



## Library Advocacy Day – March 6, 2012

In total, over **1,489** Library advocates from across New York State attended this year's event; and **63** legislators attended the early morning breakfast sponsored by the New York Library Association (NYLA).

The Westchester Library System and the Westchester Library Association partnered with the Mid-Hudson and Ramapo Catskill Library Systems and sent 3 buses with **over 150** people to Albany for Library Advocacy Day.

Representing Westchester was a total of **22** people, including directors, trustees, staff, friends, and advocates representing the following libraries listed below as well as WLS:

Armonk-North Castle Public Library	New Rochelle Public Library
Bedford Free Library	Ossining Public Library
Briarcliff Manor Public Library	Pound Ridge Library District
Chappaqua Library	Purchase Library
Eastchester Public Library	The Warner Library (Tarrytown)
Harrison Public Library	Tuckahoe Public Library
Mamaroneck Public Library	White Plains Public Library
Hendrick Hudson Free Library (Montrose)	Westchester Library Association
Mount Kisco Public Library	Westchester Library System
Mount Pleasant Public Library	

We visited the offices of the **12** legislators who represent Westchester County and met with the following individuals:

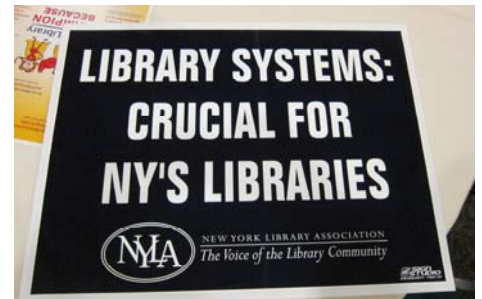
Robert Castelli, 89<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Shelley Andrews, Counsel to Jeffrey Klein, 34<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Sandy Galef, 90<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
George Latimer, 91<sup>st</sup> Assembly District  
Gary Pretlow, 87<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Thomas Abinanti, 92<sup>nd</sup> Assembly District  
Andrea Stewart-Cousins, 35<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Stephen Katz, 99<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Steven Otis, Chief of Staff to Suzi Oppenheimer, 37<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Dan Branda, Executive Director to Greg Ball, 40<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
Amy Paulin, 88<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Marianne Reilly, Press Director to Ruth Hassell-Thompson, 36<sup>th</sup> Senate District

Terry Kirchner, WLS Executive Director, visited Assemblyman Robert P. Reilly [109<sup>th</sup> Assembly District], the Chair of the Assembly Committee on Libraries and Educational Technology, and Senator Hugh Farley [44<sup>th</sup> Senate District], the Chair of the newly-assembled Senate Committee on Libraries.

In addition, Dr. Kirchner; Susan Riley, President, Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) of Westchester; Robert Cartolano, Trustee of the Eastchester Public Library; and Jason Kucsma, Executive Director of the Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO), visited with David Wakelyn, Governor Cuomo's Deputy Secretary for Education, and Katie Campos, Assistant Secretary for Education. Topics discussed included expanding the existing and creating new partnerships between public libraries, public library systems and the public schools to maximize the services provided in support of students' educational goals and learning activities

as well as WLS's GED Connect! Project—the promising results seen to date and interest in expanding this program statewide.

This year's emphasis with all legislators was the fact that public libraries, like school districts, are educational institutions chartered by the NYS Board of Regents and regulated by the State Education Department. Like school districts, public libraries receive state and local tax dollars to provide educational services to their communities. However, a 0% increase for Library Aid was proposed for FY2012-13 while a 4% increase was proposed for School Aid. Library Aid had already been reduced 23% from \$102 Million in 2007 to \$79 Million in 2011, bringing funding levels to below 1994. We urged legislators to support a similar increase of 4% for Library Aid as that for School Aid.



Good news followed:

- The Senate proposed a 4% increase in Library Aid, bringing funding up to \$82 Million, and proposed excluding public libraries and library systems from the MTA payroll tax.
- The Assembly proposed a \$1 Million increase in Library Aid that would bring funding back up to over \$80 Million.

Negotiations continue as the Assembly and Senate will meet over the next week in Joint Budget Subcommittees to reconcile the differences in their proposals.

**There is still time to contact your legislators!**

Go today to NYLA's Online Advocacy Center via the link below and make your voice heard:

<http://www.nyla.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=4>

I want to extend a special thank you to all those from Westchester who attended this year's Library Advocacy Day – and all those who have reached out to their legislators through other means. Thanks goes to Dan Hulse from the Ramapo Catskill Library System and Rebekkah Smith Aldrich from Mid-Hudson Library System for their assistance with coordinating the bus and other logistics. Lastly, I would like to thank Donna Pesce and the Westchester Library Association for their assistance and the donation of the goodies that were enjoyed on the ride home.

Speaking up in support of libraries is extremely important—now more than ever! With so many changes in the fields of communication, technology, publishing, and life in general, we need to ensure that the valuable lifelong educational opportunities being provided to all people by the libraries in our communities can continue.



Elise Burke  
*Executive Assistant*  
*Westchester Library System*

SEE PHOTOS BELOW



Pictured L-R: Elise Burke, Executive Assistant, Westchester Library System; Debbie Coppola, Advocate, Tuckahoe Public Library; Donna Pesce, Teen Librarian, Chappaqua Library, and Legislative Committee Chair, Westchester Library Association; Patricia Fontanella, Trustee, Westchester Library System; Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins, 35<sup>th</sup> Senate District; Tom Geoffino, Director, New Rochelle Public Library; Maureen Petry, Director, The Warner Library (Tarrytown).



Pictured L-R: Front Row: Kathleen Degyansky, Assistant Director, White Plains Public Library; Edie Martimucci, Librarian, North Castle Public Library; Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, 88<sup>th</sup> Assembly District; Gloria Meisel, Trustee, North Castle Public Library; Isabel Deutsch, Friend, Ossining Public Library; Art Jay, President, Ossining Public Library; Rob Cartolano, Trustee, Eastchester Public Library; Back Row: Terry Kirchner, Executive Director, Westchester Library System; Maureen Petry, Director, The Warner Library (Tarrytown); Debbie Coppola, Advocate, Tuckahoe Public Library; Tom Geoffino, Director, New Rochelle Public Library; Peter Capek, Trustee, Ossining Public Library; George Morrison, Friend, Ossining Public Library.



Pictured L-R: Assemblyman Robert Reilly, 109<sup>th</sup> Assembly District & Chair of the Assembly Libraries & Educational Technology Committee; Susan Riley, Director, Mamaroneck Public Library; Terry Kirchner, Executive Director, Westchester Library System; Jason Kucsma, Executive Director, Metropolitan New York Library Council.



Pictured Senator Hugh Farley, 44<sup>th</sup> Senate District & Chair of the Senate Committee on Libraries



Pictured L-R: Elise Burke, Westchester Library System; Eleanor Daly, Administrative Assistant, Jill Davis, Director, and Risa Getman, Assistant Director/Head of Reference, Hendrick Hudson Free Library (Montrose) during tour of the Capitol Building.