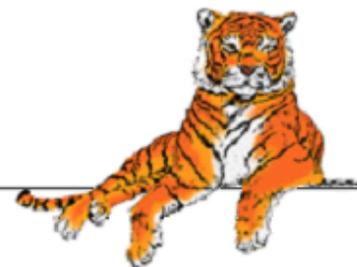


NJALA *QUARTERLY REVIEW*

A Newsletter for Library Assistants



A Publication of the
New Jersey Association of Library Assistants



Editor: Annette Tyler
Distribution Manager: Heather Rivera

Summer 2011 Vol.13 No.3

Message from the President

The following speeches were presented by NJALA's newly elected President at the conference in June.

Hello Everybody. First please join me in thanking Cathy Lynch for her outstanding leadership this year.

I am delighted to be here with you at our 25th consecutive NJALA conference. And what an exciting time it is to be involved in this professional organization! I will be using this year's conference theme, which is "25 Years of Connection and Commitment" as a spring board for next year's conference theme which will be "Embracing the Changing Needs of Libraries."

As we progress in the digital age, the resources we share with patrons are becoming more digital and virtual. The process of imparting information is changing, but the core values remain just the same as they have always been—meeting the needs of the community and in so doing we are embracing the changing needs of libraries.

I am happy to be here today to share with you my Vision of the future of NJALA. One of the premier benefits of NJALA is networking. This organization enables us to connect with others, throughout the state, who face the same challenges, unpredictabilities, and joys as we do.

As we move forward, we can continue to share our knowledge and best practices so that we can grow and learn in the digital present and future. It is true that the means to meet the needs of our patrons are changing; but as Thomas Jefferson said "I cannot live without books." Whether those books are audio, digital, or paper, we continue to meet our patron's needs.

I look forward to spearheading the continued networking and continuing education endeavors of this great organization. Thank you very much for your support.



Suzanne Ridzy
Somerset County Library System
Mary Jacobs Branch

Connections

Thanks to those of you who participated in the Tabletop Surveys, created and compiled by Marie Krosnick, for the conference on June 7. Below and on page 6 are some of the comments you were kind enough to share with us. Stay tuned to future newsletters for other categories.

The **yellow** cards were for positive kudos: How do your manager, supervisor, staff, or you make your job work and make other staff members feel like a part of the team and create a positive/fun work situation? If this doesn't happen, what realistic, practical, cheap ideas, or solutions do you have?

With a few exceptions these comments were positive. We hope you are included in an environment where you feel valued and respected. To those of you who don't have that experience we hope you find some of these comments encouraging.

Our library is like a family. The gap between "professional" and "support" staff is closing with the addition of new employees, involving both staff and faculty members in decision making factors. I see a lot more diversity on committees and groups.

Book Café discussions are a positive step.

During the first hour of our day the circulation staff members try to share with one another a positive experience that makes us laugh and starts the day in an upbeat manner.

Other staff members help pick up some of the work when I'm not there. Everybody knows what to do.

I believe it's all personality—we have a wonderful time while getting all our work finished.

As a staff member I make everyone feel part of the team by complimenting them on their achievements. We make it fun by laughing through the bad situations. I always tell a staff member if they handle a situation with .

patrons maturely. I compliment a lot on appearances.

We have significant personnel problems due to lack of leadership. Some of the difficulties are related to facility problems.

My supervisor makes me feel like I am part of a team, because she includes me in decision making. She values my input and treats me with respect. She makes work fun and comfortable.

My Director lets me know that she appreciates me. She also supports my involvement in NJALA.

My supervisor has always maintained a positive/can-do attitude ... with each and every patron and with me. There are no stupid questions. Her approach to any challenge is to discover the positive, which she always does. She decorates our office for each season and makes a warm, welcoming environment, which is never stuffy.

There is an informal manner at the main desk.

The staff in my department are very supportive of each other. Even when things go wrong we try to remain as positive as possible and keep a sense of humor. Positive feedback is invaluable.

It would be nice, just once, to be unexpectedly called into our manager's office and receive some positive comments, instead of being called in for a specific or general complaint by the staff "professionals" (not the patrons).

One of our full-time library assistants sends out e-mails around the holidays to encourage us to dress alike in colors or accessories, such as a special sticker. At Halloween some of us wore costumes. This co-worker also taped silk flowers on pens for patrons to use—and as a hint to return the pen when finished with it; the kids love this.



Chi-Chi-Chi—CHANGES

An important part of the annual General Business Meeting during the conference this year was the adoption of amendments to the NJALA Constitution and Bylaws. In the future voting will be conducted at annual meetings in person, rather than by mail as in the past.

By voting at the conference members of the association agreed to the following changes:

- The Constitution may be amended by an affirmative vote of two thirds of the **regular members**.
- Votes on amendments to the Constitution shall be conducted **at the General Session**.
- The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall be responsible for **conducting the voting at the General Session**.
- **Nominations will be taken from the floor at the General Session by the Election Committee.**
- Votes on amendments to the bylaws shall be conducted by **the Constitution and Bylaws Committee at the General Session**.



It's FREE in A.C.



International Nights, Jazz on the Beach, and a City Concert Series are presented by the City of Atlantic City and the Atlantic City Free Public Library on select Wednesdays, Thurs-

days, Fridays, and Saturdays this summer. All shows are free. Call 609-345-2269, ext. 3115, visit www.acfpl.org, or find them on Facebook: www.facebook.com/acfpl for more information.

CONFERENCE RECAP

Our 25th Annual Conference in June was a huge success. Comments that we received via our conference evaluation sheets were all overwhelmingly positive. There were quite a few compliments for the new venue at the Conference Center at Mercer County. Many of you liked the option of al fresco dining.

We were very fortunate to have had Nancy Dowd from the New Jersey State Library as our keynote speaker. Nancy's talk, about how we in library service transform lives was very well received by our membership and was thought to be very "inspirational." One member commented that Nancy's speech "set the tone for the entire conference."

Our classes were very well reviewed overall, with *Aiding Adult Literacy*, *Stress Management*, *Book Café*, and *Introduction to Microsoft Publisher* getting the highest praise from our attendees.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to leave comments, be they compliments or complaints. The Conference Planning Committee does value your feedback. WE LISTEN and do need and want your input.

Please consider joining the Conference Planning Committee. We'd love to have you and your ideas. If you can't join but would like to host a meeting we would welcome that too.

Planning for conference number 26 starts in September; please join our new Conference Co-Chairs Connie Reese and Deborah Blackwell!

Ginger Cairns
Vice President/President Elect
Ocean County Library System
Long Beach Island Branch

Happy Summer Everyone!

I hope you all are enjoying your summer and staying cool.

As NJALA Liaison I traveled to New Orleans, LA to take part in the American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference. While there I attended several meetings, including the Library Support Staff Interest Round Table (LSSIRT) Business and Membership Meeting. We had several guests at this meeting. Nancy Bolt from ALA/APA came to give us an update on the Library Support Staff Certification Program (LSSCP).

There are currently 182 applications and 144 active candidates—73% white and 16% people of color. 95% are female. Candidates come from 34 states, and 10 are from Bermuda. There are 400 scholarships valued at \$175.00 each or 1/2 of the registration fee which are called Registration Assistance Awards (RAA). The ALA/APA LSSCP has been working with Library Technical Assistant (LTA) programs to review their curriculum. If it meets the LSSC competencies the LTA graduate will be eligible for certification. So far three programs have signed agreements with LSSC: College of DuPage (IL), Palomar Community College (CA), and Ivy Technical College (IN). Six more programs are in various stages of the review process.

Another guest was Joseph Egan ALA Executive Board Liaison, who reported that one of the main focuses of ALA was transforming libraries. Member engagement is down by 1.5%; this year's full registered attendees totaled 11,270. He also stated that 3 years ago there were more than 160,000 library workers now the total is less than 150,000.

We voiced our concerns to Darlena Davis our LSSIRT ALA Staff Liaison regarding having another Empowerment Conference, which is LSSIRT's conference within a conference, held over 2-3 days during ALA Annual with workshops for support staff. It became a money problem as we had to pay for the speakers; we

then suggested that some states, including New Jersey have support staff doing library related programs. The discussion was tabled until the ALA Mid-Winter Conference.

I went to several other meetings, The Round Table Coordinating Assembly, ALA Membership Meeting, and the ALA Budget and Planning Meeting, and a OCLC cataloging workshop.

I also attend *Library Journal's* reception for the Para-Professional of the Year, which is now called Para-Librarian of the Year. This reception was held at Antoine's, New Orleans oldest restaurant. I have attended several receptions given by *Library Journal* since they created this award, but this one was outstanding. The recipient Gilda Ramos had everyone in tears while giving her acceptance speech; she was just so grateful, not just for the award, she was grateful for having a job, grateful for her family, grateful for her health, her co-workers, just grateful for life, she is truly a role model that we all should mold ourselves after.

I've been going to ALA Mid-Winter and Annual since 1997. This is the first year that I was so disappointed in the workshops offered. There are usually several workshops that are geared to support staff; this year aside from the few LSSCP workshops there was really nothing for support staff.

So what's a girl to do with no where to go in New Orleans? How about ... go to the casino, sightseeing, shop, and eat—all in 93-100 degree weather with the heat index in triple digits and 80% + humidity. The trip was wonderful; I got to meet so many people.

May you all enjoy the rest of your summer, stay healthy and be safe.

Marilyn Jack-Brown
Principal library Assistant
Montclair State University
NJALA Liaison
LSSIRT Member At Large
973-655-4195

Welcome New Members

The following people have joined NJALA in the past year:

Brian Holovach - Mary Jacobs Memorial Branch, Somerset County Library System

Nadirah Raheem - East Orange Public Library

Janine M. Rinaldi and Donald Hansen - Bergenfield Public Library

Nina Tafuri - William Dermody Free Public Library (Carlstadt)

Linda Adens - Willingboro Public Library

Susan Busardo - Lakewood Branch, Ocean County

Rebecca Schoonmaker—Lacey Branch, Ocean County

Michael A. Cadena - Metuchen Public Library

Tilisa Caldwell - Montclair State University

Ginny Di Lullo - Cape May County

Jazmine Faherty - Mathematica Inc.

Raymond Ghaul, Ro Hill, Kristin Rothenberger, and Greer Samson - Moorestown Public Library

Ann Lewis - Somerset County

Danielle Matarangelo - Monroe Township

Tara Russell - Pennington Public Library

Debby Soine and Margaret Stankwich - Clark Public Library

ANOTHER STORY

Presenter Denise McCormack and NJALA member Marie Krosnick pose for Cynthia Milbauer during the *Tangrams and Storytelling: A Cross Curricular Approach to Storytelling for All Audiences* class at the 2011 annual conference. This program

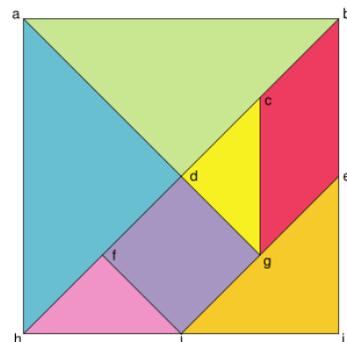


focused on the use of tangrams in storytelling as a multi-sensory, cross-curricular approach to teaching and learning. Participants made



tangrams and used them to create original stories.

A tangram is a Chinese puzzle consisting of a square cut into five triangles, a square, and a rhomboid, which can be combined so as to form a great variety of other figures.



BEST KEPT SECRET

The **green** cards from the Tabletop Surveys include “How has your library or other facility overcome budget cuts, short supply lists, or staff shortages to keep the doors open and bring in more patrons?”

We’ve been reaching out to our local community college for interns to help in our children’s room. We’ve found people with creative program skills to decorate the room and entertain the children.

We have a partnership with Youth Advocate Program, which pays a youth for 10 hours of work at the library as a page. Experience Works is a program that pays a senior citizen for 20 hours of work at the library as an adult page.

We partner with Thomas Edison College.

To overcome cuts we had our hours cut on Wednesday nights, but we are able to be open on Saturdays. Our local support comes from our wonderful Friends of the Library, who raise money through two large book sales each year. High school Key Club members help younger students with their homework.

Cross training allows people to do different jobs. Then they can fill in where and when needed.

When I get a rude patron I treat him/her in the way I hope they would treat me. We survive the budget cuts by cutting full-time positions to part-time. Part-timers are gaining more of the payroll, but they are losing benefits. Patrons get upset, but we remain kind and patient.

Our library has laid off one part-time librarian and has cut hours that pages work. We don’t order as much as we used to. We don’t have to worry about patron shortage; they keep coming no matter what happens.

Because of budget cuts we have cut programs, book purchases, and staff.

Sharing staff among departments has helped. When one department is short staffed we lend out a staff member to help in that department. We

offer free movies every Friday, and we offer free classes, such as computer usage and e-mail plus, to our patrons. In December we have fun classes.

We have active volunteers from among our most frequent patrons.

A low cost program idea is to invite all of your fans of Pokémon, Magic, the Gathering, etc. for a Collectable Card Game Show & Swap Meet. Everyone may bring their card binders, show off their prize cards, and wheel and deal. Set up a few play tables—maybe a championship ladder.

We’ve consolidated a lot of jobs. We also took a full-time slot and replaced it with two part-time positions. We’ve tried more community outreach—band students, recital students, local authors, who volunteer to come in and do a free program.

Our main branch has gotten family passes for several area or local museums and other attractions from its Library Friends Association. Patrons may come to the main library and sign out the passes for three days. No reservations or requests are allowed.

We have had about half of our staff leave, since reopening 4 years ago. Budget freezes have kept us from replacing anyone in over 2 years. We have been able to hire student pages, who have been trained to assist in the Circulation Department.

Our Friends of the Library support our summer children’s program. We have had a good response of student volunteers to man a table to sign up children for independent summer reading and to process their prizes as they complete requirements.

Ed. note:

It looks like Friends of the Library has been an invaluable group for many libraries during these hard times. The Friends group at my library has been in existence for many decades. They have weekly book sales and have been champing at the bit to get back in “business” since the explosion of May 3, 2010. Over the years they have supported the library by doing many tasks great and small and have been responsible for many of our successful programs and fundraisers. We think our Friends are the best! Please let us know about what your Friends have been doing for and with you.

Spotlight on the Winners

Each year at the conference of the New Jersey Association of Library Assistants the NJALA Recognition and Kehnast awards are presented.

The NJALA Recognition Award is given to a dedicated Director, Trustee, or Librarian in a New Jersey Library or Libraries, who encourages and supports participation in career development or activities for library assistants in New Jersey.

The winner of this year's NJALA Recognition Award is one of our strong supporters and long-time conference presenter Joanne P. Roukens. Joanne is the Assistant Director for Library Link NJ and manages the statewide continuing educational program. Library Link NJ provides resources, services, expertise, and continuing education programs to libraries throughout the state of New Jersey. Joanne was the Executive Director of Highlands Regional Library Cooperative (HRLC), the regional cooperative of North Jersey that preceded Library Link NJ. Before coming to HRLC in March 2000, she was with the Morris County Library for 14 years. Joanne has earned a Certificate in Training from the New Jersey Department of Personnel and was the co-coordinator of the New Jersey Train-the-Trainers Program from 2001-2005. She is a member of the New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) and the American Library Association (ALA). Joanne was the New Jersey Library Association's 2007 Librarian of the Year. In addition to presenting customer service workshops, Joanne does a keynote style talk, called "Conversation and Connection: Focusing on the Customer." She also conducts workshops on presentation skills, valuing libraries with her colleague Robert Lackie of Rider University, how to power up your library instruction, teaching methods and facilitation skills. Joanne is also a licensed trainer for True Colors, a highly effective personality and communications tool.

The Kehnast Award is given to a dedicated library assistant in a New Jersey Library who has made a significant contribution to the profession or to his/her library and actively participates in career development or activities in New Jersey. This award is named for AnnaMarie Kehnast who served as President and Liaison of NJALA.

The 2011 winner of the Kehnast award is Barbara Ward. Barbara has been employed by Seton Hall University for the last 18 years and is the Supervisor of Interlibrary Loans at Walsh Library. She was President of NJALA in 2006 and 2009, and also served two terms as Vice President/President Elect and as Immediate Past President. Barbara has been on the Executive board of NJALA since 2005 and has been an active member of NJALA since 2004. She is currently Corresponding Secretary of NJALA. Barbara has been married for many years to her husband Michael and is the proud grandmother of two grandchildren and mother of two married daughters.



Each year we offer a scholarship award, named in honor of the first President and long-time supporter of NJALA. For the second time in a row this year the Rita Hilbert Scholarship was not awarded. Please consider applying or encouraging another NJALA member to apply for this monetary award next year. This scholarship is offered to a library support staff person who would like to pursue a degree or certificate program that enhances work skills.



DEADLINE

for the next

NJALA Quarterly Review **is October 4, 2011**

Feel free to send your articles or other information anytime before this date to:

NJALA Quarterly Review

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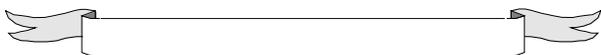
E-mail: Annette.Tyler@mainlib.org

The NJALA website is <http://www.njala.org>



Thanksgiving in July

We thank all the Library Directors, Department Heads, and Branch Managers, who support and inspire library assistants in their daily work and in being a part of the New Jersey Association of Library Assistants, including annual conference attendance. We especially appreciate the administrators, who encourage the Conference Planning Committee members as they participate in the educational experience of creating our annual conference.



HELP!
WE NEED SOMEBODY

If you haven't already volunteered for a committee or a task with NJALA this is your opportunity to

S t r e t c h
yourself and see how you can

GROW

Position now open:

Assistant to
Newsletter Editor

If you love writing, layout, editing, proofreading

Contact
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