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Subject: [NYLINE-DPL] Message from the State Librarian -- Update #4  
To: [NYLINE-DPL@listserv.nysed.gov](mailto:NYLINE-DPL@listserv.nysed.gov)

#### Update Four

Please feel free to share this update and to pass it along to anyone! This June 19 update and past updates are posted on the New York State Library's website at:

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/library/about/statelibrarian.htm>

Legislative Sausage: The famous quote clearly is correct. The two (2) things that one should never watch being made are sausage and law. The grinding process has at least stopped for the moment in the State Senate. The Senate has abolished all of its committees, except for the Rules Committee. Many closed door meetings are the symbol of this part of government not working. The State Assembly has however not slowed its pace of work. A new Chair, Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton (Ithaca) has been appointed for the Library & Educational Technology Committee. We welcome her to this very important legislative/public policy position. Yesterday the Academic Research Information Act (ARIA) passed the Assembly. ARIA has been promulgated by the New York State Higher Education Initiative (NYSHEI). Though this has no funding connected with it at this stage, it serves as a future "vessel" to support database acquisition in science, technology and medicine using state economic development resources. I, of course, want the State Library to play a greater role in the database resources area and this is a good beginning. (More about this later). The ARIA legislation still requires Senate approval and the Governor's signature.

The funding for the State Library (and the larger Office of Cultural Education which also includes the State Archives, State Museum and Public Broadcasting) is precarious. Legislation (A.6783-A/S.3640-A) to raise the fees that support the Cultural Education Fund is still in the Assembly Ways and Means Committee and was in the Senate Codes Committee. The Senate Committee is gone. Its Ranking Member Senator Dale Volker told us earlier this week that he would support the bill. The New York State Trial Lawyers Association has gone on record in opposition, but we have now negotiated a compromise with them which should permit this legislation to move forward. There is still significant legislative opposition to raising fees of any sort but we are hopeful nonetheless. The Cultural Education Fund is now bankrupt! The fund balance is -\$400,000 and sinking. The State Division of the Budget has not granted any approvals for spending of special revenue funds since April 1st. We are just holding on. This legislation is vital. Stay tuned.

Congratulations: It is no easy feat to be selected by LIBRARY JOURNAL as Library of the Year! Kudos to the Queens Library, under the leadership of Tom Galante, and his great staff, trustees, and library patrons. You make every New Yorker proud of our library traditions with such an important honor.

Also, kudos to the three library systems in New York City for their leadership and successful advocacy in averting the proposed draconian cuts in city support for Brooklyn Public Library, The New York Public Library and the Queens Library.

Summer Reading: The 2009 New York State Summer Reading program is in full swing. 'Be Creative @your library' is the theme for kids and "Express Yourself@your library" is the theme for teens. With so many families facing tough economic times, we are expecting participation to exceed last year's

fantastic 1.5 million. We can all help to keep kids reading over the summer months. Check it out at [www.summerreadingnys.org](http://www.summerreadingnys.org). New York's goal for 2012 is 1.8 million participants. And remember that summer reading is not only for kids. Do you have a summer reading program!? Linda Fairstein has some great biblio-mysteries and pays tribute to The New York Public Library and its Andrew Mellon Director David Ferriero in her latest book, *Lethal Legacy*. Please tell me if you read any great books this summer that I should put on my list. Maybe a master list of good reads selected by New York librarians is in the future.

**Broadband and Federal Stimulus Funds:** We are awaiting the formal release of the "Notice of Funds Availability" for the two primary federal broadband funding programs being administered by the Departments of Commerce and Agriculture. Notice is expected by the end of June. I hope that we can consider a statewide proposal to secure funds for many libraries. We are working within the State Education Department and are in discussion with the State's Chief Information Officer Melodie Mayberry-Stewart as well. If you have shovel or shelf-ready projects, get them ready. We were fortunate to host, with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, a Broadband Summit which brought together 250 people from many parts of the state. Participants included librarians, trustees, economic development people, regulators, suppliers, public policy makers and others. You will be hearing more about this initiative as we roll-out the results and use the great input to develop a plan to support (fund) broadband access for libraries. You can visit online at [www.opportunityonline.org](http://www.opportunityonline.org) to see some of the Summit programs. The programs were all based on the theme: "The Magic of Broadband". The eligible libraries which participated will be considered for matching grants to improve their broadband access to at least 1.5 mbps. We have about 85 libraries which will be eligible for funds. If you are interested in helping with this effort to enable libraries in every community across the State provide high-speed broadband connectivity for their customers, please send an email to [bband@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:bband@mail.nysed.gov).

**Educational Technology:** The State Education Department is welcoming comment on a new Educational Technology Plan. Feedback is welcomed as the Department builds-out a new Office headed by Larry Paska. Feedback is welcomed at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/edtech/>. It is my hope that all librarians and library staff from K-12 schools, colleges and universities, public libraries and special libraries will review and comment on this plan. It is a great chance for everyone to see the interconnections of technology in the traditional pre-K to 12 learning environments with those in the lifelong learning and higher education worlds. Do not miss this chance to comment. All types of libraries and library systems have an important stake in this.

**Databases:** In my travels around the state over the past five months, I have begun to talk about my vision of a comprehensive information system. I have been calling this NYSCIS for the: New York State Comprehensive Information System. I have pictured some type of wonderful winged animal representing this concept of a wide array of database resources being delivered to everyone, everywhere in New York. A target of 1,000 commercial databases is not too outrageous for us to contemplate. This, of course, would require state financial resources, as well as contributed resources from the library community. It will require some new ways of equipping those we serve with tools for access and productive use. It will require public education and it will require everyone to see the value of quality information resources being essential for public prosperity, public safety and public health. I look forward to talking with many more people in the library community about this concept. Your ideas about how we can build on NOVELny and its success in resource delivery as the foundation for NYSCIS is welcomed. My thanks to Sandy Stone, Orchard Park Middle School Librarian; Mary Zdrojewski, School Library Media Specialist, Sinclairville Elementary School and Melissa Morton, Library Assistant, Chautauqua Lake Central School District who along with 30 other colleagues sent me beautiful postcards

expressing thanks for the NOVELny databases, especially the addition of the Grolier database. I will not embarrass everyone who writes or e-mails me by listing your names, but I do welcome and appreciate your feedback and ideas.

New York State Research Library: At 20 million items strong, the New York State Library is an amazing resource. Staff have been engaged in a work group looking at increasing hours of public service. The focus is opening on Saturdays and a staff survey has just been completed so that we can assess some of the best ways to implement this service expansion. I look forward to swinging the doors open on Saturdays very soon. If you have ideas to help us through this transition, please share them with me or Loretta Ebert, Director of the Research Library ([lebert@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:lebert@mail.nysed.gov)).

Update: There are many more activities to share. My travels around the state have given me a chance to meet many of you, to hear your thoughts and to share some of my thoughts and observations with you. I have heard that many of you are appreciating these occasional updates and I want to assure you that it is my plan to continue these in the future. If there are issues or topics that you would like me to address please do not be shy about contacting me. And...please read a few good books this summer.

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