

NETWORK CONNECTION



Official Newsletter of the New York State Library Assistants' Association

Jan.-Mar. 2016 Vol.28, No.1

38th Annual Conference is Approaching!

Ruth V. Oberg, Conference Coordinator and Conference Chair

The planning process is about done. The conference brochure is headed off to the printer. All we need is



YOU! The brochure will be in the mail by the end of February and will be posted on the website by then, too. The conference planning committee is looking forward to your arrival.

In the last newsletter, I covered all the special events we have planned and some of the workshops we are offering. (See http://www.nyslaa.org/pdf/2015_4Oct-DecNews.pdf.) Now we focus on fundraising and baskets for the raffle at the conference. It would help offset costs if you could place an order for Schwan's to assist us in our fundraising. If you want to help out, go to www.Schwans-cares.com and type NYSLAA in the search box and then start shopping! The food is great and they offer lots of individual meal options for those busy nights after work.

Another option is the Yankee Candle fundraiser. We raised just over \$1,000 with our fall campaign. Thank you to all who participated. We will be starting a spring campaign shortly. Please watch nyslaa-l for details on when this will start and how to participate.



Because of your help with fundraising throughout the year, we were able to keep registration at \$115 this year even though hosting at this location is costing more.

We are also looking for attendees to bring baskets for the raffle at the conference. If you would be willing to bring one by yourself or put one together with your co-workers, please contact Nora Renda (nlrenda@buffalo.edu) to let us know you will be bringing one so we can include it in our list of baskets.

With the conference being in a rural location, there are not a lot of businesses to hit up for donations, so we are asking more of you to think about donating something for the raffle. I'm not sure if you are aware that the Executive Council and the conference committee donate a good portion of the baskets out of our own pockets. If you can help us by bringing a basket to the conference, we would really appreciate it. The more baskets, the more fun trying to decide where to put your tickets!



The conference committee consists of: Carrie Goetz, Cindy Kloss, Karen Kuta, Nora Renda and Karen Ridler, all from the University at Buffalo Libraries.

INSIDE: Annual Reports... Lobby Day & Library Assistants' Day...ALA News...Membership...Fundraising... LinkedIn...Craig Koste and Ray Murray Nominations...Eileen Lemley Scholarship...New York: Literary Map

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Certificate of Achievement

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“We would like 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.”

NYSLAA’S MISSION

“The mission of the New York State Library Assistants’ Association is:

1. **To enhance the professional image and status of NY State’s library assistants.**
2. **To further their professional growth.**
3. **To provide a network for communication to our members and the profession on library and library assistant issues.**
4. **To network and cooperate with library organizations on local, state, national, and international levels.”**

CHECK OUT NYSLAA’S WEBSITE: nyslaa.org

Join NYSLAA’s electronic listserv (NYSLAA-L) and follow us on Facebook.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the NYSLAA listserv, simply go to nyslaa.org, click on “Join Our Email List” and follow the instructions.



Search for: **New York State Library Assistants’ Association**

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NYSLAA Annual Reports

President

My second year as NYSLAA President was a very active one. My duties included setting the agenda for the Executive Council meetings and presiding over the general session of members at the annual conference.

The Executive Council said goodbye to Donna Kuhner, our Corresponding Secretary, who stepped down in July. Thank you, Donna, for your many years of service. In November, Dawn Gage from SUNY Oneonta offered to serve as Corresponding Secretary. The Executive Council voted unanimously on her appointment. Thank you, Dawn.

Viorela Bryant and Giovannine Finn were awarded NYSLAA's Degree Program Scholarship. Viorela is currently employed at Berkley College and Giovannine is employed at Albany Law School. No applications were received for the Continuing Education Scholarship. Congratulations to Viorela and Giovannine!

There were no applications for the Eileen Lemley Conference Scholarship.

The 37th Annual Conference was held in Corning. Sheila Tshudy chaired the conference with a local committee and, with the guidance of Ruth Oberg, the conference was a huge success. Well done, Sheila!

Adrienne Birchler and Sheila Tshudy received the Craig Koste Award. Adrienne is employed at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Sheila is employed at the Corning Museum of Glass. Several letters written by colleagues and supervisors detailing their involvement in the library community and in support of library assistants were received by the Executive Council. Congratulations, Adrienne and Sheila!

Andrea Gerberg, Head of Access Services and Assistant Director at SUNY Oneonta, was awarded the Ray Murray Award. Andrea has been a supporter of library assistants for many years. Congratulations, Andrea!

The Certificate of Achievement Review Board awarded eight certificates this year. They continue to guide anyone interested in earning a certificate.

The Donations Committee with Sheila Tshudy at the helm ran two very successful campaigns – Schwan's and Yankee Candle with each raising \$1,000 or more. The monies from these campaigns are used to defray some of our yearly conference costs.

The Public Relations Committee with Nancy Davis as the chair worked with the State Assembly Representatives to secure Thursday, April 16, 2015 as Library Assistants' Day. Nancy also came up with a very successful program to allow library assistants to join NYSLAA for free during Library Week. Thanks to Nancy's idea we saw a big growth in our membership.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele Matthews

Vice President

Entering the 4th year of being Vice President and I still find this very exciting! I attended most Executive Council meetings during 2015. I maintain the Archives by filing minutes and all other association documents. Attending meetings, helping with the conference and filing the Archives are just some of the specific duties. This past year I filled in for some of the Corresponding Secretary duties. In October the Executive Council, the Conference Committee and Library Assistants from the University at Buffalo attended a site visit at Chautauqua Institution. This is a beautiful venue for NYSLAA's 38th Annual Conference. I was able to attend the 2015 Library Assistants' Day which was held at the Doubletree Hotel in Syracuse. The event featured topics on a wide range of professional development interests to assistants from all types of libraries. The Certificate of Achievement Review Board is another way in which I support library assistants. If you haven't received your Library Assistant Certificate of Achievement please contact me and I will point you in the right direction.

I have found it very rewarding to work with the rest of the Executive Council. Let's continue to make NYSLAA successful in the future.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Rossello

Recording Secretary

I have just completed my first year as Recording Secretary on the Executive Council for NYSLAA and it has been a very rewarding experience. One of the responsibilities that I completed this year was recording and submitting the Executive Council Meeting Minutes as well as the Town Hall Meeting at the NYSLAA Conference. The Recording Secretary is responsible for compiling, editing and publishing the NYSLAA Network Connections newsletter four times annually and this was done with the assistance of Ruth Oberg, Adrienne Birchler and the rest of the Newsletter Committee. I also chaired the Elections Committee this year with the offices of President, Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary up for nominations. Election ballots were mailed and tallied in the fall with Michele Matthews receiving the most votes to earn her a second term as President. Carrie Goetz ran unopposed and will hold a second term as Treasurer. We received no nominations for Corresponding Secretary. After the election, Dawn Gage volunteered and was appointed to the position by the Executive Council. Thank you to all who volunteered to hold an office.

This past year has shown me just what a dedicated and devoted group the Executive Council really is. This was my first year being involved with helping with the conference. I was amazed at just how much the Council and some of the conference committee members do to put on such a wonderful conference, year after year. The Council Officers, Conference Coordinator and Conference Chair work throughout the whole year securing items for the door prizes and basket raffles as well as donating items of their own.

Please consider volunteering in any capacity and getting involved with NYSLAA. It truly is a rewarding experience being a part of this organization.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tammy Southard



**The Bell Tower
at Chautauqua
Institution.**

Treasurer

Since the Network Connection Newsletter is only available online, we will not post our financial report on the web. The 2015 Treasurer's Annual Report is subject to our CPA's approval in May. Our books will be finalized by April and taxes are filed in early May. All NYSLAA members are entitled to see a full report. If you are interested in seeing it after it is finalized in May, please contact me at ceoberg@buffalo.edu.

I am glad to see many people still using PayPal to renew their memberships and pay for their conference registrations. I hope you have found it to be convenient and easy to use. I have been using this service personally for years and have found it very secure for making payments. If you are still unsure of this service or have questions on using PayPal, please feel free to shoot me an email.

I was sad to see no one applied for our scholarships this year. If you haven't applied before, it is free money that we offer for you just for writing just a short paragraph. The information can be found on our scholarship page, nyslaa.org/scholarships.html.

I am looking forward to writing those lottery winner checks. Good luck to all of you who bought tickets! Our many fundraisers that we bring to you are the reason that the conferences every year get better and better and keep your registration costs so low!

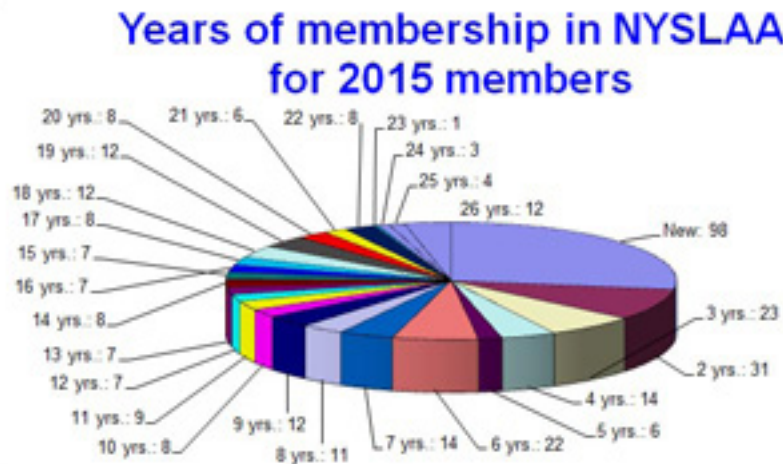
Respectfully Submitted,
Carrie Goetz



**Come with us
on Wednesday
when we tour
a winery and a
distillery.**

Membership Secretary

The 2015 membership year ended at 358 members. Associate status is held by 46 of our members.



The regional distribution of members is:

- (1) Capital District Library Council—40 (29, 20, 23, 21, 20, 3)
- (2) Central New York Library Resources Council—32 (26, 27, 28, 28, 31, 3)
- (3) Long Island Library Resources Council—13 (9, 10, 33, 12, 23, 19)
- (4) Metropolitan New York Library Council—57 (63, 55, 67, 31, 36, 62)
- (5) Northern Country Library Council—17 (20, 23, 14, 15, 17, 15)
- (6) Rochester Regional Library Council—78 (53, 60, 77, 79, 85, 88)
- (7) South Central Research Library Council—54 (50, 46, 48, 56, 63, 63)
- (8) Southeastern New York Library Resources Council—34 (23, 26, 20, 19, 27, 22)
- (9) Western New York Library Resources Council—25 (21, 24, 48, 26, 27, 28)

Out of state members—8 (7, 8, 9, 8, 10, 11)

*Numbers in parenthesis are 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, and 2009 totals.

Types of institutions represented by this year's membership are:

College and University—112 (90, 94, 102, 90, 103, 120)

Junior College—15 (16, 15, 15, 14, 18, 20)

Law—7 (6, 5, 9, 6, 9, 12)

Medical—5 (4, 1, 5, 3, 8, 8)

Non-library—23 (25, 22, 19, 18, 17, 13)

Public—184 (153, 157, 195, 151, 165, 187)

School—9 (5, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10)

Special—3 (2, 2, 6, 7, 11, 11)

* Numbers in parenthesis are 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, and 2009 totals.

The 2015 Membership directory is in the works and should be ready for online viewing shortly. Printed copies will only be available upon request.

I would like to thank Beverly Murphy, SUNY Geneseo, for her assistance in processing the registrations for the 2015 conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Hanna

Conference Coordinator

The first half of 2015 was spent working on planning for the 2015 conference to be held at the Radisson, in Corning, NY. Sheila Tshudy chaired the committee from the Corning area to organize the workshops and donations. I worked with the hotel for the catering and other onsite arrangements as well as the other venues we used. We offered three tours: one of the new design wing of the Corning Museum of Glass; one of the Pyrex exhibit on display at the Rakow Library; and a tour of the Rockwell Museum. The mixer was held at the Corning Museum of Glass with a private glass blowing demonstration. One of our members' drawing of a kraken was chosen. It was very entertaining watching the gaffers work it out and create it on the fly. There was a wonderful selection of workshops. Thursday's event was held at the Park Avenue Sports Center. It included a hot buffet and full use of the facility including mini golf and batting cages. The keynote address was given by Sharon Marella from Parent to Parent of NYS on families with special needs. The conference evaluations were good and it was rated a success. We had beautiful weather. A large thank you goes to Sheila Tshudy and her committee for their work helping me put together another great NYSLAA conference.

The second half of the year, once the conference was over, was devoted to beginning the planning for the 2016 conference. The up-coming conference will be held at Chautauqua Institution on Chautauqua Lake. I am the chair of the Planning Committee. All of the Conference Planning Committee members are all from the University at Buffalo. Planning is coming together nicely. Our mixer will be a dinner cruise on the lake. We will be touring two Lucy and Desi museums with a dinner in the re-created Tropicana Room, where Desi hosted his show on the series. This will be our Thursday evening event. The workshop selection looks great. I'm excited about our keynote. Watch the website for more information.

Conference Coordinator is one of the most time consuming jobs for NYSLAA. The time requirement is relatively steady throughout the year though it increases during peak times. Before one conference is over, I am working with the next group to get them started on the planning for following year. 2016 will be my last conference planning endeavor. I have been doing this since 1995 and it is time to pass the torch. Who wants to host next year?

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth V. Oberg

Donations Committee

What a difference a year makes! I am pleased to report that 2015 was a very good year for NYSLAA with several successful fundraising activities and organizational donations. Prior years of unanswered requests from library vendors put us on a different track in 2015—thinking outside of the box to find ways to earn needed funds. And we succeeded!

In 2015 we submitted requests for two online fundraisers and received approval from both. The first was to Schwan's Home Service (food delivery). In the first 45 days of this campaign we earned \$762.76 and by the end of 2015, we had earned over \$1,000 with additional funds expected through the final days of our campaign (ending February 29, 2016). Our second online fundraiser was through Yankee Candle. Fundraising began mid-October 2015 and ran through mid-January 2016, raising \$1,010.80.

An additional \$700 was earned from Sheila's Snack Shack at The Rakow Library (in operation for four short months). Saving the best for last, NYSLAA's most successful fundraiser was the sale of lottery tickets, which netted \$2,175!

As we are all aware, fundraising does not only come in the form of money, but in donations of goods and services as well. I am pleased to report the following donations made specifically for the 2015 conference:

- The Corning Museum of Glass contributed \$3,590 by donating venue, museum tours, and high-end raffle items.
- The Rockwell Museum contributed \$180 in museum tours.
- CSEA Local 691, SUNY Albany contributed \$440 towards conference bags.
- Wegmans contributed 150 bags.
- Walmart, Sam's Club, and Daniel Scally contributed money or high-end raffle items.
- In addition to the baskets put together by the conference committee, NYSLAA members donated 16 additional raffle baskets.
- 19 speakers who on their own time presented at the conference for no charge.

Well-deserved applause goes out to Schwan's, Yankee Candle, all donors, and NYSLAA members who greatly contributed to the success of our fund-raisers. Whether from an online sale or purchasing lottery or basket raffle tickets, your contributions are greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheila Tshudy, Chair

Public Relations Committee

Hello everyone, I hope you are as excited about this year's conference as I am. I was fortunate to go on a site visit with the Executive Council and would love to tell you all about it.

The complex where the "dorms" are located is absolutely beautiful. The dorms are homey and neat, and you can choose your specifications for the rooms as far as location in the building, bathroom shared or not, or if you want to share the room with someone. The prices are very reasonable and they have beautiful courtyards and views, so please don't be intimidated by the word dorm. Yes twin beds, but sheets and blankets and pillows are included. Consider bringing a fan as there will be no air conditioning in the rooms. You can also choose to stay at the hotel, which is about four miles down the road. It's a bit more expensive, but it has nice two-room set ups, with two bath rooms if you would prefer to go that way. We really enjoyed our visit to the Lucy and Desi Museum and can't wait until we have our dinner in the "Tropicana"!

We are currently working with Doug Rosenthal from Assemblyman Thomas J. Abinanti's Office to designate April 10th through April 16th, 2016 as National Library Assistants' Week and April 14th, 2016 as New York State Library Assistants' Day, through our annual resolution.

We are gathering a contact list for as many NYS libraries as possible to send out brochures for the conference when they become available to the public. If you have someone specific we should be including please email me their contact information at ndavis@albany.edu and I will be sure to get it out to them asap. I am happy to email, snail mail or even fax information to as many NYS library assistants as I can. Please remember to spread the word about our organization and our annual conference to anyone you think would be interested. It is a great conversation starter! I am so excited about this conference and look forward to seeing you all there!

National Library Assistants' Week 2015 saw our numbers grow by 72 new members! That was a great indication of how the word is getting out about our organization. Thanks to everyone who helped bring these new people on board. Now we have to retain them and use them to reach out even further into the library world to continue to grow in numbers!

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Davis, Chair

Community Outreach Committee

Hello to all of you fantastic, hardworking, generous, talented and kind hearted library assistants!

2015 NYSLAA Conference, Corning, NY donations collected:

- School supplies donated to the United Way of the Southern Tier, Corning, NY.
- Animal shelter supplies donated to Tanners P.A.W.S., Corning, NY.
- Food pantry items donated to Painted Post Food Pantry, Painted Post, NY

Thanks to everyone for your generosity and kindness! Giving back to the community is a good way to assure we will be welcome again for future conferences, as well as showing that NYSLAA members are caring and generous members of the community.

We have our pet contributions beneficiary for the 2016 conference. The Northern Chautauqua Canine Rescue will be accepting your donations. Please consider picking up a few things (maybe after holiday sales) while you are out and about, to bring to the conference. Here is a link to their website:

<http://www.caninerescue.org/>



We will also be collecting for the local food pantry in Chautauqua County. Please consider bringing non-perishable food with you to the conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Davis, Chair

End of Annual Reports

Lobby Day

Nancy Davis

Legislative Day 2016
Wednesday, March 2nd
<http://www.nynln.org/lobby-day-2016/>

Let's remember to flood Albany with library advocates on Lobby Day 2016. See about getting buses and going in groups, or see if there are any buses already going!

*** Remember to lobby under your library's name and not as a NYSLAA member.*

Membership Update

Donna Hanna

Membership for 2016 is at 82 with two new members.

Renewal reminders were mailed out to 2015 members the last week of January. Membership cards for 2016 renewals that have been received before the third week in February will be mailed along with the conference brochure.

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

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 via hanna@geneseo.edu.



Welcome New Members!

Phoebe Disalvo-Harms

Le Moyne College, Noreen Reale-Falcone Library

Michelle Stang

Arcade Elementary School Library

Library Assistants' Day

Nancy Davis

Remind everyone that Thursday, April 14 will be New York State Library Assistants' Day, and the week of April 10 through 16 will be National Library Week! I am currently actively seeking our proclamation for the third year in this office, and I enjoy the encounters we have and the opportunities to speak to legislatures in this process. They always seem interested and are very proactive in library needs, so don't be afraid to talk to them! I hope you all consider a celebration in your home libraries on NYS Library Assistants' Day. Please consider sharing your events, luncheons, pictures, and ideas with our editor for the newsletter.

ALA

American Library Association 2016 Celebration Weeks & Promotional Events

<http://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/celebrationweeks>

Teen Tech Week	March 6-12
National Library Week	April 10-16
http://www.ala.org/nlw	
2016 Theme - Libraries Transform	
National Library Workers' Day	April 12
National Library Legislative Day	May 2-3
http://www.ala.org/nlld	
National Readathon Day	May 21
http://www.readathonday.com	
June is GLBT Book Month™	June
http://www.ala.org/glbtkbookmonth	
Library Card Sign-up Month	September
http://www.ala.org/librarycardsignup	
Banned Books Week	September 26 - October 1
http://www.ala.org/bbooks	
Teen Read Week	October 9-15
http://teenreadweek.ning.com/	
National Friends of Libraries Week	October 16-22



Together, We Can!

Sheila Tshudy,
Donations Committee Chair

Fundraising is a critical issue for our NYSLAA organization. Without any type of fundraising to help offset the cost of our annual conference, the cost of the conference would surely be far too expensive for most of us to attend. Like NYSLAA, there are many well-deserving non-profit organizations seeking monetary support from businesses and corporations. Understandably, many businesses are experiencing an overwhelming number of requests and are unable to support all who ask.

In 2015, NYSLAA's Donation Committee decided to investigate other options in an effort to support our own cause. As you all know we did two on-line fundraisers Schwan's Home Delivery and Yankee Candle. These fundraisers allowed not only NYSLAA members, but family, friends and colleagues an opportunity to participate. With well over 300 members we felt our goal (of \$1,000 for each) was within easy reach.

Half way through the Schwan's campaign we took a good look at the participation of members and found that although we were seeing our numbers climb, only 25 NYSLAA members were participating. Those numbers were definitely disheartening.



In the fall we received information on Yankee Candle, and after consideration and approval from the Executive Council we decided to give it a try. Perhaps it was the timing (just prior to the holidays), or possibly the product (candles), or maybe a little of both, but we definitely saw an improvement in participation. This time we had 41 participants and met our goal in a very short time. Still we saw only a small percentage of our members taking part.

It wasn't until we began pulling all the numbers together for the Donations Committee's annual report that the whole picture became apparent. Members *were* supporting our fundraising efforts through more than just these two campaigns. Whether you purchased NYSLAA lottery tickets, raffle basket tickets, 50-50 tickets, or donated a basket for our conference – these contributions are all made by you and are so important – they all matter.

On behalf of the Donations Committee, "Thank you." It was because of all of you we can say, "2015 was a very good year!"

Kicking off 2016, we're excited to announce that Yankee Candle is once again giving us the opportunity to raise funds through their spring fundraising campaign just in time for Easter and Mother's Day. We will receive 40% of all orders placed starting today! Log into www.yankeecandlefundraising.com and enter NYSLAA's group # 990088376 to get started.



Schwan's home food delivery service is also providing us with another opportunity to raise funds, and this campaign will begin March 1st!

We are so fortunate to have the support of these two companies, and I look forward to your participation once again! More information to come on both fundraising events!

If you have any fundraising ideas you'd like to suggest, comments about fundraising, or would like to become a member of the Donations Committee, please feel free to contact me at tshudysa@cmog.org.

Do You Have a LinkedIn Profile Yet?

For anyone who has been avoiding LinkedIn because they think it's just another social media site like Facebook, or they don't need it because they aren't job hunting, think again!

LinkedIn is the "world's largest professional network" which is meant to connect you with other professionals who share your interest and passion for the career field that you work in. It can also be used as a tool to research companies and search for volunteer or job openings.

It is different from Facebook where you share personal news and photos with family and friends. LinkedIn is a platform for sharing interesting articles and links to videos and presentations that relate to your industry. You will find news, discussions and advice that are library-related when you join groups, such as these:

- American Library Association
- WebJunction
- Job Skills for Future Library Careers
- Library Technicians & Assistants Section (LTAS)
- NY 3Rs Association, Inc.
- Library and Information Research Methods
- This Week in Libraries
- Marketing Public Libraries Think Tank
- INALJ

Take a look at the website, create an account and start connecting with your colleagues!

https://www.linkedin.com/home?trk=nav_responsive_tab_home



Award Nominations

Each year, NYSLAA seeks nominations from its members for each of these awards. The Executive Council reviews the nominations in April of each year and notifies the recipients. The awards are presented at the annual conference in June.

Craig Koste Award for Outstanding Service

In 1992 the Executive Council created “The NYSLAA Award for Outstanding Service” specifically for New York State library assistants who are members of NYSLAA. Its name was changed in 1995 to honor Craig Koste, a library assistant who passed away and 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 will be given to the library of the winner for collection development.

Ray Murray Award

In 1989 the Ray Murray Award was created to honor Ray Murray, a librarian who opened the door for the creating of the annual library assistants’ conference, thereby laying the groundwork for NYSLAA. The Ray Murray 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.

To nominate someone for either award, please compile a packet including: your nomination letter, supporting letters, and any other pertinent documentation. The deadline for the submission is **March 31st**. See nyslaa.org for more information.

Send nomination packets (or questions) for either award to the NYSLAA President. (*See page 2.*)



Eileen Lemley Conference Scholarship

The Eileen Lemley Conference Scholarship (ELCS), previously known as the NYSLAA Conference Contest, was renamed to honor the memory of Eileen Lemley who passed away while attending the 2014 conference. Eileen loved working in the library and attending NYSLAA conferences. The recipient will receive a full conference registration, up to two night’s lodging, the mixer, and one tour of your choice. Entries will be accepted from **March 1st to March 31st**. Applicants must complete a form and write an essay on “what NYSLAA means to me and why I want to attend the annual conference.” Only members who do not receive any funding from their library may apply.

Find the application form and more information soon on the web at nyslaa.org/scholarships.html.

New York: A Literary Map

Chapter 4: Orange County Redefines the Written Word

“If you're not reading - with your heart as well as your brain - you will be one stupid grown up. Even worst, you'll be missing out on one of the best experiences you can possibly have...” ~ James Patterson

From our last installment in Sleepy Hollow, NY, we cross the Tappan Zee Bridge and head yet a little further north to Orange County. Due 40 miles north of New York City, it is the only county in New York State that lies between two rivers—the Hudson River to the east, the Delaware River to the west. Its name comes from King William III of England who was a prince in the House of Orange. George Washington took up residency in Newburgh and while staying there, he established the “Badge for Military Merit,” or what we know today as the Purple Heart.

But what we may not know is that Orange County happens to be the birthplace of the first American dictionary. Noah Webster, of Merriam-Webster dictionary fame, came to the town of Goshen, NY to set up a private school for wealthy families. At that time, the

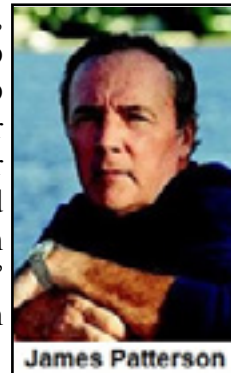


books and sources used for study were primarily British since the American Revolution was still happening. Noah Webster, being a true revolutionary, decided that Americans should learn from American texts and took it upon himself to create the first all-American speller and compendium. His work would provide our newborn country with a sense of cultural independence, complete with “a distinctive American

language with its own idiom, pronunciation, and style.” After laboring for many years, Webster completed the first all-American dictionary. Published in 1806 and titled *A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language*, it was a true milestone in our nation’s journey toward independence. When our children open a textbook or check out a nonfiction book at the library for their school project, that book comes from an American publishing company—for that we can thank Noah Webster.

Our stop in Orange County on this literary tour doesn’t end there; it also happens to be the birthplace of modern-day author James Patterson. Born on March 22nd, 1947 in Newburgh, NY, James Patterson is the author of more than 147 novels. One hundred and fourteen of those novels made *The New York Times* bestseller list. Patterson currently holds a Guinness Book of World Records for the most #1 bestsellers written by a single author, a total of 67.

But being “the busiest man in publishing” isn’t enough. James Patterson is also the creator of a myriad of reading programs and initiatives, including foundations set up to help fund school books. He teamed up with Miami Heat basketball player Dwyane Wade in a webcast for kids, parents and educators called “ONE ON ONE: Fundamentals with Dwyane Wade and James Patterson,” which emphasizes the connection between reading and success in life.



His website ReadKiddoRead.com has provided millions of families and educators with a resource for helping children learn to read with user-friendly categorized recommendations, reviews, free books, book club ideas and tools on how to encourage kids to read and improve their reading skills.

He has donated over 200,000 books to soldiers both home and abroad.

In 2013, he began the James Patterson Teacher Education Scholarships to “support up-and-coming teachers who will help give kids the necessary foundation for lifelong reading enjoyment.” Over one million dollars were given in scholarship.

For more information, please visit:

- <http://www.readkiddoread.com/>
- <http://www.jamespatterson.com/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Patterson
- <http://www.orangecountygov.com/content/1156/default.aspx>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_County,_New_York
- <http://www.merriam-webster.com/about-us/americas-first-dictionary>
- <https://www.noahwebsterhouse.org/discover/noah-webster-history.htm>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noah_Webster
- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/arts-and-entertainment/wp/2015/03/09/james-patterson-wants-to-give-1-25-million-to-school-libraries/>