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From the President

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings from Durham, North Carolina! Spring is in full bloom, and it won’t be long before summer comes with its heat but also time to travel and take on special projects.

I thank you all for your patience as we initiated a new format for our CEAL meetings. There were a few glitches. As I understand it, it was not clear that the Business Meeting was open to all. The Business Meeting provides a time to announce election results, finalize the preparations for the CEAL dinner and conduct whatever other business that may not concern our speakers or CONSALD and CORMOSEA who jointly sponsored our Plenary. Peter Zhou has suggested that the business meeting can also be an occasion for reports that may cross our current committee structure, for instance, on funding cuts for the coming year, on reorganizations facing our libraries, even on Google Books and how it is handling CJK materials. If anyone is interested in putting together a task force or reporting on a survey on a topic of general interest, please contact me, and I will share your idea with the executive committee and get back to you.

The Plenary was to my mind successful, and we are planning to continue with the same format, that is, a session devoted entirely to one issue with a variety of panelists. To the extent that is feasible and relevant, we will work with CONSALD and CORMOSEA on the selection of a topic and speakers, since we confront many of the same challenges. We are looking for topics that are both timely and of broad interest that will challenge us to think in new ways about our jobs, our relations with faculty and students, the role of technology, and/or the future of libraries.

No session was devoted to library technology, since technology is increasingly integrated into all our activities. Each of the other standing committees organized successful programs that engendered a good deal of excitement. The Chinese Materials Committee also sponsored a forum with faculty and librarians on Chinese library resources on Friday evening that engendered considerable discussion. Many thanks to Yuan Zhou for not only organizing tours of the University of Chicago library but also the dinner at the Lee Wing Wah Restaurant. It was a great success; over two hundred people attended and enjoyed excellent food and good conversation.

We are continuing to discuss the overall organization of our meetings, and some discussion is already occurring for the 2011 meetings in Hawaii. We are considering more cross-cutting panels, taking a topic and examining it comparatively for China, Japan and Korea, while simultaneously reducing the time devoted to the separate materials committees. Another possibility is organizing the conference around a theme, such as open access/open source. We may want to consider having a provocative presentation one year in our Business Meeting and then, the following
year, having a panel or the entire conference focus on the issues that were raised. The executive committee welcomes your ideas. Given the current financial situation that many of us are facing, we may also explore ways of capturing our meetings for people who are unable to attend.

I have some good news to report; the terms for both Gail King, as editor of JEAL, and Vickie Fu Doll, as statistics coordinator, ended in March 2009, but both have agreed to serve another term. I am sure that you all will join me in expressing appreciation for their service and for the vision, hard-work and knowledge they bring to their jobs.

Best wishes,

Kristina Troost
President, Council on East Asian Libraries