

# YSS Newsletter

## 2024 YSS Board

- Liz Anastasi, President
- Lex Abenshon, 1st VP (Pres. Elect)
- Kim Hazen, Past President
- Mary Jo C. Smith, 2nd VP (Membership)
- Windy Cardarelli, Secretary
- Nan Brown, Treasurer
- Joyce Laiosa, YSS Rep. to NYLA Council
- Katherine St. Laurent, 2024 Spring Conference Director
- Dana Hysell, 2025 Spring Conference Dir.

- Jaclyn Bleich, Web Liaison
- Sarah Reid, Newsletter Editor



## In this issue

- President's Message (Page 1)
- YSS Spring Conference (Page 2)
- NYS Office of Cultural Education (Page 2)
- NY State Library (Page 3)
- Talking Book + Braille Library (Page 4)
- Empire State Award (Page 5)
- OurStoryBridge (Page 5)

## Contact us

yss.nyla@gmail.com



## A Message from the YSS President

It's that time of year when we take a pause. We look for insight and understanding from the old year – lessons learned and wisdom gained – and we seek inspiration for the year to come.

I discovered a wealth of inspirational quotes while conducting my extremely rigorous research for this newsletter article on library staff and self-care (thank you, Google). One name in particular kept appearing in my search results. Youth educator, entertainer, and advocate Mister Fred Rogers. I debated over which of his quotes I should choose and concluded, why not all of them... more is more, right?



Mister Rogers' Neighborhood Street Art Mural  
Niz, Stencil Artist, Austin, TX

1. "It's good to be curious about many things."
2. "Anyone who does anything to help a child in his life is a hero."
3. "All of us, at some time or other, need help. Whether we're giving or receiving help, each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world."

All of these inspiring and insightful quotes are accredited to Mister Rogers. His words serve:

- As a reminder of the motivations that first led many of us to the library profession and youth services.
- To rejuvenate and re-energize those passions for a new trip around the sun.

So why not do your future self a great kindness in 2024 and take some of Mister Rogers' ideas to heart? Embrace your curiosity and creativity, prioritize YOUR self-care, and help and support one another.

YSS needs YOU – your help, ideas, and passion. **Why not seize this opportunity to support and advocate for youth and colleagues and become an even more active member of YSS?** Find out more at [NYLA.org](https://www.nyla.org) or email me and we can chat: [eanastasi@greenburghlibrary.org](mailto:eanastasi@greenburghlibrary.org)

Thank you, YSS Members, for allowing me to serve as your president for the 2023-2024 year. I look forward to working with all of you!

**Liz Anastasi, YSS President**



**YSS 2024**  
**THE ROARING 20S**  
**FINDING YOUR VOICE IN A LOUD DECADE**  
 APRIL 19, 2024  
 1000 ISLANDS HARBOR HOTEL  
 CLAYTON, NY

## YSS Spring Conference - April 19

Mark your calendars and pack your bags, because the 2024 NYLA YSS Conference is headed to Clayton!

We're pleased to announce that Kelly Jensen from Book Riot will present BOTH our luncheon lecture and a workshop session, and that our keynote speaker will be Lisa Fipps, author of the novel in verse *Starfish*!

With that incredible stage set, we are on the lookout for passionate presenters from the field to make this conference truly fantastic!

**We want YOU to share your expertise, insights, and a sprinkle of pizzazz in Clayton.** If you've got a topic that's near and dear to your heart, a program or collaboration that you think others could learn from or replicate, or a unique experience or perspective, we want to hear from you. We're seeking traditional presentations, interactive workshops, panel discussions, and our signature YSS table talks!

Don't delay, submit your proposal [here](#) today! Let's make this conference an awesome, empowering and fun experience together! The deadline for program submissions is December 31st. Presenters will be contacted and confirmed during the month of January.

For all attendees: watch for registration to open once the new NYLA website launches in January!

## From the NYS Office of Cultural Education

**A selection of *Reading Rainbow* videos is now available to view on PBS Learning Media!**

The classic *Reading Rainbow* series, which launched in 1983 and was the most-watched PBS television show in the classroom, not only offers nostalgia but provides high-quality curriculum for children in Grades K-5 that is still relevant today. The curriculum is based on the popular and beloved book segments from the television series. We invite you to watch and listen as cherished books are read. The accompanying activities are theme-based, stemming from the featured book, and may include questions for discussion, art projects, or writing prompts.

[Visit here](#) to explore the collection.



**We welcome librarians to subscribe to the Office of Cultural Education newsletter!** It is emailed every other month and features projects, events, and resources from the State Archives, State Library, State Museum, Summer School of the Arts, and Public Broadcasting... all in support of P-12 learning. Sign up by completing [this form](#).



New York State  
**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
 OFFICE OF CULTURAL EDUCATION

## NY State Library Updates

### Spring Solar Eclipse

SAVE the DATE! A **State Library virtual webinar to help libraries plan for the eclipse will be held on Wednesday, January 31 at 1:30pm**. The session will be presented by Dr. Mindy Townsend, astronomer at the Dudley Observatory of Siena College. See the event details and registration link listed on the event page of the **State Library LibCal**. We hope you can join us! The session will also be recorded.

The April 2024 total eclipse is fast approaching. Check the Youth Services **Eclipse Resources** page often for new information and ideas.



### Summer Reading at New York Libraries

The preliminary numbers show that 934 New York libraries (including branches) offered programs for 2023 and 'All Together Now.' Library systems reported that 375,409 children and 69,574 teens registered to participate. The State Library is still compiling the number of programs that were held and attendance at these programs to determine the final participation number. Watch for final numbers when updates are posted to the State Library's **Summer Reading participation page** by the end of the year. Thanks again to all libraries and systems for continuing to offer strong programs for patrons of all ages every summer!



All public library systems have received the 2024 CSLP manuals in various formats that were ordered by the State Library for public libraries. If you need the code to access the 2024 CSLP online manual, please reach out to the Youth Services Consultant for your public library system, or email [nyslyouth@nysed.gov](mailto:nyslyouth@nysed.gov) to request it.

Did you know that CSLP now owns the program content, art work and graphics for 'Adventure Begins at Your Library' and also for several previous years? Libraries should be aware that materials from these previous years can be used year-round. See the **Summer Program Archives** on the CSLP site for more information.

### Is there a topic you would like to see offered for the 2024 Summer Reading Lunch and Learn series?

Planning is already underway for sessions that will take place in February and March. View previous **2023 Summer Reading Lunch and Learn recordings** and send your 2024 ideas and suggestions to [nyslyouth@nysed.gov](mailto:nyslyouth@nysed.gov)

Subscribe to the **Summer Reading News blog** and get notified when new items of interest are posted!

### Ready to Read/Early Literacy

A webinar entitled "30 Favorite Storytime Books and How to Use Them" was offered on October 12, and the presenter was Alex Bernat, a seasoned storytime presenter and Youth Services Manager at Albany Public Library. The State Library received a lot of positive feedback from library staff attending this event. The webinar recording is now available on the **Youth Services** archived webinars page.

The Fall 2023 Supercharged Storytimes five-week training is wrapping up. The State Library hopes to offer more facilitated sessions of this training in Spring 2024. Library staff can also enroll in the self-paced Supercharged Storytimes training course in the **WebJunction catalog** for free at any time.

### Questions about State Library Youth Services initiatives or programs?

Email Sharon Phillips, Youth Services Program Manager at the NY State Library at [nyslyouth@nysed.gov](mailto:nyslyouth@nysed.gov)





## Talking Book and Braille Library Updates

Winter has arrived, and youth throughout New York will have breaks from school, snow days, and might have more free time for reading. All those who are blind, have low vision, or have a physical or reading disability that prevents their use of regular print materials are eligible for service through the **Talking Book and Braille Library (TBBL)** in Albany, NY. We offer a wide array of books in multiple languages for young children, middle readers, and teens to get them excited about reading and foster a lifelong love of reading.

**Using a smartphone or tablet, tech savvy youth or parents, teachers, and caregivers of younger readers can get books and magazines to suit their interests anytime, anywhere, via BARD**—the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) Braille and Audio Reading Download website—and the BARD Mobile app. These downloadable materials are great for travel over the holidays or family time spent indoors. With no waiting and instant content, this service will please everyone.



**TBBL can also provide braille or audio books and magazines** such as *Jack and Jill*, *Cricket*, and *Sports Illustrated Kids* through the mail, postage-free. Easy-to-operate talking-book playback machines are available, too. Our talking-book cartridges hold multiple books or series, so families can keep reading during winter snowstorms or out of town visits both far and near.

**For those who are interested in music**, we offer an excellent collection of more than 25,000 titles including braille and large-print scores and recorded instructional materials about music and musicians. Music-related magazines in audio and braille are also available.

**Another unique resource is the children's print-braille collection.** Print-braille titles are children's picture books that include text alongside a braille plastic overlay. Our print-braille collection contains both fiction and nonfiction titles and would interest readers in pre-k through 3rd grade. Print-braille books are great for sharing with sighted and visually impaired reading buddies!

**An exciting new program, Braille on Demand**, allows members to request up to five braille books per month, free of charge, to keep them at home and build their home library. Choose from any of the tens of thousands of braille titles available on BARD.

Teachers, Librarians, or others who serve individuals who are blind or have low vision may register as a TBBL institution member. Please contact us to apply. TBBL Toll Free: 1-800-342-3688 or TBBL Email: [tbbl@nysed.gov](mailto:tbbl@nysed.gov).



## Nominations Open for Empire State Award

First presented in 1990 by the Youth Services Section (YSS) of the New York Library Association (NYLA), the Empire State Award is a one-time award presented to a living author or illustrator currently residing in New York State.



The award honors a body of work that represents excellence in children's or young adult literature and has made a significant contribution to literature for young people. The Award, an engraved medallion whose artwork is shown to the left, is presented to the winning author or illustrator at the NYLA Annual Conference

**Any member of the Youth Services Section is eligible to submit a nomination to the Committee Chair.** The Committee members will consider these nominations along with their own. The decision for the Award rests with the Committee and is approved by the YSS Executive Board. The three committee members must have a

working knowledge of children's and young adult literature, and sufficient experience in Youth Services to have developed an understanding of the body of children's and young adult literature.

Nominations are always ongoing throughout the year, so you can nominate an author at any time, but December 1 is the deadline to select the year's winner. Submit your nomination by December 1, 2024, using [this online form](#).

Submitted by the 2024 ESA Committee:  
Molly Creveling + Margaret Martin

## OurStoryBridge

Hi, it's Jery Huntley, MLS, Founder and President of [OurStoryBridge](#). If you haven't heard about us and the free resources we have for you, please be sure to take a look at our website and what we do to promote our vision to "empower every community to cultivate connection across the generations, encourage civic engagement, celebrate diversity, and engender shared and durable kindness."

Our latest edition of the [Teacher's Guide](#), which strives to bring compelling primary sources into the classroom, contains over 800 three-to five-minute online audio stories with accompanying photographs, told from 19 projects across 11 states! These engaging narratives are summarized, listed by categories, and hyperlinked, making them easy for librarians and teachers to review, use in classes, presentations, and lead students to as resources for school projects!

OurStoryBridge started in a small rural library in the Adirondacks, and our roots remain in New York with six active projects and over 50% of stories told here. These personal narratives provide lessons to teach, especially the DEI stories, many of which are from [Freedom Story Project](#) an endeavor of John Brown Lives! in Lake Placid, NY.

As a former school librarian and teacher, I recognize the importance of listening and learning from others within education. I encourage you to take a moment today and listen to the story [I Am Odd, I Am New by Benjamin Giroux](#).

Our [Teacher's Guide](#) is updated quarterly, with help from librarians, teachers, students, and volunteers. Please check it out and for more information on OurStoryBridge, contact me at [createyourstoryproject@gmail.com](mailto:createyourstoryproject@gmail.com).

