

# TRUSTEE

The New York State Association of Library Boards ■ Vol. XIX, Issue No. 4 Fall 2007



## President's Memo

**By Richard Strauss,  
NYSALB President**

Since my background is from a small association library, and the majority of the libraries in New York State are small association libraries, I will try to provide some thoughts on funding small association libraries. As a point of understanding, an association library is an independent "company" chartered by the State of New York to provide library service to a specified area. Association libraries often include "free" or "community" in their names. Seldom or never do they include public in their names, as public implies a library funded directly by public funds, i.e. village, town, or district.

As an association library, first consider taking the next step and becoming a school district or special district library. The process is not that difficult. As a matter of fact, our editor, Sam Patton, will present the story of his library's (East Fishkill)

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## Internet Access Helps, But Challenges, Libraries

**By State Senator Hugh T. Farley, Chair,  
Senate Subcommittee on Libraries**

The predicted demise of public libraries as a result of the "Internet age" did not happen. In fact, according to *Libraries Connect Communities*, a new report from the American Library Association, libraries have become the primary community link to the Internet. Among the findings — three-quarters of public libraries report being the only source of no-charge access to computers and the Internet in their communities.

Other report findings further emphasize the role of public libraries in connecting citizens to modern information sources. Nationwide, almost all public libraries and branches are connected to the Internet, nine out of ten provide access to licensed commercial databases, and half offer wireless Internet access.

New York's libraries are generally

above national averages. Our state spends 57% more per capita on total library operating expenditures and 170% more on technology-related expenditures. For this investment, New Yorkers are more likely to find adequate connection speeds, wireless availability, Internet education resources, access to licensed commercial databases,

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Save  
the  
Date

NYSALB  
Trustee Institute

Friday, May 2nd &  
Saturday, May 3rd  
2008  
at the  
Saratoga  
Holiday Inn



## PRESIDENT'S MEMO

*Continued from page 1*

successful and rapid process (just 9 months from association to special district) at the annual NYLA Conference this year. Unfortunately, you may not receive this in time to plan on attending.

This is the preferred model for libraries throughout New York. Trustees are elected, voters approve the budget, and fiscally your library becomes much stronger. Of course there are other factors to be considered, including staff coming under civil service and the fate of endowment funds the library may own. These are the bumps in the road, not major mountains to be scaled.

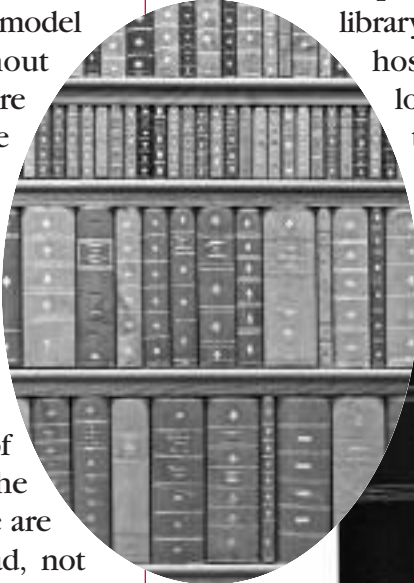
If you plan on doing this, consult your system, they are more that willing to help. Library Development in Albany also has resources that can assist.

Does this seem like too much to swallow right now? Let me provide an observation. While training trustees throughout the state, I have discovered that many trustees are often unaware of the funding options they have.

Most association libraries are funded with monies collected by the village, town, or the local school district. They also may receive State monies through their local system, based on a 1990 census funding formula. I don't know if this formula has been updated to the 2000 census. That is a topic for another

column. Regardless, funding can come from several local sources.

Your library can count on only one of these from year to year, the funds collected on your behalf by the school district or municipality. Is your library being held hostage by the local village or town? Do you go hat in hand




each year to beg for your subsistence? Why bother. Take the step and consolidate your funding via a proposition on a district ballot, either in the School District, or in the political entity that includes your service area. The school district's Board of Education or the board of the political entity cannot refuse your request. Work with your local politicians. Most village and town boards will welcome the prospect of eliminat-

ing a library line item perhaps to invest in another pay loader or snowplow. Educate community groups on the benefits of this approach to library funding. Your board should invest the time to be sure voters understand what you are trying to achieve.

Once a level of funding is established, the school district or entity is required to collect this amount for the library each year without change. Each year the library should hold a vote to ask for additional funding if for no other reason than to keep up with inflation. Should this proposition be defeated (although nearly 98% of library propositions are passed) the level of funding will remain the same as previously approved.

For an association library, funding via a proposition is the path of least resistance. An option is also available to get a library referendum on a ballot separate from the regular November ballot.

Do you know there is even more "free" money available? Believe it or not some libraries do not conduct an annual fund drive.

Regardless, do you know why the library is the tallest building in town? Because it has the most "stories." 

## Sam Patton, TRUSTEE Editor

At our Board Meeting on September 8, we had a lengthy dialogue on mandatory trustee training. This idea is not new to NYSALB as our board members have conversed about this for some time. When one considers the total amount of money invested by this state in library budgets (hundreds of millions of dollars), it is surprising to know that those trustees responsible are not required to have any training. And this financial responsibility is beyond their additional responsibilities to be sure that their library is vibrant and alive in their respective communities.

The conversation of mandatory training could not have been more appropriate with Jeffrey Cannell, the new Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Cultural Education in attendance. We appreciate his willingness to join us on a Saturday to share the vision of his department as well as the chance to express our interest in making training mandatory.

Making training mandatory would be similar for people elected to school boards. Back in the 1970's, when I served on our Wappingers Central School District board, training was optional. I tried to attend each annual meeting of the NYSSBA (New York State School Boards Association) and always learned something useful. When I was elected to public office in my town, I had a chance to go to the

annual meetings of the Association of Towns in New York, which were very informative, and where we could meet with the various state officials involved in, and regulating, town, village and city government.


NYSALB, the State Library and NYLA are developing a proposal that library board members also have mandatory training. The curriculum, content, and financing of this training lead to many long discussions, and NYSALB will take a very active role in this.

Fortunately for us in the Hudson Valley, the Mid-Hudson System has for some time provided training sessions for trustees in our five county area. They are very good, and they even provide a financial incentive for libraries to send their trustees to these training sessions. Most important is the end result: libraries that better serve their communities.

Mandatory or not, NYSALB continues to be interested in trustee training for all library board members. President Strauss mentions in his column the need for financial knowledge. NYSALB has always tried to provide education and train-

ing for library trustees, whether they are 'old hands' or newly elected. Our major effort is the annual Trustee Institute which will be held in Saratoga on May 2 & 3. Additionally some of NYSALB Trustees travel to areas to do local sessions for one or more libraries at a time.

I would be very interested in hearing from others about trustee training, in every aspect: content, format, curriculum, locations, incentives for attending, financing, qualifications for the presenters, length of sessions, and your other thoughts. My email address is on the back page of the TRUSTEE, and mail to the NYSALB office will reach me.

On a final note, we are still seeking to add to our board, people from areas not currently represented on the board, such as Erie County, Mohawk Valley, the Four County area and the North Country. Plus we continue to get more recent issues of the TRUSTEE on our web site. The goal is to have the PDF format, which is a 'picture' of the Trustee, and just the text of the articles so they can be searched for key words, etc. 



# The Library Circuit

By Sam Patton, Board Member, TRUSTEE Editor

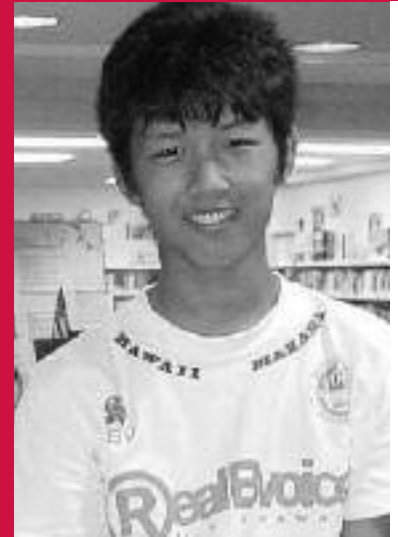
This time, I'd like to highlight two items that have come to my attention. The first happened in our own library, and would not be unusual in a large metropolitan system. A sponsor for an exchange student from Japan came to the East Fishkill Community Library to find some materials to help him learn English. Luck struck us all by surprise as library clerk Maria Yanagisawa stepped in to translate. Hired just two days earlier, Maria is fluent in Japanese and was pleased to help out. She also teaches an Origami class which meets in the library.

The second is from a newsletter forwarded to me, concerning something most of us are probably unaware of. According to the message, attributed to Dr. Charles Gerba of the University of Arizona, He goes on to write "Your library and school computers are a health hazard, Harmful bacteria can survive as long as 24 hours on computer keyboards, according to Dr. Gary A. Knoski, Northwestern Memorial; all computer keyboards in public areas should be routinely disinfected every day, according to Dr. William A. Rutala, of the University of North Carolina."

All this comes from a web site for a product called Seal Shield, <http://www.sealshield.com/products.htm>, where they claim that, "Seal Shield is the first and only fully washable Dishwasher safe keyboard and mouse solution in the market."

These claims, sounded to me like some of the panicky email messages I get, claiming that a new, virulent virus is being spread, and that it can "rewind your hard drive, short circuit your system board, and steal all your private information! ! !!" When someone sends me one of these messages, my first reaction is to check the web sites of reputable anti-virus vendors, and also to do a search for the name of the virus, or just the subject line.

Two of the sites I trust are [www.symantec.com](http://www.symantec.com), and [www.mcafee.com](http://www.mcafee.com). So far, I have found that every "scare" was a fraud, just designed to create a torrent of more messages. I also recall a message warning of a kind of spider whose hiding place was under toilet seats, were very aggressive, and whose bite could be fatal. There was even a frightening photo, and a list of "Drs." and "Professors" at prominent institutions were quoted. Needless



to say, some of the institutions were fictional, and even the ones that existed had no such people on their staff or faculty. There is another interesting site about hoaxes at <http://hoaxbusters.org/> with a long list of hoaxes.

So I did the same research with this message. However, this time, my search took me to another site: <http://www.abc.net.au/science/k2/moments/s1143577.htm> and I found out that the claims may well be true. Here is a quote from the web site: "In mid-2001, he (Dr. Charles Gerba of the University of Arizona) and his team looked for five different types of bacteria (E. coli, Klebsiella pneumonia, Streptococcus, Salmonella and Staphylococcus aureus). They studied offices at four locations - New York City, San Francisco, Tampa in Florida, and Tucson, Arizona. At each site, they tested surfaces three times a day for 5 days. They sampled 12 different surfaces - desktop, phone, computer mouse, computer

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# 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](http://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> 

## FARLEY COLUMN CONTINUED

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and computer training for patrons.

On the other hand, libraries face challenges in maintaining and expanding access to electronic resources. Four out of five libraries report having too few computers to meet demand, and most face constraints of cost and space when adding computers. Nearly a third report that they simply don't have enough electrical outlets to add more computers, while almost 30% are held back by the lack of trained staff to support additional computer users.

The State Legislature is considering several proposals to address these constraints. Two bills would help build libraries with adequate space and power/communications infrastructure. S.1682 proposes a \$500 million Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act which could be submitted for a vote at next year's general election. S.1684 would allow smaller library construction projects (up to \$5 million) to obtain low-cost loans through the State.

Two other bills propose to

increase the number of trained professional librarians in our State. S.1683A would offer fifty \$5,000 scholarships for library science students, while S.1687 would forgive college loans of newly-graduated librarians who work in high-needs communities.

As the ALA report notes, "... libraries have moved rapidly into Internet-based services that their communities want and need. Ongoing attention and investments must be made to ensure that these essential services provided by libraries are sustained." 

# NOMINATIONS SOUGHT for VELMA MOORE AWARD - 2008

**by Karen Achilles,  
NYSALB Trustee**

It is time to submit your nomination for the Velma Moore Award. The award will be presented at the Trustee Institute May 2 - 3, 2008 at the Holiday Inn, Saratoga Springs, NY.

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 chartered 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 each spring.

Our 2007 winner, Beth Peck, has been associated with the Western Sullivan Public Library at the Tusten-Cochecton Branch for over twenty years. The award has been a "wonderful boon" for the three tiny rural libraries that serve the Western Sullivan Library. The award monies were used to fund a Harry Potter Extravaganza that included many activities for the entire family. Retired patrons in the community now have a much larger collection of books on tape as a result of the award.

Think about community volunteers, library trustees, library friends, library staffers, in fact anyone whom you believe has made an important difference in your library community, or who has traveled that extra mile to

make things significantly better and/or more effective for your library. Submit a one page nomination letter with relevant information that describes the individual's commitment to library

*anyone whom you believe has made an important difference in your library community.*

service. Include his or her name, address, phone number and email address. Send the nomination to the Velma Moore Award Committee at:

[kls823@rochester.rr.com](mailto:kls823@rochester.rr.com) or mail it to Karen Achilles, 4477 Snug Harbor, Geneva, NY 14456. The nominator should include their full contact information as well. The deadline for submission of nominations for this prestigious annual award is February 15, 2008. ■

## THE LIBRARY CIRCUIT

*Continued from page 4*

keyboard, microwave door handle, elevator button, photocopier start button, photocopier surface, toilet seat, fax machine, refrigerator handle and the water fountain handle. At each location, one group of employees used disinfecting wipes to clean the surfaces they worked with, while the other group did not. (The study was partly funded by a company which makes disinfecting wipes.)

The results were astonishing. In terms of bacteria per square inch, they found that the phone receiver was the filthiest - 25,000 (probably because many people can share the same phone). This was followed by the desktop at 21,000, the computer keyboard at 3,300 and the computer mouse at 1,700. The least contaminated surface was the toilet seat with only 49 bacteria per square inch - mak-

ing it about 50 times cleaner than the desktop.

I did find Dr. Gerba and Dr. Rutala on the staff at their respective locations. So my conclusion is still, "Be skeptical, but don't jump to conclusions." And maybe the cooking directions are correct when they say, "Clean kitchen food preparation surfaces regularly with a disinfecting cleanser." ■

# Growing New York's Statewide Internet Library

By Janet M. Welch, New York State Librarian and Assistant Commissioner for Libraries

The *Statewide Internet Library* is an idea whose time has come. Anyone who has searched for reliable information on the General Internet knows the value of a *Statewide Internet Library*. Up-to-date, in-depth, reliable information is not necessarily freely available on the General Internet. Add to that the lack of quality control, proliferation of ads, and insecurities of being on the World Wide Web, and the shortcomings of the General Internet become clear.

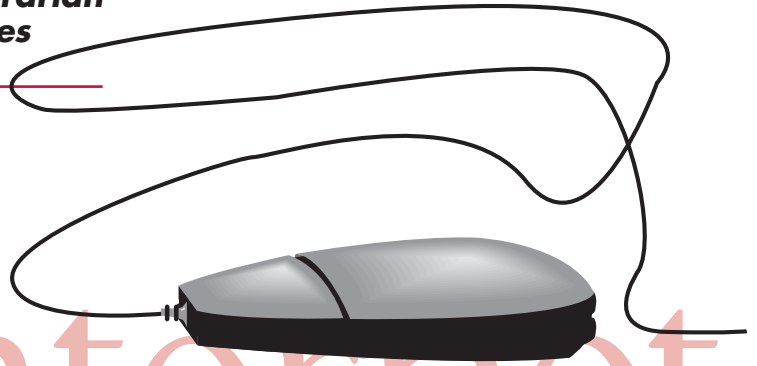
New York's *Statewide Internet Library* provides New Yorkers with round-the-clock online access to the information they need. The *Statewide Internet Library* has been tested via the very successful NOVELNY pilot project. NOVELNY is available through more than 5000 school, public, and college libraries as well as remotely from any laptop or PC. The infant *Statewide Internet Library* has already become a valuable resource that New Yorkers depend upon. For many schools, it provides the only source of currently electronic and Internet materials. It's easy to see why. While the average elementary school library provides maybe 25 jour-

nal subscriptions, the *Statewide Internet Library* provides more than 300 - as well as age appropriate research resources, and e-books. Local communities benefit from the program's cost effectiveness. For every \$1 towards resources at the State level, local libraries would have to spend \$30 to access the same resources individually.

Searches on the *Statewide Internet Library* pilot project skyrocketed almost 1300% since 2001 to more than 25 million per year. The demand for statewide internet library resources is there. But New York is not doing a very good job of meeting that demand. Currently, New York State ranks 35th among the states in sup-

port for statewide Internet resources.

New Yorkers need the *Statewide Internet Library* to grow beyond the pilot project. To be competitive New York must build its information infrastructure with a powerful *Statewide Internet Library*. Ongoing, State funding is needed to provide more science and math collections for P-16 will enable students to meet the state learning standards and increase their academic performance; college level collections in science, technology, engineering and medicine to attract top faculty and students; and high end Research & Development and business collections. ■





# TRUSTEE

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