

My first concern at present is to try to formulate and work out the details of plans to present to the board concerning two issues that we discussed briefly at the Board Meeting in Cheyenne.

1. Although the proposal to offer MPLA membership along with a state association membership for a single price is appealing, and several state associations have expressed interest, it appears to be a more complex idea than originally thought. There are two main problems — the term of membership, and pricing. Many of the state associations have “rolling” membership, with memberships renewing on the date of the initial membership, while others have a fiscal year membership. MPLA membership is effective for the calendar year. Changing that might put an undue burden on Judy, especially since a change would also affect memberships awarded by drawing or application at state conferences. The second issue is pricing. Should the MPLA membership be discounted when offered with a state membership? Should a discount be a specific dollar amount or a percentage of the usual membership fee (something that would be very difficult to calculate)? Should we expect state associations to discount their membership fees as well in a joint membership, or simply offer an MPLA membership at a given discount when members sign up along with a state membership application? These are questions that the Membership Committee will need to address before we’re ready to make a proposal to the Board.
2. The proposal to add a special membership category for Authors has met with a good deal of interest. (I’ve talked with several local authors.) Again, there are details to be worked out: should an author membership include voting privileges? Should author members receive discounted rates for conferences? Would author members be eligible for membership on MPLA committees? What additional benefit of membership could we offer to author members — perhaps a quarter page or half page add in one or more newsletters? With input from the membership committee, I hope to formulate a proposal that will address these issues, and perhaps others.

The membership committee has not met since the Cheyenne conference, but we do need to have a telephone (Zoom) meeting soon, before everyone becomes so involved in holiday preparations that there’s no room to think!

Judy received an interesting email from a librarian who had received a free membership at a conference in the past. He expressed puzzlement about MPLA — and suggested that someone might “take new members under (their) wing” and explain how MPLA is valuable and how to get involved. After receiving Eric’s approval, I have emailed James (with some information) and have offered him a 1-year free membership and an opportunity to get involved by becoming a member of the Membership Committee. This really is the key to retaining members — letting them know how MPLA can be of value to them personally. I would welcome suggestions about how we might do this!

- ◆ Greetings (a standardized but personalized message) have been sent to new members as Judy has sent lists to me. Most new members are from drawings done at state conferences.
- ◆ Judy has created a list of state librarians. I will email each one with information about institutional memberships and the offer of a personal membership within the institutional membership.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Fockler