
Executive Director's Report November 2015

(covering time period of October 26-November 17, 2015)

WLS Annual Meeting

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's Annual Meeting on November 5th. There were 50 directors, trustees, and guests representing WLS and 29 of its member libraries. During the business portion of the Meeting, the following trustees were elected to a 5-year term expiring as of December 31, 2020: Julie Mills-Worthey of Mount Vernon representing WLS District XIII [Mount Vernon]; Alex Payan of Port Chester representing WLS District X [Port Chester, Rye Brook, Rye City, Rye Town]; and Sean Ryan of Armonk representing WLS District V [Armonk, Bedford Village, Mount Pleasant, Pound Ridge].

My remarks included the many accomplishments of the past year and highlighted the following services:

- Enhanced access to electronic resources with self-learning tools such as Lynda.com and University of Fashion, available 24/7 to all patrons with a Westchester Library Card;
- Improved access to library content and ADA accessibility for the online library catalog;
- Second Annual Battle of the Books that included teams from more than half of WLS libraries and engaged over 200 youth and teens in reading and friendly competition;
- Continued participation as a Westchester County Senior Law Day partner and website host of 24/7 information site;
- Library staff training programs focused on mental health education;
- Ongoing WLS sponsored programs, the WEBS Career and Educational Counseling Service, Westchester Seniors Out Speaking, and Senior Benefits Information Centers were recognized with the 2015 Distinguished Public Health Service Award from the Westchester County Board of Health; and
- WLS Unlimited Possibilities Mini-grant Initiative, a grant program established with funding from Con Edison, Entergy, and the H.W. Wilson Foundation to fund community engagement projects that foster creativity and love of learning for all ages, supported informal learning

programs in the areas of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) for youth, teens, and adults in libraries throughout the County.

None of these accomplishments are possible without the collaboration shared with our member libraries and other community partners. All were thanked for their support and those community partners present were acknowledged: Steven Otis, NYS Assemblyman (91st District), and Elisa Jacobs of NYS Assemblyman Tom Abinanti's office (92nd District) for ongoing support and the addition of Library Construction Aid in the NYS Budget; and Laura Rossi, Executive Director of the Westchester Community Foundation, for awarding WLS a \$25,000 grant to support library staff training in marketing, media, public relations and related activities.

Also covered were key trends that libraries face including: increased accessibility to content; the expansion of mobile technology as the primary personal device; a growing entrepreneurial and freelance-based economy that offers less employment stability but more flexibility; more emphasis on sustainability; and a re-thinking of library spaces to foster more hands-on activities and provide community meeting and working spaces. Libraries are a powerful community engagement tool; they are educational spaces that support and encourage informal and active learning. Successful libraries listen to their communities and adapt to meet their anticipated needs.

Evidence of these trends is found throughout the system. On hand to talk about how their libraries are aligning with these trends were: Brian Kenny, Director, White Plains Library; Maureen Petry, Director, and Liz Siracusa, Young Adult Librarian, The Warner Library (Tarrytown) along with Rob Kissner, President of the Digital Arts Experience (DAE); former Field Library (Peekskill), Adult Reference and Young Adult Librarian, Liz Anastasi; and Hendrick Hudson Free Library (Montrose) Assistant Director Risa Getman. This special interactive presentation on *Library Trends: New Ideas to Engage Your Community*, highlighted innovative programs among which were:

- At White Plains Public Library, makerspaces and a designated teen area, The EDGE, has transformed teen programming with hands-on audio visual, 3D printing and music editing equipment.
- In Peekskill, a WLS Mini-Grant integrated fashion and technology and brought new teens into The Field Library to create electronic fashions.
- At The Warner Library, teens are learning to use software to create a digital model village design as part of the public input component for the study of the Metro North Train Station in Tarrytown.
- At Hendrick Hudson Free Library (Montrose), a successful Creative Aging Grant funded a teaching artist to work with a group of 12 adults in the spring that built a core group of participants who expressed interest in developing the Library as Community Theatre.

A detailed report of the projects discussed, along with the WLS Report and photos from the event, will be posted shortly to the WLS website.

Budget 2016 Update

Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino released his proposed 2016 budget on November 13th that cut subsidies to several local non-profits. WLS requested \$1,058,100 and was held at \$1 Million, the 2015 amount. However, to be identified as an essential service and have the proposed level of funding remain the same as last year is a major accomplishment, especially in light of the financial challenges faced by the County. The strong working relationship between WLS and the member libraries in supporting community needs throughout Westchester has been key to maintaining County funding.

To date, Francine Feuerman and I have participated in two NonProfit Westchester (NPW) meetings, one with County Legislator Mike Kaplowitz (District 4) and the other with the Democratic Caucus of the County Legislature. A NPW meeting with the Republican Caucus is scheduled as well. I encourage WLS Trustees to reach out to the County Executive and their County legislators to thank them for their ongoing support of WLS and the member libraries.

With regard to the New York State budget, I attended the New York State Assembly Standing Committee on Libraries and Education Technology's Public Hearing held on November 6th at The New York Public Library. Eleven representatives from libraries and library systems, including myself, provided testimony as did three members of the public. The focus of the panel hearing concerned how New York State Library Aid has been used to support community engagement and what innovative approaches would be tried if more funds were available. The impact and use of Library Construction Aid was also a key focal point. The speakers consistently highlighted ways that public libraries and public library systems are using Library Aid to cost effectively build stronger communities throughout New York State. Copies of the submitted testimonies and a video of the proceedings are available on the [New York State Library's Division of Library Development \(DLD\) website](#). This information can also be found on [Library Advocacy](#) section of the WLS website.

WLS Trustees are encouraged to participate in the upcoming New York Library Association's (NYLA) Library Advocacy Day scheduled for Wednesday, March 2, 2016. More details to come.

Future Events

December 9 Westchester County Budget Hearing, County Board of Legislator Chambers,
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor, White Plains, NY at 7 PM

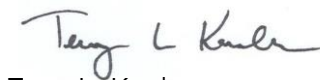
2016

January 8-12 American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter Meeting – Boston, MA

April 5-9 Public Library Association (PLA) Conference – Denver, CO

April 13 WLS Celebrating Westchester Libraries Breakfast with Barney Frank –
Tappan Hill, Tarrytown

Respectfully submitted,



Terry L. Kirchner
Executive Director

LIST OF VISITS AND MEETINGS ATTENDED
October 26 – November 17, 2015

OCTOBER

- 27 Rob Caluori, Director of Information Technology (IT)
Bill Loges, Sales Manager, Infogroup
WLS Executive Board
WLS Board Meeting
- 28 NonProfit Westchester (NPW) Executive Committee, MHA of Westchester, Tarrytown
Ken Wollins, Managing Director; Jacklyn Karceski, CEO/Tomorrow's Genius
Hui Sheng, Manager, eContent & Resource Sharing
Pat Brigham, Director of Development
- 29 Brother International Corporation: Michael Perkins, Senior Regional Sales Manager, Eastern
Region, Home Appliance Division; Pam Shefferman, District Sales Manager, Home
Appliance Division; University of Fashion: Francesca Sterlacci Purvin, Chief Executive
Officer/Founder; WLS: Pat Brigham, Director of Development – New York City

NOVEMBER

- 2 Mark Jacobs, Jones Lange Lasalle (JLL); Paul Hoffmann, Vice President, CBRE Brokerage
Services, representing BASF
- 4 Pat Brigham, Director of Development
- 5 NonProfit Meeting with Mike Kaplowitz re 2016 County Budget, White Plains
WLS Budget Committee
WLS 56th Annual Meeting, Westchester Marriott, Tarrytown
- 6 NYS Assembly Committee on Libraries and Education Technology Public Hearing on the Impact
of the 2015-16 State Budget on Public Libraries in NYS, New York Public Library
- 9 Elise Burke, Executive Assistant
- 10 Rob Caluori, Director of IT
Public Library System Directors Organization (PULISDO) Conference Call
NYS Library Division of Library Development (DLD) Conference Call
- 12-13 Vacation
- 16 Not for Profit Educational Leadership Summit, Tarrytown
- 17 Rob Caluori, Director of IT
NPW Meeting with Westchester County Legislator Catherine Borgia and the Democratic Caucus
Board