NYLA’s 2007 Legislative Priorities Move Forward

by Michael Borges

NYLA’s advocacy efforts did not stop after achieving a $5 million increase in Library Aid in the 2007-08 State Budget, which was the first time in over 10 years that Library Aid was increased two years in a row.

The New York Library Association held a second Mini-Lobby Day on May 22nd that involved members of our Legislative Committee meeting with key legislators and staffers regarding our 2007 Legislative Priorities, which are individual bills that would help the library community in various ways. These bills address issues ranging from library budget votes and state retirement for association libraries to requiring school library media specialists in grades K-6 and a loan forgiveness program for new library school graduates.

As a result of the ongoing efforts of our Legislative Committee, library advocates from around the state, and especially the actions of Senator Hugh Farley, and Assemblymember Amy Paulin, two bills on NYLA’s 2007 Legislative Priorities list passed both houses of the Legislature.

The first bill (S.3542/Farley/ A.5107 Eddington) which was recently signed into law (Chapter 184) by the Governor, will put into statute a 2004 court decision that clarified the ability of libraries to ask voters to approve ballot proposals to both “establish and increase” taxes in support of the library. Previous language in Education Law only said that libraries could ask for an “increase”. The second part of the bill clarified that only budgets “proposed by the library board of trustees” can be placed before the voters for approval. Prior to this change, Education Law allowed voters in a school district to gather only twenty-five signatures to place a budget proposal on the ballot, which could result in conflicting budget proposals on the ballot.

The second bill (S.4476/Farley/ A.7572 Paulin), which was only introduced this year, would increase the amount of aid that school library systems receive when they merge from $50,000 to $90,000 annually. The merger aid had not been increased since 1990, while the

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INTERVIEW WITH NYLA MEMBER

Jeff Cannell
by Michael Borges

IN JULY, I interviewed Jeff Cannell, who was appointed the Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Cultural Education (OCE) in March after serving as Director of the Albany Public Library for 10 years. The Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Cultural Education is responsible for overseeing the operations of the State Library, Archives, Museum and the Office of Educational Television and Public Broadcasting.

Jeff developed early on in his life a passion for information, spending a lot of his childhood in libraries and museums as well as reading everything he could get his hands on. He obtained both a BA in English and a Masters in Library Science from the University at Albany, and his choice of a career in libraries was a natural extension of his continuing thirst for information. He learned good customer service skills by working in the publishing industry selling books and then running the bookmobile for the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, which was his first library job. “The bookmobile was like running a one-room school house version of a library, you only had so much space available to provide the services and reading materials your patrons wanted, so you had to develop a good sense of what your customers wanted, otherwise they had to wait another three weeks before the bookmobile visited them again,” said Mr. Cannell.

Jeff continued to develop innovative ways to meet patron needs more effectively by testing the concept of mixing Fiction and Non-Fiction collections together based on genre classification, while he was Branch Manager of the Cumberland County Public Library in North Carolina. “It made sense that readers interested in the history of Japan might also want to read James Clavell’s Shogun and other novels on similar topics,” remarked Jeff.

He landed back in Albany in 1998 as Director of the Albany Public Library, which at the time was a under-funded and neglected quasi-city department. Jeff led a successful effort in 2002 to re-charter the library as a public library district with its own elected board of trustees and taxing authority. Prior to being appointed Deputy Commissioner, he achieved another important milestone for the library by leading efforts to win public support for a $29 million strategic facilities plan that will change the face of the Albany Public Library for many years to come.

In his new role as Deputy Commissioner, Jeff continues his penchant for developing innovative ways to serve the public, while balancing the budgetary and staffing restraints faced by the Office of Cultural Education and the State Education Department as a whole.

The other major item on the Deputy Commissioner’s agenda is OCE’s facilities development plan that was funded in the 2006 State Budget and provided $60 million for a new Stewardship and Research Facility for the State Archives, Library and Museum as well as $20 million for gallery and display enhancements for the State Museum.

In addition, Jeff is working with Regents in developing their legislative priorities for next year and has been enthusiastic about attempting to incorporate NYLA’s initiatives into the broader Regent’s agenda. “It just makes sense for the library community to be speaking with a unified voice and advocating for a common goal,” continued Mr. Cannell.

Going forward he believes that we should examine ways to provide library service more effectively and efficiently as well as insure that every community and school has the services of a 21st century library staffed by certified librarians.

“I have been involved in library associations in other states and so my membership in NYLA was a natural extension of my interest in being involved in the library community. NYLA offers networking and professional development opportunities as well as leadership in advocacy that I found invaluable,” concluded Jeff.
STORIES FROM THE STACKS is a special feature of the Bulletin where we ask our members about the profession and library issues and print selected responses in the newsletter.

This issue’s question is “Who was the most famous person to visit your library?”

Early in my career at The New York Public Library I was working a quiet summer night’s shift at the Donnell Library Center, near several midtown hotels. A slightly built older gentleman came up to the information desk with books from the Art Library, then housed in that building. He told me he was from out of town, but could he borrow the books? For identification he presented a much tattered and very out of date staff card from Time Magazine. The name on the identification was William Saroyan. At that time anyone visiting with a hotel key to show as temporary residence and a home town library card could get a temporary borrower’s card. Being a fan of his Human Comedy and having great fondness for the description of Ulysses’ visit to the mythical Ithaca Public Library I knew that if anyone would be carrying his library card with him it would be Mr. Saroyan. And indeed he did and was able to borrow his books.

Frances Rabinowitz, Assistant Coordinator, The Office of Adult and Information Services, The New York Public Library

On September 20, 1995, the library at Roslyn High School hosted the return of its former graduate, Michael Crichton. Mr. Crichton paid a visit to his alma mater, where he spoke to an audience of high school seniors and faculty about the craft of writing, and held a question-and-answer session for almost an hour. The author’s brilliance and extensive knowledge was evident from his address. When students asked him how he knew so much, he answered “I read.” What better answer could there be? The visit was taped by “Good Morning America” and aired on television. Additionally, Mr. Crichton officially released his then new book, The Lost World, during a press conference hastily assembled in the library office. A book signing completed the visit, which left so many impressed with the author’s kindness, dignity, and talent.

Karen Leon, Roslyn High School, Library Media Specialist

On May 8, many students and teachers at West Genesee Middle School experienced a presentation by a guest speaker from Japan. Koko Tanimoto Kondo survived the bombing of Hiroshima, as detailed in John Hersey’s book of the same title. She has traveled all around the world, speaking to leaders of many countries, and to school groups such as ours. Koko shared her story with our students as it relates to their Social Studies curriculum.

In the story told in Hersey’s book, Koko was the baby who survived only because her mother had picked her up and held her right before the impact - her mother had no idea a bomb had been dropped on the city. As the roof of their home collapsed on top of her mother, Koko was protected by her mother’s body; they both survived because her mother regained consciousness and was able to claw through the rubble enough for them to escape. Her father, Reverend Tom Tanimoto, dedicated himself to assisting Japanese victims of the bombing. When Koko was 10 years old, she met Captain Robert Lewis, who was co-pilot of the Enola Gay, the U.S. plane that had dropped the bomb. According to her short biography, “when she saw the tears in his eyes, she realized that she needn’t hate America for dropping the bomb on her city – she hated war.”

Janet DeYulio Chemotti, LMS, West Genesee Middle School Library

Hillary Rodham Clinton visited the Children’s Room of the Hempstead Public Library on January 18, 2002. The visit was to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Day. We rearranged the room, moved table and chairs out of the way. About 60 children sat on the floor around Senator Clinton who was in a rocking chair. She had requested a biography on Dr. King that was a good read aloud. We were very fortunate that year since Martin’s Big Words, by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Bryan Collier had been released and would be a Caldecott Honor book for 2002.

Senator Clinton spent about 45 minutes with the children, reading and discussing civil rights. She talked about being at the March on Washington. Some of the adults in attendance had also been at the March on Washington and shared their experiences. It was an incredible history lesson for all of us, and the children were totally attentive and mesmerized.

There were numerous elected officials present and many cameras, news reporters and TV cameras. In addition, because Senator Clinton is a former First Lady, there was Secret Service protection. It added a level of excitement. However, Senator Clinton stayed completely focused on the children.

After this exciting event, we sent a letter to Doreen Rappaport. She kindly presented the Hempstead Public Library with a copy of Martin’s Big Words, autographed by her and Bryan Collier. We display it every year to celebrate Dr. King’s Birthday.

Anne Miltonberg, Hempstead Public Library
Executive Director’s Report

The Spring and early Summer brought more good news for NYLA on a number of matters. Advocacy efforts continued to result in progress on our 2007 Legislative Priorities with the passage of two bills by the Legislature and the signing of one of them into law by the Governor.

In our efforts to become an information clearinghouse for the library community, we continue to add to our website with our Online Career Center to online examples of policies and procedures, library district and dormitory authority legislation, and sample referendum language.

On the professional development front, NYLA launched a new Library Assistant/Support Staff Certificate Training Program with Schenectady County Community College that ran successfully from June 11-16th with twenty-seven students and more on a waiting list. As a result of the positive feedback and continued grant funding from Senator Farley, the training program will be offered again next summer. The Leadership and Management Academy held its Summer Session in Saratoga Springs from June 6-8th and will be graduating its first class of thirteen Academy Leaders at the Annual Conference in Buffalo.

Speaking of Buffalo, I hope all of you who read this column are making plans to attend the 2007 Annual Conference and Trade Show in Buffalo from Oct. 18-20th. We have a terrific line up of speakers (Patricia Schroeder, Opening Session and David Goldsmith, Farewell Luncheon) and workshops on topics ranging from green buildings, intellectual freedom, and Spanish language outreach to trans-generational learning, RSS and blogs.

New at the Conference this year will be an Urban Library Directors Panel Discussion with directors from the Queens, Brooklyn, Rochester, Syracuse and Buffalo libraries moderated by Jeff Cannell, Deputy Commissioner for the NYS Office of Cultural Education on Saturday as well as a Book Talk with publishers discussing their upcoming 2008 Winter releases organized by the Association of American Publishers on Thursday.

NYLA’s 2007 Legislative continued from page 1

It is critical that before the end of the year that your library and library system make every effort to publicly thank your state legislators for their ongoing support for NYLA’s State Budget and Legislative Priorities, through inviting them to your summer reading programs or story hours to speak or read aloud to children and their parents, to invite them to speak at your library system’s annual meetings/dinners, to highlight their support in your newsletters, and invite them to ribbon cutting or ground breaking ceremonies for renovation or construction projects at your library. The more positive feedback state legislators receive from the library community the more inclined they will be to continue their support for increased state aid and the passage of legislation that benefits the library community.

In preparation for next year’s advocacy efforts, NYLA’s Legislative Committee has already developed and posted on our website the 2008 State Budget Priorities and mark your calendar for 2008 Library Lobby Day on March 11th. Special thanks to Legislative Committee Chair Kathy Miller and her committee members for their hard work in achieving another successful year for library advocacy.
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Members on the Move

Jeff Baker has recently been appointed Executive Director of the Chili Public Library.

Karen Balsen and Lisa Seivert have recently been hired at the New York State Library Division of Library Development.

William Meng has recently been appointed Executive Director of St Joseph’s College McEntegart Library.

Dottie Hiebing, Metropolitan New York Library Council’s Executive Director, has been appointed to serve a one-year term as chair of the American Library Association’s Information and Technology Policy Advisory Committee, beginning in July 2007.

Geri Ellner Krim, a school library media specialist at the Far Rockaway High School, won this year’s School Library Journal/Thomson Gale Giant Step Award for the most improved Library. The award was accompanied by a $5,000 check for the school’s media center.

Donald E. Wilson, Director of the C.W. Post School Library Media Program, won the 2007 LDA Award, Long Island’s Premier recognition of library advocacy. The LDA award was created in 1978 to call attention to the importance of libraries and library people on Long Island.

The Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Library System has named three new library directors. Mary Miller has been appointed the Executive Director of the Lakewood Memorial Library. Pam Bowen has been appointed Executive Director of the Seneca Nation of Indians Library. Gwen Bixby has been appointed Executive Director of the Delevan-Yorkshire Public Library.

Fran Roscello retired May 30, 2007. After 22 years of service at the State Education Department working with school library media programs, she plans to stay actively involved in libraries, particularly school libraries, on the state and national level.

Donna Hanus is the recipient of the 2007 Distinguished Service Award from the School Library Systems Association of New York State.

The following members won election to ALA/Division Roundtable office / boards / committees: Elizabeth Ridler—ALA Council; Carol Sheffer—PLA President; Sara Dallas—PLA Board; Mary Fellows—ALSC Board; Carol Desch—ASCLA Vice Chair; Catherine Marriott—AASL Board; Stephanie Squicciarini—YALSA Awards Committee.

Monica Grimm has been appointed an Adult Services Librarian at the Fayetteville Free Library.

Cassie Guthrie is the new Director of Seymour Library in Brockport.

Margaret Lanoue, Associate Director of Libraries, is retiring from The Sage Colleges (Albany and Troy) in mid-August and has accepted a position as the new Adult Services Department Head at the Guiderland Public Library. She is currently one of the Councilors-at-large for NYLA.

Barbara Mierlak, High School Library Information Specialist at Locust Valley High School, has been selected as the first “Librarian of the Year” by the Nassau BOCES School Library System. Mierlak has been the high school librarian at Locust Valley for nine years and has been instrumental in developing a district-wide information literacy program and creating a new library for the district’s middle school students.

Wendy Quinn has accepted a position as Youth Service Librarian at Bethlehem Public Library. Previously, Quinn worked at Albany Molecular Research, Inc (AMRI).

Sandy Feinberg won the PLA Charlie Robinson Award at the June ALA Conference.

Suzette M. LaBelle, a recent graduate of the University at Albany’s Library and Information Science Program, was hired as the Library Media Specialist for the Schenectady City School District.

Melissa Jadlos is the new Director of the Lavery Library at St. John Fisher College and Kathi Sigler is the new Instruction Librarian.

Lee Eaton, Director of the Beekman Library, passed away on June 8th, her 76th birthday. Lee was the heart and soul of the library, beginning in 1965 as the volunteer director of the Beekman Reading Center. She guided the library through the years, through changes in the profession and technology and through the explosive population growth in the community. Her capstone contribution was to spearhead the long haul to a beautiful new library building which became a reality for the community in August 2005.

Kim Bolan has been hired as the programmatic and facilities consultant to the Queens Library, working on the redesign of their 64 libraries as well as assisting with various programmatic and technology-related projects.


Rachel Kleinberg, Library Media Specialist at Montauk Public School in Montauk, NY, was presented with the Ludwig Braun Pioneer Award from Long Island University’s School of Education, Department of Educational Technology.

Paul (Bill) Crumlish has retired as director of Hobart and William Smith College Library after 35 years. Bill is a longtime NYLA member and was president in 1998.
THE AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF NEW YORK STATE

Identification, Natural History, and Conservation

James P. Gibbs, SUNY-ESF Syracuse, Alvin R. Breisch, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Peter K. Ducey, SUNY Cortland, Glenn Johnson, SUNY Potsdam, the late John Behler, Wildlife Conservation Society, and Richard Bothner, St. Bonaventure University, Olean

The first comprehensive presentation of the distributional data gathered for the New York State Amphibian and Reptile Atlas project. With more than 60,000 records compiled from 1990-1999, this extraordinary and up-to-date database provides a rich foundation for the book. This volume provides detailed narratives on the 69 species native to New York State. With a heavy emphasis on conservation biology, the book also includes chapters on threats, legal protections, habitat conservation guidelines, as well as the rich folklore of New York State as it pertains to these creatures, particularly rattlesnakes.

Also included are 67 distribution maps and 62 pages of color photographs contributed by more than 30 photographers.

“I particularly enjoyed the sections on the history of herpetology studies in New York State and the nods to the urban herpetofauna of New York City. The book is explicitly oriented toward people who want to identify specimens they’ve encountered and learn more about the animals in their area.”

—Russell Burke, Hofstra University

“The suggestions provided here to protect and conserve the habitats of these animals will go a long way to ensure that New York will not lose these species to statewide extinction.”

—Joseph C. Mitchell, University of Richmond

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You’ve heard of Robin Hood. Robbing from the rich, giving to the poor, etcetera, etcetera. Now, if you were going to start a foundation whose core funding model was to solicit huge donations from wealthy citizens and corporations, and then take 100% of those proceeds and use the money to help the truly needy and less fortunate in New York City, would you call that organization the “Robin Hood Foundation?” Hardly. Sends entirely the wrong message.

Maybe not. Founded in 2001 by hedge-fund manager Paul Tudor Jones, the Robin Hood Foundation makes a habit of unconventional thinking to help make a difference in the lives of New York City’s poor. Its mission is to ease the strictures of poverty through programs in early childhood, youth, education, jobs and economic security. And, because the charity wants to make a difference in the day-to-day lives of the poor, it also funds basic survival programs in healthcare, hunger, housing and domestic violence prevention.

But one thing that really sets the Robin Hood Foundation apart from so many other charitable organizations is that its Board of Directors underwrites all of its overhead. All donations go to help others; no “administrative expenses” are taken off the top.

Which might help explain the success of the Library Initiative, a partnership of the Robin Hood Foundation and the New York City Department of Education. The initiative’s goal is to design, build, equip, and staff new elementary school libraries. This is not a rebuilding project; it is, rather a transforming process. Money is available from other sources to buy equipment, shelving, and books. This, they say, is different. The foundation has undertaken to transform “school libraries into vital resources for the whole school community—students, teachers, and parents—that will impact and contribute to improved student performance,” in the words of their website (www.robinhood.org).

The foundation undertook this challenge because, as its website explains:

An alarming 60 percent of New York City’s public school students in grades 3 through 8 are reading below grade level. Their inability to read and understand limits their opportunities for success in school and in life. To make matters worse, often these students come from homes and attend schools that lack the capacity and resources to help them develop their ability to read, to comprehend, and to explore the world.

A lofty goal, but Robin Hood is achieving notable successes. The first 10 libraries of the Initiative were completed in 2002 and serve children and parents in Harlem, the South Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island. Twenty-one more libraries opened throughout the city in 2004. Twenty-five more libraries are slated to open in 2007.

Where does all the money for this particular initiative come from? Individual private donors, the foundations board members among them. But corporate sponsors as well. Robin Hood sought and received major funding and support for the Initiative from two major children’s book publishers—Scholastic and HarperCollins—each donating a million books. The Initiative also attracted cash as well as in-kind donations to cover everything from architectural services to computers for a total of $40 million for the project. Major donors include Credit Suisse First Boston, Apple, USA Networks, Pentagram, Sciame Construction, and HMG Architects, along with nine other top architectural firms.

The program has captured a significant amount of press attention. A 2005 feature in the New York Times – “New Libraries Make the City’s Schools Come Alive” – explained:

“...It is a very big deal, the new library at P.S. 105. A new library feeds a boy’s dreams. “When this library first opened,” said Isaiah Ross, a fifth grader, ‘I promised myself I’d read every dinosaur book here.’

...The new library at P.S. 105 has a full-time certified librarian and a full-time aide, meaning it can be open before school, every period during school and even after school, for parents to come in with children and check out books.

If you would like more information on the Robin Hood Foundation, or would like to make a donation to the Library Initiative, please visit the foundation’s website at www.robinhood.org.
What people read in the library is strictly their business. Unless it's on a computer screen in the Rochester Public Library.

In July, the Rochester Public Library and all libraries in the Monroe County (New York) Library System agreed to implement a series of recommendations that will solve the privacy problem inherent in viewing pornographic content on the library's public access computers.

Viewing controversial material is a problem faced by all libraries that make the Internet available to the public. At the core is the problem of privacy: How to prevent the potentially objectionable material one patron is viewing from being seen by other patrons. Many solutions abound. In some libraries, Internet privacy is achieved through the use of screen filters, attachments that make it difficult for anyone except the person sitting immediately in front of the computer to see the screen. Other libraries have separate banks of computers, one for adults' use only and other, separately located banks, for teens and tweens and children. Rochester's answer to the problem was arrived at through the use of money—some $6.6 million worth.

Their solution is an outright ban on pornographic material on the system's computers. And the $6.6 million was the amount of money—some 70% of the library's budget—that the county executive threatened to withhold unless Internet pornography was not banned. The Rochester Public Library and the Monroe County Library System are county-funded; withholding these funds would have crippled the system.

The controversy started earlier this year when local television station News 10NBC aired a “porn in the library” investigation. The report noted that some members of the library board were concerned that blocking porn would violate patrons’ first amendment rights. At that time, the library was filtering Internet sites, but the filter would be disabled on request by adults in accordance with the American Library Associations interpretation of the Supreme Court’s Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) decision.

In February, Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks sent a strongly worded letter to the director of the county library system, Paula Smith. Saying she was “mortified” and “stunned” to learn that the library would enable patrons to view pornographic material on request, Brooks threatened to halt about several million in county funding for the Rochester Central Library if it didn’t tighten restrictions.

“As a mother I was horrified to see our community’s children put in a position of being exposed to matters beyond their comprehension in some cases, in a place designed for learning,” Brooks said.

A task force was formed to study the problem, and work out a solution that would preserve patrons’ first amendment rights while appeasing the county executive. After much back and forth, the boards that run the libraries agreed to the restrictive policy. As quoted in the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle,

“This was a difficult decision, which was arrived at following careful review of the first amendment, state law and censorship concerns,” a statement from the Rochester library said. “The board concluded that the Central Library is too valuable to the community to allow any disruption of service.”

The county-wide policy calls for using the library's Internet filtering system to block all pornographic sites unless—upon written request—an administrator or his or her delegate deems a site appropriate for a patron to view in accordance with the Library Collection Development Policy. This policy delineates the factors librarians should consider when selecting library material.

But there is a wrinkle in this solution. In order to make a determination whether a site is appropriate for viewing, an administrator’s delegate will have to view the site. Will this create a hostile work environment for the delegate? Watch for further developments.

Privacy v. Porn: One Library’s Solution

by Mark Curiale
For most of the last several months, I’ve heard comments that went something like this: “Nice idea for six day library service, but at $43 million, it just can’t happen. It’s like spittin’ in the wind.”

Well folks, the wind direction has changed because New York City has included all of the funding to bring the City’s libraries back to six day service immediately!! No two or three year phase-in, but rather 45 hour weekly service in all five boroughs in all 210 branches for FY ’08!! Thank you to all NYLA members who helped with advocacy letters or phone calls.

For too long, New Yorkers were unable to visit their local library because it was only open while they were at work. Or students would not be able to check out books because their local branch would be closed in the afternoon. Now, with $43 million in the new City budget to increase library hours we can keep our libraries open later and open on Saturdays. This means more helpful librarians and staff, more great programs, and more books and services that modern libraries provide.

None of this would be possible without NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn and the Chair of the Cultural Affairs Committee Domenic Recchia, whose leadership brought libraries to the forefront during budget negotiations. Their commitment to libraries ensured the full $43 million and an immediate return to six day service. In overall funding for FY ’08, our libraries will be receiving $320 million to expand library services to pre-9/11 levels and beyond. This money is not just an investment in our libraries but an investment in the futures of New Yorkers both young and old. This is a mission for the three library systems to bring hope and opportunity and equality to everybody in the five boroughs. •
ASLS
Why should you be a member of NYLA's Academic and Special Libraries Section (ASLS)? A look at the official objectives on the NYLA website indicates that the section exists to represent the interests of academic and special libraries in New York State, which is fine, but perhaps not a compelling reason to join. If you are in an academic or special library, you will find ASLS a great group of colleagues ready and willing to share information and ideas, to talk about anything and everything, and most importantly, to have fun! Who else would celebrate their 50th anniversary by having a balloon artist make hats out of purple and white balloons? Or have a penguin walking the corridors at the annual conference?

We are also proud library professionals, and while we love to have fun, we are very serious about providing excellent programming that is relevant to our members. The 2007 NYLA Conference programs sponsored by ASLS are an indication of our commitment to our members. From Stephen Abram’s “Baby Busters, Gen X, and Born Digital Babies” to “You Want to Catalog WHAT?” with Marcia Trauernicht from RIT and Eleanor Brown from Cornell, there is something for everyone. It only costs $5 to join an additional NYLA section, so please consider joining us!

PLS
PLS has been busy planning a preconference CE workshop, finalizing our NYLA Conference programs for 2007, revising our annual awards, and doing some early planning for our Spring 2008 conference.

At this year’s NYLA conference, our annual meeting will be held at a free Tabletalk Breakfast on Friday morning. You will have an opportunity to talk with other public library professionals on a variety of topics. Please join your colleagues at the breakfast and visit the PLS booth for a member gift.

And, don’t miss Author! Author! featuring the award-winning Jeffrey Deaver. Our annual event takes place in the grand Buffalo Historical Society building, built for the 1901 Pan-American Exposition. Festivities begin with a tour at 4:30 pm, followed by Mr. Deaver’s talk and a sit-down meal of gourmet finger foods. Mr. Deaver will sign books before and after the event.

Vote!
An e-mail ballot for the new PLS board is coming soon to your virtual mailbox. Please cast your vote for four positions on the PLS board: vice president/president-elect, 2nd vice president, secretary, and first-year director. Details on the candidates will be included with the ballot.

See you in Buffalo!

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For Vice President (President-Elect)

Joshua Cohen
Executive Director, Mid-Hudson Library System

If everyone loves libraries, then who are these people working against us? Why aren’t they willing to provide libraries with adequate funding? Some people feel they—not librarians or boards of trustees—have the right to decide what a library can put on its shelves? Others still think libraries can and probably should be run by volunteers? One man told me how much he loved his library but said he worked against its request for a budget increase. A town supervisor in the Hudson Valley is refusing to fund a library at the level passed by voters in a referendum.

Another person insists that a library should not contain certain books. Then, there are the federal legislators who tell us we should filter our computers. It seems these people think they know how to run libraries better than we do.

- When librarians are challenged, we need a strong voice to speak up for us.
- When pressure groups demand that materials be removed from our shelves, we need a strong voice.
- When librarians are given funds inadequate to meet their user’s needs, we need a strong voice.

I still firmly believe that whatever brought us into this exciting and wonderful realm of books and information in the first place is still very much alive in all of us. With all the choices out there, people still find value in what we have to offer, so let us never stop valuing ourselves or our libraries.

What I’m asking us to do is to work together to forge our collective visions into a strategy for continued success. We need to meet our future by challenging ourselves. I believe NYLA affords us the medium through which we can do this most effectively. Much the same way we have worked together to obtain increased funding for libraries, we need to focus on working together to ensure our significance in the communities we serve. Whatever type of library we represent, at whatever level, our future depends on our ability to be open and creative. If we aren’t, someone or something else will take our place. As NYLA President, I will be committed to this endeavor, and my sense is, you will too.

For Vice President (President-Elect)

Robert Jaquay
William K. Sanford Town Library

I am honored to be asked to run for the office of NYLA President. This is my opportunity to let you know what I believe I can offer you and NYLA, should you choose me. What I can bring to the table is experience, dedication, energy, creativity and a sense of humor.

In this world of quick and easy access to all types of information, anywhere, anytime, most of us are being called upon to not only modify the way we look at the service we offer, but our respective roles as well. To some of us it’s exciting; to others it’s a threat.

After 37 years as a librarian, and over 25 years involvement with NYLA, I have been involved with local, state and national library associations for over thirty years. Participation in these organizations has always strengthened my knowledge and skills as a librarian. I believe active participation of membership and sharing of expertise is the lifeblood of library associations.

It would be an honor and privilege to serve as the Chapter Representative to the ALA Council. My aim would be finding new and better ways that the associations could work together to reach our common goals. I would advocate for all types of libraries. I would encourage involvement by New York librarians in both organizations.

I would work to increase the stature and effectiveness of NYLA and to bring New York’s concerns to ALA and would offer NYLA’s successful experiences for replication by others. Similarly, I would note what has worked well in other states and report to NYLA.

I believe that continued and enhanced cooperation with our colleagues nationwide is a critical facet of NYLA’s mission to support and improve New York’s libraries.

For ALA-Councilor-at-Large

Bea Angus
Madison-Oneida BOCES SLS

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For Councilor-at-Large
Deborah Emerson
Rochester Regional Library Council
What does NYLA mean to me? A wonderful group of colleagues, dedicated to promoting and improving library services in all types of libraries. An opportunity to be involved with activities that really make a difference to the profession, like continuing education and the annual conference. My experience with multiple NYLA sections and committees has been extremely rewarding because I can see that is helpful to libraries and the people who work in them.

For Councilor-at-Large
Marcia Eggleston
Norwood-Norfolk Grade 7-12 Library
My first experience as a librarian was working as the band librarian at my high school, Norwood-Norfolk. I lived across the street from the Hepburn Library of Norfolk, which I visited constantly. This is where my love of books and libraries began.

As a school librarian for the past 24 years, I’ve worked very hard for my school district, for my teachers’ association, for my school library system, and for SLMS/NYLA. NYLA needs the help of every member. It’s not enough to be a dues-paying member of an organization. In order to be a member in good standing, it requires a little work on each and everyone’s part. NYLA as an organization needs strong leadership. I would like to work for NYLA as a councilor-at-large.

We have proven how effective we are together through Library Lobby Day, gaining the respect of lawmakers and major increases in funding. Let’s continue this momentum together making our organization stronger and a force to be reckoned with. I enjoy working for NYLA and with the members of all sections of NYLA. As your councilor-at-large, I will serve you and NYLA working hard as an advocate for all libraries and all librarians.

For Councilor-at-Large
Lorie Wies
Union College
The role of libraries in fostering literacy and education is unquestionable. As a NYLA member, I have been very proud to have participated in activities which have served to advance the profile, viability and growth of libraries in New York State. My candidacy reflects this spirit: the desire for an opportunity to further serve in an increased capacity through participation on the NYLA Council as a Councilor-at-Large.

For Councilor-at-Large
Dr. Bernie Tomasso
I have served as a Councilor-at-Large for the past two years. I began with an affiliation with SLMS and have expanded it to include RASS and YSS. I also am a member of the Government Information and Finding Inspiration In Literature and Movies Round Tables.

Since I am now retired, I advocated for a Retiree Roundtable which would not only assist NYLA but also allow retired professionals a voice. This roundtable is now a reality. I have also been in touch with Empire Friends who are looking for ways to strengthen their membership and are looking at retired members to assist them.

While on Council, I have been serving on the Continuing Education Committee, the Awards Committee, and the Joint Conference Committee. The latter has resulted in discussion regarding the uniqueness of the sections and their need to work together for NYLA. I realize now how much NYLA is truly the sum of its parts and I wish to continue serving so that NYLA moves forward.

NEW – Electronic Voting for 2007

The 2007 NYLA Council election will be conducted via electronic ballot. By August 15th an e-mail invitation will be distributed to all NYLA members with log-in information and voting instructions. Those members for whom NYLA does not have an e-mail address will receive their instructions via US mail. The online ballot will remain available through midnight of September 15, 2007.

For complete candidate resumes, details on the electronic ballot and voting process, and the latest election information visit:


Note: There were no petition candidates for office this year.
## NYLA Welcomes First-Time Members

1/1/07 – 6/30/07

### ASLS
- Mary Ahenakew
- Yvette Cortes
- Audrey Davidson
- Brigitte Doellgast
- Katie Donahue
- Peter Edelman
- Susan Fill
- Shirley Friedman
- Linda Perahia
- Mary Jeanne Perlmutter
- Alicia Reinhardt
- Edward Roche
- Michael Scaglione
- Mara Zonderman

### LAMS
- Thomas Grech
- Betty Johnson
- Sheryl Knab
- Scott Nicholson
- Robert Schofield
- Pamela Thornton

### PLS
- Matthew Baiotto
- Claudia Baker
- Alice Barton
- Carolyn Bauer
- Mary Behringer
- Marie Bindeman
- Laurel Blatchford
- Carol Bond
- Jennifer Bradshaw
- Judith Brown
- Vickie Button
- Jay Caffrey
- Sally Cranston
- John Dax
- Susan Dimpfl
- Debra Engelhardt
- Emily Farr
- James Gelarden
- Thomas Geoffino
- Carol Graves
- Kathleen Henry
- Amelia Kalin
- Amy Kaplan
- Miriam Katowitz
- Paul Leise
- MaryAlice Markham
- William McIntyre
- Dacia Metes
- Paul Morrell
- Lynn Overgaard
- Jeffrey Reynolds

### RASS
- Lauren Cardinal
- Tracy Crawford
- Linda Going
- Ann Gunning
- Sherry Lynn Kowalski
- Tracy Ristau
- Lisa Taylor
- Lisa Weaver

### SLMS
- Jillian Abbatangelo
- Sharon Bainbridge
- Terri Brandt
- Renne Burns
- Marilyn Carlson
- Eugene Chase
- Sarah Chauncey
- Linda Chesbro
- Margaret Costello
- Elizabeth Cuddy
- Jane del Villar
- Mary Jane Detwiler
- Michael Dodes
- Ellen Dove
- Donna Eager
- Christiane Emery
- Suzanne Feldberg
- Joan Fischer
- Sharon Gaffney
- Sari Grandstaff
- Kristy Hofstead
- Kristin Kennedy
- Christine Kingsley
- Pamela Knapp
- Mary Knopp
- Anne Marie Lavoie
- Jacqueline Lee
- Jennifer Lyons
- Donna Martellotto Boyce
- Peg Mauer
- Megan McCoy
- Maureen McNaboe
- Barbara Mierlak
- Kristie Miller
- Jennie Morris

### SMART
- Charles Frank
- Scott La Counte
- Laura Osterhout
- Erik Spielmann

### YSS
- Joanne Adam
- Angela Antzak
- Lauren Brosius
- Barbara Buckley
- Marci Dressler
- Sally Eller
- Ryan Harrington
- Lisa Herskovitz
- Heather Hunt
- Barbara Jacobini
- Elise Landesberg
- Elizabeth Marcus
- Julie McKay
- Anne Miltenberg
- Barbara Moon
- Christina Morrison
- Lorna Peachin
- Mariel Perez
- Donna Pesce
- Melissa Quarles
- Katalin Radnay-Baltimore
- Michele Ryan
- Christina Ryan-Linder
- Judith Sagat
- Joanne Simone
- Emily Smith
- Stephanie Stewart

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be: We lend! Borrow! Please! And it’s not the kind of lending you usually see. A credit card company says: Here, take our money. If you’re late paying us back, we’ll charge you 25% interest. A bank says, here, take our mortgage. You can’t pay it back? No problem: we’ll just take your house.

In a library, it’s an honor system. Take that book. Just bring it back. Call us if you need more time. If you’re late, twenty cents a day, more of a gentle reminder than a fine. Our libraries are so outside the capitalist system, it’s almost un-American.

I love libraries because their proud names have not yet been appropriated by Pepsi, General Motors, Fleet Bank, Gillette, Fedex, American Airlines, National Car Rental, America West—which all own arenas. Can you imagine: Honey, I’m going out to the library. The Tropicana branch. It sounds absurd, and it should, because we own our libraries. They bear the names of our towns and cities: Berlin, Berne, Brunswick; Castleton and Cohoes; Grafton and Guilderland. We pay for them with well-spent taxes and budgets we approve. That’s why almost every library includes one of these two beautiful words—public or community. Our libraries, thank goodness, have survived an era when people in power take on faith that anything done for a profit is better than anything done for the public.

But we know better. Americans rate libraries higher than any other local institution; 95% of Americans—that’s 19 of every 20 people, I think—say libraries are important to them. Libraries invite all of us in the door. Red Staters need libraries; Blue Staters need libraries. So do anarchists, Reaganites, mothers, grandfathers, humanitarians, toddlers, atheists, poor people who can’t afford to buy books, and rich people who know a bargain when they see one.

I love libraries because they make me feel rich. After I visit, I come home with armfuls of history books, the latest best-seller, all the movies I’ve missed. My 7-year old daughter learned to read and love ideas and travel the world through library books. My sister commutes over an hour each way to work each day and over the last few years during her commute she has read half of the books in the New York State library system. And she hasn’t even read them. She’s had them read to her. Amen to audio books!

I love libraries because they don’t put stuff on the walls that can be bought at Sears or is painted by professional artists. They’re decorated by the First Tuesday Quilting Circle or Fred, who takes gorgeous pictures every time he goes to the Jersey shore. Or with art by our kids, who need libraries as much as fresh air.

And finally, I love libraries because they come with librarians. At the risk of pandering, I will say it: I love librarians. First off, all librarians are mysterious. You might not realize it, but you are. You see what books and movies I take out, but I don’t know what books and movies you take out. And you’re always nice to me, no matter how overdue my books are.

Sometimes you feel worse about my fines than I do. Sometimes I keep my books past their due date just to receive a librarian’s sympathy. And you never tell me what to do. You leave me alone until I need your help. Then you help me. It’s like “I Dream of Jeannie.” I am lost, confused, or stuck, and you come to my rescue, and in a blink—just like Jeannie, right?—you hunt down sources and obscure facts. You’ll even retrieve the book from the stacks for me. My own wife wouldn’t do that. She’d say, “Get your own book.”

I love libraries because they are full of smart people I want to be around. Now, most of these people are dead authors. Most of the time you want to get rid of dead people. Bury them. Toss ’em in the ocean. But not dead writers. Smart dead writers you want to take home with you. You might not want to hear this, but sometimes we even take these dead authors to bed with us. And I must confess, we’re not monogamous. A handsome cover? I’ll take you home! An academic tour de force? I’m easy! A best-selling romance-writer? Let’s get busy!

This makes all of us—you might not have heard this phrase before, even though you are librarians—polygymous necro-bibliophiliacs. It is my guess that the overwhelming majority of people in this room are polygymous necro-bibliophiliacs and I am honored to be a member of your club!

Thank you!
From the President...

Dear Colleagues:

This talk was given by Dennis Gaffney at the annual meeting of the Upper Hudson Library System, where he was awarded the 2006 William Meredith Library Advocate of the Year Award. He received it for his advocacy of the successful $29.1 million public referendum to build five new libraries that was passed in Albany in February. Dennis is a freelance writer who was elected as an Albany trustee in May.

His words struck me, and everyone else at the UHLS dinner, as apt, funny, touching, inspiring - one of the best library (and librarian) support speeches I've ever heard. I hope you agree!

Instead of a speech, I would like to offer a list. The name of my list is: Why I love libraries. Here we go:

I love libraries because they don't expect much of me. There's no teacher in a library telling me what book to read. I choose. There's no place to do my laundry. There's no place to do the dishes. You sweep your own floors. You mow your own lawn. I'm not supposed to talk on the phone. I'm not even supposed to talk to people, which can be a pleasure in itself. I don't even have to buy a $6 beer or a $4 cup of coffee to use your lavatories. What a relief.

So what do I do? I wander. I know you call it browsing, but it's really wandering. I do it all the time. I'm looking for a novel I should have read by Willa Cather. Somehow, I find myself in the sports aisle engrossed in an account of the 1969 New York Knicks championship run. I think I'm looking for a biography about Harry Truman and I find myself reading a biography about Ingrid Bergman. Sometimes I just look at her pictures. It's like the Internet, but much, much slower. As I said, expectations are low.

I love libraries because they save me from myself. How? Sometimes I'm in a bookstore—I know I shouldn't go to bookstores, but I do—and I see a hardcover book. Beautiful jacket, famous author, spectacular blurbs. I buy it, take it home and I read three pages and what do I discover? It stinks. Night after night, it sits on my bedside table, nagging me. Read me, it says, read me! I come to hate that book, hate that author, even hate that beautiful jacket. Why don't I just throw the book out? Well, it cost me 25 dollars and 43 cents! How can I throw it out?!

But what happens when we borrow a book that stinks from your libraries? We give it right back to you. We put it in the box. Sometimes we throw it in the box. And once again, I am free to impulsively select a book with a beautiful jacket, a famous author, and spectacular blurbs. But I borrow it.

I love libraries because you don't have to pay admission to get in and you don't have to leave a tip to get out. You know that famous Shakespeare line—neither a lender nor a borrower be? Well, if a librarian had written that line, it would

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