

TRUSTEE

The New York State Association of Library Boards ■ Vol. XVII No. 4 Fall 2006



President's Memo

The Next Generation

**By Norman J. Jacknis,
NYSALB President**

Around New York and much of the country, there has been renewed attention paid to library services for teens. Librarians are coming up with some interesting ways of adapting to how teens now use reading and other materials. They are also finding ways to entice those teens into libraries, a place that many teens had neglected in recent years.

Librarians have extended their offerings to include graphic novels and other forms of literature that are relatively new to the stacks. Libraries are beginning to set up and use various forms of Internet-based social networking to communicate with and enable communications among teens, including blogs, wikis, podcasts and even services like MySpace.

(Of course, in yet another attempt to hold back the tide, our national lawmakers have placed these new kinds of services in their cross-hairs. No matter what the final outcome of such attempts

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Study: Libraries are Valuable, Yet Vulnerable

**by State Senator Hugh T. Farley, Chair,
Senate Sub-committee on Libraries**

A landmark national study shows strong public support for local libraries, but reveals that community leaders are concerned about their future financial vulnerability.

“Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public and Leadership Attitudes About Libraries in the 21st Century,” surveyed a national random sample of over 1,200 adults, conducted seven focus groups, and interviewed 34 national and community leaders. The study was funded by the Americans for Libraries Council and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

On the positive side, the survey results emphasize that “everybody loves libraries.” Overall, 76% of respondents said that libraries are doing an “excellent” or “good” job, exceeding public approval ratings of police (68%), schools (56%), and news media (50%). Similarly, about three-quarters of the people describe their local library as “well-run,” and would consider closure of the library an, “important loss that affects the whole community.” Significant majorities placed “high priority” on maintaining free library services (84%), offering books for

children (82%), keeping adequate reference materials (81%), and employing friendly and knowledgeable librarians (81%).

During the 34 in-depth interviews, national, state, and local leaders agreed with these positive views, reportedly describing libraries as “beloved” and “indispensable.” Beneath the surface of this good feeling and apparently strong public support, however, the study

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Save
the
Date

Friday, May 4th &
Saturday, May 5th
2007

NYSALB
Trustee Institute

at the
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Queens, NY

Save the Date

2007 Trustee Institute



NYSALB



Make it a Trustee Holiday
for you and your guest

**Friday, May 4th &
Saturday, May 5th
2007**

at the
Crowne Plaza Hotel
Queens, NY

Program topics to be included this year:

- Roles, Responsibilities, and Duties of Public Library Trustees
- Competing Visions for the Future of the Book
- New Library Construction or Renovation of Existing Space

Highlights include

- Educational Sessions for Trustees & Directors
- Invitation extended to New York City's Mayor Bloomberg to speak
- Tour of the Queens Public Library
- Presentation of the prestigious Velma Moore Award
- Friday Evening Dinner
- Boat ride on the NY Harbor (around Liberty Island)
- Trip to any one of the many Museums all located in 5 miles or less
- New York Botanical Gardens
- Plans for group tickets to a Mets or Yankees Baseball Game
- Opportunity to attend a Broadway Show & access to Manhattan shopping
- Incredible room rate in NYC

Since we are a large group, we were able to secure an outstanding room rate for all attendees. This rate has been extended for Friday and Sunday evenings for those wishing to make even more of their trip. Cost for the Institute is still being finalized but will be around \$40 for dinner on Friday evening and in the \$100 range for Saturday's program.

Rooms are expected to book quickly and fill our block of 125 rooms reserved per night. Once the block is filled, NYSALB cannot guarantee that the rate will be extended for additional rooms. To guarantee the room rate secured by NYSALB of \$129 (plus taxes) per night, reservations must be made by March 31. After this date the regular room rate of \$399 will be charged.

At anytime, you may call for hotel reservations at (800) 692-5424. Please indicate that you are with the NYSALB group or group code NYS. Reservations can be booked for any one or more of the following dates: May 4, 5, or 6 for single or double rooms. Complimentary shuttle to and from LGA airport and for those driving, discounted parking of \$5 per day.

The Institute also earns attendees credit toward becoming a **Certified Trustee**. This program announced at the 2006 Institute, recognizes trustees who make the effort to educate themselves about libraries, library issues, and responsibilities of trustees.

As details on Institute speakers and sessions are confirmed, NYSALB's website will be updated. Be sure to visit it often to learn more. Early registration for the Institute to open in December (on-line registration).

This is the eleventh annual Institute hosted by NYSALB. It is a conference for library trustees and directors. There are sessions for all levels of trustees with opportunities to gain valuable information on trustee roles and responsibilities. ■

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and their impact on libraries, they will not reduce the importance of these services to teens.)

After an autumn presentation to the board of my own library system about its plans for teens, I realized that we were talking about much more than the services we provide to teens today in order to get them back into our libraries.

Sharing and social networking on the Internet is a phenomenon with tremendous implications for the book world as "Scan This Book!", the cover article in the Sunday New York Times Magazine on May 14, 2006, made clear. The author, Kevin Kelly, started the article by referring to an old dream: "to have in one place all knowledge, past and present. All books, all documents, all conceptual works, in all languages ... For 2,000 years, the universal library, together with other perennial longings like invisibility cloaks, antigravity shoes and paperless offices, has been a mythical dream that kept receding further into the infinite future. Until now."

As you might expect, he then described Google's library project.

By now, this is not likely to be news to most trustees. But he went on to devote a significant portion of his article to "what happens when books connect." He elaborates on the combination of a searchable database of the world's written words and the sharing of the thoughts of readers on those words - until you end up with something that is such an extension of books as we have known them that perhaps they become a new phenomenon.

Reading this, I was reminded of the quaint way that automobiles were ushered into the world as horseless carriages. That phrase tied them to something familiar, but hid the qualitative difference that cars would make on the lives of everyone.

The phenomenon Kelly portrayed, though, is one with which teens are very comfortable. This is the world they live in as they spend hours before the computer screen.

Now consider how much libraries have changed over the last decade or two in response to the demands of today's adults. Here's a question that puts this in focus: would library trustees twenty years ago have

expected the proportion of their library space devoted to books to diminish as much as it has? It is fair to say that many libraries were unprepared for such changes and had to play "catch-up," often at great expense.

This is not to say that books have disappeared or that libraries have forgotten about printed reading material. It is just that today's adults also want other media and computers connected to the Internet. And this results in a different mix of services and different use of space.

Similarly, the teen library services that we are seeing blossom around the state are an early warning system of where we will need to go with adult library services in the future — because teens grow up and become, after all, the next generation of adult library patrons.

Please pass along your library's teen experiences to your fellow trustees around the state, by sending an email to:

nysalb@www.watpa.org, NYSALB's email discussion group. You can also send us private email at nysalb@nycap.rr.com. **Thank you.**



LIBRARIES ARE VALUABLE, YET VULNERABLE


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revealed significant challenges which could threaten the future of public libraries. According to the study, many of the community leaders interviewed raised concerns regarding the visibility of libraries in a competition for scarce taxpayer dollars. The First Lady of Iowa, while strongly supporting libraries, acknowledged that, "Libraries have been around so long, they're taken for granted." Case studies from Providence, Rhode Island, where the lack of municipal funding forced reduced

hours and 21 staff cuts, and Salinas, California, where two consecutive municipal budget defeats almost caused the library system to close, reinforced the leaders' worries.

In addition to the "leaders" interviews, the survey tracked a subset of the random sample, consisting of individuals identified as "civically engaged" because they regularly vote and participate in charitable or community causes. Although these influential citizens always vote in local elections, there is a

"softness" to even their understanding of libraries — one in four lacks a library card, and one in five has not set foot in a public library during the past year.

Referring to public libraries as the "canary in the coal mine," the study's authors conclude, "While leaders have pricked up their ears to the distressed calls of the canary, the public seems to hear only a sweet song and no hint of impending trouble." Copies of the study and related materials are available on the internet at LFF.org. 

The New Handbook for New York State Library Trustees: Part One: Trustee Selection and Training

Francis Picart, NYSALB Trustee

This first article in the series deals with the very primary and very important need for a library board to be properly selected and maintained. A library board of trustees is entrusted with the custody of the visionary, fiduciary, policy, and administrative soundness of their libraries and is vested by law with the authority to oversee those activities. Among the most important areas of the day-to-day concern that a collective board has is the selection and hiring of a competent director and also planning for the selection, training, and motivation of new trustees. Various methods exist for the selection of library trustees. They may be appointed by local government, selected by the terms of a library's founding deed or directly elected by public vote. In New York State most public library trustees are elected or appointed. Library boards represent the interests of the communities that they serve and provide a two-way bridge between the community and the library. To adequately perform their roles good boards should have as broad a demographic representation of their communities' diversities as possible in their members. Boards should also consciously and aggressively seek to include in their memberships people with the best sets of personal and professional skills who are knowledgeable or highly trainable in the areas that the library has oversight needs

in, and who have demonstrated commitment to libraries in the past and in their other activities.



“Trusteeship by definition is the agency of a person (or persons) designated to act as governor or protector over property belonging to another.”

— Virginia Young - 5th Edit. 1995 “The Library Trustee”

These qualities are not always easy to obtain in people, especially in those with the time available to commit to a board. If board members are appointed, the current board should cultivate and maintain a short list of persons with those qualities whom they can recommend to the appointing entity. If board members are elected, the current board should cultivate and maintain a short list of persons whom they can approach to run

for the positions as they become vacant, and these prospective trustees should have good and broad connections in the community that would reflect well on your library and would indicate that the person could work well within the electoral process.

Ultimately, library service is not mandated in New York State. It is provided mostly by electoral consensus, and good trustee selection is a critical component of supporting that consensus support. Even when selected, good training and networking practices are required to keep trustees working effectively for your libraries, and it is critical that your policies and budgets provide sufficient support to your trustees to allow them to maintain their knowledge through seminars given by NYSALB, local systems, NYLA, ALA and in house training.

I hope that these basic ideas about trustee selection will be of some use to you in your service. Each library situation is different and it is difficult to approach this area in other than general terms. Having said that, I hope that I have been able to encourage your boards to consciously plan ahead and examine themselves and their communities in their needs and resources, and establish a list of criteria for trustee selections, and maintain a short list of persons who can be called on if necessary. ■

New York State Library Announces Construction Money for Public Libraries

Special to the NYSALB TRUSTEE

A one-time allocation from the New York State Legislature of \$14 million in capital funds for public library construction means that public libraries will get some help in their efforts to modernize and renovate aging facilities. These funds will be distributed in the form of grants and are separate from, and in addition to, the annual \$800,000 allocation for public library construction.

Libraries can apply for the construction grant program by going to the New York State Library's web site at www.nysl.nysed.gov. Point to Library Development and click on "\$14 Million Public Library Construction Grant Program FY2006-07." Grants can fund up to 50 percent of a project, including site acquisition, construction, and renovation or rehabilitation of a facility. Libraries must work with their library system to apply.

The minimum grant award is \$2,500, and no award will be made for any project with a total cost of less than \$5000. While no maximum award has been determined, the amounts of awards will depend on the number of applications received and total funding available to the library system.

The grant program period is July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2009. Only expenditures made after July 1, 2006 are eligible under the grant program, but expenditures made before July 1 may count as part of the required local match. Libraries may use local, state, or federal public funds, private funds, or a combination of funds from those sources for the required match.

Libraries are encouraged to contact their library system as soon as possible to discuss possible plans for a

construction grant application or for more information about the construction grant program. Contact information on library systems can

be found at:

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/libs/publibs/1pls.htm> . 

State Library Partners in Outreach to Spanish Speaking New Yorkers


The New York State Library and the public library systems are participating in a joint Gates Library Foundation / WebJunction national program to promote library outreach to Spanish speaking populations. The program goals are:

- Encourage library use among Spanish speakers
- Help libraries offer programs and resources that serve the needs of the Hispanic population
- Increase use of library public access computers among people who speak Spanish

The State Library is partnering with the New York State Association of Library Boards, the Mid-Hudson Library System, the New York Library Association and the Public Library System Directors Organization to implement this project in New York State.

NYSALB's partnership will provide a vital link to library trustees through the organization's newsletter, listserv, and web page. Trustees and library staff from all kinds of libraries (public, school, academic, correctional, special) are encouraged to attend one of the 48 Spanish Language Outreach workshops that are to be scheduled between October 2006 and May 2007. Library Board support of this program will mean greater program success within each community.

The Spanish Language Outreach Program will offer one-day workshops across New York State for some 800 library staff members, trustees and graduate library school students. At the workshops, trustees will learn how to connect with community leaders to bring Spanish speakers into their libraries. Increased use of library services and public access computers for Spanish speakers are additional key components of this training opportunity. More information about this exciting program can be found at the WebJunction Spanish Language Outreach Program website: <http://www.webjunction.org/do/Navigation?category=10555> ; at the New York State Library's Spanish Language Outreach Program web page: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/gateslib/spanish/index.html> and from Cassie Artale, Library Development Specialist, New York State Library, cartale@mail.nysed.gov or 518/474-1479.

Watch for the statewide schedule of workshops on the State Library website October 16, 2006. 

From the Editor's Desk

Sam Patton, TRUSTEE Editor

The two most interesting library news bits for me were right here in Dutchess County. First was the announcement by Senator Steven Saland of a major Legislative Grant to be shared among sixteen libraries in this area. The grants ranged from \$8,866 for the Tivoli Free Library to \$41,622 for the Greater Poughkeepsie Library District, and totaled \$238,200. At the press conference in Poughkeepsie, Senator Saland commented, "As Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, I am extremely pleased to have led the fight to increase funding to libraries and as a result, helped secure \$2,265,332 in the 2006-2007 state budget for the Mid-Hudson Public Library System, and an additional \$238,200 for technology and capital improvements for local libraries."

NYLA Executive Director Michael J. Borges also thanked the Senator for his efforts to help get a nearly \$20 million increase in state aid for library services across the state.

Speaking on behalf of NYSALB, and of course, our own library, I also had a chance to thank the Senator for his efforts on behalf of libraries

in New York and in our own area.

The second event was the result of the long anticipated effort to change our local library from a Free Association Library to a Special Legislative District. We have enjoyed a very good relationship with our Town officials, who have supported the library well. But in recent years there have been severe financial strains on the Town, primarily in costs of benefits to employees and retirees, as well as constant inflation in the cost of town services. In two of the recent several years, we have received no increase in Town funding. So this spring, we asked the Town to enact legislation supporting this effort, which they did. And, with the support of both Senator Saland and Assemblyman Pat Manning, the needed legislation was passed in Albany, and signed (just before the deadline) by Governor Pataki. We conducted the vote, and though voter turnout was less than we hoped, the proposition was passed by a four to one margin, giving us an increase of four percent over the prior year town support. We also elected nine board members, seven of them incumbents of the

Association Library Board, and two new to the board, though well known in our library community.

At the NYSALB Board meeting in Albany, we elected two new Trustees. The first is Arnold E. Elman from the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, in the Southern Adirondack System. He is a retired teacher of English, Principal and Superintendent of Schools (in both Connecticut and New York). He is currently on the Board of the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library, and of the Southern Adirondack Library System. The second is Sally O. Swierczek from the Dunham Public Library, in the Mid-York System. She has an undergraduate degree from Russell Sage College, and a Master's degree from Syracuse University. She has served on her local board from 1978 to the present.

We welcome them both.

Please reserve the dates for the 2007 Trustee Institute. You can find out more in another story in this Newsletter. It promises to be a very special event, and I look forward to seeing many of you in Queens next spring. ■

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT for VELMA MOORE AWARD - 2007

**by Karen Achilles,
NYSALB Trustee**

It is time to submit your nomination for the Velma Moore Award. The award will be presented at the Trustees Institute May 4 - 5, 2007 at the Crowne Plaza, New York-LaGuardia. This award was established in 1962 to honor the memory of Velma Moore, who worked as a very effective library activist from

1947 to her death in 1961. Mrs. Moore was one of the charter members of the Library Trustees Foundation of New York (predecessor of NYSALB). For two terms she was the organization's president and also served as trustee, for 33 years, of the Kenmore Public Library (near Buffalo, NY). She was the wife of former NYS Lieutenant Governor Frank C. Moore. The award carries a \$750 stipend to be donated to the library

or library service of the award winner's choice. The winner will be presented with an attractive engraved plaque at the NYSALB Trustee Institute in May 2007.

The Guilderland Public Library this year budgeted monies for a full time librarian to head up older adult services. The money awarded to the Velma Moore 2005 winner Merry

Continued on next page

From the Chair of the Assembly Standing Committee on Libraries and Education Technology

Patricia Eddington — Special to the NYSALB TRUSTEE

My first session as Chair was both exciting and productive. While this was indeed a good year for libraries, there is still much more work to be done. For too long our libraries have been short-changed and I look forward to continuing my efforts toward building strong libraries and library systems throughout New York.

Over the years, libraries and library systems throughout New York have suffered from a severe lack in funding. As a past board member for the Patchogue-Medford Library in Suffolk County for eight years, I know first-hand the financial struggles that libraries face on a yearly basis. As a member on the Joint Conference Committee for Education during this year's budget negotiations I made sure the voices of libraries across the state were heard and that their needs were addressed. It is my belief that the final budget reflects a new commitment to libraries and library systems, and I look forward to building on this commitment in the years to come. By working together, we have

provided libraries and library systems with nearly \$20 million more in much needed state aid and capital construction monies.

As you know, for the past five years the Governor has failed to utilize the most recent census figures to calculate appropriate library funding. To correct this, the Legislature fought for a budget that will fund New York's libraries and library systems using the 2000 census. In addition, a "save harmless provision" will protect libraries from the economic impact of area population loss, ensuring that they will receive the same funding as they did in the previous fiscal year. This increase in aid will hopefully help to turn the tide against the millions of dollars that libraries and library systems have lost under the current administration.

As you also know, approximately half of New York's public library buildings are 50 or more years old. Due to the advanced age of these buildings, over one third of our State's library buildings are not yet in full compliance with the

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Furthermore, many of these buildings cannot be properly wired to fully utilize computer technology. This is especially troubling considering public libraries are the primary access point for those who do not have an internet connection at home or at work. It is my hope that the capital funding will not only help to bring our libraries into the 21st century, but that it will help to ensure that libraries are safe and welcoming places where the public can go and learn.

Although this increase in aid comes at a critical time, there is still much more work to be done. Libraries are an integral part of our communities, which provide benefits to everyone in the community. I look forward to continuing my work in the Assembly to help make New York's libraries and library systems stronger as well as working with the New York State Association of Library Boards and the new administration to ensure our libraries continue to get the support they deserve. ■

VELMA MOORE AWARD - 2007

Continued from previous page

Sprano will be used as seed money to purchase a book discussion collection to be used by assisted living and nursing home patrons. Books will be purchased in regular print, large print, audio, and CD. When the discussion group is finished with a book, all library patrons will be able to check it out, on the media that suits their needs. What a wonderful way to use this award creatively!

The Tully Free Library Trustee Board has just completed building renovations along with a 500 square foot community room expansion. Carol Gleason, the 2006 Velma Moore win-

ner, was part of that project. Her award monies supported the capital fund expenditures. A trestle computer table with all the bells and whistles was built by the project manager, a master craftsman. He also volunteered hours to build shelving for the children's room and the main desk. Even though the project is not quite paid for, the Velma Moore Award helped this small library fund necessary library improvements.

Think about library community volunteers, library staffers, in fact, anyone whom you believe has made an important difference to our library

community, or who has traveled that extra mile to make things significantly better and/or more effective for our libraries. Submit a one page nomination letter with relevant information that describes the individual's commitment to library service. Be sure to include the name, phone number, and email address, and send your letter to the Velma Moore Award Committee at kls823@rochester.rr.com, or by mail to the NYSALB office at P. O. Box 11048, Albany, NY 12211. The deadline for submission of nominations for this prestigious annual award is February 15, 2007. ■



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YOUR FEEDBACK IS STILL VALUED

DO YOU HAVE MORE SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT ?

Let us know by returning this form to NYSALB. The drawing for the \$100 prize (donated by a member of the NYSALB Board) will be made from forms received by December 1, 2006

NAME _____

LIBRARY _____

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COMMENTS _____
