness of PLA Programs and Publications

The survey questionnaire listed a series of programs and publications offered by PLA in the past two years (Q.1), asking respondents to “indicate whether you have heard of or seen something about each item.” At least 60% of survey respondents marked yes to all but three of the 15 items. This indicates awareness of PLA products and publications is fairly high.

Awareness, defined above, was highest for the PLA National Conference (99.3%), followed by the PLA Website (95.3%) and PLA pre-conference programs at the ALA annual conference (94.9%).

Awareness was lowest for PLA Technotes (37.7%), PLA e-learning (52%), and PLA Traveling Workshops (54.6%).

Distributed in the middle were the PLA Smartest Card Campaign (91.4%), PLA Every Child Ready to Read Campaign (82.2%), PLA Spring Symposium (80%), PLA e-newsletter (79.4%), PLA Committee Work (78.1%), and all the PLA publications: *The New Planning for Results* (69.1%), *Staffing for Results* (64.8%), *Creating Policies for Results* (56.7%), and *Public Library Data Services Statistical Report* (59.5%)

Comparison to 2000 Survey

Only 6 of the above mentioned programs and publications were also assessed in the 2000 membership survey. Levels of awareness for these items did not differ significantly from responses reported in the 2005 survey.

Differences by Subgroup

Several findings were statistically significant. Members with a MLS degree were significantly more likely to “have heard or seen something” about all PLA Program Publications addressed in the survey (Table 7) than those who did not. Of the 16 categories, 13 were significantly affected by the number of years the respondent has been a PLA member. Awareness of PLA publications was most notably affected by differences in membership time, MLS degree holders, and more years in the library profession.

TABLE 4
Awareness of PLA Programs and Publications
By Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession

Percent aware of...	<u>Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession</u>			
	Under 5	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
PLA National Conference	99.2	100	100	100
PLA traveling workshops	45.2	43.2	43.8	60.5

PLA Technotes	26.2	28.0	33.7	42.1
PLA Spring Symposium	65.9	82.7	80.7	82.0
<i>The New Planning for Results</i>	28.6	50.7	62.4	80.1
<i>Creating Policies for Results</i>	21.4	37.3	50.6	67.1
<i>Staffing for Results</i>	26.2	44.0	62.5	75.1
<i>Public Library Data Service</i>	26.2	41.3	55.7	68.9
Base=	42	76	90	392

Awareness of PLA publications was most dramatically affected by increased years in the library profession. Among publications, *The New Planning for Results* was cited by only 28.6% of members in the library profession for less than 5 years. In contrast—80.1% of members in the profession more than 15 years were aware of *The New Planning for Results*. A similar trend followed for the other three PLA publications.

TABLE 5
Awareness of PLA Programs and Publications
By Number of Years A PLA Member

Percent aware of...	Number of Years A PLA Member				
	Under 2	2 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
Pre-conference programs at ALA annual	88.5	93.8	97.5	96.6	95.3
PLA traveling workshops	34.5	50.0	54.7	64.2	63.5
PLA e-learning	37.2	49.1	55.3	49.2	63.0
PLA website	88.2	97.2	96.8	95.7	96.0
PLA e-newsletter	64.4	78.0	85.0	82.1	81.5
PLA Technotes	23.9	33.6	45.0	37.6	41.9
PLA committee work	63.6	68.4	81.9	83.5	87.1
PLA Spring Symposium	56.3	77.0	86.1	87.2	84.9
PLA “The Smartest Card”	87.5	83.3	95.6	93.2	94.4
<i>The New Planning for Results</i>	37.9	52.7	71.1	84.5	88.1
<i>Creating Policies for Results</i>	27.6	42.3	59.7	71.6	72.0

<i>Staffing for Results</i>	35.2	50.0	64.2	81.2	84.7
<i>Public Library Data Service</i>	23.3	48.2	61.1	71.6	81.0
Base=	88	114	162	122	128

Similarly to the differences seen in number of years employed in the library profession, awareness of PLA publications was significantly affected by differences in PLA membership time. Overall, for almost all the PLA programs and publications surveyed, librarians who have been a PLA member for more years, have a greater awareness of PLA programs and publications.

TABLE 6
Awareness of PLA Programs and Publications
By Possession of a Master’s Degree in Library Science

Percent aware of...	Possession of a Master’s Degree in Library Science	
	YES	NO
<i>The New Planning for Results</i>	71.0	54.2
<i>Creating Policies for Results</i>	59.1	38.4
<i>Staffing for Results</i>	67.5	44.4
<i>Public Library Data Service</i>	61.4	45.8
Base=	537	75

Having a MLS degree significantly increased PLA members awareness of all four PLA publications.

TABLE 7
Awareness of PLA Programs and Publications
By Size of Legal Service Area

Percent aware of...	Size of Legal Service Area		
	Under 25,000	25,000 to 100,000	100,000 over
PLA Traveling Workshops	50.7	45.1	64.0
PLA E-learning	56.7	43.9	52.8
Base=	143	206	217

PLA members from larger (over 100,000) legal service areas were significantly more aware of PLA traveling workshops than members from smaller legal service areas. In contrast,

awareness of PLA E-learning was higher among the smallest (under 25,000) legal service areas as compared to their larger counterparts.

Use of PLA Programs and Publications

Those who responded they had “heard of or seen something” about a specific PLA offering were asked whether “you have used/ ordered/ or participated in” the item. Survey results indicate that awareness of PLA programs and publications is greater than actual use or participation (see Appendix A, Q.1). Items having the highest rates of utilization—percent of those aware of actually using the item—were the PLA website (86.4%), the PLA eNewsletter (84.2%), the *Public Library Data Service Statistical Report* (60.1%), and the PLA national Conference (54.9%).

Comparison to 2000 Survey

Of the seven items surveyed in 2005, and in 2000, levels of use did not differ significantly over the five year period for any of the items.

Differences by Subgroup

In general, members who have been in the library profession longer than 5 years and/or have been members of PLA for longer then 2 years have significantly increased participation rates in PLA conference activities (national conference and pre-conference programs).

TABLE 8
Utilization of PLA Programs and Publications
By Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession

Percent used/ordered/participated in...	Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession			
	under 5	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
PLA National Conference	22	43.9	56.0	63.0
Pre-conference programs	2.5	12.5	10.8	22.1
PLA “Every Child Ready to Read”	12.8	30.4	19.8	31.6
Base=	42	76	90	392

Long term PLA members have significantly increased use of ten out of the fifteen surveyed programs and publications. In every case, with the exception of the PLA eNewsletter, use of the PLA program/publication has increased with longer PLA membership.

TABLE 9
Utilization of PLA Programs and Publications
By Number of Years A PLA Member

Percent used/ordered/ participated in...	Number of Years A PLA Member				
	under 2	2 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
PLA National Conference	28.2	50.9	64.1	62.4	65.3
PLA Pre conference programs at ALA	6.0	13.9	16.6	26.1	21.8
PLA eNewsletter	71.2	76.1	72.7	65.3	56.1
PLA committee work	3.7	7.6	11.0	18.2	26.5
PLA Spring Symposium	6.1	10.9	21.7	23.5	26.7
PLA "The Smartest Card"	87.5	83.3	95.6	93.2	94.4
PLA "Every Child Ready To Read"	17.3	25.3	28.2	25.9	39.7
<i>The New Planning for Results</i>	24.4	37.2	44.2	55.6	61.5
<i>Creating Policies for Results</i>	12.0	12.2	22.7	22.8	40.2
<i>Staffing for Results</i>	11.7	16.9	27.7	32.7	42.7
<i>Public Library Data Service Statistical Report</i>	10.8	23.5	36.0	55.0	58.3
Base=	88	114	162	122	128

There is a clear, statistically significant association between years in the library profession and years a PLA member. Although no data was gathered on age of the PLA members it could be assumed that persons in the workforce longer would be older as well. Thus, one may hypothesize that older members tend to use the PLA newsletter less often due to the technological capability differences between older persons and younger persons. Further investigation would need to be done in order to establish this hypothesis.

TABLE 10
Utilization of PLA Programs and Publications
By Possession of a Master's Degree in Library Science

Percent used/ordered/participated in...	<u>Possession of a Master's Degree in Library Science</u>	
	Yes	No
PLA Technotes	21.8	10.9
PLA committee work	15.3	4.6
PLA Spring Symposium	20.3	9.2
<i>The New Planning for Results</i>	48.4	29.7
<i>Creating Policies for Results</i>	24.9	11.5
<i>Staffing for Results</i>	30.9	5.1
<i>Public Library Data Service Statistical Report</i>	42.0	21.0
	Base= 537	75

PLA members who have a MLS degrees were significantly more likely to subscribe to all four PLA publications. Those having MLS degrees were also significantly more likely to use PLA Technotes, attend PLA Spring Symposium, and participate in PLA committee work.

TABLE 11
Utilization of PLA Programs and Publications
By Size of Legal Service Area

Percent used/ordered/participated in...	<u>Size of Legal Service Area</u>		
	Under 25,000	25,000 to 100,000	100,000 over
PLA Committee Work	3.3	8.8	23.4
<i>Creating Policies for Results</i>	27.7	15.4	24.7
<i>Staffing for Results</i>	20.2	25.4	33.9
<i>Public Library Data Service Statistical Report</i>	32.5	31.1	50.5
	Base= 143	206	217

PLA members from larger legal service areas (over 100,000) were more likely to order all four PLA publications surveyed than PLA members from smaller legal service areas.

Topics and Issues of Greatest Interest to PLA Members

The survey listed 49 topics or issues of potential interest to public librarians. Each one, asked respondents to rate “how interested you are in having the topic or issue covered in some way by PLA.” Those evoking greatest interest are shown at the top of the following page, along with percentages obtained for corresponding items in the 2000 survey. (The complete ranking of all 49 items is presented in Appendix A Q.4.) Topics in which half or more respondents were “extremely interested” were: “Ideas for promoting use of library services” (65.3%) (ranked number one in the 2000 survey), followed by “Marketing the library” (58.0%), and “Ideas for increasing financial support for the library” (50.3%).

Topics in which fewest were “extremely interested” include: “Fees for service” (15.7%) (ranked second least interesting in 2000); “Finding a library job” (15.3%); and “Cooperation with academic libraries” (11.9%) (ranked least interesting in 2000).

<u>Percent “Extremely Interested” in:</u>	<u>Survey 2005</u>	<u>Survey 2000</u>
Public use of the Internet*	33.2	56.0
Outreach services*	36.5	20.5
Personnel issues	43.4	50.4
Library planning and evaluation	47.1	47.3

* Statistically significant at .05 level

Differences by Subgroup

TABLE 12
Topics or Issues to be Covered by PLA
By Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession

<u>Percent “extremely interested” in...</u>	<u>Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession</u>			
	<u>Under 5</u>	<u>5 to 9</u>	<u>10 to 15</u>	<u>15 +</u>
Ideas for promoting use of library services	68.3	61.3	68.2	65.2
Personnel issues	22.0	42.7	51.7	44.9
Certification/training issues	21.4	33.3	34.8	27.6
Improving reference performance	40.5	46.7	48.3	32.8
Reader’s advisory services	50.0	46.7	54.4	33.1
Children and technology	26.2	37.3	27.8	26.1
RFID technology	15.0	26.7	31.8	28.2
Cooperation with school libraries	21.4	45.3	26.7	23.7

Cooperation with academic libraries	23.8	18.9	12.2	9.3
Job and career information services	42.9	49.3	40.0	17.7
Finding a library job	50.0	36.0	21.1	5.2
New librarian issues	57.1	33.3	22.2	14.7
Library web sites	51.2	49.3	50.6	32.4
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	Base= 42	76	90	392

Librarians who have been employed longer have significantly more interest in personnel issues than new librarians. Newer librarians have more interest in issues that affect new librarians, and career and job information.

TABLE 13
Topics or Issues to be Covered by PLA
By Number of Years A PLA Member

Percent “extremely Interested” in...	Number of Years A PLA Member				
	under 2	2 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
Ideas for increasing financial support for library	50.0	46.4	44.7	50.8	60.6
Reading clubs/groups for adults/children	43.7	37.8	39.1	42.1	21.4
RFID technology	21.2	23.0	28.7	24.2	37.1
Children’s services	31.0	31.9	37.1	26.2	35.4
Working with trustees	13.8	22.1	29.2	23.1	33.1
Job and career information	39.1	31.9	30.0	23.0	14.3
Finding a library job	35.6	18.6	12.5	12.3	4.8
New librarian issues	46.0	23.9	18.1	13.1	15.9
Cooperation with academic libraries	19.5	14.2	11.9	9.1	7.1
Collection development	50.6	54.9	52.2	43.4	31.5
Services to physically impaired	16.1	27.7	23.8	21.3	10.3
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	Base= 88	114	162	122	128

Similarly to number of years employed in the library profession, newer PLA members are interested in new librarian issues, and job and career information. Newer members are also significantly more interested in cooperation with academic libraries and reading clubs/groups. Older members are more interested in RFID technology, working with trustees, and “ideas for increasing financial support for the library.”

TABLE 14
Topics or Issues to be Covered by PLA
By Possession of a Master’s Degree in Library Science

Percent “extremely interested” in...	Possession of a Master’s Degree in Library Science	
	Yes	No
Certification and training issues	27.9	33.8
Children and technology	25.8	43.2
Early childhood literacy	33.5	39.7
Reading clubs/groups for adults/children	34.3	50.0
Circulation issues	39.2	20.0
Cooperation with school libraries	24.8	44.6
Use of volunteers	24.6	39.7
Unattended children in the library	27.1	39.7
Finding a library job	13.9	25.7
New librarian issues	19.4	39.2
Services to physically impaired	18.4	31.5
Fees for service	14.3	26.4
	Base= 537	75

PLA members with a MLS degree are significantly more interested in circulation issues than members without a MLS. PLA members who do not hold a MLS were significantly more interested in the other eleven issues.

TABLE 15
Topics or Issues to be Covered by PLA
By Size of Legal Service Area

Percent “extremely interested” in...	Size of Legal Service Area		
	Under 25,000	25,000 to 100,000	100,000 over
Diversity of staff	15.4	15.7	28.6
Working with diverse patrons	32.2	28.6	44.6
Legislation on library issues	37.8	24.0	31.3
RFID Technology	17.1	30.2	31.9
Children’s services	32.4	36.1	28.5
Working with friends groups	33.6	27.0	24.5
Local history collections and services	32.9	28.6	19.1
Working with trustees	32.2	24.3	20.7
Homeless people in the library	18.2	21.5	26.8
Recruitment	9.9	14.6	27.1
Base=	143	206	217

PLA members from larger (over 100,000) legal service areas are significantly more interested in diversity issues (“diversity of staff” and “working with diverse patrons”). PLA members from smaller (under 25,000) legal service areas were significantly more interested in “working with friends groups,” “local history collections and services,” and “working with trustees.” A list of other topics respondents would be interested in is provided in Appendix B.

Use of and Attitudes Toward “Public Libraries”

Respondents were queried about reading patterns pertaining to Public Libraries. More than one in three (37.2%) indicated they “read all or most of the magazine” (compared to 36.0% in 2000). Nearly half (46.2%) said they read the articles that are most interesting to them (compared to 48% in 2000). Fewer (15%) “skim the journal without spending much time on any one section,” while only one in 60 (1.6%) indicated they “don’t really pay much attention to it.”

The survey listed twelve principal “components” of Public Libraries. For each one, asked respondents to “rate level of interest in that component.” Eight out of twelve components were rated either “very high” or “moderately high” in interest (See Appendix A, Q.9). Components rated most interesting were *Tales from the Front* (29.9%), *Perspectives* (25.8%), and *Book Talk* (24.5%). Items rated least interesting were advertisements (2.4%) and *From the President* (6.5%).

About half (49.2%) of respondents indicated they pass along their copy of Public Libraries for others in the library to read (compared to 52% in 2000). Asked, “How many people in your library including yourself...typically read your copy of Public Libraries?,” the average (mean) number reported was 5.01 persons (compared to 4.6 persons in 2000). The median was 3.0 (quartiles 3.0 and 6.0).

There was also a new question regarding use of Public Libraries in the survey instrument this year. More than half (56.0%) use Public Libraries to “change or implement a new practice or program” in their library. Almost half (49.7%) of respondents use Public Libraries’s “articles to initiate discussion about staff development.” Fewer (14.8%) “refer articles to board members or county supervisors.”

TABLE 16
Use of and Attitudes Toward “Public Libraries”
By Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession

Percent whom...	Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession			
	Under 5	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
Pass along copy of <u>PL</u> for others In the library to read	35.7	35.5	48.9	54.3
Base=	42	76	90	392

TABLE 17
Use of and Attitudes Toward “Public Libraries”
By Number of Years A PLA Member

Percent whom...	Number of Years A PLA Member				
	under 2	2 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
Pass along copy of <u>PL</u> for others in the library to read	37.5	40.4	49.4	61.5	53.1
Base=	88	114	162	122	128

TABLE 18
Use of and Attitudes Toward “Public Libraries”
By Size of Legal Service Area

Percent whom...	Size of Legal Service Area		
	Under 25,000	25,000 to 100,000	100,000 over
Pass along copy of <u>PL</u> for others in the library to read	59.4	51.0	44.7
Base=	143	206	217

Overall, respondents who have been members of PLA and or involved in the library profession for a greater amount of time were more likely to “pass along a copy of PL for others in the library to read.” PLA members from smaller (under 25,000) legal service areas were also more likely to “pass along a copy of PL for other in the library to read” than their counterparts in larger service areas.

Respondents were asked what *one* thing about Public Libraries they would change if it were possible. 85% of respondents offer no comment for changes or improvements, suggesting that PLA members are generally satisfied with the journal. Comments that were made regarding use of Public Libraries can be found in Appendix C, comments regarding changes to Public Libraries can be found in Appendix D.

Use of PLA Website

Questions regarding PLA member’s use of the PLA website are new to the survey instrument this year. Most (64.0%) of PLA members indicate they visit the PLA website less often than once a month. The majority (65.8%) of members use the PLA website for conference information. Most (60.1%) of PLA Members also find the “conference, events, and online learning” sections of the site most useful. Many (44.3%) of PLA members use the website for press releases and news. Similarly, 43.8% of PLA members find the “Home page (News from PLA)” to be most useful.

Overall, PLA members find the PLA website easy to navigate with few (11.2%) of respondents “becoming lost at any point when visiting the PLA website.”

TABLE 19
Use of PLA website
By Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession

Percent use website for...	<u>Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession</u>			
	<u>Under 5</u>	<u>5 to 9</u>	<u>10 to 15</u>	<u>15 +</u>
Conference information	61.9	57.9	66.7	69.1
Membership	21.4	23.7	13.3	12.0
Contacting PLA staff	2.4	1.3	2.2	10.2
Job and career	33.3	34.2	24.4	13.0
Literacy information	26.2	23.7	10.0	14.8
Base=	42	76	90	392

Newer librarians are significantly more likely to use the PLA website for “membership information,” “literacy information,” and for “job and career information” than their more experienced counterparts.

TABLE 20
Use of PLA website
By Number of Years A PLA Member

Percent use website for...	Number of Years A PLA Member				
	under 2	2 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
PLA and committee documents	11.4	16.7	21.0	18.9	27.3
Conference information	51.1	62.3	67.9	73.8	68.8
Classes/continuing education	18.2	31.6	34.6	30.3	20.3
Contacting PLA staff	3.4	4.4	3.7	6.6	18.0
Job and career information	34.1	24.6	18.5	14.8	8.6
Literacy information	22.7	18.4	18.5	14.8	7.8
Base=	88	114	162	122	128

Again, similarly to number of years employed in the library profession, newer PLA members are more likely to use the website for “job and career information,” and “literacy information.” Older PLA members are more likely to use the PLA website for conference related materials (“PLA and committee documents,” “conference information,” and “contacting PLA staff.”)

TABLE 21
Use of PLA website
By Possession of a Master’s Degree in Library Science

Percent use website for...	Yes	No
PLA and committee documents	21.0	10.7
Conference information	68.3	48.0
Literacy Information	14.0	30.7
Base=	537	75

PLA members that hold a MLS are more likely to use the PLA website for conference information (PLA committee documents, and general conference information). Non-MLS degree holding members are more likely to use the website for literacy information than their degree holding counterparts.

TABLE 22
Use of PLA website
By Size of Legal Service Area

Percent use website for...	Size of Legal Service Area		
	Under 25,000	25,000 to 100,000	100,000 over
PLA committee documents	13.3	13.1	29.5
Conference information	57.3	69.9	69.1
Base=	143	206	217

PLA members from larger legal service areas were more likely to use the PLA website for conference information (PLA committee documents, and general conference information) than their counterparts from smaller legal service areas. Additional comments on other types of information PLA members access at the PLA website can be found in Appendix E. PLA member comments on how to make the PLA website more useful can be found in Appendix F.

Use of Special PLA Programs

New to the survey this year are data elements addressing PLA eNews, PLA/ALSC “Every Child Ready to Read @Your Library” (ECRTR) program, and the “PLA Smartest Card. Get It. Use It. @ Your Library” public library advisory campaign (Q.19 through Q21c).

Most (72.3%) of PLA members have “read about the ECRTR program on the PLA website or in library literature.” Of those that are aware of the ECRTR program, most (64.0%) read about the ECRTR program. Many (41.4%) “heard about the ECRTR program from a colleague.” One in four (25.4%) have “used ECRTR materials at their library.” Finally, one in nine (11.2%) of respondents have “attended ECRTR training programs.” Of those that had never used ECRTR or gone for training, more than a quarter (27.7%) are considering it.

More than half (53.4%) of PLA members indicate they “skim without spending much time on” the PLA eNews.

Many (91.2%) PLA members are aware of the Smartest Card campaign. Of those that are aware of the “Smartest Card” campaign, most (84.2%) of PLA members have “read about the Smartest Card campaign on PLA website or in library literature.” Almost half (46.8%) have “heard of the Smartest Card campaign from a colleague.” Some (28.2%) of PLA members responding have “used Smartest Card materials at [their] library.” One in ten (10.4%) have “attended Smartest Card programs.” Of those who are have not used the Smartest Card or attended programs, almost one in three (32.6%) are considering it.

TABLE 23
Use of PLA website
By Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession

Percent ...	Number of Years Employed in the Library Profession			
	Under 5	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
Aware of PLA's Smartest Card	81.0	92.1	91.1	92.9
Attended Smartest Card programs	2.9	4.3	6.1	12.9
Aware of ECRTR program	57.1	64.5	71.1	76.0
Base=	42	76	90	392

More experienced PLA members were significantly more likely to be aware of and attended Smartest Card programs, as well as be aware of ECRTR programs.

TABLE 24
Use of PLA website
By Number of Years A PLA Member

Percent...	Number of Years A PLA Member				
	under 2	2 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 15	15 +
Aware of PLA's Smartest Card	89.8	83.3	92.6	92.6	96.1
Attend Smartest Cards programs	7.6	3.2	10.0	14.2	14.6
Use Smartest Card Materials	19.0	21.1	25.3	33.6	38.2
Used ECRTR materials	10.9	33.8	25.7	23.3	28.7
Base=	88	114	162	122	128

Older PLA members were significantly more likely to be “aware of PLA’s smartest card,” “attend Smartest Card programs,” and “use Smartest Card materials at their library.” They are also more likely to use ECRTR materials at their library than new PLA members.

TABLE 25
Use of PLA website
By Possession of a Master's Degree in Library Science

Percent ...	Yes	No
Consider using ECRTR materials	27.0	51.3
Base=	537	75

PLA members with MLS degrees were significantly more likely to consider using ECRTR materials than non degree holding members.

TABLE 26
Use of PLA website
By Size of Legal Service Area

Percent...	Size of Legal Service Area		
	Under 25,000	25,000 to 100,000	100,000 over
Consider using the Smartest Card	44.8	31.9	28.9
Consider using ECRTR materials	43.8	28.2	23.6
Base=	143	206	217

PLA members from smaller (under 25,000) legal service areas were significantly more likely to consider using both Smartest Card and ECRTR materials.

Continuing Education

New to the survey in 2005 were data elements regarding continuing education (Q.22 through Q.24a.). Most (78.2%) respondents indicate they regularly use periodicals to follow education and updates on library practice. Almost half (46.4%) of responding members use electronic discussion lists to follow education and updates on library practice. One in three (32.7%) indicate they regularly use books to follow education and updates on library practice. Respondents use web-based conference proceedings and audio-taped conference proceedings least often (8.0% and 1.5% respectively).

When asked if they would rather have to “travel to another location” or use an “online workshop” for a continuing education workshop, most (60.1%) would rather travel. Of those that have taken an “online continuing education course” (42.3%), most (13.5%) have taken it through a library school or some “other” (12.2%) provider.

Demographics of the PLA member population

Almost half (47.5%) of respondents self-identify their professional responsibilities as “public library administration.” Most (35.5%) of responding PLA members come from legal service areas over 100,000, then respondents (33.7%) from medium (25,000 to 100,000) sized Legal Service Areas, followed by respondents (23.4%) from small (under 25,000) sized Legal Service Areas. The majority (63.8%) of members have been in the library profession for more than 15 years. Eight out of nine (87.8%) of respondents have a MLS degree.

Summary

Overall, members are very satisfied with PLA. However, there are some areas that could potentially increase member satisfaction, as well as effectiveness of the PLA's mission to "enhances the development and effectiveness of public library staff and public library services"².

Of greatest interest to PLA may be the findings related to new PLA members. Generally, new PLA members would like to become more involved in PLA, yet they indicate they lack information regarding how PLA works, as well as a general information on a number of PLA services (as compared to long term PLA members). If new PLA members were given all the information they need regarding PLA services, they may be more inclined to take a more proactive role in their membership.

In general, awareness of PLA publications is lower for newer members and newer librarians. In order to increase awareness (and perhaps subscriptions) of these publications it would be advisable to target new members (who are also more likely to be newer librarians).

Finally, because of the drop in response rate for this membership survey from 53.1% in 2000 to 40.9% in 2005, despite three reminders and a financial incentive, PLA may want to consider supplementing the survey analysis with a focus group of PLA members. A focus group may be able to gather more robust data regarding member views and suggestions. In addition to the quantitative analysis that surveying provides, focus groups can provide qualitative data that puts a human face on the survey numbers. By augmenting the PLA Membership survey with focus groups, issues can be discussed in depth, which could potentially yield richer response information. By tailoring a focus group sample, as well as questions, it would be possible to explore PLA membership issues in greater detail as well as exploring the lower response rate to the survey instrument.

² Mission Statement from the PLA website: <http://www.pla.org/ala/pla/pla.htm> Accessed on 10/20/05.

APPENDIX A

**Summary of Survey Responses
(Presented in questionnaire format)**

PUBLIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
Member Survey 2005

1. Below is a listing of programs and publications that the Public Library Association has offered in the past two years. In the left-hand column **(a)**, indicate whether you have heard of or seen anything about each item. If "Yes", indicate in the right-hand column **(b)** if you have used/ ordered/ participated in the item.

	(a)		(b)	
	Heard of/ seen something on?		Used/ ordered/ participated in?	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>N</u>
PLA National Conference	99.3	593	56.5	588
PLA pre-conference programs at ALA Annual Conference	94.9	605	17.5	570
PLA Traveling Workshops	54.6	606	5.3	524
PLA eLearning	52.0	608	3.6	523
PLA Website	95.3	593	83.4	584
PLA eNewsletter	79.4	597	69.3	564
PLA Technotes	37.7	602	20.4	515
PLA committee work	78.1	607	14.0	542
PLA Spring Symposium	80.0	601	19.0	548
PLA Publications:				
The New Planning for Results	69.1	598	46.4	545
Creating Policies for Results	56.7	598	23.3	524
Staffing for Results	64.8	600	28.1	531
Public Library Data Service Statistical Report	59.5	595	39.3	524
PLA Smartest card. Get It. Use It. @ Your Library - Public Library Advocacy Campaign	91.4	606	31.9	564
PLA Every Child Ready to read @Your Library Early Literacy Project	82.8	606	28.0	507

2. Listed below are several statements about the Public Library Association. We'd like to know whether you personally **agree** or **disagree** with each statement. For each statement, circle the number of that best corresponds to your feelings about that statement. (Average N=588)

	<u>Definitely agree</u>	<u>Generally agree</u>	<u>Moderately agree</u>	<u>Moderately disagree</u>	<u>Generally disagree</u>	<u>Definitely disagree</u>
- I find PLA conferences to be very rewarding	53.3	30.7	13.0	2.0	0.9	0.0
- PLA does a good job of addressing concerns of public librarians and libraries	33.8	49.1	14.1	2.0	0.7	0.3
- PLA covers issues that are important to me	30.2	47.6	18.1	3.2	0.8	0.2
- PLA membership is useful to me	30.8	42.7	21.7	4.0	0.7	0.2
- PLA is responsive to my needs and requests	0.5	13.2	40.0	40.7	4.3	1.2
- PLA helps advance my career	7.6	24.7	45.9	13.9	5.7	2.2
- PLA is my main source for keeping up with current developments in librarianship	8.1	21.3	35.7	23.4	9.0	2.5
- I would like to be more active in PLA than I am now	10.0	23.0	36.6	20.8	7.0	2.7
- I found it easy to get involved in PLA	6.7	19.1	39.3	26.3	6.5	2.2
- I don't understand how PLA works	3.0	7.9	23.5	29.0	26.8	9.9
- PLA is too distant and impersonal	1.9	6.1	27.0	28.8	25.3	11.0
- I don't receive enough information about PLA	1.0	5.4	17.5	33.1	28.8	14.2
- The programs and materials offered by PLA are not relevant to my library's situation	1.2	1.7	9.8	28.2	32.7	26.5

3. Overall, how satisfied are you with the results of your most recent contact with PLA? (CIRCLE ONE) (N=570)

Very satisfied.....	52.3
Somewhat satisfied.....	41.9
Not too satisfied.....	4.6
Not satisfied at all.....	1.2

4. Below are listed topics or issues of potential interest to public librarians. For each item, circle the number that best describes how interested you are in having the topic or issue covered in some way by PLA (e.g., through conferences, publications, seminars, eLearning, policies, or work with other ALA units.) Assume the word "library" means "public library." (Average N=607)

	<u>Extremely Interested</u>	<u>Moderately Interested</u>	<u>Not very Interested</u>	<u>Not at all Interested</u>
- Ideas for promoting use of library services	65.3	31.3	3.1	0.3
- Public use of the Internet	33.2	52.1	13.1	1.3
- Electronic reference services	35.0	52.1	12.2	0.7
- Personnel issues	43.4	42.8	12.0	1.8
- Certification, training issues	28.5	45.5	22.9	3.1
- Improving reference performance	37.4	48.1	12.2	2.3
- Access to information/censorship	27.5	53.9	16.0	2.6
- Ideas for increasing financial support for the library	50.3	35.4	12.3	2.0

- Library planning and evaluation	47.1	38.1	13.0	1.8
- Legal issues affecting libraries	34.2	48.3	15.6	2.0
- Diversity of staff	20.8	45.5	29.0	4.8
- Working with diverse patrons	35.6	47.3	14.8	2.3
- Readers' advisory services	39.2	42.2	16.1	2.5
- Legislation on library issues	30.6	48.0	17.6	3.8
- Electronic books	15.2	43.8	31.4	9.6
- Measuring use of nonprint resources	28.9	47.3	18.4	5.5
- Circulation of nonprint resources	24.1	50.9	20.9	4.1
- Children and technology	28.0	48.6	18.9	4.4
- Early childhood literacy	34.3	38.3	22.0	5.4
- Children's literacy	36.3	38.8	19.9	4.9
- Adult Literacy	33.4	48.8	15.7	2.1
- How to be more effective in the local political process	37.1	39.0	19.6	4.3
- Nonprint collections	19.5	56.8	20.0	3.6
- Reading clubs/groups for adults-children	36.5	44.4	15.8	3.3
- Use of commercial database systems	23.1	53.0	19.8	4.1
- Young adult services	35.2	43.9	17.1	3.8
- Circulation issues	22.4	51.2	21.5	5.0
- RFID technology	27.4	40.7	23.7	8.2
- Cooperation with school libraries	27.3	41.1	25.0	6.7
- Children's services	32.7	39.5	21.9	5.9
- Library security	28.4	47.5	19.7	4.4
- Working with Friends groups	27.2	43.9	22.6	6.3
- Use of Volunteers	26.4	49.9	19.9	3.8
- Library construction	28.4	33.7	28.2	9.7
- Local history collections and services	25.7	43.3	23.8	7.2
- Outreach services	36.5	46.5	13.7	3.3
- Working with trustees	25.3	39.1	24.8	10.8
- Unattended children in the library	28.7	44.0	21.1	6.3
- Homeless people in the library	22.5	40.8	29.9	6.7
- Job and career information services	27.0	47.0	19.2	6.7
- Cooperation with academic libraries	11.9	40.4	32.8	15.0
- Programming of all types	44.6	43.6	10.0	1.8
- Recruitment	19.2	40.0	28.9	11.7
- Finding a library job	15.3	25.0	37.5	22.2
- Marketing the library	58.0	34.6	6.3	1.2

- New librarian issues	21.7	34.4	30.3	13.7
- Collection development	46.4	41.8	9.5	2.3
- Money issues, salary issues	39.5	41.7	15.2	3.6
- Services to the physically impaired	20.1	58.6	17.5	3.8
- Fees for service	15.7	41.6	32.9	9.8
- Library websites	38.7	46.5	12.7	2.0
- Other (SPECIFY) <u>(See Appendix B)</u>				

5. Public Libraries is the bi-monthly journal of PLA that is sent to all members. In general, would you say that you usually: **(CIRCLE ONE) (N=613)**

Read all or most of the magazine	37.2
Only read the articles that are of most interest to you	46.2
Skim the journal without spending much time on any one section	15.0
Don't really pay very much attention to it	1.6

6. How do you use Public Libraries? **(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.) (N=614)**

Use articles to initiate discussion about staff development.....	49.7
Refer articles to board members or county supervisors	14.8
Use articles to change or implement a new practice or program in your library.....	56.0
Other: (SPECIFY) (See Appendix C)	

7. Do you usually pass along your copy of Public Libraries for others in your library to read? **(N=614)**

Yes.....	49.2
No	50.8(Skip to Q.9)

8. About how many people in your library, including yourself, would you say typically read your copy of Public Libraries? **(N=301)**

9. Below is a list of components of Public Libraries. For each, please circle the number that best describes your level of interest in that component. **(Average N=597)**

	<u>Level of Interest is:</u>				
	<u>Very High</u>	<u>Moderately high</u>	<u>Moderately low</u>	<u>Very low</u>	<u>No opinion/ Do not read</u>
Editor's note	7.5	38.2	35.8	9.8	8.8
From the President	6.5	37.5	36.5	10.4	9.1
Tales from the Front	29.9	52.2	12.9	1.2	3.9
Perspectives	25.8	52.0	16.0	1.4	4.9
Book Talk	24.5	42.6	23.8	4.0	5.0
Internet Spotlight	19.8	48.0	23.5	3.8	4.8
Tech Talk	19.7	41.6	27.5	6.0	5.1
News from PLA	18.8	48.9	23.8	4.0	5.0
By the Book	17.0	48.4	24.3	3.0	7.3

New product News	21.5	46.1	21.6	5.4	5.4
Verso	13.7	37.5	28.1	6.4	14.4
Advertisements	2.4	17.2	40.4	22.7	17.3

10. If you could change any one thing about Public Libraries, what would it be? **(See Appendix D)**

11. Which of the following best describes your overall feelings about being a member of PLA? **(CIRCLE ONE) (N=608)**

PLA membership is:

The best \$50 I've spent this year	5.4
Something I will continue because I find it useful.....	69.4
Something I will continue, but I don't feel very strongly about it.....	18.4
Something I may drop in the next five years.....	6.7

12. In the past three years, have you ... **(Average N=604)**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Used PLA products or services?	68.2	31.8
Called the PLA office with a question?	18.0	82.0
Held a PLA elected office or chaired a committee?	5.1	94.9
Served on a PLA committee?	10.7	89.3
Attended a PLA conference?	54.0	46.0
Attended the PLA Spring Symposium?	13.8	86.2

13. About how often do you visit the PLA web site (www.pla.org)? **(N=614)**

Everyday.....	0.0
Once a week	3.9
Once a month.....	22.0
Less often than once a month.....	64.0
Never.....	10.1(Skip to Q.19)

14. For what types of information/ or purposes do you usually visit the PLA website? **(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.) (Average N=614)**

Overview of organization.....	16.3
Press releases and news.....	44.3
PLA and committee documents	19.7
Conference information.....	65.8
Classes and continuing education.....	27.9
Membership.....	14.0
Contacting Business Committees	0.5
Contacting Issues and Concerns Cluster	3.6
Contacting PLA staff	7.3
Contacting Library Services Cluster	2.9
Contacting Library Development Cluster	1.6
Job and career information	19.1
Library advocacy information	22.3
Literacy information.....	16.1
Other (SPECIFY) (See Appendix E)	

15. Using the PLA web site, how easy/difficult is it to ... (Average N=499)

	<u>Very easy</u>	<u>Fairly easy</u>	<u>Fairly difficult</u>	<u>Very difficult</u>
Return to PLA's home page?	37.7	58.9	3.4	0.0
Search the overall web site?	18.5	71.1	9.4	1.0
Find contact information?	20.0	70.9	8.7	0.4
Use the menus on the left-hand side?	32.0	62.6	5.5	0.0
Read the screen?	34.4	62.0	3.4	0.2

16. Have you ever become "lost" at any point when visiting the PLA Website? (N=114)

Yes.....	11.2
No.....	88.8

17. Which areas of the web site do you find most useful? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.) (N=500)

Home page (News from PLA).....	43.8
About PLA	13.2
Organization	6.0
Conferences, Events, and Online Learning	60.1
Committee Work.....	6.8
Publications and Reports.....	31.3
Issues and Advocacy	27.2
Resources	23.0
Awards	8.0
News.....	28.7

18. What would make the PLA web site more useful? (See Appendix F)

19. PLA eNews is the electronic newsletter of the Public Library Association. In general, would you say that you usually: (CIRCLE ONE) (N=606)

Read all or most of the eNews	13.7
Skim it without spending much time on it	54.1
Never look at it/delete without opening it	6.9
I opted out of e-mailings -- do not receive	25.2

20a. Are you aware of the PLA/ALSC "Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library"(ECRTR) program? (N=614)

Yes.....	72.3
No	27.7 (skip to Q.21a)

IF YES:

b. Have you ever...

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>N</u>
Read about the ECRTR program on the PLA web page or in library literature?	64.0	439
Heard about ECRTR from a colleague?	41.4	435
Used ECRTR materials at your library?	25.4	429
Attended ECRTR training programs?	11.2	429

c. If you have **not** used the ECRTR materials or attended ECRTR training, are you considering it? (N=354)

Yes.....29.7
 No.....70.3

21a. Are you aware of the PLA Smartest Card. Get It. Use It. @ Your Library - Public Library Advocacy Campaign? (N=614)

Yes.....91.2
 No.....8.8 (skip to Q.22a)

IF YES:

b. Have you ever...	<u>Yes</u>	<u>N</u>
Read about the Campaign on the PLA web page or in library literature?	92.3	560
Heard about the Campaign from a colleague?	46.8	560
Used the Smartest Card materials at your library?	28.2	560
Attended Smartest Card programs?	10.4	560

c. If you have **not** used the Smartest Card materials or attended Smartest Card programs, are you considering it? (N=448)

Yes.....32.6
 No.....67.4

22. How often do you use the following for education and updates on library practice? (Average N=605)

	<u>Regularly</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>
Periodicals	78.2	18.9	1.8	1.1
Books	32.7	53.0	12.3	2.0
Electronic discussion lists	46.4	30.1	15.7	7.8
Web-based courses	8.0	29.0	34.3	28.7
Audio-taped conference proceedings	1.5	11.8	35.2	51.5

23. If you had to choose between a continuing education workshop at another location or taking the same workshop online, which would you prefer? (N=601)

Travel to another location.....60.1
 Online workshop.....39.9

24a. Have you ever taken an online continuing education course? (N=614)

Yes.....42.3
 No.....57.7 (skip to Q.25)

IF YES:

b. From which of the following providers have you taken an online continuing education course?
 (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.) (N=614)

ALA/ALA unit	6.4
PLA	3.1
OCLC	6.2
WebJunction.....	8.8
Library school.....	13.5
University.....	9.3

State/Regional Library	10.3
State Library association	6.7
Other (SPECIFY) (See Appendix G)	

25. Please circle the number that best describes your professional responsibilities: (**N=613**)

Public library administration	47.5
Adult services	17.3
Young adult services	1.5
Children's services	7.8
Public library technical services	5.1
Trustee	1.8
Other library position (SPECIFY) (See Appendix H)	
Not employed in a public library.....	5.4

26. Please indicate the population of the legal service area of your library: (**N=611**)

10,000 or under.....	9.3
10,001 to 25,000.....	14.1
25,001 to 50,000.....	18.0
50,001 to 100,000.....	15.7
100,001 to 250,000.....	13.7
250,001 to 500,000.....	7.7
Over 500,000.....	14.1
Not Applicable	7.4

27. How long have you been employed in the library profession? (**N=614**)

15 years or more	63.8
10 to 15 years	14.7
5 to 9 years	12.4
Less than 5 years	6.8
Not applicable.....	2.3

28. Do you possess a Master's Degree in Library Science? (**N=612**)

Yes.....	87.7
No.....	12.3

29. How long have you been a member of PLA? (**N=614**)

15 years or more	63.8
10 to 14 years	14.7
5 to 9 years	12.4
2 to 4 years	6.8
Less than 2 years	2.3

30. Of which of the following ALA divisions are you a member? (**CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY.**) (**N=614**)

AASL	0.8
ALTA	2.3
ALSC.....	10.4
ACRL	2.1
ASCLA	2.8
LAMA	20.0

LITA.....	6.8
RUSA.....	10.7
ALCTS.....	2.8
YALSA.....	8.6
None of the above.....	47.6

31. Are you a member of a state library association? (N=610)

Yes.....	83.0
No.....	17.0

32. Who pays for your PLA membership? (N=610)

You yourself.....	49.2
Your employer.....	47.0
Both.....	3.8

33. Finally, please use the space below to tell us how PLA could be more responsive to your needs:

(See Appendix I)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION. Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope or mail to:

**The Library Research Center
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
501 East Daniel Street
Champaign, Illinois 61820**

APPENDIX B

**Q.4: “Other” topics or issues of potential interest to public librarians
Questions reported as electronically submitted by the respondent.**

The following is a list of the 131 verbatim responses to “Other” topics or issues of potential interest to public librarians. Each response is separated by a line.

1. Working with elementary schools
2. Summer Reading programs
3. Recruiting and retaining Friends of the Library members.
4. How to estimate value of a collection for insurance purposes

Building consensus for library advocacy statewide

Management skills

Please note that I am a Trustee and Director of a Library, not an employee. Therefore, I have not answered these questions.

How TO CREATE A SUCCESSFUL LIBRARY FOUNDATION.

HOW TO CONDUCT LOCAL ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

I was disappointed in the PLA Conference in Seattle because I felt that there were very few programs addressing Reference Services.

Recruiting/training for library management

Programs aimed at the current or soon-to-be retired public librarian. Give us a reason to continue to belong to PLA and attend conferences, etc. This is a growing group that needs something to keep us part of the profession.

International library issues

Educational programs, such as reading groups, exhibitions, film discussions and the like available for library use with their communities.

Working with home schooled children, their parents and organizations

Reader's advisory in both fiction and non-fiction for adults, yas and children

Geographic data for planning

Business and Investment Information Services
Mid-level management and leadership

Libraries as facilitators of civic engagement
Library service philosophy (eg give 'em what they want vs. Give 'em what they need)
Library futurism (how to survive & stay relevant)

GENEALOGY

Digital scanning techniques and Dublin Core metadata for putting archival collections online

Cost benefit analysis- what do services cost, what is their value

Periodicals in the library--print vs. Electronic
Fund raising
Planned/Deferred gifts
Advocacy for part time employeed (ie prorated benefits)
Continuing ed for the technologically impaired
IMPROVING THE IMAGE OF LIBRARIANS
IMPROVING SALARIES

City and county cooperation.

Training issues for new branch librarians

Working with ILS vendors to develop USEFUL products

Return on investment studies to focus on the value of libraries for communities

Focus some attention on how a librarian in a non-supervisory or non-management position can deal with negative situations in the workplace in such a way as to protect his/her career and reputation. The approach taken in personnel-related ALA publications seem to be from the viewpoint of a supervisor or manager dealing with subordinate staff. What about a publication that is targeted to subordinate staff who happens to be dealing with difficult situations at work? Specific scenario example -- What can a librarian do in a situation where he/she is the target of emotional abuse/bullying by his/her supervisor. The librarian is in a position with no power, and upper management gives no credibility to the librarian's concerns, choosing instead to protect the supervisor and the organization by characterizing the subordinate librarian as a negative influence. The negative impact on the librarian who brought his/her concerns to management hoping for help, is significant and is very traumatic. The only choice seems to be for the librarian to resign, but that situation becomes very hard to explain or deal with when it comes time to look for another job. I would like to see ALA provide guidance on standards for ethical behavior in the workplace, especially from those in positions of power, and to see discussion on the importance of creating a "positive library workplace" that is free of emotional harrassment and bullying. An anonymous hotline for those who need some guidance on how to deal with ethical situations in the library might be a possibility, but seminars or conference workshops would be great. This type of situation is very real and needs to be addressed in a way that provides support and solutions for those who have experienced the damaging effects of a negative and emotionally unsafe workplace.

Audiovisual topics especially digital downloads of music movies audiobooks

Working with summer youth - these are high school students working a stated number of hours a week during the summer and paid by a public agency, not the library. Sub-issues include:

How they are trained (and whether they get paid for training)

Evaluating their performance

Instilling a sense of responsibility - i.e., they are committed to work X number of hours a day, and can't just decide to take off for the beach

How departments work as teams

Successful community partnerships

Library Services to Older Adults

Library Services to the Baby Boomers

Bookmobile Library Services

Electronic-E Books

Developing Writing Groups for Adults & Older Adults

Bulletin board displays, patron surveys, ways to arrange the library to increase circulation, programing for children, how to make the library function with a drive thru window, floating books,

Demographics - not so much obtaining, as how they can be used in decision making for library programs and services. Often these programs are too focused on the mechanics of using census bureau or other websites.

Resume' design/building.

PLA's role is addressing library interaction with current religious and political issues.

Space planning in an existing building.

SALARIES, SALARIES, SALARIES!!

Customer service/satisfaction

Return on investment; surveying; statistics

Training for support staff - a process of showing them the "big" library picture. Also educating support staff of the evolution of libraries - how they are changing.

Information on how we compare to other professions. What can we boast about that others do not have. What benefits could we provide to staff (other than higher salaries) that might attract a new generation?

Services to seniors

Building grants (bricks and mortar), also Operating grants. We have such a small tax base that businesses feel they are already taxed to the limit and we have one of the smallest budgets in the state. I need more money and this parish can't give me any more. Help!

Multilingual opacs

I'm interested in the education of librarians and the value of the MLS degree. I'm interested in working for fair compensation for librarians and for making it a career that is attractive to motivated, highly qualified new professionals. I think it remains important to have different compensation levels that distinguish between people who have chosen librarianship for a career and gone to the trouble of getting a professional education, and people who are in it because it's a "nice place to work." I think some of the current trend to blur the distinction is not going to advance the profession and will perpetuate the public perception of librarians as people who "stamp books".

Universal design and accessibility of electronic resources, facilities and other public accommodations for everyone - including users with disabilities. This is a bigger issue than basic customer service / etiquette for working with people with disabilities.

PLA & Small/Rural Serving libraries

Cost effective publications - I don't need the nice binding/wonderful graphics et. Al. I need the data.

Interstate connectivity, how to get beyond interlibrary loan in the age of technology.

Retirement issues.....pensions, deferred compensation, Social Security [or what is your favorite flavor of Whiskas?]

The library director's role as a city/county department head.....

Training library trustees to be more effective advocates for local funding.

Materials Handling systems
staff allocation

Services to small businesses

Development of Teen Areas

Why does ALA keep insisting that there is a librarian shortage when new MLS graduates all over the country are having trouble finding work? I received my MLS a year ago, and have yet to get a library job. The fact that ALA is still trying to "recruit" new librarians is terrible.

Would gender issues be related to the part "diversity in staff?"

Working in teams; adapting to change in work environment; scheduling/staffing needs; communication between managers and staff ; communication between departments- cataloging/ reference/children's / circulation/ administration, etc... / how people's communication styles differ- communicating effectively.

Outsourcing; Dependency on commercial resources especially in collection development, and, how this has led to the homogenization of collections; real discussions that are critical and analytical and that go beyond the "beginner" stage of librarianship.

Branch issues--collection development, transporting,etc.

LIBRARIANS vs PARAPROFESSIONALS

HR POLICY ISSUES - PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR LIBRARY STAFF, OPTIMAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT LEVELS, ETC.

MEASURES OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STAFF & THE LIBRARY

Staff and public computer training

I am interested in the national organizations advertising the great services we offer. NATIONAL AD CAMPAIGN!

Staff development - especially para-professional - how to plan inservices for the whole staff (librarians, library assistants, clerks, pages, etc.)

Certification of trustees

library districts

technology support for rural libraries

New technology as it is related to technical services. What are the current and new trends in cataloging and technical services.

Since few staff are able to attend national conferences, how can we bring quality conference-type programs to the local libraries and do it affordably?

Grantwriting for YA services

As a library trustee, more needs to be addressed on how to advocate. When you visit the legislature and ask for more money. What do we need it for and how do we use the money to help the public. How will John Q. Public benefit for this service. Everyone asks for more money, why are we to be in the front line ahead of other groups? What makes us special?

Reference Service evaluation

Staff Motivation

Networking, collaboration, developing partnerships

"behavior" policy, computer usage policy, child and teen development

Overall organizational management/motivation of the library as a corporate or governmental structure: General management techniques & trends not specific to libraries.

Specific professional development aspects such as improved or learning public speaking, publishing, fund raising, etc.

Aging staff

Film programs in libraries

I'm adding a comment here since I'm not sure whether there will be another opportunity to do so. As a retired public librarian, I am currently working as a volunteer with two special libraries. My continued membership in PLA is primarily to keep up on topics which affect me as a library user and topics which relate to my work with special libraries. For this reason you may wish to exclude my responses from the final tally.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Motivating staff

Leadership development

Public librarianship curriculum in library schools

How different library systems are organized

Failure to advocate aggressively. Being too wimpy. A failure to understand that many of our libraries and librarians are in deep, serious trouble...that some George Lopez psas aren't going to solve.

Vendor relations -- the threat of information monopolies

Library management & efficiency (not just "money issues" but how to best utilize funds too--how other libraries are saving time/money)

Customer Service & customer satisfaction

Innovation in libraries

Library governance as it affects revenues.

State library law compilations and comparison.

I would like PLA to support better the efforts of volunteers who produce programming at conferences. PLA should pay for photocopying and speaker fees and expenses more willingly.

I like PLA conferences as you can actually find sessions relevant to public reference librarians - ALA covers so much that there's nothing for PL Ref Libs - so much Academic, Special... ALA just has too much on its plate - i've been to the ALA conference once and will never go again - it was useless for me - the PLA conference, on the other hand, has so much I want to go to that I have to make some hard choices - keep it up! Not crazy about the magazine though - the articles are way too long (and Academic, esp. For public librarians!). Try some short stuff similar to American Libraries, Booklist, or Library Journal. Thanks for asking for my opinion!

Planning staff in-service

Preparing interview questions

Letters of recommendation for scholarship, advanced degrees, honors, etc

PLA might be more involved in serving as a clearinghouse for legal issues and policy creation regarding public library services...i.e. "best practices."

Community librarianship

Library as community center/place but a topic that moves beyond the physical structure of "library as place".

Too often we try to grasp at this antiquated notion of library as a physical place. We need to move beyond that and stress relevancy in the lives of our users.

Attracting Baby boomer gen and YA's to services both inhouse and outreach. Educating Seniors to life long learning.

I think one of the questions which might be addressed (maybe after this section or another section) is:

Does the public library planning process address your needs?

I would answer no.

Planning for results seems too rural and unrealistic for a suburban library. In addition, during my 30 years as library director the public library planning process NEVER builds upon itself. Every 5 years, there is the latest gimmick. The author(s) of this document seem more interested in their own personal agenda rather than the public library, library director, staff or patron needs. While planning is not simple, each new adventure in PLA planning process seems more abstract, time consuming and not practical. Worst, our State Library forces us to use the document that is created.

I think PLA should have SMALLER and CHEAPER documents addressing the needs for various types of libraries: I.e. Rural; small; medium; and large public libraries. These documents should be written and created by the public librarians in that type of library. Frankly, library science professors should not be driving this process nor writing it! The librarians driving this process should include but not only be restricted to directors. Committee should include, reference, reader's advisory, children's, catalogers, outreach, etc. Based on the type of librarians employed in these public libraries. Working librarians should write the various documents. In the long range view of PLA, this plan should be revised, tweaked, added to over the years but not complete changed every 5 years as has happened in 30 years. You're inventing the wheel every 5 years! I have a science background and science has changed greatly but they do not reinvent the wheel every few years. They build on it!

As far as the above programs: they are only as good as the speakers. You may address an issue that EVERY librarians wants to hear but if the speaker is dull, poor, or plain bad that program didn't address our needs.

Library SECURITY, TRAINING FOR SUPPORT STAFF, NEW TRENDS IN PROCESSING AND PROTECTING YOUR COLLECTION

Business collections/librarianship in a public library setting.

Hot research subjects in public libraries.

Unions for professional librarians

Specific personnel issue: libraries eliminating MLS librarians from staff and replacing with paraprofessionals due to budgetary restrictions, while at the same time increasing hours libraries will be open.

New technology and how it can be applied to library service / staff workload and cost effectiveness if implemented

Career path for specialists and support staff public libraries and local politics

Preparing mid level library managers for directorships.

Changes in cataloging rules and methods
Automation systems

NEW LIBRARIANS, RECRUITMENT AND SALARIES VERY INTERESTED IN.

Anything that's relevant to operating an effective public library!

E-Rate - ongoing training on at least an annual basis (regionally or by state

Developing Master Facilities Plans (Planning for the future)

Conducting patron surveys.

Topics relating to collection development--especially deselecting materials and dealing with gift book donations

Specifically how public libraries can collaborate with public schools regarding "No Child Left Behind."

Also, I would like some ideas for advocacy in regards to paying MLS Children's Librarians the salary that goes with this qualification.

Emerging trends in technology, new sources/ways of providing and delivering information.

Collections and services for Spanish-Speaking patrons.
Collections and services in languages other than English.
Summer Reading Themes, Programs, Activities, etc.

Information Literacy...what about PLA LIRT

Management of a branch within a larger system

Improving working conditions, hours.

RA for non-print collections - fiction and nonfiction
Librarian retirement/relocation/transitional issues
How to stay informed when no longer working in PL

Creating a unique library ambience.

Personnel issues covers a huge area and overlaps with legal issues and others. There are so many things that would be useful.

Paraprofessional issues
Ending intellectual elitism

Public Relations
Internal Communications
Human Resources
Union

Teen participation in Library Programs

I find it quite unbelievable that you have not listed any cataloging topics and hardly anything to do with technology.

I would be VERY interested in seeing PLA actively and aggressively address patrons' VISUAL literacy needs in particular, and media/electronic service needs overall. It is not enough to just constantly address online/internet database research/needs, though that is also very important. The problem is that the associations act like once this area has been addressed, they're done with non-print services. (Side note: could we be using a more negative term?) This is a criticism I have of both PLA and ALA - there is severely inadequate support of AV librarianship within public libraries both in terms of raising members' awareness and educational levels. The one tiny, enfranchised group (roundtable level) within PLA is buried within the ALA website.

It is more than time to acknowledge its importance as a legitimate area of public library service with sessions and materials on the level done for print. This is particularly true of anything dealing with film librarianship. Programming that would address collection development, equipment needs/trends, public performance rights - particularly for foreign/independent films, how to help grow patron/staff visual literacy/appreciation for quality films -- none of this is addressed on the regular basis that it should be. At PLA in Seattle there was *nothing* having to do with any media except audiobooks (again with the book emphasis so strong, that many attendees for the dinner with [audiobook] authors, didn't even realize that the focus was going to be on the audiobook versions of their books. This was one of (I believe) a whopping 2 sessions on audiobooks. The other was actually a sub-section in the *Reader's* Advisory workshop where Barbara Rosenblatt addressed being a narrator for audiobooks. And that was it for anything film/media-related. The ALA Conference had marginally more, and only in a library programs context. When am I going to see workshops for Film Advisory? Music Collection Development? Collection and Maintenance of CD-ROM collections? The latest and greatest trends for downloadable (fill in the blank: audiobooks, films, music, etc)? Promotional materials specific to films, audiobooks, Videographies, Library-based film fests, music, ...?

PLA - and ALA - are missing the boat in treating patrons visual needs as a burden to be endured and sidelined instead of embracing it as the perfect - and natural - counterpart to patrons' reading needs. I expect more from the largest and most influential associations in my profession.

1. The attempt to use non-certified/unqualified people in the role of librarians.
2. Laying off librarians
3. PLA's role as an advocate for librarian's job security.

Downsizing: doing more with less (reassessing core services, staff responsibilities, partnerships as we're faced with reduced staffing due to the mature librarians retiring and not being replaced)

Making parents, caregivers, YMCA and Boys & Girls Club sponsors aware of the dangers of turning a group of kids "loose" at the library without supervision.

Teaching seniors how to use digital resources.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM!

MOVING REFERENCE

New librarian mentoring programs; generational balance in workplace; departmental collaboration in programming i.e. Adult/Children's programming Seniors/Teens etc.

rural library issues; one staff libraries

Getting administration to buy in to the importance of children's services.
Elevating level of professionalism in children's programming.

More cataloging and technical services issues. Current AACR2 standards, etc.

Staffing and supervisory issues
Training and staff development

Diversity in the work force

how to avoid/deal with burnout on the job

Issues concerning long term employees. 7 out of 9 Librarians at my branch have worked for the Library system for more than 20 years. How do you get the energy back for long term employees?

Readers Advisory
Genre study

public libraries and provision of government information to the public

Opportunities of volunteering and servicing PLA

Libraries and community sustainability

Digitization of library records and local newspapers, historical data, etc.

APPENDIX C

**Q.6: “Other” uses for Public Libraries
Questions reported as electronically submitted by the respondent.**

The following is a list of the 49 verbatim responses to “Other” uses for Public Libraries. Each response is indicated by a bullet point.

- Share articles with other librarians
- use as a catalyst for patron newsletter articles, topics for two radio programs at which I am a part
- I do not read it.
- For general information.
- Read and note articles of interest and forward to senior staff
- professional education
- TO BE AWARE OF GENERAL TRENDS
- Share articles with other staff but not many
- don't use at work
- ideas for trying new practices
- working with other libraries (consulting capacity)
- General inspiration, information for improving library service
- personal continuing education
- keep myself up to speed on other public libraries & their situations
- use articles in a class that I teach as an adjunct faculty member
- check out research projects
- increase my knowledge base
- Find out what other libraries are doing; learn about new ideas or developments
- Just for my own information
- Share applicable articles with other staff.
- Educate myself on issues
- Keep current with public library developments
- share with colleagues any articles that may be of interest to them
- Don't really use them.
- keep up-to-date
- USE ARTICLE TO BACK A NEW PRACTICE
- Issues that have an impact on projects I am involved with.
- Pass on to trustees
- Refer articles to colleagues and staff, sometimes to committees for discussion
- Stay informed about library services and issues and to get ideas
- identify hot topics in libraries
- At more former employer we were discouraged from making suggestions.
- Keep informed about PLA and issues facing public libraries
- to improve my own customer service and librarian skills
- General information, particularly about new facilities and products
- Share with colleagues who are not PLA members
- Pass relevant articles on to fellow staff members/ used in Library School
- i don't use it very much
- Personal Information
- Sometimes refer other staff to articles that relate to what they do.
- Stay informed.
- show/ route magazine and articles to staff who are not yet members.
- just read it
- refer specific articles to staff
- share articles with other staff members
- Refer articles to System member directors
- my own information/professional development
- to stay attuned to current issues/trends in librarianship nationally; ssek ideas, tips or strategies (what works in other libraries)
- Read to keep up on issues; job hunting

APPENDIX D

**Q.10: If you could change any one thing about Public Libraries, what would it be?
Questions reported as electronically submitted by the respondent.**

The following is a list of the 193 verbatim responses to, “If you could change any one thing about Public Libraries, what would it be?” Each response is separated by a line.

add job posting section

editor's note

can't think of anything

Better format - looks like other newsletters

Add a classified section with job openings for both professionals and para professionals.

Not having a copy in front of me at this time, it would be difficult to comment.

I am not in a position to give you feedback.

Have more articles about personnel in public libraries

The look-it is the most boring looking publication I have ever seen. I yawn every time I look at it.

LIST OF FEATURED ARTICLES ON COVER. MAGAZINE LOOKS BORING, SO SOMETHING NEEDS TO PULL ME IN.

Nothing that I can think of. It is far superior to American Libraries which is a "Look at me aren't I great" magazine.

Format is very academic- I don't think it appeals to many "working" public librarians.

Articles about the small public library-1800 patrons. (Population 2415). ie. stretching the budget; making sure Trustees do their job; trustees taking the librarians job seriously, etc.

Make articles higher quality and more up to date with profession.

Less about conferences

I can't think of anything to change...

Cheaper subscription fee

More cutting edge articles.

No problems with magazine...just no time to read it.

More articles with international focus

Publish it quarterly.

more "how we did it" sharing

The layout is a little dull, as is the paper should be slicker. But the content is good now.

not sure

More articles on REAL library work

Topic area that you can anticipate, i.e., marketing, advocacy, etc. Use of color in photos

More information on PLA committee etc activities

Make it more relevant & responsive to all readers, not just those active in PLA. Not all can participate in the conferences & seminars.

SOMETIMES THE LAYOUT IS A LITTLE ODD - THE WAY AN ARTICLE WILL CONTINUE A FEW PAGES OVER INSTEAD OF THE NEXT PAGE.

More stories or reports on libraries and librarians in the field.

More about individual libraries

can't think of any one thing...

I like it just the way it is.

Needs more exciting layout and format

Make it slicker.

FORMAT

na

the look of the magazine--cover, layout, graphics

More feature articles

Have article or note continue from one page to another before another article begins

Each issue would cover a pertinent public library issue and articles would represent practices from various sizes of public libraries in a cross section of the country

more of an area on best practices

Include sections or columns that focus on the different divisions, on a regular basis (e.g. ALSC or YALSA for youth service librarians). Include a regular section on readers' advisory that talks about techniques, books, reading, patrons' reading interests (all ages), book clubs, reading promotion, etc.

More how-to articles

THE FORMAT- It is a very unattractive publication. It does not have to be a DK publication, but its format is does not entice you to pick it up and read it.

Make information about submitting articles easier to find -- perhaps indicate the themes of upcoming issues to generate more articles from the field.

Highlight more practical articles from libraries across the country, especially highlighting audiovisual which is such a high growth area.

More articles on issues front-line public librarians face rather than the academic stuff the magazine publishes. It seems to me that most authors of major articles are academic librarians, not practitioners. Sorry, I think it's really good as is, but maybe more pictures.

Use photographs on front cover instead of drawings

highlight a public library system each issue with a standard profile and photo

The font

Please DO NOT change the layout and paper...I find Public Libraries very reader friendly and much prefer it over American Libraries

I would make sure that the people who are editing sections of the magazine are actually PUBLIC LIBRARIANS, not academic librarians or special librarians! I understand that there are people in other types of libraries who are interested in public library issues, but since this is the journal of the PUBLIC LIBRARY Association, it would be nice to see some public librarians doing more of the editing!

I don't find that there is enough about the work of the committees of the Association.

I don't have any ideas for change. I like it the way it is.

layout - it is very bland and uninviting

Have the articles be more timely in terms of time span from when written to published.

I wouldn't change anything...

I honestly cannot think of a thing to change! It is the most consistently high-quality library publication I receive.

none

It seems slightly amateurish compared to the other library journals I read. A new design would help it "feel" as important as LJ, PW and American Libraries.

For me, it's fine the way it is.

I always find so much of interest in each issue! Keep up the good work! I am sorry that Renee and Paula are leaving--hopefully the quality will continue.

Layout

Address parapro issues including training.

I would like to see a Employment section

Set up local chapters; these would give librarians who cannot afford to use the time or money to travel, to build coalitions, solidarity and provide support, networks of communication & dialog.

More information related to non-librarian staff
More information for job hunters

I can't think of anything I'd change. The magazine is the best thing about my PLA membership. Because of a family member's disability, I cannot attend conferences---the magazine is my main avenue of keeping up with PLA. Please don't change it!

More marketing ideas.

Make the articles a bit less academic.

List topics for all entries in table of contents, not just feature articles

Monthly not bi-monthly.

I really enjoy the in-depth articles by bright lights in the field like Joey Rodger and other librarians who inspire us. Also, some of the author interviews are great!! Keep it coming:)

More on reference services and sources

Nothing. Nice mix already.

more public administration topics as they apply to libraries. I have my MPA and it is more valuable to me as a library director than my MLS.

More information relating to small & rural serving libraries.

slightly bigger type font

Drop the column structure and use complete page for articles....

the cover artwork

More "best practices" articles. People are crunched for time and need to make best use of resources (time/money/staff).

This is picky, but I really don't like a three column layout for articles.

More articles that make you think about issues

Searchable archives; RSS issue summary

Nothing

Can't really think of anything. I like this publication as a professional mag. I also keep at least a year's worth for my own use and any issue with an article I deem necessary

I wish it wasn't so one-sided politically. I am often offended that it is assumed that all librarians have the same political views.

I have just entered the public library as a reference librarian in January, 2005. I am using this year to acquaint myself with the public library issues that you are covering in P.L. I have previously been a school librarian K-12 and I am finding refreshing differences between these two types of libraries. Include a section destined only to present interviews with Public Librarians around USA and the world indicating their achievements and problems. This could improve the communication between PLA and Librarians.

ALL back issues should be online by now. This may be the only way to access a document. In particular, I recall a salary and recruitment paper that was completed for the PLA Executive Board. It was published in "Public Libraries" but was otherwise unavailable. It also was not "live" on the archive section of the web site!!!

n/a

A competent job, people. No complaints.

don't know

Change the look to make it more appealing.

allow only one story a year from any library in Tales from the Front.
AND add some occasional humor

Children's and YA services issues are most important to me.

I found it easy to read and don't have any complaints with the current format.

Add Time Management Tips

NA

More info from YA Librarians and that pertains to YA spaces and services. More info on awards and grants available in the library world.

Go to a grocery store and order a book online and pick it up, next time I go back. Bookmobiles in outlying area,rural areas with tech training and new books and dvds

Have more information about and for support staff.

More articles relevant to Reference Services

MORE OPEN DISCUSSION, LESS PLATFORM OPINION...I JUST DON'T FIND THE VARIETY OF OPINION IN PRINT THAT I HEAR FROM MEMBERSHIP. IT'S AS IF PUBLIC LIBRARIES (AND OTHER ALA SPONSORED OR RELATED PUBLICATIONS) ARE MORE ABOUT PRESENTING A FORUM FOR PROMOTING AN INDIVIDUAL'S PROFESSIONAL PROFILE THAN OPENING A REAL DISCUSSION

In this world of glitz, PL could use color, graphics, more photos to interest/inspire readership.

more youth services oriented material

Do not recall seeing a Q/A about personnel or other PL issues (incl.anonymous entries)

More on "Tales from the frontlines"
Glossy paper and full color--we'd lookless boring to the rest of the world!
I like it.

Working with Library Board

add some color

Monthly publication

Have it published more frequently

NOTHING

Not an ALA member any longer, not interested in the magazine at all.

articles would be more timely -- current events need immediate coverage

On-line access to back issues and electronic access for PLA members.

Generally I like the publication. I skim all the sections and read completely those articles of special interest/relevance.

It ought to be a little less serious in its tone.

More information about buildings, technology, large library systems. Use (and pay) consultants and writers from outside PLA who bring professional expertise.

shorten the articles and make them more interesting

Color!
More about people, practioners, library schools and advanced degrees

Give more emphasis to timely coverage of cutting edge issues for public libraries...especially those for small and/or rural libraries vs. large, urban libraries.

It is not very attractive.

More articles about successes of smaller libraries.

No opinion

The journalesque look to the articles. Yes, we want to be scholarly but we also don't want to be so intellectual that it puts people off that might not have a MLIS.

More for small libraries without {professional} staff with expertise.

I read it every month but it looks dull and uninteresting... more pictures. Can there be more articles but shorter? ... guess this is more than one thing!

I have only received it for one year and do not have enough readership background to qualify this answer.

Find more time
GREATER EMPHISIS ON SUPPORT STAFF.

More young adult services information

More regional news.

More information about outreach programs

more articles about how to further your library carrer

More positive news stories.

I would like to be sure there would be one article that would help me do my job better. Something practical. Most of the time it seems articles are targeted to administration and it doesn't matter whether something is interesting to me if administration isn't interested.

More practical tips from on-the-front librarians

It is hard to say. I am in a small rural library. It is my link to the national public library world. I cannot attend all conferences, though I would love to. They are more valuable than ALA to me. The publication is a substitute for me. I hesitate to recommend a change because I read it very little, although I would not be without it!

Shorten major articles

Remeber that there are NON-public service librarians who actually wirk in Public Libraries. Somehting by and for us would be nice.

IT HAS NO COLOR.

More feature articles.

Would like more articles on Reference.

More feature stories about librarians' experiences implementing library services. Those are really all I read.

More photographs and the paper.

While all of the information is great, the layout is pretty mundane. Maybe a little more "pizazz" in the appearance of the magazine.

The quality of writing, which is often way below that of American Libraries.

Would have it indexed

N/A

more feedback best pratices or current practices

It's good now

More youth services information.
New Product News

Sometimes it seems dated

The format/layout! It has an outdated look, with a lot of small print filling up too much space. I don't generally leap into change for its own sake, but the journal definitely needs a facelift. Doesn't necessarily have to be slick or glossy, but...taking off from the emperor's comment to Mozart about Mozart's music having "too many notes" (in the film AMADEUS), there are too many words crammed into too small a space.

The layout, design and readability - it is far too dense looking. it looks intimidating.

More management, supervisor advice.

I think the quality of content outshines the quality of the design, so I would look for an updating of the design.

It's fine as is.

The Perspectives column in July/Aug 2005 issue was particularly good (or maybe just particularly relevant). I'd like more like this, more that addresses some of the things that are difficult to talk about because we've been taught that they are things that are sacred.

I'd change to glossy paper for the pages.

publish a Monthly publication

My answer under the previous topics of interest pretty much addresses this.

More advocacy for job security.

Needs a new title. When I pass it on my staff thinks it's work, etc. Something like "People's libraries at work"

Publish monthly

NO CHANGE

Include more "Feature" articles

More color

na

Make it more appealing to the eye

Don't know.

Make it more attractive and more useful, less scholarly.

MORE FOR SMALLER LIBRARIES

More items/columns devoted to circulation issues.

For me the more academically rooted articles are of less practical value.
Enhance its support of library advocacy.

Less academic coverage, more front-line, how-to, this-is-how-we-did-it stuff.

I like it just the way it is.

I can't really think of anything.

should cover more about how to lobby

I would not change anything. I would like to see more people in different positions.
Reaching out to all races.

From an overall content perspective, the writing could be a bit tighter (stronger editing) and the "cutesy gosh-our-patrons-are-challenging-aren't they" tone could be omitted altogether.

My time to read and absorb it.

DESIGN

Make it shorter or combine it with other professional journals. Finding time for reading all of my professional journals is a problem.

Enjoy the easy format. Good as is.

Articles are too esoteric, like the stuff you have to read in library school; make them more practical, relating to everyday life as a librarian in the public library setting. Right now, our system is dealing with massive job eliminations, replacement of professional librarian jobs with with totally undegreed (high school graduates)library assistants, a unionization campaign, a downtown main library where I work that is overrun by disruptive homeless people monopolizing the computers all day in chat rooms, porn sites, etc. who have caused security problems and managed to intimidate serious students/researchers from coming to use the wonderful collections housed there, a politically/fiscally conservative library board that is resistant to the idea of a local levy even in the face of drastically reduced state funding (95% state-funded system), a top-heavy administration that wants to base everything on a business model and slash the front line people to save money, etc. Who the hell wants to read all the esoteric crap in Public Libraries that has no relevance to anything we are experiencing? Get real!

cannot suggest anything

APPENDIX E

**Q.14: “Other” types of information/ or purpose you visit the PLA website.
Questions reported as electronically submitted by the respondent.**

The following is a list of the 33 verbatim responses to “Other” types of information or purpose you visit the PLA website. Each response is indicated by a bullet point.

- Planning for Results workforms; handouts from conference programs
- promotional info
- e-learning
- publications
- ordering publications
- Professional Development & Interview Prep
- ALLIED PROFESSIONAL ORG
- Information on being an outreach site for programming
- PLDSS
- Tech notes
- Comparisons with other library systems, also advocacy and marketing (publicity) of other library systems
- Library Tech Notes
- awards and grants
- info about products & promo programs
- marketing campaigns
- library school scholarship information
- consultants
- programming and learning of resources
- "Every child ready to read" research/info
- Updates on PLA activities
- Promotional info (National Library week info/dates, any resources available for September Library Card Signup Day)
- Tech Notes
- Browse for ideas
- Every Child Ready to Read
- Every Child Ready to Read resources
- Smartest Card campaign info
- PUBLICATIONS
- check if any of the Video Roundtable info has been updated.
- publications
- for special campaigns or programs, especially when it is linked from another site or a listserv email
- publications
- Publications
- Trustee information

APPENDIX F

**Q.18: “What would make the PLA website more useful?”
Questions reported as electronically submitted by the respondent.**

**The following is a list of the 86 verbatim responses to, “What would make the PLA website more useful?”
Each response is separated by a line.**

respond to requested changes more quickly.

perhaps links to important ALA intellectual freedom documents - it is hard to find them on the ALA website

access to general library statistics

The same things that would make PLA mor useful.

Get the outdated information off as soon as it is outdated. There really shouldn't be anything left on PLA in Seattle.

The font face is a little hard on the eyes. Smaller sized font in the left-hand menus would also be good, because it all seems jumbled-really no separation between lines, like bullets or spaces. Overall, its a great site, but hard to literally read-- at least for me.

More member content

Not having to return to the home page to go to another area

Its ok the way it is

better organization and design. it seems cluttered.

Don't really use it. Only use it when I need specific information regarding a conference and cannot place my hands on the paper copy.

To serve as a clearinghouse for grant opprotunities for libraries.

na

Tell ALA to forget the webpage setup they adopted and make it more user friendly!

no opinion

I get confused when the links to various pages seem to be described in different ways rather than to use the same name. I would like to navigate through the site more intuitively. It isn't very easy to view the pages reserved for members only, especially when you switch divisions. I don't like having to login more than once. The site is not very appealing visually, and seems fragmented to me, especially when going from one division to another. I'd like to see useful links upfront, rather than discover them buried. Sometimes I find it hard to find the same useful page in a different session, and I have to do some exploring to find that section again. Red and black colors can become monotonous after a while.

RSS feeds

A "search" option for PLA only

More detailed committee information with links to interest areas elsewhere on the web, then I would access it more often.

Obvious list of public program grant application opportunities arranged according to when grant is due.

It looks like a confused mess. No style. No Pizazze. It needs to be made over.

I might visit it more if alerted to new features.

I feel it is very good as is - keep it up to date and keep on going with it.

send email notice about updates as I do not look at the site on a regular basis

better integration with the bimonthly journal

Earlier information for conference schedules since in our system staff have to sign up for conferences early and we want to make sure there are classes that are pertinent to the specific job duties for the staff to attend.

no opinion

If it could get us better salaries.

shorter url

I DON'T THINK IT IS HARD TO USE BUT IT ISN'T PARTICULARILY ATTRACTIVE

.

Nothing - so easy to use

The site seems to be a little "too busy". It seems cluttered.

It's a fairly useful and user-friendly website. Go give ALA some pointers on that subject in re: their website.

I'd like to see some of the conference handouts posted from both PLA and ALA conferences.

updated conference information, and when proposal solicitation is over, either take the page down or somehow archive it and say clearly - this page no longer relevant as of particular date. Current example is one saying that you are planning the conference program for Boston- but deadline was actually November last year. ALso, I didn't know about the committe meetings at ALA, and don't know which ones are actually more like programs and which are really open to committee members about their business. Not enough information. OF course, even the programs I wanted to attend at ALA - about 75 % of them were oversold/overfull past fire capacity even by the time the program was started, so I couldn't get into the ones that were most important to me. I hope PLA is not like that. I did not have that problem in Seattle, and hope Boston will be as well prepared.

It should be in our interest to have many many people see and use the site. It should be more freely accessible to non-members. We should be proud of what we do and show it. People would say that PLA looks like a top-notch organization and I really want to get involved.

some of the type could be bigger!

It could load more quickly. I frequently have a difficult time getting in.

spotlight an office holder in PLA so that the organization might become less unfamiliar than it is.

I don't have a clue. Since I am not a computer kid. (38 yrs as a librarian), I'm grateful that I can access you web-site and enjoy the information that is offered.

It's a great site; I have no complaints or suggestions.

NA

Not sure

Easy access to conference & research reports

BETTER SEARCH ENGINE

Going between pages. Things are hidden.

Larger print, better spacing.

Can't think of anything.

Fewer dead links

NOT REALLY SURE

A site map.
"PLA Home" button on top menu bar as a constant presence

More interactive information, particularly committee work. More updates - if PLA is to be seen as an up to date organization, the site must also be up to date and resources should always support keeping this electronic presence of the organization up to speed. At times it looks like an afterthought, whether through lack of resources or being too low on the organization's priorities.

The PLA & ALA sites are not clearly delineated in my mind. I would like earlier information on nation wide publicity campaigns (we try to employ a six to one year planning process so if we hear about good ideas for National Library Week in March or April it doesn't do any good until the next year.) I also find it frustrating (this might be ALA's site so disregard if it is!) to not be able to find dates for NLW ahead of time on the website until there is a press-release very close.
Also, from time to time I'm looking for factoids (e.g. maybe I'm writing a press release for September Smartest Card--are there any statistics or nice comparisons which I can include? I know there was a little pocket multi-fold (part of America's libraries campaign) of library quick facts which was handy.

Information should be more up-to-date. Committee member lists need to be updated. Committee member phone numbers, institution addresses and other contact information would be helpful.

Would like ALA conference meeting listings, with locations, on the Web site in advance of the ALA Annual and Midwinter conferences.

I only use it for conference info, so really can't comment on the design (don't remember) I do know think that it could be more helpful by providing reading lists for K-12, websites by subject...

It seems very plain to me.

I find the web site extremely difficult to read. The text is very small and lacks definition. Like many library sites, it fails to use graphics well (or at all).

Links to libraries with wonderful things to share
Although I have no trouble getting back to the home page, a "Home" option would be generally helpful.

No suggestions

Occasional emails to members highlighting new information on the website and providing a hyperlink to the information.

Put PLA Blog Link in Left side of Home Page as well as far down a list in body of home page

So far it has met my needs

Not sure, I find it fairly useful as is.

Useful as is.

resources and issues and advocacy.

Better Search Mechanism but do not use the ALA page search system; this system is very ineffective!

Not sure, since I don't go there often enough.

I'd suggest cleaning up the homepage by moving the mission statement elsewhere, deleting the "Quick Links" heading (I expected it to be a pull-down menu at first), and removing redundancies such as ALA and "Links" (same thing as "Resources") at the left side of screen.

I still prefer information in print rather than via www.

It's been too long since I've gone to the site to be able to answer questions about it.

more color differentiation and better spacing between high-level banner and margin links

Grant information
Toolkits

I use it often as a resource for library issues. It usually takes me a while to find what I'm looking for. The search function doesn't seem to work well, and many of the documents I'm looking for are stored on various committee pages. I'd like a directory or an easier way to find those reference resources.

Continue to add content that is difficult to locate elsewhere.

Streamlining navigation, redesigning interface to be more user friendly/less "busy"

NOT SURE

little better design and navigation

I have not made use of the PLA website.

A search button would make it easier to search the entire content of the site.

Less clutter

Offer prepub alerts.

It is well done, like anything with so much info, the site map is great.

Information on Board members

If when you have a question, someone actually responds to your query. I am distressed by PLA/ALA's lack of response to my queries/orders. I don't ask that many, and I no longer recommend that libraries contact the organization via the website or email. Sometimes if you call you can get an answer.

It meets my needs.

APPENDIX G

**Q.24b: “Other” providers you have taken an online continuing education course from.
Questions reported as electronically submitted by the respondent.**

The following is a list of the 72 verbatim responses to “Other” providers you have taken an online continuing education course from. Each response is indicated by a bullet point.

- vendors courses
- vendor
- NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
- PC vendor
- Dynix
- Library Circ Software - Sirsi
- personal author
- Kentucky Virtual University
- BCLA, CLA
- ALEPH-ExLibris
- Ed2Go; National Institute of Genealogical Studies
- Community College
- InfoPeople (SF bay area)
- iNFOpEOPLE
- Ed to Go
- non library related
- community college
- oclc
- Community College
- Regional Library System
- InfoPeople
- Religious web site
- LIS vendor
- IT professional training
- ULC
- Personnel Assoc.
- Lii
- dell.com
- ILS Vendor related course
- Actually was Palinet re. OCLC
- Special Library Assn
- vendor - dynix
- Net G
- Adult Educ program
- West
- Dynix
- Northeast Texas Library System
- service providers
- junior college
- OLC
- proprietary database firms
- Northeast Texas Library System
- Dynix/horizon
- vendor
- I don't know as a coworker and I did it together and she set it up. I also took online classes outside of Library Science disciplines.
- LibraryU
- Local agency
- Solinet
- Dynix Institute
- Dynix
- solinet
- VENDOR
- OLA/CLA

- Dell, database vendors
- NEFLIN
- Commercial Program sponsored by Regional Library Cooperative
- aarp, barnes & noble
- Community College course on Basic HTML and Web Site Design
- commecial vendor - company
- local library system
- KENT STATE UNIVERSITY
- Vendor sponsored-Dynix Institute
- vendor
- BCR (Colorado)
- MLA
- Dynix
- Vendor-sponsored
- Ontario Library Association
- Dynix
- LATI
- Private Sector
- Special Libraries Association

APPENDIX H

**Q.25: “Other library positions” that describe your professional responsibilities.
Questions reported as electronically submitted by the respondent.**

The following is a list of the 86 verbatim responses to “Other library positions” that describe your professional responsibilities. Each response is indicated by a bullet point.

- Administration of children & adult services & web administrator
- consultant
- Foundation President
- consultant for libraries
- Student
- systems librarian & staff training
- university library
- Department Manager
- Information Technology
- I am a grants officer for a major funding organization that funds programs in libraries. I also teach Library Administration as an adjunct at an ALA accredited library school
- Research non-library position
- Collection Development
- Collection Development
- Consultant
- Collection Development
- public library outreach services
- Collection Development
- audio-visual librarian
- Public library consultant
- Systems librarian
- Circulation
- Collection Development and Technical Services
- LIS ph.d. student
- facilities project manager
- Library System-Outreach Services
- Collection Management
- Circulation Services
- educator
- Branch manager & #2,3,4, above
- Branch reference, includes adult, YA and children
- mANGER cOMMUNITY LIBRARIES AND OUTREACH
- Consultant
- retired
- State Library Agency
- state library consultant
- state library consultant
- reference/webmaster
- branch manager
- Continuing Ed Libn
- state library consultant
- cOLLECTION DEVELOPMENT
- children/YA/ and administration
- Library consortium administrator
- BRANCH LIBN/MGR
- BRANCH MANAGER
- Head of Circulation services
- retired library administrator, but trustee
- State Library staff
- marketing and PR
- state library director
- Library Branch Manager
- Training and Staff Development Coordinator

- recent MLS grad/ substitute at public library
- library student considering public libraries (also considering academic)
- circulation
- County Librarian
- state library consultant
- Director
- adult reference librarian
- Branch manager
- Collection development/technical services librarian
- State Library Youth Services Consultant working with both children's and young adult librarians in public libraries
- Branch Manager
- promotions manager
- Student
- LIBRARY CONSULTANT
- Info Technology Management
- Manager of Information Technology
- LIBRARY ADMIN/REF/TECHNOLOGY (COMPUTER PERSON)
- Generalist - adult and children
- government documents
- Head of Children's/Young Adult S
- Information Technology
- Public Library Circulation Services
- part-time small branch
- program coordinator
- Only staff - responsible for all administrative, public and reference service duties, plus much more!
- State Library
- Public library public service-circulation
- Circulation services
- Head public services (adult and children's)
- friends
- branch manager & literacy outreach
- BRANCH MANAGER
- Branch Manager
- State Library

APPENDIX I

**Q.33: “How PLA could be more responsive to your needs?”
Questions reported as electronically submitted by the respondent.**

**The following is a list of the 147 verbatim responses to “How PLA could be more responsive to your needs?”
Each response is separated by a line.**

As of now I am satisfied with services PLA provides.

I think it's doing a fine job as it is

I am not in a position to give any feedback.

Pay more attention to the needs of librarians in the trenches, streamline publications so one doesn't have to plow through dreck about people in public libraries most of us don't know and about libraries most of us will never visit or libraries with technology that most of us aren't able to afford, or buildings that most of us will never be able to afford or duplicate. It's all very nice, but it isn't useful. And I don't have enough time for things that aren't useful.

I would like to be more involved but can't really figure out how to do it.

Award a scholarship toward a Master's in Library Science degree. (I already possess a BS in Education.

Keep in mind that not all libraries are huge with many staff and the ability to create many programs.

Again, as I get closer to retirement, I will really miss the PLA conferences, etc. Give some reason to continue to attend!!!

I'm a new member so I need to familiarize myself with the organization.

Be more "in my face" on listservs and with RSS feeds

PLA is very responsive to my needs and I hope that I am responsive to the associations needs. However, I must say that questionnaires like this one make an assumption that everyone who is a member of PLA works in a public library. I'm not certain that the assumption is right. Lots of people that I know are members of PLA are not employed by Public Libraries but are very interested in public libraries and the profession.

I just wanted to clarify the question on traveling to a workshop or taking it online. I prefer going someplace else for training, as long as the other location is within an hour and a half from my home base. If it is further than that, i would choose to take an online course.

I am one of about 20 people on the Youth Services staff at my library. We do not have branches. While I can make recommendations, I have no decision making authority. So what I need is information on how to do my job the best possible way. I would like information on ways to improve reference and readers' advisory interviews, and ideas for handling unattended children (not policies, which I cannot make, but games and activities for 9 and 10 year olds who are babysitting younger children). I would like information about working with other organizations to serve children and their parents who otherwise would never think about the library. Other areas that are of interest to me are: what makes a good website for a library's children's page; working with other staff members to provide the most effective programming and reference work; and working with home schooled children.

I know that this is very child centered. However, many of the skills and contacts would be applicable to any line staff member.

More attention to small public libraries

I feel that PLA is too "under" ALA. I also wish there were more interplay between various subdivisions - for instance, I am a reference manager who is also very active in readers advisory. RUSA/BRASS seems to offer more reference-related programs, but only at ALA, which I don't attend. I did some investigating about this with various people who had worked on programs at either PLA or ALA, and what I heard back is that groups don't talk to each other. The upshot is that I don't get the program offerings at PLA that I need.

Also, I wish there were more ways to be active without having to attend ALA conferences as well as PLA etc. I am fortunate in that the director and the Board encourage PLA conference attendance, but that is only once every two years.

I work in a public library in Canada and I tend to be more active in the professional associations in Canada - at both the provincial and national level. I don't tend to look to PLA for much more than a way of staying in touch with what's happening south of the border.

Keep up the good work with the conferences. It has been a while since it was "my turn" to attend a conference, but the ones that I did attend were fantastic.

You're doing a great job. The PLA Conference is the BEST conference that I attend. I haven't missed one in 20 years! Keep up the good work.

Get out from under ALA

More good programs at conferences, etc.

I really don't know. I love the conferences and workshops. I feel they are the most valuable continuing education I receive.

LESS ADMIN. MORE STAFF ATTENTION

The PLDS is MOST valuable -- use it on a regular basis, at least several times a month.

Collect Library Policies from libraries, more info on legal questions, do more with ALTA. I think the cluster organization is unwieldy and not well understood, simplify structure- administration, services, public relations, funding.

Publicize any and all list serve discussions available with public library issues covered

Provide continuing education opportunities for librarians who have had some experience in the field, but who would like to refresh or update their skills in various areas. Don't forget those members who are currently unemployed for a time, but who remain ALA and PLA members, and who plan on returning to work as librarians. How about training for those who are considering committee work, but who have not yet taken the plunge?

I joined because a colleague told me that the PLA conference was the best for public libraries and they were right!

Separate from ALA I attend ALA mainly because of committee work but so much of their programming and structure is linked to academics and we have little in common.

On the workshop question, you did not indicate how far I'd be willing to travel to a different location--probably not much longer than 30 minutes. If I had to go far, I'd rather do the workshop online.

Greater emphasis on Director/trustee relationships, as well as devoting more programs to trustee concerns.

More front line type programs at ALA Conference.

It would be great if PLA would be more active about recruiting early-career librarians for committee work. It never ceases to amaze me how the people who go on and on about the "graying of the profession" and how there's not going to be anyone to lead in ten years are the SAME people who keep committee work in certain ALA divisions (and PLA is definitely one of them) closed off to new members. New librarians have a lot to offer. I know it's important to "pay one's dues," but unfortunately, people get caught in the catch-22 of not being able to get appointed to a committee without committee experience...and not being able to gain committee experience without being appointed to a committee. If the "graying" segment of the profession is so concerned about a lack of leadership, they should give us some opportunities to lead!

Hi! I have been an ALA Member for over 25 years and probably a RUSA and PLA Member for that long as well. I have always found RUSA to be a friendly Association that reaches out to new people; but have never felt that way with PLA. I have been a PLA Chair and a member of several committees. PLA is perceived by many to be a closed club. That special appointments are made to a chosen few. That it is difficult to become a Chair of an important committee. I must say that I feel that my recent experiences continue to make me feel that.

I have never received an e-mail from the PLA President (that I can remember) inviting me to serve on a special

committee, attend a program or simply get involved. I continue to be distressed by the number of my colleagues (and myself) that have had their program proposals rejected by the PLA 2006 Boston Program Committee. Who was selected? I hope that the conference is a balanced one? The PLA Board all seem to be seasoned Directors. Maybe it is time to get some of the younger people involved.

I am not interested in children's librarianship. So our library might use smart card but that is not of interest to me. So I feel that PLA is responsive to my needs as far as adult librarianship is concerned. I read everything. My least interest is the tech articles. But since I will retire in 2 to 4 yrs , that's understandable.

I am satisfied with PLA's responsiveness.

You seem to do a pretty good job as is responding to my needs.

Biggest drawback of CE classes, programs and PR items is cost. The PLA conference is top on my list. I felt professionally "behind" because I did not attend the 2004 conference. I did not attend because I needed to attend our ILS user conference and could not afford both in one year.

I must state that my answers may be a little skewed since I don't work in a public library. Instead, I am employed at a law library. I originally became a member to understand the different issues surrounding my new profession.

no opinion

No suggestions beyond survey responses

Survey membership about types of workshops either like to attend or send staff to and consider doing regional workshops in off years for professional and parapro. Maybe offer at State conferences as a pre-conference activity.

I'm disgusted with the low salaries for librarians. I have been a librarian for 6 years and it seems as if this is an issue that goes around and around, but never improves. The job ads are a joke--libraries have 3 pages of requirements and then "wish" qualifications and then when you get to the salary, it is pitiful. This, to me, is the biggest problem facing the profession. This is why good librarians leave the profession to do something else Librarianship is my 2nd career and I am already thinking about leaving. If this was a mainly male profession, would libraries be offering such paltry salaries for these type of responsibilities? I doubt it. I'm also sick of seeing White Male Faces plastered everywhere every year when the Library Partners (or whatever it is called) are announced. I find it truly embarrassing.

Be an advocate for the profession.

Could there be a level of membership for support staff? I would like to be more involved but I have never been sure how to become involved in this process.

MOVE PLA SYMPOSIUM TO OTHER AREAS

I believe that I can be most effective to our customers by being in the library and having materials available to them when they come. I think that programs like "the Smartest Card" are totally meaningless to our customers and do nothing to promote our services. Your conferences are the best service PLA has to offer, followed by your monthly journal.

Offer more education online.

More marketing and construction ideas. How to save money, get more donations, conduct better tax elections. Please don't talk about consultants because we don't have the money or personnel to deal with community meetings. We are all too busy as it is.

.

Don't know yet; I just joined and just starting to receive the journal and e-mail info, which is why I skipped a number of questions. I am retired from another library-related field and work as a part-time substitute reference librarian; joined PLA as a development tool for myself, to learn more about public library issues.

I think librarians need a professional association that is for librarians, not libraries. Other professional associations address professional issues, without feeling that they need to divert attention to things like library card campaigns. I know that's not very politically correct or popular to take a stand like that, but other professional associations have done a better job serving their members, like teachers, lawyers, doctors, architects, etc. I think many of us back into ALA and PLA membership and feel a little uncomfortable that we haven't made much progress on the salary issue that plagues us.

I hope these answers are still useful to you at this late date. I apologize for the delay. I was sick at the time I received the letter and buried it. Thanks for being PLA!

Get rid of "for results" series. They are developed by librarians who are supposed experts, but only present one-way, often very complexly, of doing things. There are better people out there who are not librarians who can offer more variety and insights on these topics.

I am a retired librarian after having served the profession for 39 years. PLA's thrust is toward active professionals, as the phrasing of the questions above indicates. I must answer many of them "not interested" because of the supposition that I am still employed and should be actively using PLA resources for professional development. At the moment, I see no relevance in belonging to any division of ALA and will only join ALA to support the profession rather than the Association, itself.

I can't think of anything. Conferences, by and large, have been great. With less than 3 years until retirement my professional interest is waning. Will be in Boston in 2006.

You are doing great!

PLA does a better job on being responsive than ALA usually does. I do recommend avoiding the use of acronyms (ECRTR) since they create more barriers, especially to our customers.

Design a better survey. This one offers little flexibility. I am a new member who has had little experience with the organization. Forcing me to rate PLA's effectiveness when my experience level is so low will only skew your results.

I RETIRED JUNE 30 AFTER 28 YEARS 10 MONTHS HERE AND MAYBE 10 YEARS IN OTHER LIBRARIES.

Personally, I'd be happy if you offered some more grants or scholarships to attend national conference (and if you do, make them more noticeable since it's obvious I don't know anything about them!). Since I have to pay for all my own professional development, I'd love to have some help! Otherwise, the one time I met Luis Herrera at MPLA in Lake Tahoe, I told him this was the best professional organization I could belong to, and I still believe it. Would that I could only give you guys my money and not have to also pay ALA. But that's okay, it's all for a great cause.

Why does ALA keep insisting that there is a librarian shortage when new MLS graduates all over the country are having trouble finding work? I received my MLS a year ago, and have yet to get a library job. The fact that ALA is still trying to "recruit" new librarians is terrible.

I've only tried to join a committee once and got no reply. It didn't exactly stimulate me to keep trying.

Generally, more awareness that libraries are not just about books and that audiovisual materials are a significant part of library collections.

I need to live through a few years as a public librarian to better answer your question.

Listening and helping to solve the problems that Public Librarians have to deal with.

ideas for organization to somehow involve paraprofessionals - what will catch their interest? Not sure, but ways to involve/relate to the library assistants. Calling for conference proposals earlier through direct email. More detailed early conference program information on the website. More information and sessions and guidance at

the Conference itself for people relatively new to conferences and to committees. Even with going to the new member program, there was not enough to actually allow outsiders/newbies to really understand how to become involved, what are the options and possibilities, and not enough personal contact opportunities amongst people attending the conference who come as individuals and not in groups. Not enough follow-up discussions on how to apply learning to local situations. Website searchable - not just to all of ALA as it appears to be.

If government libraries come under PLA and not SLA, it would be nice to see something on that. I don't know if gov't counts as public?

No complaints, folks. The BULK of my focus stays in my community. But PLA's reputation is of the best, most focused conference for public librarians -- and the conference I've attended have confirmed this. I presented at the last conference, and found it fruitful.

I am a library student, I will have the degree in the spring of 2006, perhaps the PLA could mentor the library students in some way.

Overall PLA/ALA needs to stop coming up with advertising for INSIDE our buildings. We need to get OUT THERE. The average Joe on the street does not know what their library can do for them. As long as that is true our funding will continue to be at risk. How about a national ad paid for by PLA. Instead of putting out a pat yourself on the back magazine use that money for billboards on the highway. How about some during election season... "Don't know who to vote for? Get unbiased info at your library!". Please DO NOT give me yet another ad to be put up INSIDE my library. Read posters and such are all just advertising to users who already know and use libraries.

"Wow, you don't look like a librarian."

"It must be so nice to read all day at work."

Until we can use the media and advertising to banish these stereotypes we will never get the money we deserve. No wonder libraries can not pass tax votes. People think I sit on my ass all day.

If libraries disappear from the landscape, I think it will be because no library organization ever bothered to tell the public what we do.

Until PLA makes it possible to serve on committees without having to travel to the ALA Annual and Midwinter conferences, I will continue to feel marginalized.

You are doing an excellent job. I particularly like your conferences!!!!

I would like more information on how to join a PLA committee.

Send trends to trustees to keep up with new issues

Hold spring simposiums later in spring or further south.

Hold separate PLA conference every year

I like the organization. More meetings in the state of California would be nice! My administrator does not cover my travel.

the PLA conference & spring symposia are among the best conferences I attend. I did like the former system of one intense session at the spring symposium. thanks -- you do a terrific job for the profession!

regional conferences

PLA has incredible content, but I have been unable to obtain sufficient travel funds to attend any PLA conferences or symposia.

Make participation in organization easier

Continue to provide marketing ideas and campaigns that can be adopted by individual libraries to promote library services.

I have never asked a question of PLA that has not received a swift and appropriate--and useful--response.

Keeping current and abreast of trends and impact on providing services in the public library setting.

Pressuring ALA for an easier-to-use website with better response time. I reluctantly avoid it except when absolutely necessary.

Column on Board/Administrator communications

I would like to see a group formed which would be similar to the CLENERT Round Table in ALA.... Since I have to choose between attending PLA and ALA conferences, I always choose PLA. Therefore, I don't get to take full advantage of working with the CLENERT group. I would love to be involved with other public library staff holding training and staff development positions in their libraries.

MORE PROGRAMS ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE. A BUNCH OF CHILDREN'S GEARED PROGRAMS WERE CANCELLED LAST YEAR.

Would like the journal to be published more often. I especially like hearing about programming at other libraries.

YOU DO A GREAT JOB

Not interested in national level of library association, therefore it is useless to address the issue.

set up an email alert program to inform members when their specific interests are newly addressed on the web site

I am a new member to PLA, it would help if there is a more seasoned member to guide me or give me more information about PLA that would help. Thanks!

I am planning to retire from library work on August 5th. I will likely become active in Friends of the Library activities at some point, however, I am excited about shifting my focus to a different career. So PLA has been very responsive; I appreciate the organization, but in the future it will be less relevant to me.

I really like the nationwide, packaged marketing materials (like the smartest card campaign) but find them to be very expensive. I realize that the association needs to pay bills etc., but in my opinion one of the most convincing reasons for PLA to compile a whole campaign (smartest card for example) is that instead of each library devising their own slogan, designing their own printed materials, getting those materials printed, etc. that PLA does it, and the cost of production is shared amongst all the libraries. However, to me it seems like the prices of things (bookmarks and posters) is far in excess of the printing costs. So while they may be nice slogans, and might save on time, the cost seems unreasonable. Also, making them freely available and CUSTOMIZABLE would be nice (so we could add in our name or use the smartest card logo on a poster with information about some specific services we offer). The televised spots were very nice, but they were very expensive and the limitations (pay per use) precluded us trying to get them into larger television markets (can't just send them the spot and ask them to fill it in!) How about a video spot on summer reading to go with some of the more-than-statewide themes? These things are hard and expensive for individual libraries to produce (even with adequate staff and funding).

Aren't you glad you asked?

All the PLA conferences I have attended have been very good!

Support PLA Committee work and programming to a greater degree. Pay for photocopying.

Find new authors for publications, ie. *** for Results.

Make the magazine better

I think PLA does a great job balancing the needs of various size and funded libraries. I am glad the PLA is NOT committed to taking stands on the controversial social issues that fracture ALA. (sexual preferences, military action, etc.)

Regional workshops that are easier to get to for us in California.

Have never really thought about it.

One thing that I have noticed in the literature that speaks of the librarian shortage is that it fails to mention that the shortage is in some areas, not all. It does not appear to be a national crisis akin to the nursing shortage,

etc. I feel that the PLA should do more programming for those that are trying/struggling to find jobs in this weak job market. While I have a job, others do not.

Also, PLA should consider joint association/roundtable studies into problems that relate to us all. For instance, the USA PATRIOT Act. A joint study into how it may or may not be affecting library circulation, etc. can be conducted with the IFRT.

YALSA and PLA could get together on initiatives as well.

Also, try to have more members of PLA get involved with RUSA. It seems as if there are a disproportionate number of academic librarians (ACRL) involved with RUSA than PLA members.

PLA needs to address library funding, librarian salaries, planning process, and public awareness concerning libraries.

The problem that I have seen for 30 + years are that Library Trustees and to lesser extent directors (wear two hats) are on opposite sides concerning salaries. The library director wears both hats in regard to setting salaries. On one hand they need to balance the budget while still paying employees a fair wage. The problems arise in using the wording "fair" and balanced budget. Both ALA and PLA because of legal restrictions NEVER have addressed librarian salary issues in my 30+ years! Both organizations lament the fact that Salaries are what they are but do little in raising them. Both lament that there are too few people going it not our profession, yet don't connect the fact that future employees look at how much money they will make. We are below teachers with more education and less time off! Both PLA and ALA leadership should hang their heads in shame. Also I feel other than Mitch Freeman, our leadership is spineless! As a profession, we bitch and moan in small groups but do nothing to change our situation. In our State (Illinois) the damn ILA slogan is "how to do more with less." This is the most insidious professional throat cutting campaign created. If I knew who promoted this idea, they should have both their PLA and ALA membership cards burned at a very public opening session!

Just a note about your first question. I have been to PLA conferences and symposiums in the past, but within the last two years it has been someone else's "turn" within our organization. I'm scheduled for Boston in 2006 and looking forward to it.

It's mostly a lack of time to have to pursue professional learning when there is too much to do on the day-to-day basis. In an ideal world, professional development would be a designated part of my day, not just an afterthought after I have arrived home.

MORE PROGRAMMING FOR SUPPORT STAFF AND FOR SUPPORT STAFF ADMINISTRATORS

DO MORE INDEPTH TRAINING AND EDUCATION LIKE THE RESULTS SERIES. SO PRACTICAL.

I would like to have the PLA send representatives to individual libraries to promote membership in the organization , help with resources to further my career in librarianship, help increase pay and organize professional unions

There was a question about RFID tech. I've never heard of it, so it was difficult to answer. Even in our rather well-to-do area, we are having financial problems and very few staff are able to attend meetings. I have attended one PLA conference, and enjoyed it, but might not get to go again. Even though I prefer being there in person, online workshops may have to take their place. Transportation costs could be saved. The questions I am dealing with now in my own job have to do with weeding. I have little time to spend evaluating the collection and I do the best I can. Space is getting tight and some books have to go. I do use Public Library Catalog and find it to be a useful publication.

Conferences in expensive locations are not practical. Hotels that cost over \$100 per night are too expensive. There are less extravagant locations that would be appropriate and those of us with moderate budgets may then be able to attend. The last conference I attended was Charlotte and I loved it! Thanks

It is expensive to attend conferences. If I had the extra money, I would personally pay expenses to attend on work time. I take full advantage of every opportunity to attend PLA because it fills a void for public librarians. It was unbelievable to go through exhibits for the first time and not be asked "What school are you with?" Responsiveness is not the issue with PLA. The ability to afford conferences and continuing education attendance is the barrier. Through participating in this survey, I have a deeper appreciation for possible opportunities for knowledge directly from the web site. I don't remember having an opportunity to subscribe to the e-newsletter. If it is free, that is another useful resource from which I could benefit. I am pleased to have been chosen to participate in this survey!

No suggestion

Provide more cost effective training/networking opportunities - perhaps annual regional conferences for 2 days/
1 night

Send some information about available committee service openings or publish it in "Public Libraries"

Would love to have PLA conference in NYC.

Tell me more about patron education programs that have worked, outreach that is successful, etc.

I look forward to the Public Libraries magazine in the mail and I've attended more than one spring symposium -
they're great.

It's all great -- I would love to attend more conferences and events, but since I pay for this myself and since I
will be retiring within 2-3 years, I haven't been committed enough to spend the money. Besides, in smaller
libraries, it's hard to get away for conferences.

Unable to participate due to city lack of funds. Only director is involved. With our tiny staff (of 2)am unable to
be gone or spend online time on conferences, meetings, etc.

I have not been active for such a long time prior to this past year. I would need to really need to review and
update myself on all of the opportunities and support that PLA curenly offers it members.

I believe PLA is doing an excellent job. The only way it would be "better" for me personally is if I were able to
attend Conferences or had the money to purchase more of your materials.

Continue to concentrate on library issues and not politics.

I think there is a need to reach out to librarians a bit more, unless you know someone who is involved there is
no path to get involved.

I love PLA Conference. I'm extremely impressed with the Every Child Ready to Read initiative. I've always
found the staff to be extremely helpful and responsive, to phone calls and email messages.

Especially articles of information, analisis about how libraries are doing here and around.
We need to know the experinces and organizations of libraries around the world.
Help my State PLA association become more accessible, it is not very active and really only serves the PLA
administration.

I can't think of anything specific except to say that I wish I didn't have to pay my own way to conferences.
Hopefully, that will change soon. I realize PLA can't!

Provide free continuing education certified by our state. Campaigns like the smartest card are great. Lead an
initiative about homeless people, reducing their numbers, keeping them from creating bad environments in
libraries. Practical stuff about street people, mentally ill people in libraries libraries

Have more online and on location continuing education corses (with CE credit)for staff in adult services.

Change the venue of the Spring Symposium alternate years and have more annual conferences in the North
East. (Naturally -- I live in upstate NY.)It's great that PLA is in Boston in 2006!!

BTW, I Love PLA

Just keep on alerting us to the trends and issues that will impact our ability to serve our citizens -- even the
ones that aren't what we really want to hear!

Publish a library school survival guide

I answered this survey according to my individual responsibilities. Programming, Youth and Teen Services are out of the scope of my job description. My library sends full-time staff to library conferences in a lottery-style rotation; the library budgeted for 4 staff people to attend the last PLA conference; 8 people were eligible. My name was not "pulled out the hat"--but the Director, the Programming Coordinator, and one Youth/Teen and one Adult Services staff member attended.

Only the cataloger prefers to go to ALA; the rest of us support the PLA conference.

Please see my earlier response under topics of interest.

More advocacy for job security.

More articles on how libraries can get "freebies" from publishers, how we can get books replaced that are falling apart after a couple of checkouts because the major publisher now hot glue books instead of sewing them.

use a friendlier font (easy to find) on your @ your library campaigns!

Bring workshops (Every Child Ready to Read) to our area.

HAVE MORE INFO THAT PERTAINS TO SMALLER LIBRARIES AND KEEP THE FEES DOWN

I think we get out of PLA what we put into it. I would benefit more from PLA if I participated more in conferences, continuing education & committees.

I think the very fact that you did not even list the area in which I work, Circulation, as a choice in number 25 says it all. While I find that PLA does at least include topics in the Conferences and Workshops that apply to Circulation (unlike ALA which tends to completely ignore this entire section of library employees), this section is regarded as second class. I've even gone to workshops (not PLA sponsored) where the Circulation Department was referred to as "non professional." Circulation is often the only contact much of the public has with the staff of a library. Not everyone has a reference question to take to a librarian. Although interaction between the public and Circulation is changing due to self check out and other advancements, your Circulation team is often the best public face of the library. I appreciate that PLA does recognize our existence. In fact, in Seattle, there was even a presentation by two non-librarians. Please don't forget that we are out there, that we need additional training and information, and that we want to provide the best service we can to our public. Continue with practical information sharing for those of us in moderately small rural libraries.

I joined and have remained joined for simple reasons. One because I love your conference. They are the best and target my needs. The other is to support you. I could be talked into working on a committee if we weren't so short staffed.

More focus needs to be placed on successful programs, funding, use of technology and volunteers, training opportunities. There needs to be more of a distinction between the different types of libraries and their varying clientele and the approaches used. One size DOES not fit all. More planning for a future where technology will be everpresent is sorely needed.

Recognize that the leftist agenda of all library associations is becoming increasingly difficult to defend, and retaining this stance adversely affects the future of public libraries as an institution.

Find some way to get me involved. I think people need some kind of more individual contact to get them involved - maybe come to state library association conferences and make contacts.

I just want to comment that I'm Canadian -- most negative answers could have been Not Applicable. Aside from my Provincial Assoc, PLA is the most relevant assoc in my world.

I barely get things done now.

As an LA who has earned an MLS, I'm having trouble getting an MLS job because LA jobs don't have supervisory experience and MLS jobs require it. I would love it if you could work toward bridging that gap.

Talking to the president or others

I appreciate all of the work of the association and applaud you for seeking members' input.

Respond to questions. We don't get to PLA regularly due to budget constraints. We have to select our travel carefully and budget to the penny. General conference information, assuming that people will come and sign up for the entire conference is usually not possible. Waiting for a final program is usually too late. I tried to get information on registration costs for PLA Boston about 6 months ago. Only information on the previous conference was available. No one responded to my question about costs. It was dropping email into a black hole.

I think PLA meets the needs of its main focus group. I am in library education therefore public librarianship is only a small part of my field.