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Citizen's Legislation Seminar

Mary Puleo, YSS Chair

Last spring I had the opportunity to attend the 56th Citizen's Legislation Seminar. The program is a six-week -18-hour program held at the Massachusetts State House to help citizen's develop a better understanding of the legislative process and lawmaking. The Citizen's Legislative Seminar was established in 1976 through a joint effort of the Massachusetts State Senate and the University Of Massachusetts. The Senate Legislative Education Office holds two sessions: one in the fall and one in the spring.

How did I come to attend this program? My State Senator, Jarrett Barrios, nominated me, as he knew first hand that I was interested in library advocacy. I accepted the nomination and visited the state house six Wednesday mornings in a row. Various legislators led the session and

topics included: how a bill becomes law, lobbying your legislator, the state budget process, testifying at a public hearing, and debating an actual bill on the senate floor.

I can't say enough about the program as I have developed a better understanding of the legislative process and it has helped me in my current position as Assistant Library Director. If you are interested in attending the seminar, you can contact your state representative or state senator and express your interest in attending the program. For further information you can contact Anne Reilly Ziaja, Director, Senate Legislative Education Office, Room 70, State House, 617-722-1380.

If you would like to hear more about my experiences at the seminar, feel free to contact me, Mary Puleo at 617-394-2304 or puleo@noblenet.org. Don't let this opportunity pass you by!

YSS Presents...

**Jack Gantos: Getting Boys to Read
March 4, 2005**

The Keynote speaker for the YSS Annual Spring Program will be award winning author Jack Gantos.

**Register by January 28th.
Don't miss this opportunity!**

For a program flyer, registration form and further details, check out our website at: www.masslib.org/yss.htm



Click and Read

Many of the articles in the newsletter have been edited for space and are available in their entirety on our website:

www.masslib.org/newslet.html

Just look for the mouse:



Retreat to Advance

Carolyn Noah, President

The MLA Executive Board gathered on the first snowy Friday of the season to focus on directions for 2005. Loaded with energy, collaborative spirit, and ideas, the group was facilitated by consultant Maureen Sullivan.

Conversation rapidly focused on three major areas for action. They are:

- * Focus on membership by trying to reach new audiences, communicate with those who aren't members, and work with paraprofessionals and others to be sure they feel welcomed.
- * Concentrate on communication at many levels and on branding.
- * Emphasize advocacy, taking a proactive role in identifying issues and working with other organizations to find common cause.

An action plan should be ready for the January Board meeting. It's our hope that there will be plenty of opportunities for members to become more involved. Look for more information in future issues.

MLA Slate of Officers

The Nominating Committee of MLA, Barbara Flaherty, Chair, Dee Hanley and John Ramsay are pleased to announce the following Slate of MLA Officers for 2005-2006.

Ballots will be mailed to members in early February and will be due back to the MLA office by March 1, 2005. Results will be announced at the Annual Meeting in April 2005.

Vice-President/President Elect

Gianna Gifford
Simmons College Libraries

Kathy Glick-Weill
Newton Free Library

Treasurer

Ann Parsons
Lawrence Library, Pepperell

Mark Contois
Palmer Public Library

NELA Representative

Richard Callaghan
South Hadley Public Library

Cheryl Hansen
Sutton Free Public Library

ALA Councilor

Wayne Noah
Marlborough Free Library

Lee Fogarty
Springfield City Library

A "Moment of Truth"

Diane Klaiber, Executive Manager


By the time you receive this newsletter you will probably be recovering from all your Christmas shopping complete with long shopping lines and the hope of service from the overworked clerks.

Hopefully, you had a memorable experience. Have you ever thought about what made that experience memorable or what would be a memorable experience for your customers?

Kaset International, a consulting firm specializing in customer service, talks about the "Moment of Truth" in service. That "Moment of Truth" is any instance when a customer has an opportunity to make a judgment about the quality of service you provide.

In my next article, I will discuss how we can manage those "Moments of Truth" with our library customers. In the meantime, think about the "Characteristics of the Unhappy Customer" as described by Kaset:

- 96% of unhappy customers never complain
- 91% will not buy again or use your service
- An unhappy customer will tell nine other people and 13% will tell 20 or more

Hope your "Moments of Truth" are all good ones!!! 

Happy New Year!

As we look to a New Year, MLA thanks you for your invaluable support. The Board recognizes that you have many demands on both your time and resources. Because of you, MLA will continue to work for libraries across the Commonwealth.

Have a wonderful New Year!

Exhibitor Conference Brochure Hits The Press!

MLA's annual conference brochure was distributed to over 300 exhibitors. If you have a vendor who might be interested, let Diane Klaiber know (execmgr@masslib.org) or direct them to our web page at: vendors.masslib.org

We are offering the 04 rates until December 31, 2004. Beginning January 1, 2005, rates will be increased

as outlined in the brochure.

This year, we are offering new sponsorship categories to make it easier for vendors to support MLA in a way appropriate to their business. We are offering both sponsorship AND advertising opportunities. Again, you can get acquainted with the offerings at: vendors.masslib.org

Public Relations Awards

We invite all Massachusetts libraries to submit your best PR efforts to apply for the 17th Biennial MLA PR Awards. Our distinguished panel of judges will select the winning entries. The awards will be presented and entries will be displayed at the MLA Annual Conference this May in Falmouth.

All types of PR efforts are eligible, for example: posters, Web sites, brochures, logos, newsletters, and merchandise.

From the submissions, we will also be picking a "PR for Pennies" award, which goes to the best of the bunch, created on a shoe-string budget.

All types of libraries are eligible and applicants must be a member of MLA.

Please see the application form included in this issue for complete details, or, visit our Web site for more information and to download a form: www.masslib.org

Auction Success!

The Annual MLA Auction to benefit the Continuing Education Fund was a rousing success. Thanks to our auctioneer extraordinaire, Keith Fiels, and generous donations from individuals, sections and committees, the auction raised \$7,000. Over the years we have raised close to \$20,000 for this important service.

This year's items ranged from big ticket 'getaway weekends' to handmade aprons and sweaters, herb gardens and cocktail baskets. The bidding was fast and furious and very competitive; no one was left out of the action.

Our goal for 2005 is to top last year's success. MLA members can help reach that goal by finding, making, coercing friends, vendors and colleagues to provide a wide range of

interesting items. Do you knit, sew, crochet, quilt, cook, read, garden, drink? Get those authors who visit your library to sign books to donate to the auction. Don't be shy, remember this is for a good cause and our goal this year is to top last year and bring in \$10,000.

If you know what you want to donate, email the Conference Committee or Auction Co Chairs, so we can advertise the items ahead of time. You can always bring items to the Conference in Falmouth at the last minute.

Finally, come to the auction. Watch your colleagues and friends bid against each other for the strangest things! This is superb entertainment and you just might end up with the deal of the night!



Think For Yourself

Demetri Kyriakis
Intellectual Freedom Committee

You probably noticed the flurry of movies leading up to the recent presidential election. "Fahrenheit 9/11", "Control Room", "Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism", and many others made up some of the constant barrage of political analysis this past season.

I saw a few of the movies, watched some Jon Stewart on Comedy Central, and, being a political junkie, faithfully took in as much of the Sunday morning news programs as I could stand. My biggest issue with the pre-election coverage was that nearly all these shows and movies deliver their analysis as fact and presume to tell us what to think! No one ever suggested that people should examine the facts for themselves.

Outside of the Sunday morning shows, I believe that the coverage was all political satire. Would you decide important issues based on a satirical piece? (And for the record, I do think Jon Stewart is funny, just not informative. But, it's not his job to inform.)

The Intellectual Freedom Committee's theme is "Think for Yourself." Our question is, what do you think about this past season of political coverage? What about the rest of the population? Please take the time to teach your patrons how to evaluate sources and think for themselves.



Watch your Mailbox

There are over forty programs to look forward to during our upcoming conference, May 9-11, 2005 at the Seacrest Hotel in Falmouth.

Keep an eye out for your Conference @ A Glance brochure coming soon!

DON'T WAIT, JOIN NOW!

Members are getting a bigger deal than ever as Non-Member Conference Registration Rates are going up! Join MLA today.

Learn to Lead at NELLS

Richard Callaghan
Education Committee

Do you have leadership potential? Do you think you could run MLA as well as those librarians on the Executive Board? You can find out by applying for the New England Library Leadership Symposium (NELLS) to be held in Exeter, Rhode Island July 25-29, 2005. NELLS is a four day seminar designed to foster "up and coming" library leaders. NELLA and the six state library associations are sponsoring the conference.

Participants can be professionals, par-alibrarians, volunteers, trustees, or friends who have at least 3-5 years experience with or in libraries. Attendees may apply or be recommended for the program. The symposium will have 26 participants (4 from each state and 2 from NELLA). Six experienced library leaders will act as mentors. Applications are available online at www.nelib.org and are due on February 4, 2005. MLA is offering scholarships to cover the cost (\$400 a person) of the conference.

NELLS is a great opportunity for librarians to enhance their leadership, communications, and negotiation skills. If you know a librarian who would benefit from the symposium or want to apply yourself, read the brochure and an account from a previous participant available at the website: www.nelib.org. All librarians who want to "Learn to Lead" are encouraged to apply.

Kay Bader Memorial Scholarships

Once again MLA is offering scholarships to attend its annual conference to new library personnel and MLS. students. This year's conference, "Defying Classification," will be held May 9-11, 2005. The Kay Bader Memorial Scholarships cover the cost of conference registration, lunches and dinners on the days of attendance, and accommodations at the Sea Crest. Last year, 8 scholarships were awarded to first time attendees who wrote short essays on one of two topics: "Why I want to attend the conference," or "What libraries mean to me." Look for application forms to begin appearing in your library and on the MLA. web site (www.masslib.org) in January.

Mark Your Calendar!

ALA 2005 Advocacy Institute
January 14, 2005

The American Library Association will hold its first Advocacy Institute at this year's Midwinter Meeting in Boston. This will be an unusual opportunity for Massachusetts library advocates to take part in a national workshop on advocacy. Registration is only \$10. For more information or to register go to www.ala.org/midwinter.

Ways & Means Day
February 9, 2005

MLA holds this annual event to educate members of the Legislature about the budgetary needs for libraries and library programs in the state in the upcoming year. For more information visit MLA's Legislative Website by going to www.masslib.org and clicking on Legislative Update

MLA Legislative Day
April 6, 2005

MLA's Annual Legislative Day is an event for all library supporters to come to the State House in Boston and advocate for libraries and library funding. Librarians, Trustees and Friends of Libraries are urged to attend. The Massachusetts Center for the Book will award its Letters About Literature Awards at this event, a luncheon is served, and legislative briefings are held. - Watch our web site for more information soon!

Central Mass Legislative Breakfasts

There are a series of breakfasts starting February 11th. For exact dates and more check out the Calendar of Events on our web site: www.masslib.org

2005 Annual Conference

Our 2005 guest dinner speaker will be David Rakoff, author, humorist, essayist, & contributor to Public Radio's "This American Life". If you enjoyed Sarah Vowell at the MLA's 2003 Annual Conference, you're going to love David Rakoff.

This year's popular "Afternoon with the Authors" series will spotlight authors from many genres, including mystery, memoir, science fiction and romance.

Peter Abrahams is the author of fifteen novels, including *The Tutor*, *A Perfect Crime*, and his latest, *Their Wildest Dreams*.

Steve Almond is the author of the acclaimed story collection *My Life in Heavy Metal* and is a regular commentator on the NPR affiliate WBUR in Boston.

Karin Lowachee was born in South America, grew up in Ontario, Canada. Her debut science fiction novel *Warchild* won the Warner Aspect First Novel Contest in 2001.

Nancy Thayer is the author of thirteen novels, including *Custody*, *Between Husbands and Friends*, *Belonging*, *An Act of Love*, *Three Women at the Water's Edge*, and *Everlasting*.

Look for even more conference highlights in your Conference @ A Glance brochure coming soon! ☺

E-Rate Update

Barbara Powell, ALA Councilor

Thanks to everyone who called Kennedy's office or their congressman's office about the E-Rate. December 9th the Senate voted by voice to "fix" the E-rate accounting problem that was holding up everyone's disbursement. This move was attributed to the calls and emails the Congress received. Massachusetts was cited as one of the states that had been particularly effective in organizing a strong outcry.