

FACTS: WESTCHESTER LIBRARY SYSTEM

The Westchester Library System (WLS) includes 38 Westchester member public libraries located throughout the County. WLS is one of New York State's 23 public library systems established in 1958 by State Education Law. Public Library systems expand and enhance the resources and services of local libraries by enabling them to save funds through economies of scale and the cooperative sharing of resources and services.

WLS is funded primarily by New York State with additional funding from Westchester County and State and federal grants. The 15-member Board of Trustees is elected by the trustees of the member libraries, and the board is the governing body of the Library System.

WLS has a collection of **3.95 million items**, including over **3.35 million books**, as well as audio recordings, video cassettes, print serials and additional items including maps and pamphlets. WLS libraries include over half a million library cardholders. For more information, visit westchesterlibraries.org.

Mission

The mission of WLS is to enhance and help improve the County's library services, reduce the libraries' costs through economies of scale, to ensure that all residents have excellent library service at all library locations and electronically, and to provide State-mandated outreach, consulting and other services.

Programs and Services include:

Free direct access to library resources and services. Cardholders receive full service at the County's 38 public libraries.

Free access to reference databases, periodicals, software programs and the Library's on-line catalog utilized by over 450 networked computers and over 1.7 million users.

Interlibrary loan and delivery service.

State-mandated outreach and literacy services to specialized communities including institutionalized (State prisons in Westchester), underserved and unserved populations.

Management and operation of new technologies and telecommunications.

Outreach programs including continuing education, summer reading, Web sites and resources for people with low literacy skills and new immigrants, especially English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

Career and Educational Counseling Service which provides career and educational counseling, information and referral to adults in career transition in select library locations throughout the County.

Close to 21,000 member library-sponsored, free programs attended by close to 490,000 people of all ages with more than 14,000 designed specifically for children and teens.

Annual Events

Book & Author Luncheon in April 2006

The Book & Author Luncheon is the centerpiece of Westchester's National Library Week celebration, sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA). Held in April, this event brings distinguished authors to Westchester to increase public awareness for WLS and celebrate the contributions of our nation's libraries and

librarians. Past events included acclaimed authors Julie Otsuka, Elinor Lipman, Roger Rosenblatt and Kevin Baker. The luncheon also honors a community member with a National Library Week Recognition Award for commitment to service.

African-American Writers and Readers Literary Tea

Held on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, the African-American Writers and Readers Literary Tea kicks off a month-long celebration of African-American history, literature and culture. Co-sponsored by The Bank of America and *The Journal News*, in association with the Westchester County Chapter of the Links, prominent African-American writers discuss the process of writing, their works and influences. Proceeds from the Literary Tea are designated for the purchase of African-American library materials and programs.

Staff

Westchester Library System is committed to cultivating a knowledgeable and dedicated staff that provides consistent and excellent service at each and every location. Areas of expertise among staff members include technology, collection development, library administration, outreach, career counseling and youth services. Additionally, WLS offers a continuing education program for public library staff in Westchester.

Westchester Library System Members

Ardley	Greenburgh	Mount Vernon	Scarsdale
Armonk	Harrison	New Rochelle	Somers
Bedford Hills	Hastings	North Salem	South Salem
Bedford Village	Irvington	Ossining	Tarrytown
Briarcliff Manor	Katonah	Peekskill	Tuckahoe
Bronxville	Larchmont	Pelham	White Plains
Chappaqua	Mamaroneck	Port Chester	Yonkers
Croton	Montrose	Pound Ridge	Yorktown
Dobbs Ferry	Mount Kisco	Purchase	
Eastchester	Mount Pleasant	Rye	

Spokesperson for Westchester Library System

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