

Westchester Library System
Annual Meeting
November 14, 2013 – Approved November 20, 2014

The 54th Annual Meeting of the Westchester Library System (WLS) was held on Thursday, November 14, 2013, at the 333 Westchester Avenue Conference Center, White Plains, NY.

There were 51 directors, trustees, and guests representing WLS and 23 of its member libraries; and the evening started off with an opportunity for all to meet and converse over refreshments.

WLS President Dave Donelson thanked all for coming and introduced New York State Assemblyman Steven Otis [91st District], Chair of the NYS Assembly Libraries and Educational Technology Committee. Mr. Donelson also introduced James Lothrop of Architects Lothrop Associates and member of the WLS Business Advisory Committee.

CALL TO ORDER: President Dave Donelson called the Business Meeting to order at 6:50 p.m. and introduced the WLS Trustees who were in attendance and thanked all library trustees for coming.

MINUTES OF THE 2012 ANNUAL MEETING: The minutes of the 2012 Annual Meeting were approved unanimously as submitted on a motion by Sue Neale and seconded by Cathy Draper.

ELECTION OF NEW TRUSTEES: Sue Neale, Chair of the WLS Nominating Committee, proposed the following slate of trustees who were nominated by their represented libraries and are willing to serve another term:

District XIV [New Rochelle]
LaRuth Gray (to a full term ending December 31, 2018)

District VIII [Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Scarsdale]
Sue Neale (to a full term ending December 31, 2018)

District IV [Lewisboro (South Salem), North Salem, Somers]
Edris Scherer (to a full term ending December 31, 2018)

There being no nominations from the floor, the above Trustees were elected unanimously to the WLS Board of Trustees on a motion by Sue Neale and seconded by Patricia Fontanella.

The business portion of the meeting was adjourned unanimously at 7:00 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Draper and seconded by Ms. Neale.

This year marks the beginning of the presentation of the WLS Trustees Award. The idea originated with Alvin H. (Skip) Reiss, WLS Trustee for District IV [Lewisboro (South Salem), North Salem and Somers] who sadly passed away earlier in the year. This new award is to honor an individual or organization that promotes the WLS mission of making library service inclusive for all members of the diverse Westchester communities. A contribution personally funded by the WLS Trustees is being made in the honoree's name to a WLS program that support the WLS mission and the honoree will be given a memento of the occasion.

The first WLS Trustees Award was presented to Galina Chernykh, Director of the Harrison Public Library. The Harrison Public Library Board nominated Ms. Chernykh for her efforts and deep dedication to serving many diverse populations. Mr. Donelson highlighted a number of her accomplishments:

- Participation in the WLS bilingual story time program for children, along with the introduction of a Chinese-English bilingual story time;
- Creation of conversational foreign language groups in the West Harrison branch, including English, Spanish, Swedish and Chinese;
- Solicitation of ethnic community groups to support unique programming including, *50 Wonders of Korea*, *The Silver Age of Jewish Music*; and
- Institution of special craft and story programs for children with special needs.

Terry Kirchner, WLS Executive Director, spoke about two recent observations. One came from an Amazon.com advertisement for the new Kindle Paperwhite e-Reader that used the phrase “just like a library” and another came from a presentation from Barbara Stripling, current American Library Association President, who pointed out a new phrase, “choppportunity” – a blend of *change* and *opportunity*. Mr. Kirchner compared these observations to WLS’s activities. Libraries are in a unique position to use the current atmosphere of change as an opportunity to better service their communities; and WLS has focused on a number of infrastructure activities to better meet the current and future needs of the member libraries and their local communities. The following programs were highlighted:

- A partnership with Westchester Community College to offer Spanish language instruction for library staff;
- WEBS Career and Educational Counseling Service to meet the changing job market;
- the addition of downloadable content to meet the growing demand—including e-books, audiobooks and music as well as working with other vendors who support non-traditional access to titles while preserving patron privacy;
- Increasing discoverability of items owned by the member libraries;
- Enhancement of the IT infrastructure to allow for use of new mobile technologies; improve disaster preparedness and business continuity; and foster use of technology to inspire innovation and creativity;
- Promotion of outreach via Senior Benefits Information Centers, Homework Help, GED Connect!, FirstFind and Learning Ambassadors (a video of this year’s program was shown).

Dr. Kirchner emphasized that libraries are more than just books and challenged all to seek out creative approaches to showcase all that is available and the value added by each library. To explore our creative intelligence, Dr. Kirchner welcomed guest speaker Bruce Nussbaum, author of *Creative Intelligence: Harnessing the Power to Create, Connect and Inspire*; founder of *Innovation & Design*, an online channel, and *IN: Inside Innovation*, a quarterly innovation magazine.

Bruce Nussbaum heartily agreed that libraries are more than just books and shared a number of stories about his experiences. At the library, the safe and quiet environment and the hugely competent staff who curated so many materials led him to different connections that offered something larger. The “magic circle” of laboratories supported serious play, where trust allowed for failure and unexpected outcomes. The value of community and sharing is completely relevant today. It’s not enough just to be virtual; people still need their space. Creativity can be fostered by offering a playground with less rules and inspiring people’s higher order wants.

Dr. Kirchner thanked all for coming.

Respectfully submitted,

Elise Burke, *Recording Secretary*