

# NETWORK CONNECTION



Official Newsletter of the New York State Library Assistants' Association

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## NYSLAA Conference Report

Judith Andrew, Ithaca College Library

I'd like to congratulate this year's conference planners on the wonderful title for our annual gathering: "Salt of the Earth." Not only was it apropos for the region in which we found ourselves, but also for the conference attendees themselves. The Rolling Stones have a song entitled "Salt of the Earth," and some of the lyrics are:

*"Let's drink to the hard working people!  
Let's drink to the salt of the earth!"*

I think we all did an excellent job learning, appreciating our library community, celebrating our accomplishments and hard work while we were together in Liverpool.

All four workshops I attended were wonderful. I have my own tradition of attending the annual workshop about the history of the area in which the conference is held, and I thoroughly enjoyed this one. Joyce Mills, a retired library media specialist from Liverpool Public Library, taught us so much about Liverpool's history from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century to the present. The major topics included Liverpool's salt industry, willow basket trade, and the many amusement parks which were built on the shores of Onondaga Lake in the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Her talk was accompanied by fascinating pictures and an obvious love of history.

The second workshop I attended was *Islam*, presented by Alex Snow, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Religion at Syracuse University whose

research centers on Asian religions. Alex infused his presentation with exceptional intelligence, and infectious energy and humor, covering the history of Islam and its relationship to Christianity and Judaism. I was more than a little pleased to finally understand the meaning of some of the various concepts and words which we hear and see so much in the news, and he did an admirable job of putting so much of what is happening into logical perspective. I don't think I have ever taken so many notes at a NYSLAA workshop!

My first workshop on Friday was *Leaders in Libraries: The Magic of Marketing Your Library*, presented by Dave Bendekovic and Kathryn Spier Miller of Polaris Library Systems. I am a member of the Marketing

Team at Ithaca College Library, so I was anxious to hear some ideas that I could take back to my library. I was not disappointed! David and Kathryn were a lot of fun to listen to and told us about successful marketing projects from many libraries throughout the country, stressing the importance of linking your

marketing strategies to your library's mission and goals. It was interesting to see that libraries whose focus is on customer service have a lot to learn from companies like Southwest Airlines, Crayola Crayons, and Six Flags, Inc., and Polaris's specialization in library marketing brought it all together.

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***NYSLAA Conference Report***  
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When I received my conference brochure in the spring, I was pleased to see that Fred Stoss, an Associate Librarian at the University at Buffalo, was giving a workshop entitled *The Heat is Still On: Solutions Stimulated by 'Truth.'* I had attended the workshop he gave at last year's conference based on Al Gores' research and documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth*, about the climate crisis. This year's workshop filled us in on what sort of impact the film and its attendant education of millions has had on our planet. The impact has been positive, no doubt about it, but there is still so much more we must do to improve the environment and save our home planet from disaster. In addition to clarifying the dangers we face, Fred also explained some of the actions we can take which will lead to a greener, safer environment and a hopeful future for those who come after us. He told us that libraries can play a major role in the I.C.E. solution to global warming: Information; Communication; Education.

This year's conference was our 30<sup>th</sup>! The coming together of so many members of our library community was indeed a wonderful celebration of our Association. Congratulations



to the Conference Planning Committee for a very successful conference, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude for their enabling us to happily learn and socialize with each other once again.

## **Regional Reports from the Conference**

### **Capital Area Library Assistants (CALA)**

Carol Reppard

As of June 2008 we now have 140 members. These members are a very diverse group coming from school, public, academic and special libraries.

We hosted two workshops over the last year. Our fall 2007 workshop was *Library Outreach: What Does It Mean for You and Your Library* which was presented by JoAnn Benedetti, Hudson Library System. Our spring 2008 workshop was *Digitalization: Is It for You?* and our presenters were Susan D'Entremont, Regional Archivist and Dustin Wilder, Digital Library Field Trainer both from the Capital District Library Council. Both workshops were well attended and received well by all.

2009 will be our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we hope everyone will join us to make it a great year. Stay tuned for more.

### **Central New York Library Resources Council (CLRC)**

John Butcher

Presented by Dorothy Morgan

The Fall CLRC workshop was on October 29, 2007. The morning session had two presentations: *Taking Control of Your Career* and *Students, Volunteers, and Interns*. The afternoon consisted of two break-out sessions. The first session offered *Digitization Corner* and *Breathe: Practical Ways to Manage Stress*. The second session was a choice between *Catalog Update* and *Customer Service: How to Deal with Patrons and Colleagues*. The primary audience was support staff with some librarians attending and presenting. The general consensus was positive with plans to do more in the future.

Our spring workshop was held on March 4, 2008 and was hosted by the Syracuse Library School and the South Central Council. It was a two-day unconference which may be the wave of the future. The workshops were done in a

discussion format with a moderator on a specific subject. This allowed for a sharing of ideas and these sessions ran about an hour. Some of the break-out sessions were: *Metadata and Cataloging, 2.0 Show and Tell, Security and Privacy, Keeping Up/Training, Public 2.0, Open Source, Funding Effective Change* and others. The unconference was attended by librarians and support staff and most of the moderators and floaters were current library students. It was a very successful event.

### **Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO)** Louise Smith-Jones

On October 15, 2007, Lisa Morris, Learning Systems Manager, Human Resources Dept., Brooklyn Public Library invited Vergie Savage-Branch to speak on the benefits of METRO's Library Assistants/Support Staff's & Associates Special Interest Group (LASSA-SIG). Rita Gregory spoke on the NYSLAA Certificate of Achievement and I shared information on the New York State Library Assistants' Association (NYSLAA). The event was their 5<sup>th</sup> Annual All Staff Day. We scheduled one workshop in the morning and one in the afternoon. The group had many questions and we were well received.

LASSA-SIG hosted its Eleventh Annual Library Assistants' Day Celebration on April 17, 2008, at the New York Public Science, Industry and Business Library in Manhattan. We were sponsored by METRO, New York Public Library Guild Local 1930 and the New York Mid-Manhattan Public Library. The theme was *Enhancing Our Skills in the New Age of Information*. The event offered six workshops: *Resume Writing/Career Development, Writing that Sizzles: Making the Most of Your Emails & Memos, Getting a Grip on Your Personal Finances, Building a High Performance Team, Shopping for Wellness and Economy, and Web 2.0 in Libraries* There was a tour of the library and it was announced that next year's Library Assistants' Day will be hosted by Brooklyn Public Library.

### **Rochester Regional Library Council (RRLC)** Heidi Jensen

The Rochester Regional Library Council Library Assistants group has had another busy year.

The group planned two - ½ day workshops, *Book Repair* and *Planning and Organizing My/Our Priorities*, as well as eight Monday night *Pizza and...* workshops. The Monday night workshop subjects were, *Cataloging Electronic Resources, Reference Interview, Facebook, Firefox* and a 3-part *Google Tools* series.

We also do community volunteer work. This year, we prepared four dinners at the Ronald McDonald House located in Rochester. Each of these meals are cooked and served by Library Assistants from the Rochester area.

Our group also accepts donations for a local shelter called Grace Urban Ministries. These collections are done twice a year and provide the shelter with much needed personal hygiene items for at-risk women and their children.

On May 20, 2008 we had a very special celebration for Kathy Martel. Kathy retired from the Rochester Public Library on May 30, 2008. Congratulations Kathy!

### **South Central Regional Library Council (SCRLC)** Judith Andrew

The South Central Library Council's Library Assistants Special Interest Group has presented two workshops since our last conference.

*A Day in the Life of a Customer Service Professional* was held on November 29, 2007 at Tompkins Cortland Community College.

*Professional Development in Our Rapidly Changing World* was on May 23, 2008. It was originally planned to take place at the SCRLC classroom in Ithaca, but due to an overwhelming response, it had to be moved to Tompkins Cortland Community College.

After each workshop, we have a brown bag lunch meeting where we discuss ideas for future workshops and activities.

SCRLC has had a listserv for over a year and we now have a blog with which members of the Executive Committee communicate with each other.

On our agenda for the coming year: Conduct a survey of salaries for library assistants in our region.

### **Western New York Library Assistants**

**(WNYLA)** Marie Peterson  
Presented by Sue Prefontaine

The Western New York Library Assistants (WNYLA) presented two workshops and two of our networking *Getting to Know You* (GTKY) events for regional library support staff.

In November 2007, librarians Dean Hendrix and Ken Fujiuki presented the well-received workshop *Web 2.0...The Machine is Us/ing Us*, demonstrating various social networking tools and websites. *iSafe: A Workshop on Internet Safety Education* was held at WNYLRC in April 2008, presented by educator and librarian Cathie Marriott.

Our eleventh and twelfth bi-annual networking events drew the customary crowd of participants interested in the variety of regional library environments. A tour, refreshments, and gift raffles all accompany a presentation by a representative of the library.

The October 2007 GTKY was held at the Western New York Library Resources Council with director Sheryl Knab giving a virtual tour of WNYRLC's projects and services.

In May 2008 GTKY at Buffalo's Canisius College Library included a wonderful tour and presentation of some of the unexpectedly diverse holdings of Canisius Archives.

The past year saw the conclusion of the evolution of the Western New York Library Assistants planning committee from a nearly autonomous group to a subcommittee of WNYLRC's Continuing Education Committee. It is expected that this change will lead to a stronger planning organization in the future. The Council's support ensures that professional development programming for library support staff will continue. WNYLA will further change within a couple of years to a standing committee at the Council. The make-up of the planning committee has diversified once again, as it had in the past, and includes members from public, school and academic libraries.



### **Certificate of Achievement Review Board**

Michele Matthews



There are currently 86 members who have earned their Certificates of Achievement.

This year's recipients are:

#### **Public Services-Level 4**

- Karen Kazzi, Ridgefield, Connecticut
- LaVerne Sankey, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY

#### **Technical Services-Level 4**

- Sheila Tschudy, Rakow Library, Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, NY

I am stepping down as the Review Board Coordinator, effective immediately, and I am pleased to announce that Scott Goodman will be stepping forward as the Coordinator. Thank you, Scott.

# Library Support Staff Certification Program Progress Report

Dorothy Morgan

ALA and the Western Council of State Libraries received a *Laura Bush Libraries in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services in June 2007 for a three-year project to develop a national, voluntary Library Support Staff



Certification Program (LSSCP). During the first year, this project has accomplished the following:

- Developed competency sets for library support staff in nine areas of library work.
- Developed, conducted and analyzed a survey asking members of the library profession to review and comment on the competency sets.
- Revised the competency sets, including integrating skills and knowledge from two previously independent competency sets based on comments from the survey respondents.
- Began research on the best way to assess LSSCP participants.
- Began discussions of the LSSCP field tests in 2009-2010.

LSSCP is pleased to present the revised competency sets to the Divisions that have committed to LSSCP by providing representatives to the project's Advisory Council. The first step in the process to obtain approval for the LSSCP is acceptance of the competency sets by sponsoring Divisions.



The competencies are designed to be a general statement of what library support staff should know and be able to do in each of nine competency sets:

- Foundations of Library Service
- Communication and Teamwork
- Technology
- Technical Services
- Reference Service
- Access Service
- Readers Advisory
- Youth Services
- Administration and Management

Once the competency sets are accepted, a syllabus with learning objectives will be developed for each competency. Participants may use this guide for certification assessment. Education providers may use the guide to develop or adapt curriculum to the competency sets. The Advisory Committee is discussing several approaches for acquiring and demonstrating competency sets.

The current priority is to obtain approval of the competency sets because a certification program must be sponsored by at least one ALA division. We are asking the divisions (ACRL, ALCTS, LAMA, PLA, RUSA) that have appointed a member to the project's Advisory Committee to review the competency sets and approve those that they feel pertain to their area of interest. We ask that ACRL and PLA, particularly, be as inclusive as possible in selecting competency sets to consider for approval.

We would like to have approval of competency sets related to membership's interests no later than August 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Division representative on the LSSCP Advisory Committee is available to answer any questions you might have.

## **Craig Koste Award Winner 2008**

Compiled by Joy Piper

In 1992, the Executive Council created the NYSLAA Award for Outstanding Service for New York State library assistants who are members of NYSLAA. Its name was changed to honor Craig Koste, a library assistant who, in 1995, bequeathed an endowment to NYSLAA. The award recognizes those library assistants who have distinguished themselves by their service to our organization and to the library assistants of New York on either a state or local level. A stipend of \$100 is given to the recipient's library for collection development.

Heidi Jensen  
Cataloging Assistant  
Pioneer Library System

Heidi Jensen, a cataloging assistant in the Pioneer Library System, is the 2008 recipient of NYSLAA's Craig Koste Award. Heidi has been an active member of NYSLAA since joining five years ago and now chairs the Rochester Regional Library Council's Library Assistants Group.

Kathy Martel of Rochester Public Library nominated Ms. Jensen for this year's award. Ms. Martel wrote of Heidi's leadership as chairperson of RRLC's Library Assistants' group "Her involvement and guidance assisted the group to set up programs that were well attended and to endorse programs that had been in place." Heidi also served as Public Relations Chair for NYSLAA where "...she brought fresh ideas and encouraged the board to update the tax exempt status for the organization."

Deborah Emerson, Assistant Director Rochester Regional Library Council, in her letter of support wrote, "It is wonderful to have newer staff like Heidi join the group and take on a leadership role." Ms. Emerson also commented on Heidi's skills in hosting the 2005 NYSLAA Annual Conference "I was impressed by her organizational skills and her ability to manage the multiple activities that are a part of

conference planning. She easily juggled logistical arrangements, programming, and community support/donations and ended up with a highly successful event."

NYSLAA is proud to have a member like Heidi Jensen who takes on leadership roles both at the state and local levels. As Ms. Emerson says, "Heidi brings new ideas and enthusiasm to anything she works with." Ms. Jensen embodies the ideals the award stands for and we look forward to her continued involvement and leadership on behalf of library assistants across the state.



## **Ray Murray Award Winner 2008**

Compiled by Joy Piper

In 1989, the Ray Murray Award was created to honor Ray Murray, a librarian who opened the door for creation of the annual library assistants' conference, thereby laying the groundwork for NYSLAA. This Award is given to librarians, library directors, trustees, board members or others who have contributed to the recognition and/or professional growth of library assistants.

Lisa C. Wemett  
Assistant Library Director for Reference and  
Teen Services  
Webster Public Library

The 2008 Ray Murray Award is being presented to Lisa C. Wemett, the Assistant Library Director for Reference and Teen Services at the Webster Public Library. Ms. Wemett was a charter member of NYSLAA and has continued to be a member. Ms. Wemett has been a mentor and advocate for library staff throughout her career. Her continuous effort to promote library

staff through professional development, personal encouragement and increased responsibilities exemplifies the spirit of the Ray Murray Award.



## Call for Nominations

*Nominations are now being accepted for  
NYSLAA Executive Council*

Ms. Wemett was nominated by Theresa Mulee. In her letter Theresa wrote of Ms. Wemett's "...continuous work to promote support staff from clerical titles to library assistant positions." "In the past eleven years that Lisa has been at Webster, six former library pages have become librarians or are currently enrolled in MLS programs."

Stephanie Squicciarini, who received this year's "Movers and Shakers" award from *Library Journal*, wrote "Lisa has a seemingly endless supply of knowledge and willingness to share that knowledge with others... [created] a nurturing, supportive, and inspiring work environment."

NYSLAA is proud to present the Ray Murray award to a charter member of NYSLAA. NYSLAA's Vision Statement states our desire to "...see a library community in New York State where library assistants have a voice in decisions that affect their future, are valued for their contributions, recognized and rewarded appropriately, and where there is equitable access to professional development opportunities." Through the efforts of Ms. Wemett, library assistants at Webster Public Library have been valued and inspired to grow professionally. Her support and dedication to library assistants is truly remarkable.

Each year NYSLAA seeks nominations for three officers. This year we will be holding elections for the offices of **Vice President, Membership Secretary and Recording Secretary**. You will find descriptions of each officer's duties listed below with all officers serving a two-year term. Each officer must attend 6 to 8 meetings a year, attend the Annual Conference and submit a written report to the President in January for the two full years they serve.

The **Vice President** shall:

- 1) perform the duties of the President in the President's absence;
- 2) serve as the Association's archivist;
- 3) perform other such duties as may be required.

The **Membership Secretary** shall:

- 1) receive and process membership applications;
- 2) maintain a list of correct names and addresses of active (both regular and associate) members of the Association;
- 3) supply the Election Committee with a current list of regular members;
- 4) chair Membership Committee;
- 5) perform such other duties as required.

The **Recording Secretary** shall:

- 1) keep and distribute the official record of all general sessions of the Association and of the meetings of the Executive Council;
- 2) chair the Newsletter Committee;
- 3) chair the Election Committee in odd years;
- 4) perform such other duties as may be required.

We can all make a difference and all have valuable skills that can be shared with the NYSLAA Membership. Take this opportunity to run for an office or encourage and nominate a colleague.

Nominations must be accepted in writing, and a nominating/acceptance form may be found on the following page. Please include a brief biography to be sent with the ballot to acquaint voters with the candidate.

  
to both award winners!

## Membership Update

Donna Hanna

Membership for 2008 is at 428. Of the 428 there are 66 new members! One final renewal reminder will be sent out to 2007 members so they can keep their membership current and still receive credit for the 2008 membership year. We still have around one hundred 2007 members who did not renew for 2008.

If you move, please be sure to alert me that you have a new address. This will help avoid unnecessary delays in receiving your mail.

Are you on NYSLAA-L? This is a great avenue to share information, but if you're not on

the list then you don't receive the information. It's not a busy list making email messages very easy to manage. Why not take a minute to sign up? Go to [NYSLAA.org](http://NYSLAA.org), click on NYSLAA-L listserv, and follow the instructions. The email address where you would like your mail to be sent must be used to sign up. Therefore, I am not able to sign you up.

As always, if you have a question regarding your membership or if you need a letter verifying your years of NYSLAA membership for the Certificate of Achievement Program please let me know.



### Welcome New Members!

Lynne Brokaw	Ontario Public Library
Viorela Bryant	Berkeley College, New York City
Laurie Derr	Corning Museum of Glass, Rakow Library
Jessica Ernye	University at Albany, University Libraries
Michele Giuffre	Bethlehem Public Library
Herminia Gonzalez	New York Public Library, Mid-Manhattan Library
Michele Goodenough	Ontario Public Library
Lidia Grzegorek	Ontario Public Library
Paula Hastings	Medical Letter Inc. Library, New Rochelle
Barbara Hopkins	SUNY Upstate Medical Center, Health Sciences Library, Syracuse
Heike Jones	University at Buffalo, Health Sciences Library
Olivia Maggio	SUNY Upstate Medical Center, Health Sciences Library, Syracuse
Beth McCalister	Bureau Veritas Consumer Products Serv., Info. Resources Ctr., Buffalo
Kristen Moeller	Ontario Public Library
Christina Muniz	Bernard M. Baruch College, William & Anita Newman Library, NYC
Virgilio Pinto	Cornell University, Fine Arts Library, Ithaca
Wendy Zientek-Sico	Baldwinsville Public Library