

## – and what a year it has been

lives. She found a book in his native language for a Russian offender who said he would remain on hunger strike until he had something to read.

- The health librarian who calculated the time saved by his team carrying out research for medical professionals and estimated that it was the equivalent of a full-time nursing position.
- The public librarian whose maintenance budget had been slashed, who turned it into a 'killer fact' – "the council spends less on maintaining our library than you would spend on fixing things in your own home."
- Several school librarians, who said that the library was one of the key factors used by prospective parents to judge the quality of the school.

She comments, "The most rewarding thing about the workshops is hearing from ALIA members that they can take the ideas we've talked about during the session and apply them in their workplaces. People also say they will share what they've learned with their colleagues, so ALIA's advocacy message will have reached many members and library and information professionals as a result of the Association's investment in this free PD."

There are still five workshops, in Sydney in October, and Perth in November. Check the ALIA professional development calendar for dates, venues and registration details <http://www.alia.org.au/education/pd/pd.services/training.calendar.html>.

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## How did you use our federal election campaign kit?

We have had a very good response to the ALIA federal election campaign kit available from when the election was called.

The kit included key messages, contact details for the major parties, the top 10 lobbying priorities for ALIA members, links to other resources, and two template letters to MPs and opposition candidates: <http://www.alia.org.au/election2010/>.

We asked the ALIA Public Libraries Advisory Committee members how they had used the kit. Jan Richards, in Orange, told us, "I forwarded the link to ABC radio, who were doing a series of interviews with local candidates and had asked listeners to send in questions. I felt that there was a good selection of questions in the ALIA document and I know that the ABC incorporated some of them into their discussion."

George Cowcher, from the State Library of Western Australia, said, "I didn't use the templates myself – even though I think they are very good – but did read with interest the responses from the parties. I think the top ten priorities are interesting and well worth keeping in mind. I think the work that ALIA did was great and can have ongoing benefit if people choose to use it, for example for state elections." As a case in point, Margaret Allen, State Librarian of WA and Vice-President of ALIA, used the priorities as part of her presentation at an event in September, going on to focus specifically on digitisation and the National Year of Reading.

ALIA Executive Director Sue Hutley explained, "It was incredibly useful to have the three main parties respond to the series of questions we posed. We will now be able to quote their responses back to them about the role of libraries, digitisation, the National Broadband Network, and other major initiatives."

We would love to hear more stories from members. Contact us through [advocacy@alia.org.au](mailto:advocacy@alia.org.au).

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