

From the Chair

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It has been a busy year for GODORT. Our efforts to help the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) shape the future of the Federal Depository Library Program have kept us fully engaged. Between our annual meeting, in June 2004, and March 2005, GODORT commented on GPO's proposals for a national bibliography of U.S. government publications, a collection of last resort, the electronic collection, the decision framework for federal document repositories, and Information Dissemination Policy Statement 72 on Withdrawal of Federal Information Products from Information Dissemination Collection and Distribution Programs. These letters appear as "Communications from the Chair" on the GODORT web site. We hope these and other efforts will help assure permanent (no-fee) public access to information produced at taxpayer expense.

At the ALA Annual Conference in 2004, GODORT was one of two round tables selected by the Round Table Coordinating Assembly to represent round table interests at ALA Ahead to 2010 Planning meetings held in the fall of 2004. While the final document has not been compiled, Jim Hill of the Library Support Staff Interests Round Table and I worked to ensure that language was inclusive of all library workers and ALA units. "Permanent public access to government information" was listed as a feature of "the Library" in the draft desired future, leading me to believe that GODORT's values have been adopted as mainstream ALA values.<sup>1</sup> GODORT submitted comments on the strategic plan, which ALA Council is expected to adopt this June.

GODORT continues to improve its web under the leadership of web manager Lesley Pease.

The most recent edition of [GODORT's history](#) is now available online.

In addition, GODORT's Steering Committee approved funds to mount future and back issues of DttP online to improve access to and visibility of our journal.

I want to thank all the members of GODORT, and especially members of the Steering Committee, for their efforts this year. Under the leadership of treasurer Ann E. Miller, GODORT improved its reputation with ALA for fiscal responsibility. Ann's plan, which includes building reserves and saying no to discretionary expenditures, is working. The committee chairs and task force coordinators also have worked on a number of projects, including the FDTF sponsored preconference, Demystifying Government Sources: Government Information for the Rest of Us and the 2005 annual conference program, Born Digital, Dead Tomorrow: Strategies for the Preservation of Web-based Government Information, organized by Jim Church and Arlene Weible. Barbara Miller and the Bylaws Committee have been polishing GODORT's Bylaws and Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM), while Marilyn Von Seggern and the Membership Committee have been working to make GODORT even more member-friendly. This is not an exhaustive recounting, but this GODORT chair is grateful for the good ideas and wisdom shared by members.

The Annual Conference in Chicago will be a happy opportunity for members to get together. We will honor GODORT award winners at our reception on Sunday, June 26. I urge members to attend the annual business meeting on Monday, June 27, and approve the proposed student member rate of \$10 per year to encourage library school students to join GODORT. Just as "government information must be fully incorporated into introductory reference courses," GODORT members must encourage new librarians to join our ranks.<sup>3</sup> The project to make current and back issues of DttP available online should also help make the specialized knowledge of our round table more widely available.

I would like to close with an appeal for the GODORT endowment. By this time, members should have received letters from the GODORT Development Committee regarding the establishment of an endowment for the round table. To ensure the financial stability of GODORT and to enable us to continue our government information advocacy and education programs, we have decided to create an endowment fund. The endowment will generate monies that can be used for programs; GODORT's institutional membership in organizations with similar goals, such as the Freedom to Read Foundation; and support for the ALA Washington Office. Many of us have built professional reputations on expertise in the use and organization of government information. It is time to strengthen the organization which supports our specialty. ALA requires a minimum of \$25,000 to create an endowment fund. I am giving \$1,000 this year toward the endowment, and I know of at least one other GODORT member who is doing the same. I challenge twenty-three other members to match these gifts so that we can establish the fund this year. For those not in a position to do likewise, I encourage you to give what you can. Every dollar counts, so please make your check payable to: ALA Government Documents Round Table, with "GODORT endowment reserve fund" in the memo line, and send it to Ann E. Miller, GODORT's treasurer (see address below). Together, we can make this happen!

## References

1.  
[ALA Ahead to 2010](#)
2. Mills, Lois. A History of the Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association, 1972-1992  
(Bethesda, Md.: Lexis-Nexis, 2002); Larry Romans and Sandy Peterson, A History of the Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association, 1992-2002  
(Bethesda, Md.: Lexis-Nexis, 2002).
3. Robinson, Judith Schiek. "We Are All Documents Librarians: Naturalizing the Next Generation." DttP: Documents to the People 32, no. 4 (Winter 2004): 22-24.
4. Ann E. Miller's mailing address is: Federal Documents Librarian, Public Documents & Maps, Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, NC 27708-0177.