

TRUSTEE

The New York State Association of Library Boards ■ Vol. XVIII, Issue No. 2 Spring 2007



NYSALB

Linking Libraries with their Communities

President's Memo

Farewell

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

NYSALB has had a decades-old rule that imposes a limit on the terms anyone can serve. This May at the Trustee Institute, the limit on my term as a director of NYSALB and as President will be reached. So this is my last President's column for the Trustee.

I will still be active in the library community as a member of the "three Rs" council in my area, the library system, my local library and the Regents Advisory Council on Libraries. But the end of my leadership role in NYSALB is the kind of event that leads one to reflection.

There have been three trends over the last several years, none of which is going away any time soon.

First is the changing legal and political status of our libraries. In the past, many boards just kept things going relatively

Continued on page 2

When Disaster Strikes... Go to the Library

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

Libraries have long played a significant role as community centers. Given the high level of public comfort with libraries as a safe, and useful, haven, this role is evolving into that of a major community resource during disasters and emergencies.

Much of the literature on this development comes from Gulf Coast states where annual community-wide hurricane season preparations are a practiced art. The traditional information role of libraries is a cornerstone of community disaster preparedness. Red Cross agencies in northern Florida, for example, built their "Disaster Resistant Neighborhoods" initiative around "Library Information Centers" featuring resources such as "how to" videos ranging from "Protecting Your Home From Hurricane Wind Damage" to "Jason and Robin's Awesome Disaster Adventure."

A developing role for libraries is that of direct information assistance in the wake of a disaster. A 2006 study of Internet access through libraries found that post-disaster computer access helped library patrons locate displaced friends and relatives, download and fill out FEMA and

insurance forms, and obtain current news about conditions.

Increasingly, Gulf Coast libraries are being tapped to provide direct aid. A study of the 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons found libraries serving as shelters for evacuees, running day camps for children whose schools were closed, filling water bottles, providing electricity for recharging communications devices, and distributing food and water.

Continued on page 7

In This Issue

President's Memo	1
Senator Farley's Column	1
From the Editor's Desk	3
Queens Library Volunteer Program...	4
Staff Training Opportunities	5
Velma Moore Award – 2007	5
2007 Trustee Institute	6
Library Construction Grants	7

Save
the
Date

NYSALB
Trustee Institute 2008

May 2 & 3, 2008
Trustee Institute,
Saratoga
Details will follow

PRESIDENT'S MEMO

continued from page 1

quietly. Many were association libraries, like mine, which had been especially able to keep out of the public eye.

Now we can no longer do this. We are more involved in controversies, such as Internet filtering. Library services now are dependent upon funding from both local and state officials or even direct public votes on our budgets. The result is that trustees face increased public exposure and the requisite need for leadership and political skills.

Yet, this is not what many long time trustees thought they were getting into. Many - although a decreasing number of - trustees feel uncomfortable in this more public role.

Second is the impact of technology. Clearly all aspects of our lives have been affected by the increased use of communications and information technology. But our libraries have especially been impacted. We're seeing our patrons look to libraries for Internet access and assistance with Internet access. An increasingly larger portion of new purchases are for media other than printed books.

Again, many - although hopefully a decreasing number of - trustees feel uncomfortable with the new technologies and the issues that are introduced along with these technologies.

And we are still in the early stages. Over the next few decades, there will be intellectual property issues that will affect the budgets and legal liabilities of libraries which awhile ago lived in the more certain world of "fair use" of copy-

righted material, mostly printed books.

Even the technology that libraries will start to use in the near future, such as Wi-Fi access and RFID tags on books, may raise concerns about privacy among our patrons.

The **third** trend, which is not so new, is the continuing "ups and downs" of library funding. After years of relative drought at the State level, last year things improved and this year they look even better. But the ups and downs have made planning for library services more difficult. This chaotic situation will only improve when there is some consistent, predictable funding for the whole network of library services from the State library, to the 3Rs, to the systems to your individual library.

The common denominator among these issues is the ability - or lack of ability - of library trustees to change with a changing library world. In part, this is why NYSALB has put such emphasis on training of trustees, so we can learn how to deal with these trends more successfully. In part, this is why NYSALB even exists, so that library trustees can learn from each other and also speak with a stronger voice for their concerns. It really is the collective wisdom of library trustees all over the state that is valuable - which is why NYSALB has worked so hard to create various ways for trustees to share their wisdom with each other.

And, in part, library boards will need to keep this changing and challenging environment in mind as new trustees are selected or elected. We often hear about the need for diversity and new blood on library boards. The focus is usu-

ally about diversity of ethnic groups on the boards, which is certainly needed as we serve a diverse public. But, considering the changing and challenging environment we face, diversity on our boards needs also to be extended to those - including younger people - who have the skills and temperament to address these long term challenges.

Many boards have begun doing this already, which brings me back to a personal reflection. Although I've always been an avid reader and user of library services, it was skills in technology that was the motivation of those who asked me to first become a trustee. I've obviously gone on to greater involvement in the library world and, I hope, help make my contribution to our common understanding of the issues we face.

I thank you for the opportunity to do so during my years with NYSALB. I wish all of you even greater success for your libraries in the future and continued fulfillment in your role as trustee. ■

Bye.

Save
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Trustee Institute, Saratoga
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Sam Patton, TRUSTEE Editor

This issue marks several changes for NYSALB and the TRUSTEE. President Norm Jacknis ends his third term on the Board this spring, and his final column is in this issue. We will all miss him as a board member, and as an outstanding President. He has been an excellent voice for library trustees at all levels. And I especially have benefited from his forwarding to me many interesting news items about library and related issues.

And a special "Thank You" to all Trustees, Library and System Directors from NYSALB. Membership in NYSALB is on track to reach an all time record high. A library's success is greater when trustees are enthusiastic and active. NYSALB strives to educate trustees to best fulfill their responsibilities.

And I'd like to add a "Thank You" to two of our NYSALB trustees who have had to leave our board. Nancy Simaitis of Waverly served on many committees, including Education, Nominating and Velma Moore Award, over more than seven years, and Bob Taylor of Jamestown served about four years and was a member of the Velma Moore Award committee. We will miss them both, and wish them well.

Trustees for NYSALB will be elected at the annual meeting, held at the Trustee Institute in Queens May 4th and 5th. The candidates are: Patricia N. Dohrenwend, 1st Term, Westchester Public Library System; Joan Hurley, 3rd Term, Chemung County Public Library District/Southern Tier Library System; myself, Samuel Patton, 3rd Term, East Fishkill Community Library/ Mid-Hudson Library System; Robert Presutti, 2nd Term, Lewiston Public Library/Nioga Library System; and George Stamatiades, 2nd Term, Queens Borough Public Library.

Second, we have a new Governor, and many proposed changes in the way the State operates. At this writing, the Legislature has included an

increase in Library Aid in the recently passed 2007-08 State Budget - \$5 million in additional aid. This is good news for us all.

Closer to home, Assemblywoman Eddington has been promoted to Vice Chair of the Majority Steering Committee, and Speaker Silver has named Assemblywoman Amy Paulin of Westchester as the new Chair of the Assembly Libraries Committee. We thank Ms. Eddington for her work, and welcome Ms. Paulin. We hope to carry articles from her in future issues.

Many libraries, including my home library, have become special district libraries or other entities which can levy a tax directly for library support. In most cases where the vote is in favor, the process works smoothly, but there can be snags. For example, here is a story excerpted from the March 31, 2007, Journal News.

On Nov. 7, voters in Philipstown voted on a proposition to increase the operating budget of their Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library by \$151,000 to \$276,000. By a 1,086-973 tally, voters said "Yes."

Now Town officials have decided that it's too much. Through the budget for the town, which collects taxes and distributes revenue, they're only going to give the library \$125,000 this year, the same amount allotted the library the past two years.

The reason Philipstown officials gave? Voters were "bamboozled" into voting for the increase - which, by the way, the officials say is too much. Never mind that almost 53 percent of the November voters thought otherwise. (Note to library staff: Need to beef up the "government" section, particularly the part on democracy . . . one person-one vote . . . majority wins, etc.)

It shouldn't have come to this, but on March 19, the library's board asked a state Supreme Court justice to direct the Town Board to release

the voter-approved funding. Butterfield is the smallest library in Putnam, founded in 1927 by the estate of local philanthropist Julia L. Butterfield, whose money also funded the now-shuttered Butterfield Hospital in Cold Spring. Usage at the library has quadrupled in the last five years, from nearly 2,900 in 2000 to 7,800 in 2006. Over the same period, cardholders have increased from 2,583 to 4,052, and items circulated are up from 8,024 to 38,000. But what could all those users know?

Library officials estimated that the increase requested of voters would cost roughly 17 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value, translating into a \$16 annual increase for the average property owner - from the current average of \$13 to \$29.

It is too bad that that such a small sum should lead to this situation, where one governmental unit has to go to court to get another entity to do what the laws require.

Many libraries not only use volunteers, but depend on them for better serving their patrons. They can fill many needs, from special programming to just doing some work that frees up professional staff to work more with patrons. Here is an adaptation from a conference in Minnesota on how to deal with volunteers for a special project. I found it in a note from the Mid-Hudson Library System in Dutchess County, but these ideas are valuable in any library, whether you use volunteers or a Friends Group or both, and whether you have volunteers for a special project, or on an ongoing basis.

Attendees at the Minnesota Library Association Conference learned about volunteers in "Volunteers 101, Coordinating Volunteers on a Shoestring," a session with the Friends and volunteer Services Manager, Hennepin County Library, and the Assistant Director and Volunteer Coordinator, The Friends of the Minneapolis Public Library. ■

Queens Library Volunteer Program Celebrates 23 Years of Diversity

Queens Library Volunteers, currently more than 800 strong, are a diverse group of individuals who have been an integral part of the Library's success over the years. Volunteers share their knowledge, skills, expertise, enthusiasm, energy and ideas throughout the borough as library staff provide quality customer service to the residents of Queens.

Queens Library provides volunteers with the opportunity to learn new skills or refresh existing ones; gain work experience and explore career options; complete community service requirements; meet new people and share skills and pursue interests.

The Queens Library serves a population of 2.2 million in one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the United States and our volunteers are as diverse as the borough. We welcome retired staff members, students who need volunteer credit to fulfill school requirements, both on the high school and college level, and both employed and retired customers who want to remain active and/or give back to their communities. Approximately 10% of our volunteer corps are from organizations whose clients are people with disabilities. Queens Library staff members welcome all of our volunteers and provide training and support to volunteers from all walks of life.

Many diverse, essential, and special assignments are available to Queens Library volunteers. We have many rewarding volunteer opportunities including: assisting staff in many areas from tutoring

adults in literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), maintaining the Library's collections by shelving materials and creating inviting displays; repairing books, magazines, audio and video tapes, and pamphlets; providing administrative and office support by sending out mass mailings, assisting in daily operations and making telephone calls; providing technical support; assisting staff with preparing materials for distribution throughout the borough; and assisting staff with library programs.

Staff members work with representatives from several organizations and together identify appropriate placements that will fulfill the needs of the Library and meet the requirements and skill levels of the volunteers. There are several library locations throughout the borough that accommodate the needs of volunteers with disabilities and/or special needs.

With a record 20.2 million items in circulation in fiscal year 2006, Queens Library has one of the highest circulations of any public library system in the world and our volunteers assist library staff to keep their community libraries running efficiently.


Each year a Volunteer Recognition Ceremony and Luncheon is held to honor our entire Volunteer Corps. The event provides an opportunity for volunteers from across the borough to share experiences with one another and to enjoy some well-earned rewards. This year we will celebrate our 23rd Annual Ceremony and Luncheon on April

20th during National Volunteer Recognition Week.

Our entire Volunteer Corps receives a gift along with a parchment *Certificate of Appreciation* with their hours of service which is sent via our inter-office mail system and the individual supervisors present the items to each volunteer. During fiscal year 2006, 890 volunteers provided 48,163 hours of service, totaling \$385,304 (valued at \$8 per hour).

At the ceremony we recognize the accomplishment of volunteers who reach *Lifetime Volunteers* status, those who have provided at least 500 hours of service. Each Lifetime Volunteer receives a lapel pin from the Library Director that signifies their achievement. In addition the President of the Board of Trustees presents the certificates to the *Outstanding Volunteers of the Year*. This award is made by nomination, based on written criteria, from the staff throughout our 62 community library locations as well as the Central Library Divisions and the Administrative Departments. Each year we honor a maximum of 12 volunteers.

An article on the Ceremony is prepared and submitted to *News & Notes*, which is our in-house staff newsletter, and/or *Library Matters*, our general publication, and all of the special honorees are named in the article.

At the Queens Library our branding statement is *Enrich Your Life™*. We open our doors and our hearts to enrich the lives of our volunteers and in return, our customers' lives are enriched as well. 

Staff Training Opportunities

Sponsored by The New York State Library

By Mary Linda Todd
Library Development Specialist, New York State Library

The New York State Library has announced two new training opportunities for public library staff. These training opportunities are offered in partnership with PULISDO, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, WebJunction, the New York Library Association and NYSALB.

Training on the Go is a pilot online training program that includes a variety of library-related skills for all levels of public library staff.

Participants have their choice of online courses from two providers: Element K and WebJunction. Courses cover a range of topics including office productivity (such as using Microsoft Office and web development and design), grant writing, management skills, and other library-related topics. Once registered, participants will receive an access code that will remain activated for up to one year, giving them ample time to complete their online training courses.

Interested participants can go to <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/lib-dev/gateslib/index.html> to read more about the program and to register for the online courses.

The second training opportunity involves a series of workshops on the usage of TechAtlas, a computer software utility that is useful to libraries for many purposes, such as in technology planning and for E-rate. The workshops will focus on the specific skills needed for utilizing TechAtlas to enhance library technology services, especially those affecting public access computing. Workshop participants will explore new WebJunction features and learn how to use a variety of TechAtlas utilities, reports, and planning tools. Participants will learn how to quickly inventory library computers, print out an inventory spreadsheet, and create a report, saving many hours of staff time.

These hands-on workshops are offered in many areas of the state and run from March 22 through April. The workshops are half-day sessions and are free. Workshop registration is available online at: http://host.evanced.info/nys_rls/evanced/eventcalendar.asp

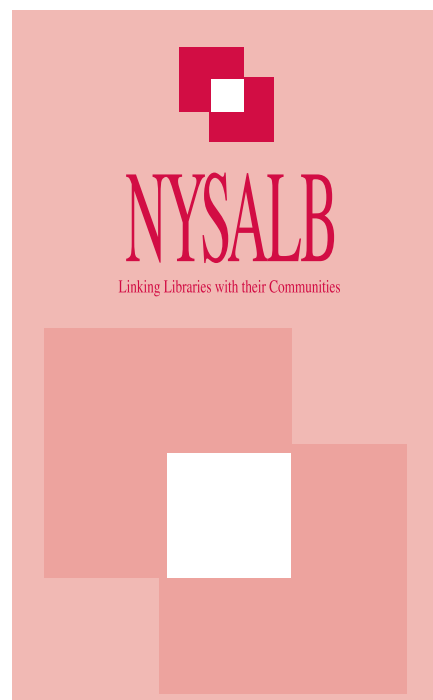
New York State's public libraries will be participating in an upcoming Gates grant program in 2007 entitled: The US Library Hardware Sustainability Access program. While complete details have not yet been released about the program, a major goal of this initiative is to help public libraries establish strategies to increase their capacity to sustain their public access computing services by developing community partners. Public libraries should contact their library system for more information. ■

VELMA MOORE AWARD 2007

Sponsored by NYSALB

The Velma Moore award results will be announced at the Trustees Institute May 4th and 5th 2007 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 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. The award carries a \$750 stipend to be donated to the library or library service of the award winner's choice. (Further details may be found in the fall 2006 NYSALB Trustee Newsletter.) ■





2007 Trustee Institute

Presented by the
 New York State Association of Library Boards
 May 4th & 5th
 at the
 Crowne Plaza New York LaGuardia Hotel Queens, New York

The Institute

This is the 11th Annual Institute hosted by NYSALB. This conference is for library trustees and directors. There are sessions for all levels of trustees with opportunities to gain valuable information on trustee roles and responsibilities.

Become a Certified Trustee! Introduced at the 2006 Institute, trustees can earn credit toward becoming a Certified NYS Trustee by attending this year's Institute.

Hotel Accommodations:

The special rates at the Crowne Plaza expired April 4, 2007.

- The host hotel for the Trustee Institute is the *Crowne Plaza NY LaGuardia*, located at 104-04 Ditmars Blvd., East Elmhurst (Queens, NY) 718-457-6300 or 800-692-5424.
- We hope to see many Trustees and other interested people at the meeting. Last minute registration for the meetings can be made through the NYSALB web site, www.NYSALB.org.

2007 Conference Agenda

Friday, May 4th

Tour of the Queens Library 4:00 – 6:00 PM,

Bus departs front of the hotel at 3:45

The Queens Library serves a book-hungry population of 2.2 million from 63 locations plus 6 Adult Learning Centers in the most ethnically diverse county in the U.S. It has one of the highest circulations of any public library in the world, and in 2006, Queens Library set a new national circulation record with 20.2 million items loaned. Thomas Galante, Director of Queens Library has generously offered to lead participants on a tour of two branch libraries, Flushing and Corona. A shuttle is offered from the hotel at a nominal charge of \$5 per passenger. If you plan on meeting the tour at the library, your RSVP is still requested and we will begin at Flushing.

After the tour all Institute activities will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel

Registration Opens 6:00 PM

Welcoming & Dinner 7:30 – 9:30 PM

Thomas Galante, Director of Queens Library

Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan, Chair Education Committee

Entertainment provided by Angela Calderella, Professional Storyteller and Children's Librarian at New York Public Library

Success Stories over Dinner

Share your library success story with trustees in attendance. This is an informal opportunity to learn how other trustees have solved problems, developed programs, and expanded services within their communities.

Saturday, May 5th

Registration 8:00 - 9:00 AM

Buffet Breakfast and Trustee Networking 8:00 - 8:45 AM

Concurrent Session One 9:00 - 10:15 AM

Attendees are asked to choose one of the following three concurrent sessions

Critical Partnership between Library Boards and Library Directors

Having a Board of Trustees that is involved and works with

their Library Director produces positive results. This training will provide critical guidance in this area.

Presented by Jackie Thresher, Director of Nassau Library System

Library Design and Budgeting

Thoughtful attention to function and design of your library space will allow your library to best serve its community.

Presented by Peter Magnani, Director of Capital & Facilities Management and

Anthony Romeo, Director of Capital Management, both of Queens Library

Serve a Diverse Public: The Queens Model

Learn how to determine who lives in your community and how to reach those populations with collections, programs and services.

Presented by Fred Gitner, Coordinator of New Americans Program at the Queens Library.

Break 10:15 - 10:30 AM

Concurrent Session Two 10:30 - 11:45 AM

Attendees are asked to choose one of the following two concurrent sessions

Teens: Everything (Almost) You Wanted to Know About Our Future Taxpayers, But Didn't Know How (or Who) to Ask

Make room in your budgets for teens! Learn the ways and strategies for attracting and keeping teens as library patrons.

Presented by Stephanie Squicciarini, Fairport Public Library of Fairport, New York

Is Your Library Properly Insured?

It is the trustees' responsibility to understand library insurance coverage — get the basics here.

Presented by Janet Steggles of Utica National Insurance and First Niagara Risk Management

Lunch and Program 12:15 - 3:00 PM

NYSALB Annual Meeting

Presentation of the Velma Moore Award

The Role of the Trustee in Protecting Intellectual Freedom

Robert Hubsher, Director of Ramapo Catskill Library System

\$14 million in Public Library Construction Grants Will Benefit New Yorkers Statewide

The New York State Library will soon be announcing some 200 recipients of the New York State legislature's one time \$14 million 2006/2007 appropriation for construction and renovation of public libraries and public library systems.

The grants will enable public libraries and public library systems to upgrade and renovate their facilities to accommodate new technologies and meet the needs of their communities. Libraries will be able to update electrical wiring to accommodate computer technology, replace roofs, upgrade heating and cooling systems, and become fully accessible to library users with disabilities.

The types of activities funded from the one-time \$14 million allocation include acquisition (purchase of an existing building suitable for conversion to library purposes), construction, and renovation

or rehabilitation of public libraries or public library system headquarters. Routine maintenance, however, is not fundable.


The New York State Library expects to publicly announce the names of libraries and library systems receiving 2006-2007 construction grant awards over a period of several weeks once final project approvals are received from the Dormitory Authority of New York State.

A list of the libraries and library systems awarded construction grants will be available on the New York State Library's website at www.nysl.nysed.gov.

While these grants will be a tremendous help to libraries across New York, there remains a documented \$1.7 billion need for public library construction and renovation in New York State and a large amount of construction and renovation that needs to be done. The

Executive Budget proposes an additional one time allocation of \$14 million in capital funds for public library construction and renovation in 2008/09.

The Regents Priority Legislative Proposal for 2007-2008, the *New York Knowledge Initiative* proposes \$14 million for public library construction and renovation for 2007-2008 and ongoing support of \$30 million annually. In addition, the *New York Knowledge Initiative* proposes \$10 million in ongoing annual support for NOVELNY (the New York Online Virtual Electronic Library), and \$3 million annually for library systems.


For more information go to www.nyki.nysed.gov or call Janet M. Welch, State Librarian and Assistant Commissioner for Libraries at (518) 474-5930 or via email at jwelch2@mail.nysed.gov. 

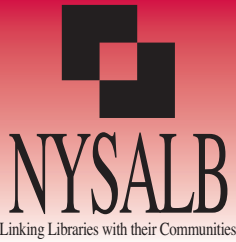
WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

continued from page 1

One report cited a Florida community where a bookmobile with wireless access was provided to emergency workers who had no other means of communication. And, in Pasco County, Florida, the public library staff are formally assigned to operate the county's Resident Information Center which serves as an information gateway for emergency management before, during, and after storms.

Given the often ad hoc nature of library involvement in disaster management, authors of the 2006 study recommend that libraries be formally included in community-wide disaster planning initiatives. The involvement can include formal training of library personnel, inclusion of the library in training exercises, and specific funding – through homeland security or other emergency services accounts – for disaster-related library activities.

Although we do not usually have to cope with the annual ravages of hurricane season, New Yorkers face winter's fury, regular spring flooding, and unpredictable local emergencies. As a trustee, you may want to establish lines of communication with your local emergency planners, so that your library is prepared to provide emergency services when they are needed in your community. 



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Why You are Receiving *this Publication*

NYSALB is a not for profit membership organization which supports library trustees. We offer trustee training and information at our annual Trustee Institute, and we lobby on library issues with the NYS Legislature. The TRUSTEE attempts to keep you informed about libraries in New York, and about interesting library news, especially items relevant to library trustees. Libraries subscribe as members on an annual basis, which automatically enrolls their trustees as members of NYSALB. If you are receiving this newsletter, please thank your library director and board president for your membership. Individuals may also join independently at a rate of \$10 per year.