

Therese Bigelow - **USBBY**, *Past President*

Still processing the Bologna Children's Book Fair experience. It was exhibit halls full of book publisher exhibits from around the world. It was watching Claudette McLinn, Rudine Sims Bishop, Leonard Marcus, Christopher Myer and Joshunda Sanders talk about the importance of the Coretta Scott King Book award at 50 to an international audience. It was cheering for this year's Astrid Lindgren Award winner and watching a presentation on the Nami Concours that included our own Junko Yokota.

Evie Freeman - **USBBY**, *President-Elect*

The Bologna Children's Book Fair is a joyous celebration of children's books, book illustrations, and the love of reading. Over 1400 exhibitors from around the world fill the halls of the Bologna Fairgrounds. In addition to the excitement and vibrancy of the Fair itself, I enjoy helping at the IBBY Stand and spending time with my IBBY friends.

Janelle Mathis - **Co-Editor**, *Bookbird: a Journal of International Children's Literature*

As a first time attendee at the Bologna Book Fair, I was in awe of the number of publishers, the exhibits they created, and the interaction among and within the different booths. I enjoyed looking for publishers and books from the countries and cities I felt connected to for various reasons, such as Zagreb, Croatia; Madrid, Spain; Germany; and Italy (having lived in the latter two). It was enjoyable to have individuals walk up to the IBBY Honor Book display and point to a book they wrote or illustrated. What I most value about this first trip was getting to know the IBBY and Bookbird Board members better and sharing work time and meals with them. It also was important to see them interacting with others at this event --both IBBY members and individuals from their own countries. I'm still finding lots to talk about as I remember different people and events -- so much in such a short time.

Junko Yokota - **USBBY**, *Past President*

I love many things about the Bologna Bookfair: books, friends, and the IBBY mission of why I am there. But what remains with me as the biggest impression is that this is an international celebration of books and reading -- that we should share the best of our books with each other, read the best of what we can get from the world, and internationalize our views of what it means to be a person in the world, connected with each other through literature and literacy. Often I am asked if I am an agent because I walk around recommending books for publishers to buy rights and make available in their countries. My response -- I am an advocate for readers to have access to the best of what our world offers, regardless of national origin.