From Lucille Whalen at SUNY/Albany, Pat Narode and Bob Barron at the State Education Department, Keela Rogers, trustee at Clinton-Essex-Franklin, and Marlene Hanson of the Rochester Regional Research Library Council, the message was the same: one of the best annual conferences ever produced by NYLA.

Although the cheese puffs stayed in a corner of someone’s room for a few days, and the heat didn’t rise until noon on a particularly chilly day, neither cooled our spirits. The Concord staff made extraordinary efforts to meet our requests for simultaneous meeting rooms, microphones and screens, and when Marc Porat, the first keynoter, was unable to appear, they even met our unusual request to produce a tele-conference on only 5 hours’ notice. A telephone hook-up enabled Porat to respond to the 1,100 librarians and trustees who previewed his film, “The Information Society,” and the probing questions NYLA conference are famous for. He stated that some information services in libraries will have to be fee-based if libraries are to remain in the information business. This issue, and the omission of library footage in the 60-minute film on information, sparked a lively discussion, moderated by Pat Mautino and Peter Paulson.

Participants met in circles, squares, in classroom style and in packed meeting rooms to hear authors, scholars and State Controller Ned Regan. His view that the “spending excesses of the 60’s” will be counterbalanced by a “flat” economic outlook in the 80’s was questioned by a star reactor panel.

Passing the gavel

The gavel, never transferred with more moxie, was happily passed by Jane Ross Moore and received in style by Pat Mautino.

Town Meeting

The traditional Town Meeting, moderated by Stanley Ransom and featuring Senator Hugh Farley and Assemblyman Ed Sullivan, is surely here to stay. Librarians and trustees from every kind of library came to share their views of immediate legislative concerns. The message was loud and clear: “HELP.”

Daniel Casey led the parade to the microphones. Speaking for the library community, he thanked the two legislators for their unique leadership. Farley and Sullivan patiently listened to the plea by Jean Pelletiere for inclusion of coordinated collection development funds for independent and public colleges... to Margaret Stern’s concern for the plight of neighborhood libraries... to Mary Joan Egan reinforcing the need for a school library contingency bill... to Barbara Razzano addressing the threat to special services and programs... to Joan Neumann supporting expanded funding and time for emerging networks and regional pilot projects... to Sally Campbell’s urgent reminder of the weakened condition of library services to the blind and visually handicapped... to Benjamin Richards questioning expenditure of money on new programs when existing services and programs...