A Message from the ASLS President

Blake Carver, ASLS President

Though it might seem like the big conference is still far off, it will be here before you know it! Our section programmer, Elaine M. Lasda Bergman, is finishing up a great group of speakers! They’ll be covering a diverse and interesting range of topics. Expect to hear about budgets, oral histories, collaboration, technology, and efficiency. And don’t forget about our annual Membership Meeting. Plans are being drawn up to hold our meeting at the NYS Military Museum, don’t miss it! The preliminary schedule will be posted at http://www.nyla.org as things are finalized. We hope you are planning on being there November 2 – 5, 2011 in Saratoga Springs.

Legislative Committee Report

NYLA Advocacy Day, which was held on March 1, was well-timed, since serious budget discussions took place much earlier than in recent years. The Governor’s budget proposal included an additional $8,450,000 cut in library funding, the third largest reduction in as many years. The Senate voted to restore $4.2 million of that cut, with the Assembly initially refusing to consider any restoration. Ultimately, a $3 million restoration was agreed to by both chambers. Total Library Aid will now be $79 million, down from $84.45 million last year.

While this is a case of “not as bad as it could have been,” there is some good news for library and library-related programs:

- The “supplemental” library system funding has now been made permanent, which will allow for better financial planning and more stability for programs supporting libraries.
- School library materials aid will remain as a separate item rather than being merged into textbook and software aid.
- Adult Literacy Education (ALE) funding was held at $4.3 million rather than being reduced.

In addition, the ARIA legislation, which sets up a structure to support high end research resources, has been reintroduced this year. As of this writing, the legislation is being considered in the Assembly Ways and Means Committee and was scheduled for an April 6 vote in the Senate.

Much of the credit for any successes achieved in this difficult year can go to library advocates who spoke to legislators about their needs and their priorities. If you answered a call to “contact your senator or assembly representative now,” we thank you! By continuing to work together we can maximize the information resources available to all New Yorkers throughout the state.

Jean Sheviak
ASLS Legislative Committee Representative
Are You Ready to Rock?  
ASLS Program Lineup for the 2011 NYLA Conference and Trade Show

The theme for the 2011 NYLA Annual Conference and Trade Show is “Libraries ROCK!” ASLS has a number of engaging and informative programs in the works for this event, which will be held from November 2-5, 2011 in Saratoga Springs, NY. We are organizing presentations on a diverse array of timely topics with dynamic speakers. Here are some of the highlights we are working on:

♦ **Stories of Our Past: Oral History Projects in New York State:** learn how the Corning Museum of Glass, New York State Folklore Society, and the United States Military Museum are developing and maintaining collections of oral histories.

♦ **High School to College Collaboration:** To address concerns that students are losing their information literacy skills between high school and college, partnerships are being formed between high school SLMS and college librarians. Come hear about one such partnership that is underway in Western New York.

♦ **Tools for Digital Preservation and Asset Management:** Many libraries are creating digital libraries and repositories to make archival and other materials available online. Two asset management systems will be discussed: Luna and Rosetta.

♦ **What do our Users Want? Patron Driven Acquisitions Projects:** How do we make sure we spend our collection development dollars wisely and in a way that meets patron needs? Purchase on demand and other patron driven acquisitions models are one way to address this challenge. Presenters from several academic libraries in NYS will describe their programs.

♦ **How May I Help You? Implementing the Single Service Desk in Libraries:** Find how the use of a single service desk combining reference and circulation services is helping improve services and create efficiency at the University at Binghamton.

♦ **Tools to Manage Your Website: Open Source vs. Proprietary:** web content management systems (CMS) can be a handy way to create and maintain your library’s web site. With all the CMS options out there, it may be wise to consider the advantages and disadvantages between choosing a proprietary system which costs money but comes with technical support, or a free open source system that relies on a user community for assistance.

♦ **Innovations between Libraries and Publishers:** Learn how Columbia Libraries’ Center for Digital Research and Scholarship is creating research repositories and data support and forging partnerships with publishers to enhance scholarly communication.

In addition, we are planning a special **ASLS Membership Meeting at the U.S. Military Museum**, which is just around the corner from the conference center. We hope you are as excited as we are about this lineup, and look forward to seeing you at the conference!

-Elaine M. Lasda Bergman
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Do you know an academic or special library colleague who has advocated for or developed a visionary service that has improved patron access to information and resources? Is there an academic or special library considering conducting research or creating a program but needs some financial assistance? Here’s your opportunity to recognize an exceptional leader or apply for a project grant to support innovative programming.

Each year, the Academic and Special Library Section (ASLS) of the New York Library Association recognizes the achievements of an ASLS member who is creative, innovative and visionary in the field of academic or special librarianship. The ASLS Excellence in Library Innovation Award annually honors a librarian who meets the award criteria with a commemorative plaque and $500 in cash or conference registration support. The winner is announced at the ASLS Membership Meeting at the NYLA Annual Conference. To learn more about this award, go to http://www.nyla.org/index.php?page_id=1935.

In partnership with the NY 3Rs, ASLS is committed to supporting academic and special libraries in their efforts to provide services and programs to students, researchers, and medical personnel. The ASLS/New York State 3Rs Special Project Grant enables the recipient to pursue a special project at an academic or special library that benefits the strategic mission of the institution and the constituency in which it serves. The $1,500 grant can be used to purchase specialized equipment, hire a temporary worker, train staff, or implement a new service. Proposals are evaluated on both the strength of the applicant’s statement of the project needs, the clarity of project goals, and the presentation of an achievable work plan. For more information visit the webpage at http://www.nyla.org/index.php?page_id=1936.

Along with all NYLA sections, ASLS has the opportunity to award a Dewey Fellowship to a NYLA member every three years. This fellowship pays up to $1,000 of the cost of attendance of the NYLA Annual conference and provides a $100 gift certificate for use at the NYLA store. The recipient is acknowledged on NYLA’s website, at the Annual Conference, and in the NYLA Bulletin. Recipients are chosen on the basis of the following criteria:

- five or more years of experience as a librarian (MLS not required)
- record of accomplishment in the library profession, and
- involvement in activities to advance the library community

ASLS will once again be eligible to offer this award to a section member in 2012. For more information please visit the webpage at http://www.nyla.org/index.php?page_id=1803.

By Sheryl Knab
Spotlight on
Frick Art Reference Library

The Frick Art Reference Library of The Frick Collection, located in New York City, provides access to resources related to art of the Western tradition from the fourth to the mid-twentieth century. Paintings, drawings, and sculpture are strongly represented in the Library’s holdings. Secondary areas of collecting are prints, medals, mosaics, tapestries, and the decorative arts.

The Library and its services are available to any adult with an interest in art. Researchers such as scholars, students, collectors, and art professionals visit the Library and use its services on a regular basis. They explore topics connected to artists, collectors, historiography, theory, and works of art, as well as other subjects of study that fall within the scope of the Library.

The Frick Art Reference Library was founded in 1920 by Helen Clay Frick, daughter of Pittsburgh industrialist Henry Clay Frick. She created the Library as a memorial to her father to further his mission of promoting the study of fine arts. Today, the Library holds more than one million images of works of art, 300,000 books, and 80,000 auction catalogs, with a growing number of electronic resources augmenting its photoarchive and print collections. Archival materials focus on the Frick as an institution, the Frick family, and manuscript collections related to the study of art. The holdings of the Library can be searched through the online catalog FRESCO: http://fresco.frick.org.

The Frick’s Library is a member of the New York Art Resources Consortium (NYARC), along with the libraries of the Brooklyn Museum and The Museum of Modern Art. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation provided funding for the development of NYARC and its collective online catalog, Arcade, which includes FRESCO. The consortium collaborates on a range of projects from the scanning of exhibition publications for online access to local resource sharing. For more information about NYARC and its initiatives, visit http://nyarc.org.

The Center for the History of Collecting in America was established at the Library in 2007 to further research related to collecting and its history in the United States. It supports this mission by hosting visiting research fellows, organizing symposia, and creating tools for finding information about collectors and collecting. The online Archives Directory for the History of Collecting in America published by the Center is available through the art history research databases portal, along with other databases maintained by the Library: http://research.frick.org.

Behind the scenes, the Library supports conservation and digital laboratories. The conservation lab is responsible for the maintenance, repair, and preservation of the book, photograph, and archive collections. The digital lab cares for the Library’s photographic negatives and oversees digital reprographics and preservation.

Reference services are available on site at the Library and remotely by telephone or via email. The Library participates in the SHARES interlibrary lending program through OCLC, making its collections available to a larger community.

For more information about the Frick Art Reference Library, visit http://www.frick.org/library.

--Suz Massen, Chief of Public Services, Frick Art Reference Library
Mid-Career Strategies

Mary Carmen Chimato’s NYLA conference session *How to Be the Bad Guy without Being Bad* was full of great advice for anyone who supervises. Here is a summary for those who were unable to attend and a recap for those lucky enough to hear the presentation.

According to Ms. Chimato, a manager’s job is to develop productive and well-disciplined individuals. She insists that performance problems lead to morale issues if not dealt with and that punishment fails. Instead, Ms. Chimato advocates being proactive – when there is a problem, address it with a performance improvement discussion.

A performance improvement discussion is a private, formal discussion between you and your employee that is highly structured. You will need to prepare for the meeting, so you can cover the following:

1. **Specify the difference between the actual performance and the desired performance.** Be sure you have documentation of when the employee failed to demonstrate desired performance, including specific details with dates and times.
2. **Explain why the performance issue needs to be resolved.**
3. **Identify consequences if the employee does not change.** Will it be a warning or will you be starting disciplinary action? It is important to be familiar with your organization’s process for disciplinary action.
4. **Determine an action plan with specific goals.** The outcome of the performance improvement discussion is for the staff person to agree to change. You want the employee to take responsibility – ask the person what he/she is going to do to change and meet desired work performance expectations.

Ms. Chimato recommends that you plan the meeting for 30 minutes, but allow for 30 minutes of padding. Tell the employee in person that you would like to meet with him/her for a performance discussion, but do not go into the details until your meeting. Stress that you will be having a discussion (it is not yet a disciplinary action). Other tips:

- You should have the meeting as soon as possible to remedy the situation, but first you need documentation and a plan for the meeting.
- Keep calm. Do not have a meeting when you are angry!
- If the staff person becomes upset during the meeting, offer to give the person a few minutes to pull him/herself together. If needed, reschedule the meeting.
- If the staff person becomes verbally abusive during the meeting, walk away. Offer to reschedule the meeting when the staff person is calmer and can have a discussion. Know there are times when it is prudent to have a third person in the room as a note taker, to record exactly what is said.
- Be consistent with how you handle issues.

If the employee fails to meet the goals set during the performance improvement discussion, your next conversation will be focused on why the person did not meet the goals (rather than rehashing your first meeting). You will also need to follow through with the consequences laid out during the performance improvement discussion, including starting disciplinary actions if necessary.

Ms. Chimato notes that a meeting to discuss disciplinary actions is very different from a performance improvement discussion. I only wish she had a second session at the conference so I could get advice on how to handle this next step! Mary Carmen Chimato is currently the Assistant Dean of the University Library at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. Prior to that, she was the Head of Access and Delivery Service at North Carolina State University and the author of [www.circandserve.wordpress.com](http://www.circandserve.wordpress.com).

Mary Lindner, The College of Saint Rose