

NETWORK CONNECTION



Official Newsletter of the New York State Library Assistants' Association

Apr.-June 2013 Vol.25, no.2

Library Assistants – Hiking Into the Future

Darlene S Strack, 35th Annual NYSLAA Conference Host

Hello everyone! I don't know if you are getting excited but I know I am, as well as the rest of my committee here at the Feinberg Library!! We went to Lake Placid on Wednesday, May 1st to get local donations for our raffle baskets and I dare say you will be pleased.

The whole area is beautiful at this time of year and will be even more spectacular come June. All the trees are turning green and the flowers are vibrant. Even your drive into the Adirondacks will be exciting. *Drive care-fully*, as the wildlife

will be roaming! The deer have a tendency to be curious so you might find them watching you from the side of the road. One more suggestion is to be sure to bring bug spray! Hopefully our black flies will be gone for the season but we will still have those pesky mosquitoes!!!

Lake Placid is such a quaint little village with lots and lots of shops and restaurants to visit. The High Peaks Resort is across the street from Mirror Lake and the views from the hotel are

breathtaking. This year we will again be doing two charitable opportunities. As in the past, there will be a food drive and this year we will add a collection for the animal shelters in the Plattsburgh area. Look for more information inside this newsletter.



Mirror Lake photo courtesy <http://www.lakeplacid.com>

Our entertainment for the Mixer on Wednesday is actually one of our own librarians. Tim Hartnett, and his friend Julie call themselves "Oh Betty". Their website states, "country for the non- country people, blues for the comedians, and a lesson in a good time." This should be lot of fun.

We are pleased with the response from our librarians as some of them will be conducting workshops at the conference. The Dean of LIS (Library and Informational Services), Holly Heller-Ross, has agreed to participate in our conference also, in different capacities. The committee and I truly appreciate all of their support. Come and have some fun!!!!

INSIDE: What It Means...New York State Library Assistants' Day... Membership ...Library Disaster Fund...LSSC Grant...Library Assistants' Day Take 2...NYSLAA Conference Contest...etc.

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**Ambassador
(Vacant)**

“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.

To follow us on Facebook search for
New York State Library Assistants' Association.



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What it Means to be a Library Assistant

Michele Giuffre and Michele Matthews

Geoff Kirkpatrick, Director of the Bethlehem Public Library, is teaching a graduate course on Public Libraries at the University at Albany. He asked Michele Giuffre, Bethlehem Public Library and Michele Matthews, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Folsom Library to speak to the students during his April 3, 2013 class.

Geoff asked us to speak about our relationships with librarians in our organizations, the different terminologies used by library assistants and to answer questions from the class. Rather than a presentation, we held an informal “fireside chat” with the students.

We spoke about our duties, length of library service, and professional organizations for library assistants. Many of the students had never worked in a library but several had and questioned the hierarchy in our respective libraries.

We also discussed the term “professional” and how offensive it is to library assistants to be considered “non-professionals”.

There was a lively discussion and hopefully we were able to give some insight into what it means to be a Library Assistant.



New York State Library Assistants’ Day

Ruth Mason, Public Relations Chair

Assembly Member Micah Z. Kellner (D – Assembly District 76, Upper East Side, Yorkville, and Roosevelt Island) was named Chair of the Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology by Speaker Sheldon Silver. Assembly member Kellner succeeds former Bob Reilly, who has retired from elected office.

Assembly Member Kellner agreed to sponsor a proclamation in the Assembly to declare Thursday, April 11, 2013, New York State Library Assistants’ Day. The proclamation was introduced to the Assembly and passed on March 28, 2013.

My sincere thanks go out to Assembly Member Micah Kellner for sponsoring the proclamation this year and his staff at his District and Capitol Offices. They were extremely helpful in facilitating our request this year.

Adrienne Birchler shared “As we’ve done in the past, the Rensselaer Libraries at RPI (Folsom and Architecture) in Troy celebrated Library Workers’ Day with everyone who works in our two libraries. The catered Mexican luncheon

featured lettuce, beans, cheese, *pico de gallo*, cucumbers, black olives, seasoned ground beef, grilled chicken, steak, tofu, guacamole, salsa, and dressings to make our own salads in a huge taco shell bowl. Cold beverages and a yellow cake with strawberry filling completed the meal. We also handed out prizes to those who chose to participate in the Guess the Number of Mexican Jumping (Jelly) Beans in the Jar contest and in the library-related Word Scramble.”

Other libraries shared get-togethers, snacks and enjoyed a little down-time to celebrate their contributions to their libraries.

Don't Forget!

*We will be doing the ever-popular
Lottery Tree as usual...bring a
scratch off ticket from your area and
add some excitement to the tree!*



Membership Update

Donna Hanna

Memberships for 2013 is at 265 and 46 members are new.

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.



Welcome New Members!

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Shantay Allbright | New York Public Library, Macombs Bridge Library |
| Mark Alonso | New York Public Library, Andrew Heiskell Braille And Talking Book |
| Debra Amesbury | Chili Public Library |
| Marie Arstein | Florida Public Library |
| Patricia Bruno | Chili Public Library |
| Amalia Butler | New York Public Library, Battery Park City Branch |
| Cheryl Clancy | Upstate Medical University, Health Sciences Library |
| Frances Collado | New York Public Library, Sedgwick Library |
| Janine DiVasta | Greece Public Library |
| Angela Donah | SUNY Potsdam, Frederick W. Crumb Memorial Library |
| Chan Hamilton | New York Public Library, St. Agnes Library |
| Amy Hathaway | Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP |
| Nailah Holmes | New York Public Library, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts |
| Michelle Hubbell | Cornell University, Olin/Uris Library |
| Stacie Hurwitch | Paul Smiths College, Joan Weill Adirondack Library |
| Chelsea Jalbrzikowski | Monroe County Library System, Central Library of Rochester & Monroe County |
| Slaganna Jean | New York Public Library, 58th Street Library |
| Joanne LaFontaine | SUNY Environmental Science & Forestry, F. Franklin Moon Library |
| Tiffany McCrae | New York Public Library, City Island Branch |
| Belinda McPhatter | New York Public Library, Library Services Center |
| Shanee Morris | New York Public Library, Science Industry and Business Library |
| Evelyn Morris | Berkeley College Library |
| Deborah Mousseau | SUNY Plattsburgh, Feinberg Library |
| Bonnie Oemcke | Clarkson University, Harriet Call Burnap Library |
| Dametria Perry | New York Public Library, Baychester Library |
| Bonnie Sakow | Newburgh Enlarged City School District, Newburgh Free Library |
| Natalie Sheridan | Cornell University, Engineering, Mathematics & Physical Sciences Library |
| Sharlene Smith | New York Public Library, Baychester Library |
| Sharena Stanley | New York Public Library, New York Library of the Performing Arts |
| Jill Sutter | Chili Public Library |
| Diane Trombly | SUNY Plattsburgh, Feinberg Library |
| Xantippe VanArsdale | Potsdam Public Library |
| Mishka Vance | New York Public Library, Stephen A. Schwarzman Building |

Two Opportunities to Contribute at the Conference

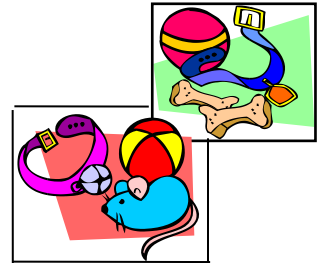


NYSLAA will be conducting a food drive to be shared among five local charities in the Plattsburgh area at this year's conference. Please bring your non-perishable food items with you to the conference. It is a great way to clean your shelves and help others in the process. Just look for the designated boxes near the registration desk to make your donation.

Thank you.
Michele A. Matthews

~and~

We would also like to help the local animal shelters out here in the Plattsburgh area. If any of you are interested in bringing any items for the shelters, we would be happy to deliver them after the conference - i.e.: dog food, cat food, blankets, dog or cat bowls, even anything for little critters.



It would be greatly appreciated!!!
Darlene Strack



NYSLAA Aids New York State Libraries Disaster Fund

Sally McMaster

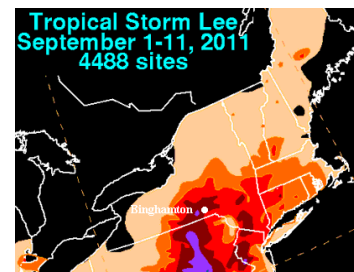
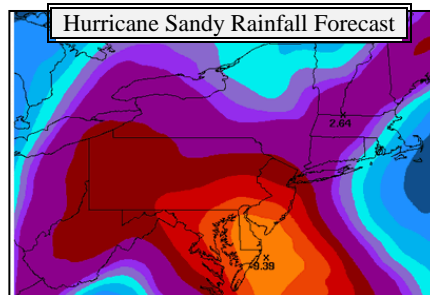
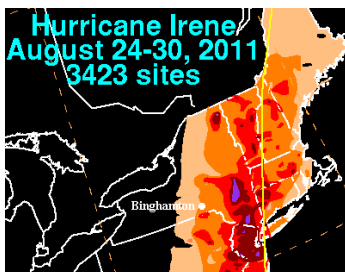
I would like to take this opportunity to announce that NYSLAA has given a grant to the New York State Libraries Disaster Fund.

Annually, NYSLAA awards two scholarships; 1) the Continuing Education Scholarship for \$250.00 and 2) the Degree Program Scholarship for \$350.00. We had no applicants this year so the Executive Council voted to issue a grant in the combined amount of \$600.00 to the Libraries Disaster Fund.

The New York State Libraries Disaster Fund provides financial support to libraries in New York State that have suffered damage or have been destroyed by the disasters of recent years.

We are proud to support our fellow libraries as they work to meet the needs of those in their communities.

Information on NYSLAA's Scholarships and other awards can be found at nyslaa.org.



Weather photographs courtesy Dr. Jeff Masters' WunderBlog.

Library Support Staff Certification Enrollment Assistance Awards

Coleen Hopkins

NYSLAA, the New York State Library and NYLA partnered again this spring to offer financial assistance to four library assistants applying for certification in the American Library Association's Library Support Staff Certification (LSSC) Program. Awards are for \$175.00 which is one-half of the application fee.

The LSSC Program is funded by a grant to ALA from the Institute for Museum and Library Services, and managed by the ALA-Allied Professional Association. Due to loss of funding this is the last year this grant will be available making these the last awards offered under this program.



Congratulations Karen Strang

Brunswick Community Library
Troy, NY.

Karen is the only NYSLAA Member to win this award.

We wish you our best as you work toward your LSSC Certification!

NYSLAA Members can request Enrichment Funds for the LSSC Program.



Library Assistants' Day Take 2

We were all set to attend the Fall Library Assistants' Day event in Syracuse, NY, sponsored by SCRLC, CLRC, RRLC, NNYLN and WNYLRC. Not to be...October 26, 2012 came along with a storm forcing the event to be cancelled. Happily, the sponsors were able to re-group and re-schedule the event for April 30, 2013. As in the past, the program did not let us down!

The Keynote Speaker; Allison Sloan, Library Journal's 2010 Paralibrarian of the Year, from Reading Public Library, Reading, MA, spoke on being a "Paralibrarian". I was thrilled to hear her tell of the influence of Dorothy Morgan and NYSLAA's Certificate of Achievement Program on Massachusetts' Paralibrarian Section.

Edward Gancarz was an energetic presenter and kept us engaged as he spoke on coping with change. He mentioned being a better listener and I have been working on that skill since then.

In the first Breakout Session, I selected *Library Security*. Two presenters spoke on physical security in their libraries and one spoke on internet security. Their tips and suggestions were very helpful in today's climate.

My day was completed with a performance by Dennis Heaphy, Ellis Island Museum of American Immigration, and four attendees of the conference. Mr. Heaphy portrayed, Boris Krasnikov, an actual Russian Immigrant at Ellis Island, one attendee introduced Mr. Krasnikov and three portrayed the judges. They gave us an opportunity to sit through a mock trial that he would have had to experience. We were allowed to ask questions of Mr. Krasnikov and in the end we could give our opinions on if he stayed in America or was sent back. The group and the judges agreed he could stay. At the end, Mr. Heaphy stated that Mr. Krasnikov was actually sent back to Russia because his brother's employer had paid for his passage.

As in the past, I felt this event was educational on a number of levels. I would encourage you to attend in the fall as they will be putting it back on schedule.

Coleen Hopkins
SUNY Geneseo, Milne Library

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the April 30th Library Assistants Day Take 2 conference in Syracuse (so named because of the horrid weather on the original date which caused the event to be postponed). This event is sponsored by five of our state regional library councils. I found most of the workshops I attended to be very worthwhile and invigorating. Edward Gancarz, in particular, was a fantastically energetic, funny, and inspiring presenter, speaking about coping with change. A bonus for the day was being able to see some of my NYSLAA friends a whole month before our June conference! I hope many more of you will attend this fall's Library Assistant's Day conference. I am on the planning committee, so if you have any ideas for workshops or the conference in general, let me know!

Judith Andrew (jandrew@ithaca.edu)
Ithaca College

Actually this was my first one & I thought it was great. I guess I really didn't know what to expect, but they did a really great job putting together a varied program so there would be something of interest to all. I think if I could pick one highlight of the day it would be Nancy Howe's presentation of an actual day in her world. She was presenting on Social Media. The point of view of her presentation was the patron and her letting us know that each of us has a responsibility to know at least a small amount of the social media options that are out there. As she said, the patron doesn't know your level of knowledge, they just know you work for the library and expect service and help. She drove her point home with plenty of humor and I thoroughly enjoyed her presentation.

Pat Klaybor
Office Coordinator-WNYLRC

Tuesday's jointly sponsored Library Assistants' Day was the third or fourth of these great events I've attended. You can count on this group to fill the day with interesting speakers on a variety of topics. They relate so well to the variety of jobs/duties that library assistants in New York State fill so ably in so many types of libraries. This all day conference that was rescheduled from last fall because of the effects of Hurricane Sandy was no exception!

Perhaps you came away from the day feeling pretty good about the role you play in your library and the greater library community. I know I did. Maybe when you returned to your library the next day you tried out that new moniker that Allison Sloan described in her riveting testimonial to the worth and place of library assistants, "the paralibrarian". I'm thinking about that one.

Or you may have climbed into your car at the end of the day still chuckling over some of Ed Gancarz's examples of how change can affect our work and our lives. Ed taught us some good lessons about listening and did it with passion and humor. He set a good example for us, didn't he?

As much as I would have liked to, I couldn't attend ALL the breakout sessions. Too bad, I'm sure the two sessions I had to pass on were as informative and well presented as the ones I sat in on. I think applying social media for personal use can be daunting and confusing but implementing it in our libraries adds dimensions and possibilities of use I had just never considered. Thanks to Gwen Glazer, Nancy Howe, Angela Pierpaoli and Clare Rauch my horizons have been broadened to include a much better understanding of Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, etc. and more importantly, I think, how patrons see these opportunities and respond to them.

Our library at JCC has introduced thousands of eBook titles into our collection in a very short amount of time. It's been a big and fast learning curve for us as we figure out things about MARC records and eBooks and access for patrons. Inga Barnello, from an academic

library and Jennifer Schlossberg, from a public library presented their point of view on the role, function, implement, and distribution of eBooks. Their explanation of the programs necessary to pull the eBook experience off helped me better understand the burgeoning environment in which all libraries are beginning to exist.

Many thanks to SCRLC, CLRC, RRLC, NNYLN and WNYLRC for once again giving us the gift of a great day of fun, networking and education!!

Kenyon Wells
Jefferson County

This was my first year attending the Library Assistant Day in Syracuse. All the workshops related to my job as a library assistant and to libraries in general. Kudos to the planning committee for a job well done!

Although I did learn something from every workshop, my favorite topic was *Coping with Change in the Changing Library Environment*. Edward Gancarz was a wonderful speaker and he engaged the audience. He put into practice what he later talked about when he mentioned having clear communication. To paraphrase, tell me and I forget, show me and I remember,

involve me and I understand. I now better understand what causes people to fear change and have an idea how to make change less threatening. I am also planning on working on the weaker areas of my listening skills. Now, how many areas was that? Too many I'm afraid, but I am planning to work on just one (at a time). That I can do!

Wendy Freier
Geneva Public Library

This is the fourth Library Assistants Day that I have attended and the best one. It was well organized and I felt the presentations were very good. I especially loved the interactive Ellis Island presentation. Dennis Heaphy has certainly developed something that has made learning painless. I have been telling everyone about this and surprisingly most of the facts are cemented firmly in my mind. People are now sick of listening to me!

I also enjoyed the humor of Edward Gancarz. Much of what he spoke of has real relevance to the library I work in. I will try to remember his words as we face the future of welcome changes and some *not so* welcome changes.

The lunch was perfect. I was relaxed and happy the entire day. Thank you for the day and for honoring the work we do.

Dawn E. Gage
SUNY Oneonta, James M. Milne Library

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## NYSLAA Conference Contest Winning Entry

Lisa B. Prichard  
Lee-Whedon Memorial Library, Medina, NY

I have worked at the Lee-Whedon Memorial Library for almost 13 years, but my connection with libraries started many years before that. When I was a little girl the library was a place that my mother could spoil us with books, music, and dinosaurs, all for free. When I was older it was a place I could go after school and loose myself on the prairie with Laura. Finally, I became a mother too and I could take my own

daughter there and show her the magic between the pages of a book. I had never lost my love of the library and the thought of working there had always seemed like an unattainable dream. The dream came true and like many things you dream of the reality has been so much better.

I love my job; I love to share books and the joy of reading with others. My finest moments are



when a patron returns a book I suggested and says, "I loved the story. I couldn't put it down." To me that is the goal of what we do as library assistants. When my patrons need help they think of me, that is success. Just this week I helped a patron set up an account on her Nook so she could buy stories for her son, I added minutes to a little old ladies phone because she needs it to talk to her daughter, but couldn't figure it out. I looked up a phone number for a man whose eyesight is going and couldn't read the page; he called the library for help.

I am proud to say I have earned my Level IV Certificate of Achievement in Public Services helping these people. My library is small and cannot afford to send me to the conference this year, where I would be awarded my certificate. My mentor in this process was Michele Matthews and I would love to receive my certificate from her at the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and thank her in person.



## Raffle Baskets

If you are bringing a raffle basket to aid in the fund-raising, please contact Darlene Strack (strackds@plattsburgh.edu) in advance so she can have labels made and ready upon your arrival. Please include a title if you have one and the contents of the basket. Thank you.

## Last Minute Conference Items

Coleen Hopkins

The Conference is a couple weeks away and there are a few things to remember.

We will be in the Adirondacks so come prepared for all kinds of weather and the beautiful outdoors. You might consider laying as temperatures can change dramatically from day to evening. *Don't forget your insect repellent!*

Since we will be staying at the High Peaks Resort, I was curious about the current rates for tipping. I checked the rates on Oprah's site [www.oprah.com/money/Guide-to-Tipping](http://www.oprah.com/money/Guide-to-Tipping) and on the TripAdvisor site

[www.tripadvisor.com/Travel-g191-s606/United-States:Tipping.And.Etiquette.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Travel-g191-s606/United-States:Tipping.And.Etiquette.html) They have very similar recommendations. The following information is from TripAdvisor: \$1-5 for bellhops, doormen, and parking valets, \$1 per coat for coatroom attendants, and \$2-5 per night for housekeeping. Their suggestions for waiter staff at sit-down restaurants and bartenders: 10% usually means you are very unhappy, 15% usually means all was ok, 20% for excellent, 25% for outstanding. 15% and over is considered "normal".

