
Executive Director's Report

November 2016

(covering time period of October 19 – November 18, 2016)

WLS 57th Annual Meeting

Over 70 library directors, trustees, staff, government officials, and friends attended WLS's 57th Annual Meeting held for the first time in our new Headquarters at 570 Taxter Road in Elmsford. Peter Howard and Dan Richards from Keystone Property Group and Dennis Noskin and Amanda O'Leary from Dennis Noskin Architects, along with all the members of the relocation team, were publicly thanked for the wonderful work they did in making our new space a reality. In addition, WLS Staff were thanked for their efforts in limiting service disruptions to the libraries and the public during the move. It was a tremendous success!

The Annual Meeting also offers a time to recall the various service accomplishments from 2016. Thanks to additional support from the NYS Legislature, increased Library Construction Aid allowed 19 library applications—the most ever. WLS Minigrants continue to give libraries new opportunities to try new program offerings and gain valuable knowledge from their experience. WLS also served as a champion for new library products, such as TotalBoox, helping to create new models of library service. As one of the few Library Systems to offer direct services to patrons, the WEBS program, WSOS, TASC Connect!, Family & Early Literacy, Westchester Connections and their transformative interactions challenge ways of measuring value instead of with the usual quantitative data. They have shown WLS how to tell our story in different ways. With help from a Westchester Community Foundation grant, WLS's April Celebrating Westchester Libraries' Event focused on *Telling our Stories* with the creation of full-page patron stories from the member libraries. This fostered a constructive dialog for future efforts. NYS Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti [92nd District] gave a few remarks and thanked the libraries for being today's community centers. The WLS Business Meeting was led by WLS President Cathy Draper; and two new trustees were elected: Karen Zevin, WLS District I [Croton, Montrose, Yorktown], and Susan Murdoch, WLS District VI [Ardley, Dobbs Ferry, Greenburgh, Hastings-on-Hudson, Irvington].

The featured speaker was Alison Macrina, librarian, privacy activist and founder and director of the Library Freedom Project. Ms. Macrina shared a great deal of information regarding surveillance and its threats to privacy, which has always been one of the library communities core values. The post Edward Snowden era raised questions from the public about privacy like never before. In an attempt to answer those questions, Ms. Macrina started the Library Freedom Project; and she has made it her mission to share best practices, guidelines, strategies and tools for *Surveillance Self Defense*. She also spoke about the Tor browser as well as other privacy

tools and steps needed to take back digital privacy in the age of big data. The slides from Ms. Macrina's presentation, the slide show of the 570 Taxter Road construction as well as the other documents distributed will be posted shortly to the WLS website.

NYLA Annual Conference

The theme of the 2016 New York Library Association (NYLA) Conference was "Strong. Strategic. Sustainable." Two of the programs were especially noteworthy. The first, "Libraries: A Powerful Platform for Change," was an all-day pre-conference that reinforced the role of libraries as leaders of positive change. The pre-conference was built around the framework of sustainable thinking and how libraries are positioned to be the natural leaders in this initiative. Members of the NYLA Sustainability Initiative Committee shared resources and tools that have been developed to help libraries make the case for sustainability; develop a strategic road map to implement change; benchmark a library's progress on desired actions; and become an agent of change within one's community.

Jill Davis, Director of the Hendrick Hudson Free Library, was one of the presenters during this workshop and she spoke about their library's "embracing sustainability journey" and its overall positive effects on the organization and the community. The Hendrick Hudson Free Library has received numerous rewards for its efforts including the 2014 Charles W. Brown, Jr. Sustainability Award for Outstanding Achievement in Outreach and Organizational Commitment and the 2016 Joseph F. Shubert Library Excellence Award for their being the first library in Westchester County to be certified as a Green Business.

The keynote address, "Tapping Your Inner Futurist: Libraries and the Future of Sustainable Communities," was presented by Garry Golden, an academically trained futurist. The informative and fast-paced talk provided some new perspectives on how to forecast the future. Three mechanisms of change were explored: trends, events and choices. Trends help identify plausible futures. Events help define possible futures. Choices help lead to possible futures. Understanding the mechanism of change being used to describe the future promotes better management of expectations of potential outcomes.

Mr. Golden also identified three influential drivers of change: demographic transitions, transforming energy and blockchain technology. In terms of demographic transitions, the primary influence is the aging of the U.S. population. Unlike never before, there are impressive numbers of individuals aged 65 or older that presents some new challenges. In particular, three age-related challenges were discussed: the need for better universal design to make services more user friendly and accessible; the need for more means of mobility to help transport the aging population; and a large increase in substance use disorders—largely due to medical prescriptions that have led to addiction. While libraries have made many strides in these areas, there is still room for further growth and development.

Transforming energy as a driver of change revolves largely around policy issues in the energy sector and how power is distributed and integrated into communities. Libraries have an opportunity through construction aid and other grants to become leaders for reforming how energy is created and consumed. Examples of how libraries are involved in transforming energy

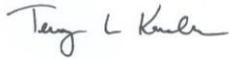
include the installation of solar panels and the use of construction design to maximize latent heating and lighting options. Potential activities might include the use of fuel cells rather than generators to allow libraries to bypass the traditional power grid during times of heavy energy consumption or power disruptions.

The discussion of blockchain technology, which he defined as the "Internet of Trusted Transactions," proved to be the most transformative in terms of how digital services are conducted within libraries. The transformative aspect is that the blockchain process utilizes new approaches to verify who owns and has access to what resources on the Internet. What this means for libraries is that there could be totally new options beyond the traditional library card for determining who gets access to what materials on the Internet and how that access is counted, protected, shared and so forth. Mr. Golden's presentation reaffirmed that libraries could play an active role in the future – as long as libraries remain flexible and responsive to community needs.

Future Events

January 20-24, 2017 American Library Association Midwinter Meeting – Atlanta, GA

Respectfully submitted,



Terry L. Kirchner
Executive Director

LIST OF VISITS AND MEETINGS ATTENDED
October 19 – November 18, 2016

OCTOBER

- 19 Pat Brigham, Director of Development
New Yorkers for Better Libraries Conference Call
The Digital Shift: The Service Continuum virtual conference
Webinar 201: *Visionary Boards: What They Are and Why You Need One*
- 20 Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) General Membership Meeting
PLDA Finance Committee Meeting
WLS Strategic Working Group
- 21 Family Task Force Meeting, White Plains
- 24 WLS Administration Meeting
Elise Burke, Executive Assistant
Michael Wisniewski, Strategic Partnership Manager, Merck Publishing
- 25 Webinar: *US-Germany Sister Libraries*
Rob Caluori, Director of Information Technology (IT)
METRO Digital Literacy Training
Webinar: *BoardSource Certificate of Nonprofit Board Education Series – Week 6*
WLS Board Executive Committee Meeting
WLS Board Meeting
- 26 NonProfit Westchester (NPW) Executive Committee Meeting
Pat Brigham, Director of Development
Hui Sheng, Manager, eContent & Resource Sharing
Green Business Roundtable for Westchester & NYS Public Library Leaders, Hendrick Hudson Free
Library, Montrose
WLS Budget Committee Meeting
- 27 Sirsi Operations Conference Call
Public Library System Directors (PULISDO) Executive Committee Conference Call
- 31 WLS Staff Meeting

NOVEMBER

- 1 Rob Caluori, Director of IT
METRO Digital Literacy Training
Margaret Cunzio, Westchester County Legislator [3rd District], White Plains
- 2-4 New York Library Association (NYLA) Conference, Saratoga
- 7 PLDA Finance
David Lappin, Pilot Project Coordinator, ReaderLink
Elise Burke, Executive Assistant
- 8 Rob Caluori, Director of IT
- 10 Westchester's Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) 5th Annual Conference, Tarrytown
- 11-12 Library Trustees Association of New York State (LTA), Albany
- 14 PLDA e-Collections/Central Library Committee
Elise Burke, Executive Assistant
Ryan Colpaert, Business Development, Mango Languages
- 15 BLUECloud Analytics Fundamentals
Rob Caluori, Director of IT
PULISDO Conference Call
PLDA Executive Committee Meeting
- 16 Pat Brigham, Director of Development
- 17 WLS 57th Annual Meeting, WLS Headquarters
PLDA General Membership Meeting