

# From the Chair

Susanne Caro



**G**reetings Members! The New Year is typically a time of reflection, looking at the past year and evaluating the good and the bad. This has been one heck of a year for government information; the National Science Foundation brought us the first image of a black

hole, the Mueller Report was one of the most eagerly awaited publications of the year, and United Nations Climate Change Conference reports have called the world to action. At the state level California banned plastic straws, Washington State tightened gun safety regulations, New York strengthened renter's rights, and more states either legalized or decriminalized marijuana. It has been difficult to keep track of it all.

Looking forward we will be seeing more on impeachment, the roll out of Census 2020, and an election that promises to be another wild ride. 2020 will also be a time to look back and celebrate the passage of the 19th amendment legalizing woman's suffrage. The first Seneca Falls Convention was in 1848, the 19th amendment was passed 72 years later. Just 97 years since the Equal Rights Amendment was first proposed Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the amendment but the legal standing is still unknown. Both efforts are a testament to both perseverance and resistance to change.

On the cusp of a new year and there are many changes in the wind for GODORT and ALA. When you read this we will have had our first totally virtual Midwinter meeting. The ALA Steering Committee on Organizational Effectiveness (SCOE) has released their recommendations and another committee

will be continuing their work. We will have more opportunities to give feedback and I strongly encourage everyone to take advantage of the in-person and online options for providing suggestions. The most concerning recommendation is to eliminate Round Tables that fall under the 1% of ALA membership. This arbitrary number could mean the end of GODORT and much of our work.

A topic of conversation this year will also be if GODORT should merge with the Map & Geospatial Information Round Table. We have a much in common, and with the proposed changes that would disband round tables, joining forces could also ensure survival for both organizations. We will be looking at what merging would require, the benefits and disadvantages of joining and that information will be presented to the membership for an informed vote. This will not be a quick process and will require the approval by membership of both organizations. Should membership want this merger it will take several years for it all to be finalized.

Change is coming. Let us meet it head on.

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