The ANC Rocks!
By Susan Bailey, Office Manager Milligan Lawless, Phoenix, AZ

If you dream of having a voice in the direction of the ALA, you should consider serving on the Association Nominating Committee (ANC). I had the pleasure of being the Region 6 representative on the ANC this past November and I couldn’t have asked for a more worthwhile experience. I never would have pictured myself closely interacting with ALA’s current Past President, President, and President-Elect, as well as a couple other Past Presidents and region representatives. Very surreal, yet it was a very comfortable, productive group!

So how does it work? Each representative is assigned 2-3 (or more, it depends on the number of openings and applicants) people on whom to conduct due diligence. The positions to be filled are open Regional Directors, At-Large Directors and the President-Elect for the coming year. These positions, along with the current Past President, President and President-Elect make up the Association’s Board of Directors.

There is one month of extreme craziness in setting up and completing the multitude of phone interviews to vet your prospective candidates. Although hectic, I found this one of the most enjoyable tasks. It was very energizing to speak to both the candidates and those contacted for feedback on them. It’s a lot like attending conference where you come back energized and excited. Hearing others’ excitement and passion for ALA is so contagious! Once the interviews are complete, a summary is drawn up for each candidate. Then it’s a waiting game for the official ANC meeting.

The ANC Committee meeting is held at a hotel located near ALA headquarters. Mind you, this is in Chicago in November. (You have to realize, I’m from Phoenix and live here because I ran from the cold of the Midwest, so Chicago would not normally be high on my list to visit in November!) And disappoint it did not. You may remember Chicago’s big November snow storm of eleven inches. Well, of course it took place over ANC weekend! Thank goodness I saved my winter coat and boots. And actually, we were indoors the majority of the time, so I really couldn’t complain.

Once settled into the hotel Friday afternoon, the ANC committee members had the opportunity to socialize with the President-Elect candidates, which was a great way
to view their interactions with others. Then just the committee members headed out to dinner before the start of early morning deliberations. Dinner was so much fun! It’s amazing how quickly you can connect with people - even those you don’t know - when you share this type of experience.

Bright and early Saturday morning the committee met for breakfast in their sequestered room (haha! Doesn’t that sound fun? Plus I had to get a legal term in here somewhere!). Following breakfast, the President-Elect presentations began. Each of them had fifteen minutes to present to the committee, with a question/answer period following. Talk about being in the hot seat! They all did an amazing job, which only made ours tougher. Once the presentations were completed, the due-diligence for the various President-Elect candidates was reviewed. During this process, each member reads the summary drawn up after their phone interviews regarding the candidates they were assigned. After listening to the summaries, discussion on the candidates ensues. Votes are taken when the group feels ready for it, but if a majority is not reached, it goes back to the discussion table until a consensus is reached. It may not sound like it, but this can be a long process. The talented, passionate, committed members we have in ALA seem endless and having to choose just one person for an opening can be very difficult, but it is what it is. Once the President-Elect was decided, the committee moved on to the other open board positions in much the same fashion. The only difference being these candidates do not personally present to the committee, so the due diligence conducted by the committee members is again reviewed and discussed, with a vote following.

It was a great feeling when the board’s open positions were filled. It was one very long, productive day (it sometimes goes into the second day) of selecting next year’s board and the feeling of accomplishment was palpable. And having a voice in the direction of our Association by being part of this committee? I can truly say it was something in which I am very proud and humbled to have been allowed to participate. It was an unforgettable experience and one I highly recommend! Interested? Applications are being taken now with a due date of March 15.