

2007 ALA Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.

Report by Yana V. Serdyuk

The number of exhibitors this year seemed to be larger than before. I had a chance to meet and discuss issues related to my library with our current and prospective vendors. Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. was a featured speaker at the ALA President's Program, "A Contact With Our Future". Mr. Kennedy discussed how librarians can contribute to the transformation of our communities, our nation, and our planet by developing sound environmental policies and procedures for our organizations. I toured the Library of Congress and saw "The Gutenberg Bible". In addition, I participated in the following workshops:

Essential Liberty or National Security: Is it Really Necessary to Give Up the One for the Other?

Richard Posner, author of "Not a Suicide Pact: The Constitution in a Time of National Emergency", and Geoffrey Stone, author of "Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime" debated the issue of balancing national security and individual liberties. A question-and-answer session followed.

Reference Books Bulletin: Is Print Reference Dead?

A panel of reference librarians discussed whether the print reference collection is a thing of the past, or whether it still has a place in the increasingly electronic world of reference.

Status of Recent Litigation Affecting Libraries.

A report on the status of litigation and non-litigation projects recently undertaken or monitored by the Freedom to Read Foundation with a featured speaker Theresa Chmara, FTRF Counsel, Jenner & Block, Washington, D.C., who also provided practical information on how these court cases affect the daily operations of libraries.

Minding the COOP: Maintaining and Improving Library Security Through Continuity of Operations.

The program provided information on how to establish an effective COOP (Continuity of Operations) plan for the libraries. COOP is a methodology that could ensure a high level of library security as well as disaster preparedness. The objective is to maintain a library's essential functions in the face of natural or man-made disasters and emergencies. A COOP plan emphasizes the protection of facilities and assets, enabling vital functions to take place while safeguarding staff and collections. Speakers: Dr. Elizabeth Titus, Director, New Mexico State University; Curtiss Bartell, Executive Manager, Continuity Planning for the Senate; Steve Jones, CEO, First Response Coalition.