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A Year in the Life

“Don’t cry because it is over. Smile because it happened.” – Anonymous

Time: Where does it go? I so vividly remember last May’s Association Luncheon, during which I described how honored and excited I was to have the privilege to “paint the picture” of ALA President for 2007-2008.

When I reflect upon my many experiences and journeys during the past year, the most vivid images I see are the faces of the people I have met while traveling – people who have enriched my life beyond measure and brought life to my precious picture.

As I now begin to put the finishing touches on my painting, I would like to share some of the things I have observed and learned during this memorable year.

- While visiting ALA’s Fort Worth Chapter, I learned that if you attend a 7:30 a.m. meeting shortly after Daylight Savings Time kicks in, you can watch the sun rise from the 38th floor conference room.
- From Indiana Chapter members I learned that you should always wear socks in hotel rooms and should never carry your undergarments in the hotel elevator!
- I have confirmed and reconfirmed that airline flights don’t always go as planned and luggage doesn’t always go with you.



- I have learned that scheduled wake-up calls don’t always happen and that back-up plans are a must.
- In Birmingham, Alabama, I discovered what a tornado warning sounds like.
- I proved that you *can* fly directly from China to the ALA Region 6 Educational Conference in Tucson, Arizona, and still be able to speak at the luncheon the next day.
- At a wonderful barbeque restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri, I discovered “burnt-ends.” All I can say is, “Yummy!”
- In the “wardrobe malfunctions” category: I was thrilled to find that Scotch tape works great when you need an emergency repair of a gaping hole in one’s evening gown, and that the nail polish color “I’m Not Really a Waitress” does not show up when dribbled down the front of a black evening gown right before leaving your hotel room for a gala event.

- I have a hot tip for anyone selling raffle tickets: If you want to sell a lot of tickets and need someone who is not afraid to do some strong-arming, consider asking Hampton Roads Chapter member Kim Pici to do the selling for you.
- After bravely eating three scorpions (yes, three – after all, they are a delicacy!) in Beijing, I learned that you are supposed to remove the tail before eating them. Who knew?
- I have discovered that you can actually get calluses on your hands and tennis elbow from schlepping your luggage through airports on a regular basis.
- In New Orleans, I witnessed firsthand that if you place a cowboy hat on Chapter President Don Champaign, he could pass for country music legend George Strait.
- I have learned not to take myself too seriously.
- In Puerto Rico, I confirmed that it does rain ... and rain ... and rain in their beautiful rainforests, and that delicious plantains are served in some fashion with almost every meal.
- While attending a real-live rodeo in Austin, I witnessed something called “Mutton-Bustin” – cute as can be!
- I learned that being successful and enjoying my term as ALA President has taken a lot more than luck and

hard work. It's all about the great people I have come into contact with, day in and day out. Everywhere I have journeyed, our members have been overwhelmingly welcoming.

- I have been blessed to observe awe-inspiring sights from planes flying 35,000 feet in the air: the magnificent Grand Canyon on a clear day; the beautiful orange sunset of the Arizona desert; the snow-covered peaks of the Rocky Mountains blending into the clouds; a lunar eclipse; pink- and purple-tinged clouds as the sun set over the Pacific Ocean; and many, many more!
- As I have frequently turned to various ALA resources to get my "real job" done every day, it has been reconfirmed to me that ALA is

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an invaluable resource. It would have been nearly impossible for me to serve as President of this Association without the assistance of the great folks at ALA headquarters and the resources and tools that they provide to every member.

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- Upon returning to the United States after spending a week in Brazil with

ALA Past President Richard J. "Dick" Nigon, CLM, as the ALA representatives at the legal management conference and exposition FENALAW/SENALAW, I was thrilled to learn that he considered me a "low maintenance" travel companion!

- I have learned that time really does pass quickly. You can save all sorts of things – money, food, stamps, etc. – but you can't save time. Time simply must be spent wisely.

This year has been an incredible journey, one I will cherish and smile about often. But it is now almost time for me to pass the paintbrush over to Wendy Rice-Isaacs so that she can begin painting her own unique picture of ALA President for 2008-2009. Thank you for enriching my life so dramatically and for allowing me to share my painting with you. ♦

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