TLA Election News: Last Day to Vote is March 30
If you are eligible to vote in the TLA 2021 Executive Board elections (you renewed or joined as an individual member by January 31, 2021) you should have received an email from Survey and Ballots with the subject line: 2021 Executive Board Election - Instructions and Login Information

Use the link in that email to login and vote in the election. Your username (TLA Member Number) and auto-generated password will be in the email along with the link.

The TLA 2021 Executive Board Election will close on March 30 at 11:59 PM. Questions? Email Kelly Dibbens at TLA.

Update: Texas Legislative Session
The pace of work at the Capitol is starting to pick up and bills are being assigned to committees and scheduled for hearings. March 12 is the deadline for bills to be filed. The Senate Finance Committee held a hearing on Article I of the appropriations bill which includes the Texas State Library and Archives budget on Feb. 9. TLA provided written testimony in support of the TSLAC budget request. We will be reaching out to members with requests to contact elected officials regarding key bills as they begin to move through the process. Bills TLA is tracking

TLA Statement about the Mask Mandate
TLA issued a statement regarding the statewide mask mandate: "Libraries across Texas have instituted effective policies and procedures to protect the health and safety of their users and employees. It is critical that these protocols, including wearing masks, be kept in place to ensure a safe environment for Texans that rely on their libraries, and for the frontline library workers providing these valuable services." Read the full statement.

Renew your membership!
Don't forget to renew your TLA membership for 2021! TLA membership comes with many benefits. Joining TLA and volunteering are two of the best ways to build connections in the Texas library community. Renew or join here.

TLA Disaster Relief Fund
As Texans emerge from this winter storm crisis, we are hearing from libraries that have been impacted by the disaster, and from those who want to assist. You can contribute to the TLA Disaster Relief fund here. Click on Other Funds and look for Disaster Relief Fund. If your library has been damaged, and you would like to apply for a grant, the application is here.

New Dates for TALL Texans: November 14 - 18, 2021
The application deadline has been extended to April 1. Apply today!

TALL Texans participants study strategic planning, risk-taking, conflict negotiation, team building, coaching, ethics, advocacy, personal career planning, and more. Mentors, selected by the TLA Executive Board, serve as coaches, counselors and role models, sharing their experiences as veteran library leaders.
2021 Texas Bluebonnet Award Winner Announced
A total of 54,784 students, from 1275 registered institutions (school libraries, public libraries and homeschooling groups) across Texas voted for this year’s Texas Bluebonnet Award. And the results are in: the winner of the 2021 Texas Bluebonnet Award is If I Built a School, written and illustrated by Chris Van Dusen. Students representing 10 Texas school districts will present the award to the winner at the TBA Author Session at #txla21. Thank you to TBA Coordinator Jacqui Bridges-Sheppherd and the TBA Committee for their hard work! Watch the announcement video.

TLA 2021 Conference News

Teacher Day at TLA
Do you know a classroom teacher who would enjoy the TLA Annual Conference? Connect with your teachers and impact their instruction by inviting them to join you at this year’s Teacher Day @ TLA! Teacher Day @ TLA attendees will receive full conference registration, an invitation-only interactive author event, focused activities on Saturday, April 24th and a one-year membership to TLA. Don’t miss out on this opportunity to strengthen your partnership with a teacher! Spots are still available, but the application deadline is March 20, 2021. Featured speaker is author Varian Johnson. Don’t delay, apply today!

Matthew McConaughey, Academy Award-winning actor and author, is the TLA 2021 Spotlight Author Session speaker. He will discuss his #1 New York Times bestselling memoir, Greenlights. He will speak at 11:30 AM on Thursday, April 22, in a live presentation.

Danny Trejo, one of Hollywood’s most recognizable, prolific, and beloved character actors, is our keynote speaker for TLA After Hours on Thursday, April 22 at 6:30 PM. The actor will discuss his memoir Trejo: My Life of Crime, Redemption, and Hollywood (out July 6). Read Entertainment Weekly’s article about his memoir.

School Administrator's Conference
We would like to encourage all Texas superintendents, principals, school board members, and curriculum leaders to attend the 2021 School Administrators Conference taking place on April 22, 2021. Strong library programs are crucial partners in planning actions to address significant learning loss due to the pandemic. Professional librarians are trained and experienced in engaging students, supporting teachers, advancing learning, promoting reading, integrating technology, and influencing student achievement – all vital in developing successful learning experiences. Recommend your school administrator for this free event.

Speaking at TLA 2021?
Speakers, moderators and presenters, make sure to read through our speaker to do list. Contact Elias Aguirre with any questions.

Conference registration rates go up March 26! If you have not already, register now.

Names in the News
Leora M. Kemp, University of North Texas at Dallas Founding Librarian, passed away January 26, 2021.

Join us for Battledecks!
Last chance to join the fun! We have one more round of Virtual Battledecks TONIGHT before the Championship Round during the 2021 TLA Virtual Conference. There will be prizes in the Championship Round. Don’t miss out!

Virtual Battledecks is a fun improv game that challenges contestants to deliver a presentation on the fly using an
unknown slidedeck containing random (often hilarious) images. Contestants are judged on their ability to deliver a coherent presentation that incorporates slide content smoothly.

If you would like to participate please sign up here. All are welcome to tune in and cheer on the contestants.

**Zoom link for Thursday, March 11th**

Meeting ID: 828 4294 3715