



ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN LIBRARIANS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume 29:3 2009

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings, APALA members! I'm honored and delighted to serve as your president for 2009-2010. During these difficult economic times, with libraries facing budget cuts, furloughs, and layoffs, APALA will continue to grow and respond to your needs and concerns. Over the

year, we'll continue doing what APALA does best: offering fellowship, mentoring, and opportunities to further our mission of supporting library services to Asian, Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander Americans.

This year is especially exciting, as 2010 marks the 30th anniversary of APALA's founding. Our 30th Anniversary Committee has already started planning some special programs for the next ALA Annual conference in Washington, D.C. Please be sure to save Saturday evening, June 26, 2010 for our special anniversary dinner and program. More details will be forthcoming as we draw closer to Annual. We're looking forward to celebrating with you!

Even as we look ahead, I'd like to recap our recent activities. At this summer's Annual Conference in Chicago, APALA organized a number of fun and exciting events. The rain didn't stop our Chinatown tour and luncheon with Chicago Chinese American Historical Society president Gene Moy. Our table at the annual Diversity and Outreach Fair, coordinated by Saima Fazli, provided excellent networking and recruitment opportunities. At our program on multicultural outreach and communication, skillfully moderated by past president Michelle Baildon, we heard from librarians Si Chen, Reme Grefalda, and Samantha Hewakapuge, who shared their expertise working with their respective collections and user populations.

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President
Sherise Kimura
kimura@usfca.edu
415-422-5379

Vice President/ President-elect
Florante Peter Ibanez
florante.ibanez@lls.edu
213-736-1431

Treasurer
Angela Boyd
a Boyd@library.ucsb.edu
805-893-5086

Secretary
Liladhar R. Pendse
lpense@library.ucla.edu
310-825-1639

Immediate Past President
Michelle Baildon
baildon@mit.edu
617-253-9352

Board Members-At-Large
Rebecca M. Kennedy (2008-2010)
bloomingbecka@yahoo.com
312-744-2555 / 312-744-2293

Cecilia Siu-Wah Poon (2009-2011)
cecilia.poon@wwu.edu
360- 650-3079

Executive Director (Ex-Officio)
Gerardo "Gary" Colmenar
colmenar@library.ucsb.edu
805-893-8067

Newsletter Coordinator
Kamille Matias-Alicbusan
kam.alicbusan@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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Kudos to our Literary Awards Committee and chair Dora Ho for helping make our 3rd Annual Literary Awards breakfast a success. I was both moved and inspired listening to several of our award-winning authors at this event. Thanks also to Sarah Jeong and Cecilia Poon for serving as panelists on APALA co-sponsored programs.

We had a productive members' discussion on Sunday afternoon, where we heard from members about the reasons they joined APALA and ways we can improve our organization. As a result of this feedback, I'd like to build on our strengths and address areas for improvement. For example, one issue that came up was recruiting and retaining members. I'd like to offer more opportunities for members to become active and even take on leadership positions. Since we conduct most of our committee work over email and phone conference, it's easy to volunteer even if you're not able to attend ALA Midwinter or Annual.

We're continuing our outreach efforts to the next generation of librarians. I'm very pleased APALA grants free one-year memberships to Spectrum Scholars, as a way to get Scholars involved early in their careers. Moreover, former Executive Board member Sandy Wee and I attended the Spectrum Professional Options Fair, where we met and talked to this year's class of Scholars. With many Scholars expressing interest in finding mentors, I hope our more experienced members will consider volunteering through APALA's formal mentoring program. It was refreshing meeting new and future librarians at the conference; I know their unbridled energy and enthusiasm will invigorate our organization.

In terms of APALA activities since Annual, we've been busy working on several projects and planning upcoming events:

In late July, I formed the Task Force on Family Literacy in response to ALA President Camila Alire's call to ethnic affiliates to promote family literacy activities in our respective communities. As part of our goal to continue partnering with other organizations, the task

force submitted a joint proposal for a cultural heritage literacy program with the American Indian Library Association (AILA).

In another effort to support coalition building, the APALA Executive Board voted to offer free memberships to the presidents and vice-presidents of the four other ethnic caucuses.

APALA will continue provide assistance to members in the form of scholarships and awards. This year we'll sponsor an ALA Emerging Leader, award a scholarship to a library school student, as well as offer a travel award to attend the ALA Annual Conference. The application deadline has already passed for the Emerging Leader sponsorship, but look for emails about the scholarship and travel award early next year.

In order to connect with members who aren't able to attend Midwinter or Annual, please consider organizing a local APALA gathering in your area. We've been doing this for over a year in Northern and Southern California, and the response has been very positive. Contact me if you are interested in organizing an event and I'll help you get started.

On a final note, I'd like to welcome Liladhar Pendse and Cecilia Poon to the APALA Executive Board and acknowledge a few members for their significant contributions to APALA. Thank you to outgoing board members and committee chairs Saima Fazli, Sarah Jeong, and Sandy Wee for their excellent work over the years. I'd also like to acknowledge Immediate Past President Michelle Baildon for her leadership and vision, all the while dealing with a very difficult family situation. Many thanks to all the committee chairs and members for volunteering their time and energy. Last but not least, thank you to Gary Colmenar, Executive Director, for his inspiration and tireless efforts to keep APALA running as smoothly as possible.

We're off to a great start and I look forward to moving APALA forward this year. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or ideas you'd like to share, or are interested in becoming more involved in APALA.

Best regards,
Sherise Kimura



ALA AND APALA ON TWITTER

One of the most interesting and exciting things that happened at ALA Annual 2009 was the explosion of Twitter usage among conference attendees. If you don't know much about Twitter, it's basically a social networking tool that allows you to inform others about what you're doing and thinking in 140 characters or less. You can follow other people's messages and have them follow yours. Updates, referred to as "tweets" by most, can be sent from the Twitter website, your mobile phone, or numerous 3rd party Twitter apps like Twitterfox and Tweetdeck.



At ALA Annual 2009, Twitter users marked their conference-related tweets with a special hashtag, #alaz009, and this produced a vibrant backchannel in which people talked about the conference as it was actually happening. To read more about how Twitter served as a backchannel at ALA Annual 2009, take a look at this Library Journal article at <http://is.gd/2gLPW>.

Of course, APALA was in on the action with our very own Twitter account, which you can see at http://twitter.com/ala_apala. APALA-related programs, get-togethers, and other news were shared via Twitter. If you're already using Twitter or at least considering joining, please follow @ala_apala for updates, news, and random thoughts from APALA. Check out the list of our followers to connect with other fans of APALA!

Richard Kong
@kongtemplation on Twitter

2009: A PROMISING YEAR TO BE AN EMERGING LEADER

By Lana Adlawan

What a transformative year to be chosen to represent APALA in the 2009 Emerging Leaders program! I first would like to thank APALA for selecting me to represent our association in the Emerging Leaders program, which was created by ALA Past-President Leslie Burger in 2007. This year, I was one of 107 library leaders chosen from around the country to participate in a program created to support and promote teamwork, networking and mentoring among library professionals. My involvement in this program allowed me to attend both the ALA Midwinter Conference in Denver, Colorado and our latest Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois. Experiencing two new cities was a treat in and of itself, but having membership amongst such a motivated and talented group of individuals is an experience I will not soon forget.

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Two of my greatest passions are working with children/teens and in the world of children's literature. I am currently a Children's Librarian for Brooklyn Public Library at their Central Library location. Each day is radically different from the next and the diverse communities in Brooklyn continually allow me the luxury of finding better ways to serve children and families. As a participant in the Emerging Leaders program, each member is given the opportunity to take on a leadership project that will benefit a division of ALA. I immediately chose a project offered by the Coretta Scott King Committee (Project A; Lift Every Voice and Read: A Personal Library for Every

2009: A PROMISING YEAR TO BE AN EMERGING LEADER

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Child) in which a small group of librarians throughout the country create a marketing plan aimed at raising the awareness of the Coretta Scott King Book Awards. Our tasks consisted of creating promotional print/web materials and tools for educators which would help to market the award nationally to children and families. Some of the items our group created were: subject and age-level bibliographies, greeting cards, public service announcements and thematic bookmarks. To view all of our promotional materials and see the completed project, please visit: http://wikis.ala.org/emergingleaders/index.php/Project_A_%282009%29

Needless to say, this was both a challenging and extremely rewarding project. I had the privilege of working with both Satia Orange (formerly of ALA's OLOS office) and Chrystal Carr-Jeter, Director of Youth Services for the Cleveland Public Library as mentors and this opportunity was motivation alone in learning how to forge new paths in the world of multicultural children's literature. It is my hope that in the future I can use the experience garnered from this project to create a greater awareness of APALA's Literature Awards for Children and Teens.

Thank you again, APALA, for your much needed support. I've recently been assigned to APALA's Scholarship Committee and am currently in the process of helping to select our 2010 APALA Emerging Leader. I can't wait to see what our future Emerging Leaders create for our association, and I, personally, am happy to be part of this process for APALA.

STOREFRONT LIBRARY in Boston's Chinatown

Halfway through its three-month experimental run, the Storefront Library in Boston's Chinatown has become an active and beloved space serving Chinatown residents and visitors from all over the Boston area.

The Storefront Library is a temporary library, operated largely by volunteers out of borrowed space (www.storefrontlibrary.org). Archstone Boston Common donated the 3,000-square-foot, street-level space at 640 Washington Street. The Boston Public Library acted as project advisor. APALA is a sponsor of the project.



A Day in the Storefront Library

The purpose of the temporary library, says organizer, operator, and Chinatown resident Leslie Davol, is to test a model for library services while activating formerly vacant space with community-based use. In the process, the library also gives people in Chinatown a taste of what it feels like to have a library in the neighborhood again and adds new momentum to a campaign by a group called the Friends of the Chinatown Library to bring a permanent library back to the neighborhood. (Chinatown's branch of the Boston Public Library closed in 1956, coinciding with the land swaps for the construction of the Central Artery.)

The Storefront Library offers approximately

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STOREFRONT LIBRARY in Boston's Chinatown

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4,500 books for circulation – all donated for the project. Thus far, 2200 of these have been cataloged into LibraryThing, a social cataloging web application. The library also offers daily newspapers, magazines, a large children's book collection, and internet access. Many materials are in Chinese as well as/or in English. There is also a drop-in "Drawing Lab," a community service center providing the latest information on physical and economic development in Chinatown, weekly bi-lingual (and sometimes tri-lingual) story hours, and drop-in English conversation hours. Special one-time programs, such as the upcoming "Home Movie Night," or screening of a documentary on Beijing's disappearing Hutongs, are also offered. Numerous community groups use the space for meetings and workshops.



Storefront Library online catalog hits 3000

Leslie and her husband Sam run the library with the help of Program Manager Amy Cheung and 31 volunteers and interns, who have thus far logged over 330 hours of service. Some volunteers, like attorney Rebecca Lee and high school student Cindy Li, live in the neighborhood and volunteer on weekends. Others, like Cynthia Yee and Maria Wong, are retired public school teachers. Still others, like Adam Robinson and Laura Jean Miller, are students or recent graduates of

Simmons' Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences program.

To date, 477 materials have circulated. Of these, 52% are in Chinese. Over 250 people have filled out forms to obtain a library card, providing a snapshot of the likely demographics and interests of future library patrons of a permanent branch. 63% of library card-holders are Chinese-language speakers, and 21% come from the immediate area, Chinatown. The next largest groups (7%-5%) come from the South End, Back Bay, Malden, and Quincy. There are also small percentages from most towns throughout the Boston area, including Arlington, Belmont, and Waltham.



Volunteers give away extra books outside Storefront Library

Volunteer Emily Wu observes, "Already, this temporary storefront library has become a gathering place...I wonder if and how we'll feel the loss when it's all over in three months."

Working in coordination with the Friends of the Chinatown Library, project organizers are hoping to translate the inevitable feeling of loss when it closes into new ideas and commitment to finding a site and the funding for a permanent branch.

(www.storefrontlibrary.org)



BOOK REVIEWS

Lac Su

I Love Yous Are for White People: A Memoir. 

Harper Perennial. May 2009.

ISBN 0061543667.

Forced to leave war-torn Vietnam, four-year-old Lac Su and his family flee Danang traveling aboard a sixty-foot boat packed with over 300 people. After several weeks of drifting across the violent South China Sea, landing in Hong Kong and getting shuffled between tent cities, the family immigrates to the United States and settles in a drug-ridden neighborhood in Hollywood, California. Home is not the heaven Lac and his family imagine. Rather, their new world is marked by the "mayhem and commotion" of police helicopters shining their floodlights across rooftops ("crackhead and junkie haven[s]"), Los Angeles's booming traffic (a "tangled, teeming mess") and uneasy underworld encounters with dealers, prostitutes and gangsters. In his provocative debut, Su boldly writes about the trials of his youth, chronicling the loneliness of life in America, the challenges of growing up with a demanding father (a "firecracker with a testy fuse") and his intriguing, yet dangerous liaisons with street gangs. Su tells a frank story of tough love, expressing a deep human need for acceptance while exploring the universality of family life.

Marilyn Chin

Revenge of the Mooncake Vixen: A Novel. 

W.W. Norton. October 2009.

ISBN 0393331458.

Poet Marilyn Chin's spins together forty-one tales into a wild, fiercely inventive novel about Moonie and Mei Ling Wong, a pair of Chinese-American twin sisters, growing up under the watchful eye of the "Great Matriarch," their clever-wielding grandmother. The books begins with a fearless Moon taking revenge on a group of "trashy white boys" who have humiliated her. Moon's retaliation is sardonically described: "For thirty days and thirty nights [she] scoured the seaside howling, windswept--in search of blond victims. They would drown on their surfboards, or collapse while polishing their cars." Subsequent sections of the book follow the sisters' transformation from delivery girls ("certain Wong-named-nobodies") to two overtly ambitious young women ("I'm attending Stanford and Mei Ling's at Harvard, both of us on pre-med scholarships and on our way to becoming important doctors"). Throughout the novel, Chin playfully sprinkles her tales with Chinese myths, parables, Taoist thought and Confucian beliefs, while presenting a terrifically diverse cast of characters including a young monk, a donkey, an ex-San Diego Charger, an eight-armed bodhisattva, a surfer, and a cook. The chorus of first- and second-generation Chinese Americans is especially rich. Their voices are full of yearning, hope, rage, passion, and pain.

BOOK REVIEWER

Miriam Tuliao

Assistant Director,
Central Collection Development
Collections Strategy
New York Public Library

APALA sponsors EMERGING LEADERS for 2010

Jeannie Chen has been selected as the 2010 APALA-sponsored Emerging Leader. Jeannie has a B.A. in English Literature from UC Berkeley and is currently working on her MLIS degree at the UCLA, specializing in digital technology, digital storytelling, and youth services. She has a strong interest in the emerging area of children's informatics because of the numerous possibilities it provides for expression among diverse populations. This past summer, she interned at the National Archives Office of Presidential Libraries, creating strategies and developing proposals for social media tools for outreach and user discovery of digital resources. In her previous career, she was a senior magazine editor at *Women's Wear Daily* and *W* magazine. Jeannie is committed to enhancing services and outreach for the Asian Pacific American community, and currently serves on APALA's Task Force on Family Literacy. Congratulations, Jeannie!

In addition, Michelle Baildon, one of the APALA-sponsored Emerging Leaders in 2008, will resume her participation in the 2010 Emerging Leaders program. She postponed her participation for family reasons, and we are happy that she can participate this year.

Many thanks to Heawon Paick, Scholarship Committee chair, as well as committee members Lana Adlawan, Daniel Berdaner, Lana Thelen, and Anchalee (Joy) Panigabutra-Roberts. We had a very strong pool of applicants this year, and the committee worked hard to select our sponsored Emerging Leader.

For information about the Emerging Leader program, go to http://wikis.ala.org/emergingleaders/index.php/Main_Page

Greetings Members,

With the holidays right around the corner, and Midwinter less than a month, I wanted to give you a heads-up about APALA meetings and events at Midwinter. In particular, you won't want to miss our tour of the Chinatown Storefront Library (<http://www.storefrontlibrary.org/>) and dim sum lunch after on Saturday. APALA gave \$250 this fall to support the library. Later on Saturday, join us at JCLC Fundraiser in Camila Alire's Presidential Suite. Sunday morning we'll have our All Committees Meeting, and in the evening, we'll catch up and meet new members at our dinner social. And finally, you won't want to miss the uplifting and inspiring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunrise Celebration early Monday morning. Feel free to contact me if you have questions about any of the events.

Friday, January 15

**7:30 - 9:30pm APALA Executive Board Meeting [Open to all]
Sheraton Hotel, Back Bay C**

Saturday, January 16

11:00-11:30 am Tour of Boston Chinatown Storefront Library

**11:45 am -1:00 pm Dim Sum lunch -- Chau Chow City
Please RSVP to Eugenia Beh at eugenia_beh@yahoo.com for both events.**

**4:00 - 6:00 pm JCLC Fundraiser (All invited - FREE)
WESTIN - C. Alire's Suite (Presidential Suite 1645)**

Sunday, January 17

**10:30 am - 12:00 pm APALA All Committee Meeting
(including 30th Anniversary Ad Hoc Committee)
Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, Room 252 A/B**

**7:00 pm APALA "Dutch Treat" Dinner - Tantric India Bistro (<http://www.tantricgrill.com/home/>)
123 Stuart Street, Boston, MA 02116
Please bring cash
RSVP to Eugenia Beh at eugenia_beh@yahoo.com**

Monday, January 18

**6:30 am -7:30am Martin Luther King, Jr., Sunrise Breakfast Celebration
Westin Grand Ballroom A/B (attached to the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center)**

This list is also viewable on our website: <http://www.apalaweb.org/conferences/conferences.htm>

Wishing you and your loved ones much joy this holiday season!

**See you in Boston,
Sherise**