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## **Executive Director's Report**

### **March 2015**

**(covering time period of February 19 – March 19, 2015)**

#### *Trustee Education*

The Trustee Institute *Planned & Major Giving: Plain & Simple* offered on Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, provided a quick but thorough overview of strategies for creating, managing and growing planned and major giving activities. The discussion was led by Christian A. Templeman, Financial Advisor, Morgan Stanley Wealth Management. In attendance were representatives from seven member libraries (Bedford Hills, Harrison, Larchmont, New Rochelle, North Castle/Armonk, Ossining and Pound Ridge) and WLS. One of the key takeaways for me was the reminder that planned and major giving are long-term strategies that require ongoing and consistent follow through by all members of the organization. The relationships with potential donors develop over time. An organization's "donation worthiness" is often determined by the stated mission of the organization, the actions taken to support that mission and the marketing materials used to communicate the organization's community impact.

#### *Upcoming Trustee Events*

This year's Library Trustees Association (LTA) Annual Trustee Institute will be held on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, and Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, in Syracuse, NY. The theme of the conference is *Crucial Connections*. Workshops will cover a range of topics including: *Understanding the Audit Process: How to Prepare for and Complete a State Audit*; *How Best to Connect with Elected Officials and the Library's Community*; and *Legal Issues: What Trustees Need To Know*. Details about the event are being finalized and more information is available on the [LTA website](#). This event provides a good learning and networking opportunity for public library and public library system trustees. WLS Trustees interested in attending the Institute are asked to notify Elise Burke by Tuesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Due to the continued winter weather and storms, the Trustee Institute on *Renovation or New Construction? Lessons from the Field on making the Right Decision* with Raymond Beeler, Principal Architect of Gallin Beeler Design Studio, and Judith Lockman, Public Library Consultant, was cancelled. Originally scheduled for March 10<sup>th</sup>, the program is now in the process of being re-scheduled—hopefully to early May. The new date has not yet been confirmed, but notice will be sent once the date and place is finalized.

*What you Always wanted to know about Open Meetings Law but were Afraid to Ask* with Robert (Bob) Freeman, Executive Director for the Committee on Open Government, will be held on Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 6 PM at Greenburgh Public Library. A review and update will be offered

regarding the Open Meetings and Freedom of Information Laws, and questions will be encouraged and answered throughout the program. Mr. Freeman is a true expert in this field and has worked for the Committee on Open Government since its creation in 1974 and was appointed Executive Director in 1976. Registration is available via [WLS's Evanced calendar](#).

### **Public Libraries and the IRS**

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program that offers free, individualized tax preparation for low-to-moderate-income taxpayers, especially those 60 and older, is available at many of the WLS member libraries from February 1<sup>st</sup> - April 15<sup>th</sup> each year. WLS works with the member libraries and the AARP Foundation to ensure that secure network connectivity is in place for the tax preparation consulting and e-filing services. This year WLS was asked by the Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) to provide physical copies of the 1040 Instruction booklets because the instruction booklets were only provided by the IRS as an electronic document. Over 500 copies of the 1040 Instruction booklets were printed by WLS and distributed to the member libraries to help them meet the demand for this resource.

The demand for print materials to support tax preparation activities is not unique to Westchester. Nationwide there has been frustration with the IRS's perceived abandonment of printed resources in their efforts to move all tax filers to online. While going to a total e-filing system might prove cost effective for the IRS, it leaves public libraries in a difficult position because they are the first point of contact for individuals who are uncomfortable with e-filing and/or do not have the digital literacy skills required to successfully prepare and file their taxes electronically and/or do not have internet access. The IRS's cost saving measures increased the costs incurred by WLS and the member libraries to support the federally mandated payment of income taxes. The American Library Association (ALA) has entered into discussions with the IRS's Tax Forms Outlet Program (TFOP) to try and improve the availability of print documentation to support for next year's tax preparation.

### **Lease for WLS Headquarters**

Fran Feuerman, Rob Caluori, Elise Burke and I conducted numerous site visits of commercial properties along the I-287 corridor along with the commercial real estate firm Jones Lang LaSalle Americas, LLC (JLL). Several of the properties were identified as having high potential and additional research is underway to analyze cost and design factors. Dennis Noskin Architects (DNA) will also be working with us on this part of the process. While WLS's current lease does not expire until the end of June 2016, starting in advance will allow for better planning and in-depth exploration. Regular progress updates will be provided.

### **Consulting with Member Libraries**

This month I have worked with the Board Presidents of the Ossining Public Library and the Somers Library to assist them with the creation and posting of library director vacancy announcements. I have also discussed with other member libraries the different ways that I or others at WLS could support the creation or updating of a library's Long Range Plan of Service. Strategic planning and longer range visions were common themes in my recent discussions with

the PLDA Technology Committee and the PLDA Finance Committee. These strategic conversations will contribute to the development of the 2017-2021 Plan of Service document that needs to be submitted to the New York State Library Division of Library Development by October 2016.

### **New York State Budget Updates**

A group of 13 library supporters from Westchester joined the New York Library Association's (NYLA) Library Advocacy Day in Albany on February 25<sup>th</sup>. The group was made up of directors, trustees, staff, and advocates representing the following libraries: (Armonk) North Castle Public Library; Bedford Free Library; Eastchester Public Library; Irvington Public Library; Mamaroneck Public Library; Mount Pleasant Public Library; Mount Vernon Public Library; New Rochelle Public Library; Pound Ridge Library District; The Warner Library (Tarrytown); and of course, WLS. We visited all the offices of the 14 legislators who represent Westchester County; and our main ask of the legislators was to have Library Aid funded to the full extent of Education Law or \$102.6 Million. This year's proposed Executive Budget for FY2015-2016 included only \$86.6 Million in Library Aid, an amount which reflects levels equivalent to 1997. For those who could not make the trip to Albany, a postcard campaign was held at the libraries in Westchester. Over 1,700 postcards were sent to our Legislators from 20 libraries.

A recent update from NYLA provided a good snapshot of how our advocacy efforts are faring in the proposed budget process. Both the Senate and Assembly have proposed increased funding for Library Aid. The Senate's one-house budget resolution includes an additional \$5 Million in Library Aid, as well as \$14 Million in capital funding, a \$1.3 Million MTA Tax offset, and a permanent MTA Tax exemption. The proposed \$5 Million increase in library funding is reflective of the Governor's top-level proposed education aid increase of 4.8%. The Assembly's one-house budget resolution includes an additional \$2 Million in Library Aid, as well as \$14 Million in capital funding, a \$1.3 Million MTA tax offset, and a permanent MTA tax exemption.

While both the Senate and the Assembly proposals are better than the Governor's proposal, the Senate's budget allocation would be the most beneficial to WLS. Trustees are encouraged to reach out to their local Senators and Assembly members to advocate on behalf of the proposed \$5 Million increase to library aid.

### **2015 Westchester County Public Health Service Award**

WLS will receive the 2015 Distinguished Public Health Service Award from the Westchester County Board of Health. WLS is being recognized for its role in supporting public health initiatives throughout the County. This has largely been accomplished through the Westchester Seniors Out Speaking (WSOS) and Senior Benefits Information Centers (SBIC) programs. Such an award would not be possible without the support of the member libraries and library staff that have hosted site activities and programming spaces, marketed these services to their communities and provided referrals to WSOS and SBIC. A special thanks to Elena Falcone, Director of WLS Public Innovation and Engagement, and her dedicated group of coordinators and volunteers for making these services possible.

An awards ceremony will be held on Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Greenburgh Public Library starting at 10 AM. Registration for the event is at: <http://goo.gl/forms/JhRntA9Xjf>.

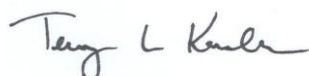
### **Breakfast With Bruni—Celebrating Westchester Libraries: Unlimited Possibilities!**

WLS's annual celebration of American Library Association's National Library Week will take place on Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, at the Tappan Hill Mansion in Tarrytown at 8 am. This year's event theme is *Celebrating Westchester Libraries: Unlimited Possibilities!* and will feature a gourmet breakfast with Frank Bruni, *The New York Times* Op-Ed columnist and former food critic. This event raises visibility of WLS and Westchester public libraries; and libraries are invited to participate in the Souvenir Journal with a sponsored page to highlight the *Unlimited Possibilities* offered at their library. Each library page will be replicated as a poster and unveiled at the breakfast. Tickets, sponsorships, and journal information is available on the [WLS website](#) or by calling Pat Braja at 914-231-3241. Sponsorships and proceeds from the breakfast will support mini grants to fund free public programming in the member libraries.

### **Future Events**

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| April 7   | WLS Multi-Language Book Fair, Ossining Public Library (1-4 pm)  |
| April 15  | <i>Unlimited Possibilities @ Your Library: Celebrating Westchester's Libraries, Breakfast with Frank Bruni</i> , Tappan Hill, Tarrytown (8-10 am) |
| May 1-2   | Library Trustees Association of New York State (LTA) Trustee Institute, Double Tree Inn, Syracuse, NY   |
| May 8     | Westchester Library Association (WLA) Annual Conference, Tarrytown DoubleTree Hilton  |
| May 27-29 | Book Expo America (BEA), Javits Center, New York, NY  |

Respectfully submitted,



Terry L. Kirchner  
Executive Director

**LIST OF VISITS AND MEETINGS ATTENDED**  
**February 19 – March 19, 2015**

**FEBRUARY**

- 19 Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) General Membership Meeting  
Sirsi Operations Conference Call  
Douglas Wray, Manager, Cataloging Services  
Elena Falcone, Director, Public Innovation & Engagement (PIE)
- 20 Westchester County Board of Legislators Family Task Force  
JLL Site Tour of Potential Leasing Properties
- 23 Westchester Librarians Servicing Latinos Meeting  
Alan Burger, Consultant for Mount Vernon Public Library  
Elise Burke, Executive Assistant
- 24 Learning Ambassador Mentor Training  
Rob Caluori, Director of IT  
Bill Loges, Sales Representative, Infogroup  
WLS Board Meeting
- 25 New York Library Association (NYLA) Library Advocacy Day – Albany, NY  
NonProfit Westchester (NPW) Board Meeting
- 26 Pat Braja, Director of Development  
Sirsi Operations Conference Call  
Elena Falcone, Director, Public Innovation & Engagement (PIE)
- 28 Trustee Institute: *Planned & Major Giving--Plain & Simple* with Chris Templeman, Morgan Stanley, Ruby's Oyster Bar & Bistro, Rye, NY

**MARCH**

- 2 Dennis & Julie Roche, Co-Founders, burbio.com  
Elise Burke, Executive Assistant
- 3 Rob Caluori, Director of IT
- 4 Maureen Sullivan re: Ossining Public Library Director Search Process  
Pat Braja, Director of Development  
Hui Sheng, Manager, eContent & Resource Sharing Services  
Adrienne Lee, IMLS Contractor, Interview re Creative Aging in Public Libraries Projects  
Recap Meeting re 2/20 JLL Potential Leasing Properties Site Tour
- 5 Sirsi Operations Conference Call
- 6-9 Vacation
- 10 Rob Caluori, Director of IT  
Conference Call with Public Library Directors Organization (PULISDO) and NYS Division of Library Development: Bernie Margolis, Carol Desch
- 11 Pat Braja, Director of Development  
New Yorkers for Better Libraries Conference Call  
Jim Hasl, Board President, Somers Library  
Pat Braja, Director of Development; Rob Caluori, Director of IT; Kate Meyer, External Relations; meeting to discuss Westchester EXPO (WEXPO) Table  
Beth Bermel, Director, Scarsdale Public Library
- 12 PLDA Technology Committee  
Westchester Library Association (WLA) Board Meeting  
Sirsi Operations Conference Call  
Elena Falcone, Director, Public Innovation & Engagement (PIE)
- 13 Westchester County Association Political Friday with Hon. Michael Kaplowitz, White Plains

*MARCH (continued)*

- 16 JLL Site Visits of Potential Leasing Properties
- 17 Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS) & Upper Hudson Library System (UHLS) Meeting re  
Shared Services Discussion
- 18 Pat Braja, Director of Development  
Hui Sheng, Manager, eContent & Resource Sharing Services  
Business Council of Westchester (BCW) Expo, Hilton Rye Town
- 19 PLDA General Membership Meeting  
Douglas Wray, Manager, Cataloging Services  
Elena Falcone, Director, Public Innovation & Engagement (PIE)