

After 13 years with the Lucy Robbins Welles Library in Newington, Vicky Chase left her job there in May 2008 to pursue a lifetime dream of joining the Peace Corps. Since the fall of 2008, she has been teaching computer technology to freshmen and sophomores at the Sandema High Secondary/Technical School in Sandema, Ghana, West Africa. She lives on the school campus, about three miles outside of Sandema. The local language is Buili, but the language of instruction is English, which for her students may be a second, third or even a fourth language. She will teach in Sandema for two years.

Why did I join the Peace Corps? The quick answer is that I had a midlife crisis and instead of buying a Harley I joined the Peace Corps. I was getting close to 50 and thinking about what I had done with my life; also about the things I had not yet done. Then I read in the *Hartford Courant* that the Peace Corps was looking for volunteers who were 50 years old or more.

"I could do that!" I said out loud to Nikki, my cat. It would give me the opportunity to do things I have wanted to do. I could give something back. Helping others is an expression of my Christian faith. I could fulfill my desire to live in another country. I was tired of the 9-to-5. I wanted to live at a slower pace, to learn to value social interactions over the GNP, to test what I needed and what I wanted. Could I live with less?

Here is a story of a day in November 2008. It will give you a feel for the daily rhythm of life here and give you a *small small* feel for a place I have come to love. Maybe it will show that I am also learning from the people I have come to teach.

Almost before I woke up, I was thinking about breakfast. I had pawpaw (papaya) sauce and eggs on hand, all I needed was fresh bread from Perpetua's bakery and I could make French toast. So, I didn't lounge in bed and listen to the BBC; I went to get the bread. Madua, the teen-aged *small girl* who helps Perpetua with cooking and cleaning, the bakery and shop, and caring for her six-year-old daughter Dizzy, said to wait *small small* and it would be done. I knew that could mean five minutes, or 50. I decided not to wait.

Dizzy came by, and I asked her if she wanted to cook breakfast with me. I told her I was having eggs. She decided to stay and help. I made up a name for the eggs we were cooking. I told her they were Christmas eggs because we added red tomatoes and green peppers to them. I was more excited about the name than she was. Maybe it's good that Christmas isn't such a huge deal for her. I also fried up the rest of the tomato. Something I used to do before I had a fridge in which to store the cut tomato.

I ate eggs and tomatoes and drank tea. Dizzy had milo and *small small* eggs. I eat my breakfast when I get up, but most people in Ghana eat their breakfast about 9:30. They have been up for



Madua (right) is a teen-aged *small girl* who assists Dizzy's mother Perpetua with her shop and bakery and who helps to look after Dizzy, my six-year-old African 'granddaughter'.

many hours by that time. Dizzy would have another breakfast later, at her house.

When we finished, I had to bathe and get ready to go to town with the 'Presby,' (Presbyterian) students, who were going to the other high school in town for a worship service. Joshua, a fellow teacher, was going with us.

I went to the dining hall about 8:30. No students were in sight, so I sat on a bench under a tree. There was a cool breeze and I could watch the kitchen staff work.

One woman was winnowing corn. She used two calabashes, lifting one high above her head and pouring the corn into the other, which sat in a big metal bowl. In case the corn missed the calabash, the metal bowl would catch it. I could see the chaff blowing away as she poured the corn.

We were supposed to be at the other high school by 9:00, but I am getting used to African time. I now use time spent waiting to watch whatever is happening around me or to visit with someone.

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# Sweeping the Seats

by Maxine Bleiweis

After a certain point in my daughters' lives, I knew I could no longer help them with their homework. Actually, in the subject of math, that probably occurred very early in their school careers. As I think about it, I wonder how I could possibly pass today's test for fourth grade math, never mind the geometry I struggled with in tenth grade.

So as my daughters made their way through higher education, it became clear that our conversations would be about other things—books, movies, life—but not about math, science or advanced anything.

Therefore, it was with great joy that I heard my daughter, now a cognitive psychologist, say to me recently, "Mom, a librarian gave a talk at a conference I attended and I think you'd like to hear what she had to say." Be still my heart. We're on a level playing field here, if only for a little bit, as our professions intersect.

The conference speaker had conducted research on patrons' use of space in public libraries in Vancouver and Toronto. She had delved into what some of us already know experientially—after all, she isn't in the trenches on a daily basis. She's just a visitor to our sometimes bewildering world. But her findings bear repetition for those of us intent on making a library visit as good as it possibly can be.

The research method she used is called "seat sweeping." Not crumbs from the cushions, but a physical walk through the various areas of the library many times a day to observe what people actually were doing, rather than what they reported when interviewed or surveyed.

The term "room geography" also fascinated me. It refers to mapping how individuals distribute themselves in a given space. We all know about elevator behavior; the second, third or fourth person to enter the elevator will stand as far away as possible from other riders. The same is true at a four-person library table: one person at each, then a second on the other side at the opposite end, and so forth.

Such behavior argues for small tables for one, or for two with a divider down the middle, or perhaps for those old fashioned, very long library tables that have mostly disappeared.

So far, I've got the gist of the conference speaker's talk. I'm feeling good. What else did she learn?

While the statistics collected in exit interviews indicated that more females than males used the library, the sweeps told her that was accurate only for the children's department. Males actually constituted the majority of patrons in other areas. More women than men were observed asking for assistance at information desks. More men were seen using the microfilm areas (The studies were conducted in 1999. Swap computers for microfilm and you would get the same result, I'd bet.) Men used the sofas and benches more than women and, on average, stayed in the library longer than women.

The longer people stayed, the more they required different kinds of spaces for their comfort. They needed to eat, to call home, to discuss work. People became distressed when there was no place to do these every-day things. Bring on the food and the phone spaces.

Patrons' carrying cases were an interesting category all their own. Out of the depths of these briefcases, handbags and bookbags came clues to comfort: food (surprised?), tissues, cameras, and magnifying glasses. In 2009, we would surely add PDAs to that list.

The most frequent patron activities observed were, in order: reading, writing, with talking a close third. Females were more likely than men to address staff. Some behaviors that rarely are admitted to in written surveys tended to surface during these sweeps—sleeping, embracing, and nursing babies.

The seat sweeps results dispute some patron perceptions, such as the comment, "The computers are always in use," which tended to mean, "The computers are always in use when I want to use one."

It was fun to learn about this study. Most information was not new, but it did remind me that, with respect to differences in male/female behavior, the gender gap might never close. It makes me wonder how much influence a staff dominated by females should have over a space used more intensely by males.

Thank you, my daughter, for bringing these studies to my attention. Along with our usual surveys, seat sweeping is now on my "to do" list.

# HIGH

CLA Executive Board  
Meeting of March 5, 2009  
Meriden Public Library

**ACLB** Stan Siegel said that ACLB's 2009 leadership conference, "Tapping the Money Tree," is scheduled for October 16 at Water's Edge.

**Awards** Kathy Leeds noted that there will be three awards programs at the conference: the awards ceremony, excellence in public service awards, and the PR awards.

**Candidates for CLA Offices** Carl Antonucci presented the slate of nominees for CLA offices 2009/2010. See pages 6-7 for details.

**Career Development** Kim Farrington said volunteers are needed for the "Speed Mentoring" session at the annual conference. The committee received five applications for the LTA scholarship and 14 for the MLS scholarships. Winners: LTA—JoAnn Massad, MLS—Judy Sparzo and Jennifer Olson.

**Children** Beth Crowley reported that the section is organizing a memorial for Kate McClelland and Kathy Krasniewicz and will make a formal presentation at the CLA awards ceremony.

**CLA Leadership Conference** Jay Johnston proposed a one-day CLA leadership conference in August 2009 at the University of Hartford. Jay, Carl Antonucci, Randi Ashton-Pritting, Alison Wang and Chris Bradley will serve as a committee to plan the institute.

**CLASS** Sandy Brooks reported that the CLASS salary survey is posted on the CLA website. Eventually, she hopes that CLA will establish a minimum salary guideline for support staff.

**CLC** Chris Bradley distributed fact sheets about InfoAnytime and CLC discounts and thanked libraries that supported CLC's budget request with their calls and emails.

**CSL** Ken Wiggin reported on his legislative testimony regarding Connecticut, iCONN, and Connecticut. He will address construction funds at a March 10 bond hearing. He said that most federal stimulus funds would be spent on health and education. Sharon Brettschneider distributed a fact sheet about the library service centers and reported that a statewide "Big Read" program is being discussed with the CT Center for the Book. There is also the possibility of a CT book festival in May 2011.

**Legislative** Jay Johnston reported on the Legislative Committee's meeting with Rep. Andrew Fleischman, co-chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee. Jay thanked the library community for their calls and emails supporting CLA's legislative agenda.



Maxine Bleiweis  
is director  
of the Westport  
Public Library.

**Membership** Stan Siegel proposed that the CLA membership year be based either on the calendar year or on the anniversary date of joining or renewing. Following extended discussion, the board voted for the latter. (See proposed change in CLA Bylaws on page 12.) The board recommended that members be listed in the conference program and have membership noted on conference name badges.

**Minimum Salary Guideline** Jay Johnston recommended a 1.5% increase (to \$25.66/hr.) in CLA's recommended minimum salary for beginning positions requiring an MLS, effective July 1, 2009. Motion approved.

**President** Kathy Leeds has been fielding a lot of calls from the media about the heavy use of libraries in this economic downturn. She also reported on the success of the American Heart Assn./Dept. of Public Health program "Healthy Messages" and public libraries' cooperation with the US Census Bureau.

**President Elect** Randi Ashton Pritting reported that CLA and CASL are surveying vendors and members regarding the location and number of days of the 2010 conference.

**Publicity** Betty Anne Reiter encouraged libraries to submit photos for the Legislative Office Building exhibit in April.

**Region I** Tracy Ralston reported that four libraries in the Northwest corner are airing a weekly radio show on WHDD called "The Corner Library"; Goshen PL is offering job hunting/résumé writing seminars; Kent Library, in cooperation with the Conservation Commission, is circulating two Kill-a-Watt devices.

**Region III** Siobhan Grogan reported that Tolland PL's budget has been frozen since October 2008; Friends and foundations have stepped up to fill the void. Circulation is up 20% for the second year in a row at the Jonathan Trumbull Library in Lebanon. The Canterbury Library has purchased a Wii and is working with the senior center to host bowling tournaments.

**Region V** Maribeth Breen reported on Essex Library's partnership with SCORE to support those who need job help; CT's Career Express will be in Essex on March 30. Wallingford Library continues its popular "Lunch and Learn" health-related programs co-sponsored with Masonicare. The Derby Library is offering programs on career help and computer lessons.

**Treasurer** Alison Wang transferred \$20,000 from CLA's investment account to the operational account. CLA has since received almost \$20,000 in deposits from vendor payments for the 2009 annual conference.

# Cooperation. Collaboration. Caring

by Kathy Leeds

Connecticut libraries are staffed by people who not only care about the mission of their organization and profession, but often, equally about each other. Definitions of cooperation and collaboration—two activities at which we excel—may include the phrases, *working together toward an intersection of common goals*, and *working in harmony, side by side and not separately in competition*.

Having worked in the corporate world for a couple of small businesses, and in a public school system prior to my current career as a public library director, I can attest to the fact that not all the working world approaches business this way. We are blessed with a culture that shares as well as cares; that culture nurtures and sustains us in all sorts of ways.

Recently, as the CLA Legislative Committee discussed state funding for libraries with our representatives in Hartford, I was very proud of the efficiencies we create in working together across the state every day. Connecticut's libraries are a model for other state and municipal agencies when they routinely take part in cooperative purchasing, collaborate on professional development and training, and share resources through our service centers and interlibrary loan.

When we think of where to go for answers or to commiserate in tough times or to celebrate success, it is most likely to colleagues. We waste little if any time on posturing and competitive behavior, cutting right to the core of sharing what we know with those who need mentoring or advice.

As a new library director, I relied heavily on being able to walk down the hall or pick up the phone to bounce ideas off both my peers and more seasoned colleagues. After more than eight years on the job, I still consult others, but now am equally likely to be consulted myself. What a pleasure it is to pass along hard won knowledge, to be given the chance to help others as I've been helped in the past.

At the same time that we share goals and mentor one another toward their achievement, we care for one another. So it was with horror, disbelief, and then

great sadness that we learned about and came to grips with the senseless accident that claimed the lives of two of our brightest stars, Perrot Library's Kate McClelland and Kathy Krasniewicz, as they returned from ALA Mid-Winter. Of course, colleagues, friends and acquaintances pass away with disturbing frequency—particularly as I get older. But this loss, so sudden, and coming just after they'd attended a conference to hone their already formidable skills and talents, was wrenching.

Gerri Hirshey, in an article entitled, "Library Recalls Two Who Made It Better" (NYT, February 13), wrote of the "breathtaking sadness" the loss of Mrs. K. and Mrs. Mac had caused. Their shared passion for children's literature, for storytelling, and for the kids themselves leaves a tremendous void not only in Old Greenwich, but also throughout Connecticut. At the time of this column's writing, a Celebration of Life service for Kate and Kathy was scheduled for March 20 at the Congregational Church in Old Greenwich at the library they loved and that loved them. I have no doubt that caring colleagues from all over the State will be there.

We are indeed fortunate to be working in libraries that encourage collaboration, cooperation, and the closeness that comes from mutual respect and admiration. That culture, coupled with goals of the most worthy sort, makes what we all do incredibly rewarding. The fact that sadness at parting is often inescapable (whether the cause is relocation, retirement, or in this case, tragedy) is part of the bargain.

Caring about goals and mission can make us vulnerable in other ways as well; it is difficult not to be devastated when layoffs or cuts in service are dictated by our faltering economy—just when we're needed most. The secret to surviving in tough times is to rely on the relationships we've built with our colleagues and to look forward together to better times ahead.



Kathy Leeds  
is executive director  
of the Wilton Library.

I don't know if it was planned or simply a happy coincidence, but it's particularly appropriate that Robert Pinsky will be a keynote speaker at the upcoming CLA Annual Conference at the end of this month. April is, of course, National Poetry Month.

U.S. Poet Laureate for three terms, from 1997 to 2000, Pinsky has written or edited 19 books, including six collections of poetry. He has also translated an edition of poems by Polish Nobel Laureate Czeslaw Milosz, as well as a highly regarded modern translation of Dante's *Inferno*.

Pinsky's first collection of poetry, *Sadness and Happiness*, was published in 1975 to great critical acclaim. Poet Robert Lowell wrote, "It is refreshing to find a poet who is intellectually interesting and technically first-rate. Robert Pinsky belongs to that rarest of categories of talents, a poet-critic."

What is also evident in this early volume is Pinsky's awareness of the need for human connectedness, of alleviating what he describes in the first poem in the book, "Poem About People," as "the dark wind crossing the wide spaces between us." Titles in this eclectic collection range from "The Discretions of Alcibiades" to "Library Scene" to "The Beach Women," an incisive commentary on 1950s America as reflected in a New Jersey seaside community.

The last poem in *Sadness and Happiness*, "Essay on Psychiatrists" is a long (nearly 500 lines) rumination on the nature of psychiatry and its practitioners. The language is mostly simple and declarative ("Shrink" is a misnomer"...Many, I have heard, grew up as an only child"...), but the references and allusions run the gamut from Ann Landers and Bette Davis to Dionysus and Pentheus. In the end, the narrator comes to the conclusion "that 'psychiatrist' is a synonym for 'human being'" and that "...we are all psychiatrists, / All fumbling at so many millions of miles / Per minute and so many dollars per hour / Through the exploding or collapsing spaces / Between stars, saying what we can."

"Shirt," perhaps Pinsky's most celebrated poem, appears in his 1990 collection, *The Want Bone*. In 16 three-line stanzas, he uses the metaphor of a meticulously but simply

## Robert Pinsky: An Appreciation

BY DAVID GARNES

described shirt to evoke the sweep of history and the tangled relationships across the centuries among people connected in one way or another to a universally recognized man-made object.

The brilliant central conceit of this tightly constructed poem is the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire of 1911, in which 146 workers died, many by jumping or falling to their deaths to escape the flames.

Pinsky's powerful images of the victims render horror and pity and at the same time an affirmation of the human spirit. Elsewhere in "Shirt," Koreans and Malaysians in sweatshops, Scottish mill weavers and spinners, slaves toiling in Southern cotton fields, and even the English poet George Herbert mix and mingle in a global kaleidoscope of real and imagined connections.

In addition to his poetry, Robert Pinsky has contributed significantly to literary criticism in several volumes, including *The Situation of Poetry: Contemporary Poetry and Its Traditions*. About poetry he has said: "Poetry connects us with our deep roots, our evolution as an animal that created rhythmic language as a means of transmitting vital information across the generations. We need to communicate not only with our peers but our ancestors and descendants...Poetry in a deep-going way calls upon the very nature of human society, our interdependence upon on another not only in space but in time."

Stepping away from academia, Pinsky was featured in a guest spot on the sitcom "The Simpsons" in 2002 as well as on "The Colbert Report" in 2007, where he judged a "Meta-Free-Phor-All" between Stephen Colbert and Sean Penn (!).

Other than these forays into the realm of network television, Pinsky's most public activity probably occurred during his time as U.S. Poet Laureate. Early in his honorary tenure, he established The Favorite Poem Program. Initially a unique project in which 100 people (selected from over 18,000 entrants) read their favorite work in a video recorded for the Library of Congress, the program has continued to flourish with a variety of initiatives.



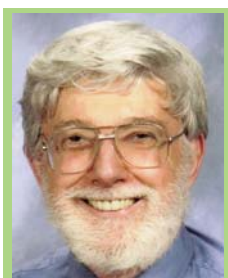
Robert Pinsky will speak at the CLA Annual Conference on Wednesday, April 29, at 10:15 a.m.

Summer institutes held for teachers at all public school levels provide participants with teaching tools that emphasize the nature of the art of poetry and the importance of speaking it aloud. In addition to Pinsky himself, other major contemporary poets, including Louise Gluck and Frank Bidart, have taught at these seminars. At the CLA Conference, Pinsky will help launch a new Favorite Poem Project for Connecticut under the auspices of the International Festival of Arts and Ideas and the Connecticut Library Consortium.

Poetry editor since 1997 of the daily online magazine *Slate*, Pinsky currently teaches in the graduate writing program at Boston University. His most recent published work includes the non-fiction *The Life of David* (2006), a fascinating look at the biblical king; *Gulf Music: Poems* (2007); and, as editor, *Essential Pleasures: A New Anthology of Poems to Read Aloud*, published this year.

For an in-depth profile of Robert Pinsky, I'd recommend his interview with Gibson Fay-LeBlanc in the November 2007 issue of *Guernica*, an online magazine of art and politics.

At the end of their discussion, Fay-LeBlanc asks Pinsky about his role as "one of this country's most public poets" and how he feels about the responsibilities therein. Pinsky replies, "My poems—like my family life, my life with friends, my teaching—these things express who I am. I don't feel any extra responsibilities or relishes or necessary evils in them. They are part of who I am, with all of those customary desires and doubts, purposes and confusions that come along with being a particular person."



David Garnes is the author of *After the War Was Over: Poems of an American Childhood* and the forthcoming novel *Waiting for the Train to Come In*.

# Excellence in Public Library Service Awards

Deep River Public Library and Russell Library in Middletown and the winners of the 2009 Excellence in Public Library Service Awards, sponsored by the Connecticut Library Association and the Connecticut State Library, in partnership with the Association of Connecticut Library Boards and the Friends of Connecticut Libraries. Formal presentation of awards will occur on Friday, May 1, at 1:30 p.m., during CLA's Annual Conference in New Haven.

## Russell Library, Middletown

SUPPORTING LIFELONG LEARNING AND EARNING

by Suzanne Elliot

Of the many services we offer at Russell Library, three in particular exemplify outstanding community service and are potential models for other libraries. Each of these services has improved the quality of individual lives and contributed to a successful future for Middletown.

The Green Children program has given our youth a heightened ecological awareness and encouraged a healthy environment. Job and career services activities have helped people find jobs or change careers. Older adult programs have provided seniors with a vital connection to the library and the community.

**Green Children** focuses on the ecology of Middletown and the surrounding area. We teach children what they can do to protect the land, air, and water, as well as the plants and animals that live in these environments. Children learn that ecology is literally a back yard issue, not always some faraway concern like saving the rain forests.

We heighten ecological awareness through a series of guest speakers, programs, crafts and activities. The group has done everything from building birdhouses to planting a centerpiece flower garden, from creating a compost pile to making strawberry jam. "Veggie Children" is a new project that involves children in the planting, growing and harvesting of a vegetable garden on library property.

As an integral part of Middletown's environmental community, Green Children has forged relationships with Wesleyan University, the Jonah Center for Earth and Art, the Middletown Garden Club, and the Connecticut Forest and Park Association. We hope that the Green Children program will foster a lifelong appreciation of and respect for the natural world.

**Job & Career Programs** The major goal of these programs is to help people, including the long-term unemployed, find jobs or change careers. Our major objectives are: 1) help individuals develop job seeking

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Russell Library's Green Children program teaches kids to protect their environment and the plants and animals that live around them.

## Deep River Public Library

MORE THAN A LIBRARY, A COMMUNITY CENTER

by Ann Paietta

The Deep River Public Library (DRPL) opened its doors on May 26, 1900, offering 675 volumes to the public. Today, the library has over 34,000 volumes and 6,607 registered patrons from Deep River and surrounding towns.

The heart and soul of any small public library is its staff and Deep River is no exception. You could say "jack of all trades and expected to be a master of all," are words to serve by. The library now offers so much more than books; we must be masters of multi-tasking.

DRPL has a small budget, but with the help of great volunteers, the Library Board, and the Friends we provide first class service and programming. The library offers patrons an inviting atmosphere, with comfortable chairs and free beverages to enjoy while reading newspapers and magazines. Five public computers are available for users seeking information, and staff are on hand to answer reference questions. The library supports three databases: Prep Me, BookFlix and InfoAnytime. We also deliver books, DVDs and CDs to people who are homebound.

Although we have no designated children's librarian, staff and volunteers constantly provide new and innovative programs for children of all ages. Baby Sign and Music with Margie are two of our popular programs, funded by the Friends. The annual Teddy Bear Picnic in August is extremely successful with preschoolers. Children bring their favorite teddy bear to the town gazebo along the Connecticut River for an afternoon of stories and a picnic lunch provided by the library.

The library offers a summer reading program with a specific theme every year. Other ongoing programs include a weekly story and craft hour for preschoolers and a monthly movie and pizza night for people of all ages. Throughout the year, holidays such as Valentine's Day and Halloween are celebrated with parties, and Easter is marked by an Easter egg hunt. We also provide programs for families, such as History Mystery, which is our form of letterboxing with a local history twist. For our annual Bookmark Contest, children and adults submit ideas for

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Deep River Library's prize-winning staff, from left to right: Jeanne Roussel, Roberta Ziobron, Pam Ziobron, Ann Paietta, Ryan Hall, Susan Oehl, Linda Hall

# Nominees for CLA Offices 2009/2010

The CLA Executive Board is pleased to present the following candidates for association offices, 2009/2010. Plan to meet them at the Annual Awards & Business Meeting during the CLA Conference in New Haven on Friday, May 1, at 1:30 p.m., when an election will be conducted. Each nominee has been asked to respond to the following question:

Newspapers and television are reporting on the increased demand for library services during the current recession. What should CLA be doing to leverage this public attention into better funding for libraries?

## Vice-President/President Elect



**Debbie Herman**

Head, Electronic Resources and Information Systems  
Central CT State University

### Education

BA, State University of New York/Fredonia;  
MLS, State University of New York/ Buffalo;  
MA, Trinity College

### Professional Activities

Member: CLA, ACRL New England Chapter.  
CLA: Career Recruitment Committee, 2005-  
Chair, 2006-; Conference Committee, 2009;  
Conference Co-Chair, 2010. ACRL New  
England Chapter: Continuing Education  
Committee, 2005-; Chair, 2006-;  
Communications Committee, 2006-; Annual  
conference program committee, 2008. CT  
Library Consortium: Database Committee,  
2007-. Music Library Association: Marketing  
Subcommittee, 1996-2001; Leader, New  
Members Roundtable, 1999-2001. Music  
Library Association, New England Chapter:  
Member-at-Large, 1998-2000. Music OCLC  
Users Group: Chair, Website Subcommittee,  
1997-1999; Treasurer, 1999-2001.

### Statement

It is a tremendous honor to be nominated for Vice-President/President Elect of CLA. I am proud to be part of such a vibrant organization and welcome the opportunity to serve the association in such an important role.

Like others in the library field, I am pleased to see the media attention being given libraries, though it is unfortunate that the economic downturn that has brought so many through our doors is the impetus of this recent interest.

Libraries are a bulwark against economic hardship, and the data that show increased usage nationally are testament to this vital social function. I firmly believe that the focus on libraries, as well as the ways they enrich civic and family life, can and should be leveraged into improved funding at all levels of government.

In fact, the current surge in library use is being leveraged with great vigor by CLA Legislative Committee Chairs Jay Johnston and Carl Antonucci, as well as by President Kathy Leeds as they seek to rally support for the current CLA legislative agenda. Although libraries across Connecticut face budgetary reductions, I believe the cuts in state funding proposed by Governor Rell would have been far deeper were it not for the advocacy of CLA, our sister organizations, and library leaders statewide.

Nevertheless, with libraries in the spotlight, we have a golden opportunity to develop innovative ways to promote the value of libraries to our civic leaders. As vice-president/president elect, I would work to establish a grass roots advocacy grant program to provide seed money for outreach/marketing programs and materials that generate an exciting buzz around libraries and increase the awareness of wonderful statewide programs like Connecticut, iCONN, and InfoAnytime.

For example, some libraries have invited their teen and undergraduate users to submit videos promoting library services or to vlog about what their libraries mean to them. Such content can be shown to granting agencies and local and state elected officials for fundraising purposes. An "indie" campaign like this would complement the more official modes of advocacy pursued by CLA.

Similarly, as many of us spend a significant portion of our lives online, I would work to establish a stronger presence on social networking sites like Facebook or Twitter. I believe that the key to increased funding is greater visibility in our communities. We have the opportunity as well as the tools at our disposal to make this happen.

## Region 1 Representative



**Tracy A. Ralston**

Library Director  
Post University

### Education

BA, UConn Storrs; MLS, Southern CT State University

### Professional Activities

Member: CLA, ACRL, ALA, CCALD. CLA:  
Regional Representative, 2005-2008. CCALD:  
Member, 1998-; Chair, 2001-2002.

### Statement

Start by encouraging renegotiation between consortiums and vendors to achieve greater savings. But better funding should start at the local level. CLA can advocate that each library in CT do its part—aggressive outreach and marketing to patrons (AKA voters) that the library is not currently serving. Speak with local legislators; be a voice at town meetings advocating for library services and resources. Come armed with data about increased usage of your library—circulation and database usage statistics, as well as reference and counter statistics. Have patrons be the advocates—anything from petitions to letters to the editor.

Be fiscally responsible and utilize funds with the greatest prudence and accountability, and make sure all staff are in cooperation. Develop sustainability initiatives—conserve electricity, paper. Be career services central for patrons; they will appreciate it, and so will town hall.

Provide a catalog of area professional services to maximize benefits in the community. Build a relationship with these professionals—they may do minor repair work and renovations gratis. Send out letters to local companies detailing how important libraries are during a recession, and how private donations can help. Utilize private donations for program development and tax money for operating expenses. Community outreach programs should be implemented—collaboration with area schools, share resources with area public libraries if need be in a budget crunch. Prepare for possible budget constraints, and adjust accordingly.

In addition, the basics: provide a suggestion box for patrons on how to improve the library, and report on this to trustees and town boards. Make sure at least a third of your patron population is represented in the report findings.

## Region 4 Representative



**Carolyn Benjamin**

Head of Technical Services  
Wilton Library Association

### Education

BA, Smith College; MLS, Southern CT State University

### Professional Activities

Member: CLA

### Statement

It is critical that Connecticut libraries receive their fair share of the stimulus package recently enacted by Congress as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, and the Connecticut Library Association can be instrumental in advocating for this federal funding.

Many Connecticut towns are facing budget shortfalls, and libraries are being asked to do more with less. The good news is the state is expected to receive approximately \$3 billion in FY2009/2010 for projects identified and approved by Governor Rell's Connecticut Recovery Working Group. This task force includes representatives from state agencies, the General Assembly and statewide organizations, and they need to hear how local

libraries can use federal funds to save or create jobs—the primary focus of the stimulus plan. Funding is required to protect current library positions and to prevent layoffs and cutbacks. Unemployment levels in Connecticut have reached 7.1%.

In addition, libraries need money to pay for programming and materials designed to help patrons find jobs in their communities. News media have recently highlighted what libraries are already doing to assist people to brush up on job-hunting skills and improve their computer proficiency.

Broadband provisions in the Recovery Act have allocated \$7.2 billion dollars to expand services, and Connecticut libraries will have the opportunity to benefit from this program.

Construction projects to modernize and enlarge library facilities can also be funded through the Recovery Act under provisions for K-12/Higher Education Repair and Modernization and the Rural Communities Facilities program.

When municipalities are forced to decide how to fund competing social services, libraries can be a soft target. The federal legislation provides opportunities to compete for grants and direct aid, and the Recovery Working Group is currently formulating a framework for funding consideration. The Connecticut Library Association can provide information for this task force and be a conduit for libraries throughout the state.

### Region 5 Representative



**Maribeth Breen**

Director  
Henry Carter Hull Library, Clinton

#### Education

MA, Westfield State College; MLS, Southern CT State University

#### Professional Activities

Member: ALA, CLA. CLA: Reference and Adult Services Committee 2004-2006; Region 5 Representative 2008.

#### Statement

CLA as an organization needs to continue to lobby the state government to let legislators know just how important libraries are during these tough times, and how our libraries depend on statewide collaborative programs to keep their budgets manageable for their respective communities. Libraries depend more and more on cooperatively negotiated discounts for materials and electronic database subscriptions that would be completely beyond their means if purchased by individual libraries. State representatives can't hear this often enough.

CLA has done a fine job publicizing the challenges of the state's libraries, smaller operating budgets, and increased usage, but it's an ongoing battle. Legislators also need to know how invaluable the regional service centers are for continuing education. These training centers provide a vast array of resources that

would be impossible to duplicate for the price and offer many opportunities to keep current with emerging technologies.

Connecticut's libraries offer its citizens so many resources; we need to get better at self-promotion. To that end, libraries need to let their CLA regional representatives know what amazing things are happening at their libraries and how many ways they are helping the citizens of Connecticut survive these challenging times. This information should then be passed on to the state level, as we need to continue to let lawmakers know how remarkable Connecticut's libraries are.

Libraries are arguably one of the most important institutions in society. The positive effect they have is impossible to quantify. Yet public officials fail even in good times to give them the priority and support they deserve. It is exactly in these hard times that libraries are more critical than ever. We cannot forget to fight for them in good times and bad.

### NELA Representative



**Mary J. Etter**

Director  
South Windsor Public Library

#### Education

AB, College of New Rochelle; MSLS, Simmons

#### Professional Activities

Member: CLA, NELA, ALA, PLA, LAMA. CLA: NELA Rep 2005-; since 1972, positions have included: President; Chair, Children's Section; Conference Co-Chair; Legislative Committee. NELA: CT Rep 2005-; since 1971, positions have included: President; Secretary; Member-at-Large; Public Libraries Section Co-Chair; Conference Chair. CT State Library Board 1992-1998 and 2006-2008. CLC Board 2003-8; President 2006-7. Various positions with WHCLIST and CRLC/CircCess/CONNECT

#### Statement

The upswing in demand for services in our libraries at this time comes as no surprise to us, but the influx of media attention paid to the phenomenon is quite remarkable. (Perhaps "reports of [our] demise were premature?")

CLA should both monitor and share press coverage and analyze articles to provide members with templates on core topics to be used in local press releases and budget discussions. Sharing the various formulas for describing a library's value is one example of this activity; sharing information on how a pertinent new or newly critical service (such as job-hunting) is being delivered is another.

How about using our lobbyist's "ears on the hill" to suggest the themes legislators find most compelling this year and then develop samples for ways those themes could be used to describe a library's local services? ("Here's how our library has demonstrated the value of regionalization since 1976...") The core of our public service is a form of cost-efficient resource sharing, and we're quite good at it. CLA should help us promote that fact.

### American Library Association Chapter Councilor



**Jay Johnston**

Executive Director  
Farmington Libraries

#### Education

BA, Kentucky Wesleyan; MSLS, Southern CT State University; MA University of Connecticut

#### Professional Activities

Member: CLA, ALA, LAMA. CLA: NELA Representative 1990-1997; President 2000-001; Conference Leader 2003-2004, 2005-2006; ALA Councilor 2004-2009; Legislative Co-Leader 2008-. LAMA: Governmental Affairs Committee 1995-1999; Long Range Planning Committee 1997; Program Committee, 1994-1998.

#### Statement

The Connecticut Library Association, through its officers and membership, currently occupies the bully pulpit to publicize and leverage the public perception of the library as a community hub and economic stimulator.

To that end, President Kathy Leeds has spoken to many reporters and met with legislators and the governor's staff to explain the role and vital importance of public libraries in particular, and libraries in general during economic slow downs.

As CLA's legislative co-leaders, Carl Antonucci and I have argued forcefully with legislators and the governor's staff for the continuation of library funding at this most critical time.

Our efforts are supported at the local and personal level by CLA's legislative links who help to make legislators, the media and local officials aware of the important work libraries do and the funding that they require.

ALA's Washington office is also working hard to keep the federal government, Congress, and White House, alert to the positive and critical work libraries perform.

Through CLA and ALA, I look forward to promoting greater recognition and branding of the library in the 21st century as more important than ever to our society.

The annual exhibit of library photographs sponsored by CLA's Publicity Committee will be displayed at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, April 16 to 28. This year's exhibit features more than 400 images of library interiors and exteriors across the state.



## Saving Dollars On Library Computers

HARD TIMES CALL FOR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

by Bruce Johnston

About a year ago, the economy only seemed to be slumping a bit. It is now painfully clear that times are very tough, with no quick recovery in sight. Many of us are tightening our belts, especially when it comes to library budgets. With this in mind, what can be done about the library's computer needs? In this column, I'll explore some ideas for reducing costs.

There are two approaches to saving money on computing expenditures: one is to spend less money on the equipment itself; the other is to seek alternatives that enable the library to provide patrons with equivalent service at a lower cost.

Let's start with the first—saving money on library equipment. When the budget for new equipment is uncertain, it becomes especially important to get the most from what you already own. In our library, we had instituted a three-year replacement cycle for personal computers, including staff and public machines. However, replacement equipment that we expected in the summer of 2008 never arrived; now it is very uncertain as to when we might see any new equipment again. The existing computers are now out of warranty, and hardware failures are becoming a regular occurrence. Therefore, it's critical for us to figure out what we can do to keep all of it running.

The first step is to preserve hardware that isn't yet broken. Fortunately, simply keeping the computers clean is your best strategy for maintaining them. Many hardware failures occur when it gets too hot inside the computer. Keeping chassis vents unobstructed and the insides clean and free of dust can prevent this.

As an additional preventative measure, you can check the temperature of the computer's internal components under normal operating conditions. Depending on your hardware, there are third-party software options, such as Everest and Motherboard Monitor, as well as utilities provided by the manufacturer, such as Intel Active

Monitor. However, older equipment usually just needs some spray-can air and a dust cloth.

No matter how cool and clean you keep it, computer hardware eventually wears out and fails. The most common failures occur with the relatively few moving parts of the computer, notably optical drives and the hard drive. Optical drives are an easy and inexpensive fix. If an old computer has a broken CD-ROM drive, there is no reason not to upgrade to a DVD burner, currently selling for as little as \$25 each. The same can be said for hard drives, which have also become bigger and cheaper. Just make sure you select the appropriate interface to plug into your existing motherboard, whether it is IDE, SCSI, or SATA. This can be identified by the shape of the data cable plugged into the hard drive, and may be labeled on the hard drive, motherboard or system bios if you are in doubt.

Suppose a hard drive does fail? What about having to reinstall the operating system and other software? There is a silver lining to this cloud. Computers have a bad habit of accumulating a lot of garbage on the hard drive over time. Software is installed, upgraded, patched and removed, cached files accumulate, system logs grow and grow, and the registry balloons in size. In the time that it takes to replace the hard drive and install current versions of what you need, you could end up with a computer that performs better than it did last year. It might not be as fast as the newest equipment available, but it will be noticeably better.

While you are in there, check to see how much memory is on the motherboard, and determine whether it will accept more. For as little as \$20 you might be able to double it and get better-than-new performance out of a computer you would otherwise have given up for dead.

As described above, computer upgrades cost a fraction of complete replacement. However, there is another, even more dramatic cost saving strategy. How about taking an existing computer and turning it into four, six, or more terminals that individual patrons can use concurrently? Sounds far-fetched? Perhaps, but it can be done.

Our library will soon participate in a pilot project using Ncomputing equipment that enables a single computer to be shared among four, six, eleven, or even thirty concurrent users, depending on the option selected. Each terminal "sharing" the original computer needs only its own monitor, keyboard, and mouse, in addition to the physical hookups and software from the company.

While this solution will not work for staff computers or service points, it might make the computer access we offer to our students and the public much less expensive to replace, and easier to maintain. We are looking forward to seeing how software applications and functions such as printing will work, but our initial investigation has been very promising. For each terminal that is "shared," the specialized hardware costs \$100 to \$300 (depending on the option), but in return we save the cost of a \$1,000 new computer. Naturally, we will re-use peripherals we already have, and if this works as we hope it will, we will save thousands of dollars.

As an employee of the State of Connecticut, I know that our institution is one of many that will be under pressure to continue to deliver high quality service under a constrained budget for at least the next couple of years. We hope that finding creative ways to do more with less will enable us to at least maintain continuity of service for our patrons. I am sure many of you are in the same boat, and I wish you the best as we prepare to meet the challenges ahead.



Bruce Johnston  
is systems librarian at  
Eastern Connecticut State  
University.

# Stan Siegel

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EAST NORWALK PUBLIC LIBRARY

by Carol Abatelli

When Stan Siegel received a call in 2004 from Norwalk's town clerk telling him that he must come down to city hall to get "sworn in," he had absolutely no idea what was in store. It turned out that he had been appointed to the Norwalk Public Library's Board of Trustees several months before, but no one had told him about it! The following evening, Stan found himself at his first board meeting. "My whole first term was truly library boot camp," he explains.

Although Stan's initial assignment as a trustee was to revise the board's bylaws (including the creation of the office of secretary, which he was then elected to fill), his key contribution was to step up library advocacy and marketing. So successful was he in this regard that he was named president of the board the following year. Stan was also appointed as director of public information for the library, a pro bono position he created to help further his efforts to inform the Norwalk community about their library's services.

Stan brings a lifetime of experience in marketing, public relations, and advertising to Norwalk PL. A native of Brooklyn, NY, he attended Brooklyn College, but—in an effort to see the wider world—ended up graduating from the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. After a two-year hitch in the Army, Stan landed a job with Ethyl Corporation in New York City, where he worked in the employee communications department. He later did freelance product marketing for IBM in White Plains, NY, and then founded his own marketing and public relations business, which he now runs from his home office.

In 2006, Norwalk Public Library Director Les Kozerowitz nominated Stan for the Association of Connecticut Library Board's Outstanding Trustee of the Year award. Stan was pleased to receive the award but dismayed by the small turnout at that year's ACLB conference.



Stan Siegel serves the Connecticut library community as a director, a trustee, and committee chair. His current campaign, as head of CLA's Membership Committee, is to personally contact potential and lapsed members, with the goal of restoring the organization's membership to earlier levels.

Founded in 1970 to represent library trustees statewide, the ACLB had provided valuable consulting services to Connecticut library boards and individual trustees for decades, but the organization had recently declined due to the illness of its long-time president and champion, Dorothy Willett. Stan contacted Dorothy through Suzanne Lee, ACLB's vice president, and was asked to join the board. After a short time, Dorothy

suggested that he take over as president of the ACLB.

In contrast to the handful of people at the 2006 conference, ACLB's 2007 leadership conference had over 180 attendees, and even more came in 2008. Stan's energetic efforts to reach out to trustees and library directors on a personal basis, along with his reorganization of the ACLB Board to include additional voting members, helped make the difference.

Among his many library-related projects and activities, Stan is a member of the steering committee of "Norwalk Reads," a nonprofit organization that provides free books to Norwalk children. Through this work, Stan became acquainted with the former executive director of the East Norwalk Public Library, Terry Rooney, and joined in a fundraising effort for this library.

(Norwalk has four public libraries: The city funds Norwalk PL and its South Norwalk Branch; East Norwalk PL and Rowayton PL are association libraries.)

Following the retirement of Terry Rooney due to illness last year, Stan was asked to take over as executive director of East Norwalk PL and its parent organization, the East Norwalk Improvement Association. As executive director, Stan is responsible for the budget, staffing, and other business operations of both entities. East Norwalk PL is currently open 38 hours

each week with a staff of one librarian and two part-time assistants.

Recently, the library increased its public computer access and, last summer, continued its successful weekend programs featuring magic and music shows, along with drawing lessons and other creative activities for kids. Stan, who once considered becoming a veterinarian, has just introduced a "reading to dogs" program, in which children read books to therapy dogs. He is working with members of the Senior Corps RSVP group to offer ESL tutoring at East Norwalk PL.

Stan has continued as president of the Norwalk Public Library Board. In 2007, he designed a Read! poster series for the library, echoing ALA's nationally known series. Norwalk's posters feature local authors, teachers, officials, and business leaders with their favorite books. The series won a CLA publicity award last year.

As president of the ACLB Board, Stan serves as liaison to the Friends of Connecticut Libraries and CLA. This year, CLA President Kathy Leeds asked Stan to take over as chair of the Membership Committee. CLA membership, which numbered about 1,000 several years ago, has declined since then. Stan believes that to increase membership, CLA must personalize member contact. He intends to reach out to potential members on a one-to-one basis and, through a "Member Ambassador" program, explain how membership in CLA can benefit them.

In discussing his work with libraries over the past four years, Stan says, "I've been fortunate in that I have been given a great deal of freedom to do what I think needs doing—being able to see the forest for the trees." He enjoys contributing to the success of libraries as they serve the people of Connecticut, but believes that many citizens—especially financial supporters—don't really understand what it takes to provide excellent library service. That's something he hopes to change. Although he readily admits that he still has much to learn about libraries, Stan notes that it is learning that keeps him going. He sums up his library experience by saying simply, "I love it!"



Carol Abatelli is head of collections & electronic services at ECSU's Smith Library.

## A SECOND LIFE

continued from page 1

Joshua came about 8:45, and some kids started showing up. The bus arrived around 9:30 and off we went. Joshua was a great tour guide, pointing out all the places of interest. He said the Good Family Guest House is very good, "running water and all." I even saw a satellite dish on the roof. He also taught me three new phrases in Buili.

At the school, we greeted the ministers and a teacher, and then Joshua and I boogied out of there. With extra classes in the afternoons and evenings, we teachers don't have much time to prepare lessons during the week. We both wanted to get back to do some work.

As we drove through town I asked the bus driver to stop at Good Family Grocer. Good Family is quite a local conglomerate in Sandema, a district capital with an area population of about 7,000 people. They own a guesthouse and *grocer*. I *picked* a few things at the grocer, and we headed home, where I prepared for the week ahead, until my stomach started grumbling.

I made a cabbage, tomato and green pepper salad with vinegar and mayo dressing, and then realized I never got my bread. So I went to the bakery and bought a fresh loaf of sugar bread and ate a thick slice of it with my salad and a cup of water—cold water from my refrigerator.

I have two girls who serve me. They fetch water, sweep and sometimes do my laundry. They came to fill my water barrels while I was eating. I usually give them something when they come; this day, I gave them each an orange.

After lunch, Dizzy and I played outside for a while. She had blown up an empty water sachet and made a balloon, which we

tossed around. Then I saw Perpetua and asked when I could set up their new computer. Her husband, the Senior House master at my school, had won a computer as the recipient of a best teacher award. He hadn't yet gotten a table for the computer, so the set-up would wait.

I asked Perpetua if she would let me learn how to pluck the groundnuts off the plants. They had pulled

them all up today and were going to pluck them this weekend. She said she would call me.

Dizzy and I headed off to see the work on the new boys dormitory. On the way, we stopped in the fields and talked to her dad. He showed me how to harvest the groundnuts. It's best after a rain because the ground is soft and they come out easier. You just grab the plant and tug gently and the nuts and roots come out. He is worried about the harvest this year. The goats got into the groundnuts and the weeds were overgrown because of so much rain. When he pulled up some plants the groundnuts looked scarce and small, even to a novice like me.

We moved on toward the construction site—a slow process, what with watching butterflies and picking



Women on their way to market

flowers and talking about the *dough dough* (the boogy man) in the trees. Much progress had been made on the dorm; cement was in all the trenches, and many cement blocks had been laid.

Then back to work for me and to play for Dizzy. I finished my preparation for the week's classes and took a short nap. It was very cool when I awoke, and I heard a very loud crash. The rain was coming. And did it come! My favorite kind of rain—wild and noisy. I gave myself a treat and worked on some puzzles and listened to the BBC while it rained.

After the rain stopped, Madua came by on a bike and said I should try to ride. I did, wimping out at a mud puddle on my first try. But on my second try, I rode on down the lane, and it felt pretty good. I think I'll have to get one. After that, I needed a Sprite. Dizzy and I drank my Sprite outside. Then I went back in to listen to the BBC.

At suppertime, Shadow, the cat, came to my door. I gave her some veggie stew on the stoop and put the rest of it on the stove for myself. Shadow was crying, so I let her in. The last time I let her in, she was spooked because I shut the door, leaping onto the screen door and yowling. So I propped it open and she stayed to be petted and to wander around my house. I gave her more soup and she ate it all.

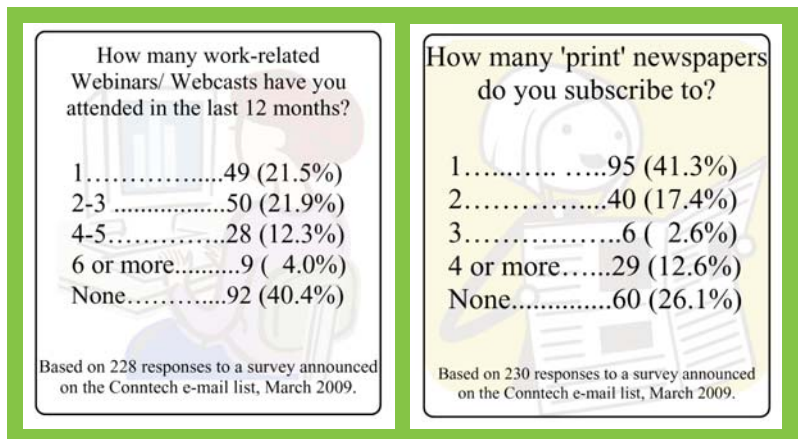
It got so cool that I had to put on my one and only sweatshirt. Now I am settled in bed. My stomach is full. The kitchen is clean. The cat is out. I am ready for a good book.

My days here are simple: I walk, I cook, I eat, I bathe, I teach, I play, I read, I photograph. I am allowing myself to be in the moment. I am learning to relax when I have to wait and to take pleasure in the things around me. I am enjoying the opportunities I have to get to know the people around me.

You can read more about Vicky Chase's life in Ghana and view more photos on her blog: [1person.wordpress.com](http://1person.wordpress.com). Her email address is [sevi.chase@gmail.com](mailto:sevi.chase@gmail.com).



A student at Sandema High Secondary/Technical School. The mouse pads that Connecticut librarians sent for the students in November have proved to be helpful.



## RUSSELL LIBRARY, MIDDLETOWN

continued from page 5

skills; 2) help them understand how others see them through feedback from video-recorded practice interviews; 3) support them with a network of fellow job seekers; 4) provide expert advice from professional job and career consultants; and 5) collaborate with other local organizations to publicize our services and recruit speakers for workshops.

We fulfill these objectives by organizing a variety of programs and activities. Expert professionals conduct monthly job and career workshops. Topics include resume and cover letter writing, interviewing, networking, stress management, and job search strategies.

A weekly job group (listed on the CT Department of Labor homepage) gives people the opportunity to network and gain insight from professionals in a variety of occupations. We also send emails with job listings and other helpful information to participants.

A licensed job and career counselor provides free, confidential job counseling appointments. Practice interviews are conducted and evaluated by volunteer professionals from the community. These sessions can be videotaped and replayed confidentially so that job seekers can see how they appear to others.

Contacts have been made with the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce Business/Education Advisory Council, Health Care Council, Manufacturer's Council and the Department of Labor Connecticut Works Center.

**Older Adult Programs** Russell Library offers many programs to enrich the lives of older adults in our community. The program has two main focuses: 1) in-house activities, and 2) outreach programming conducted at local senior facilities.

The staff interdisciplinary team, named OAT (Older Adults Team), meets regularly to plan entertaining and educational events for older adults who are able to come to the library. One of these, the "Lunch & Learn Series," has been especially popular. Participants are encouraged to bring their lunch to eat while learning about timely, fun subjects.

Past programs have included topics on antiques appraisals, resources for caregivers, travel tips, small space gardening, cooking for one, and organizing for life stages, among others. Thematic film showings and discussions led by a film critic or professor have also been very popular.

The library's older adult specialist offers various services throughout the community to those who are unable to travel to the library. Every attempt is made to provide service that is individualized. Many seniors are lifelong library users, and this service maintains a valuable connection to the library and their community.

The older adult specialist focuses on four major areas: book discussion groups in senior apartment complexes, rotating library collections, discussion-based educational programs in ten senior care facilities, and homebound book delivery.

The Russell Library staff is thrilled to receive the Excellence in Public Service Award and the opportunity to showcase our services and help cultivate ideas for other libraries and their communities.

*Suzanne Elliot is community services librarian for the Russell Library.*

## DEEP RIVER PUBLIC LIBRARY

continued from page 5

bookmarks, and winning designs are printed as bookmarks for patrons.

We organize a variety of events and programs that appeal to the general community. Many authors/experts have presented talks and autographed their books here. We sponsor a foreign film series on Friday evenings in May and October, with pizza and/or desserts. Throughout the year, local artists display their work in the Community Room, with a reception preceding each new exhibit. Many community organizations also use this room for a variety of purposes.

Other services for which the library provides space include: free tax preparation assistance, an AARP safe driving course for the elderly, and a farmers market on the lawn during the summer. These activities introduce people who may not normally use the library to our services.

One unique aspect of our building, which was built as a private home in 1881, occupied by the library in the 1930s, and renovated in 1995, is the possibility that the DRPL may be haunted. The library has been the subject of several investigations into the paranormal. Inspired by that possibility, talks about the paranormal have been our most unusual and well-attended events. "Ghosts in the Library," an exhibit of photographs taken in the library, was presented during Halloween. Thus far, no one has been able to definitively confirm or deny the existence of paranormal activity in the library.

None of our programs and services would be possible without the work of our dedicated staff and volunteers, the support of the Friends and the Library Board. The Friends' fundraising activities, such as the annual book and bake sale or their holiday ornament sale, enable us to purchase passes to local attractions, fund programs, and buy equipment and books. With the assistance of creative members of the Library Board, DRPL has won four CLA publicity awards, including best website, in the last two years. Visit us at [www.deepriverct.com/library](http://www.deepriverct.com/library).

*Ann Paietta is director of the Deep River Public Library.*



[www.ctlibraryassociation.org](http://www.ctlibraryassociation.org)

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## Connecticut Libraries

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How many ways can Stan Siegel serve CT libraries? Find out on page 9.

## Proposed Changes to CLA Bylaws

The following proposed changes to CLA Bylaws will be voted on at the Annual Membership Meeting in New Haven, May 1, 1:30 p.m. Additional proposed changes, published in the March issue of *Connecticut Libraries*, will also be voted on at the meeting.

### Article III, Membership, Section 3: Dues, Rights & Privileges

- Current: Only regular members of the Association have the right to vote and hold office. Dues are payable in July of each year. The schedule of dues shall be amended in the same manner as the bylaws.
- Proposed: Only regular members of the Association have the right to vote and hold office. Dues are payable annually based on the anniversary date of payment of member dues. The schedule of dues shall be amended in the same manner as the bylaws.
- Reason: Since all memberships currently expire at the end of the fiscal year (June 30), people who join CLA at any point other than in July receive less than a full year's membership. Switching to an anniversary date for payment of dues guarantees a full year of membership no matter when, in the course of the year, a person chooses to renew.

### Article XV, Amendments

- Current: These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at an Annual Meeting of the Association or voting by mail ballot, provided that the text of the proposed amendment has been included in the notice of the meeting, or in the case of a mail ballot, sent to the general Association one month prior to the deadline for their return.
- Proposed: These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at an Annual Meeting of the Association or voting electronically or by mail ballot, provided that the text of the proposed amendment has been included in the notice of the meeting, or in the case of an electronic or mail ballot, sent to the general Association one month prior to the deadline for their return.
- Reason: Currently, amendments to the bylaws can be made only at the annual meeting, or must incur the expense of a paper mail ballot. This change would allow for changes to be voted on by email or other appropriate electronic means as well.

Prepared by Sandy Brooks, Procedures Chair

## Join Me @ CLA



I recently became a librarian after 20 plus years in the business world, where I'd been a member of a lot of associations. None came close to delivering the value of my CLA membership. A big part of that value stems from the generosity of our members, with their willingness to share ideas, knowledge and experience. And the annual meeting is a must! From the quality of the educational sessions to the opportunity to meet vendors and colleagues, so much is accomplished in so little time!

*Sascha Gardiner, Children's Librarian  
Hagaman Memorial Library, East Haven*

**MEMBERSHIP INFO**  
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