



# MHLS BULLETIN

Mid-Hudson Library System | Serving the Staff and Trustees of Public Libraries in the Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam & Ulster County Area  
103 Market Street - Poughkeepsie, New York 12601 - 845.471.6060 - Fax: 845.454.5940 - <http://midhudson.org>

## Josh Cohen: NYLA President-Elect

**It's official! Our very own Josh Cohen, MHLS' Executive Director, has been elected to be the New York Library Association's Vice-President/President Elect.** Josh will assume the presidency in 2008-2009.

The New York Library Association (NYLA) was founded in 1890 to lead in the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning, quality of life, and equal opportunity for all New Yorkers. Today, NYLA is working stronger than ever to further promote its mission in support of libraries and information service.



Josh's statement prior to the election reveals his strong commitment to strengthening NYLA as an advocacy organization, *"If we believe in our profession, the ideals of librarianship, the crucial role of libraries in supporting education, in ensuring democracy, then every librarian in the state needs to join NYLA,"* said Josh, *"It's only by having a stronger statewide voice that we can ensure that libraries and librarians and all they contribute to civil society will thrive in the future."*

Josh will not be leaving MHLS to take this post, the NYLA presidency is an unpaid, volunteer position – much like the role of a library's board president.

MHLS is proud to see a majority of NYLA members agree that Josh is the right person for this role. He has proven himself a tireless advocate for our member libraries and we're confident he'll do the same for the rest of the state.

Congratulations Josh!

### MHLS Announcements

**48<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting:** Approximately 150 library directors, trustees, and staff members attended the System's 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in the Danny Kaye Theater of the Conrad Hilton Library at the Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, New York, on Friday, October 5<sup>th</sup>.



**Susan Wagner, our Innovative Interfaces, Inc. Regional Sales Consultant,** conducted a 30-minute presentation about new trends emerging in Online Public Access Catalogs. She shared new developments and examples that meet the needs and expectations of a new generation of Web 2.0 users.



After Susan's presentation **MHLS Board President, Marie Smith,** called the meeting to order and welcomed and introduced Board members, trustees, staff, and special guest Michael Borges, Executive Director of the New York Library Association (NYLA).

Following introductions, President Smith turned the meeting over to **William Conine, Chair of the Board's Election Committee,** who conducted the election of three trustees to the MHLS Board:

- John Bickford from Dutchess County
  - Jean Ehnebuske from Putnam County, and
  - Jennifer Lange from Ulster County
- (5 year terms commencing January 1, 2008)*



Josh presented service awards to the following employees: (himself!) - Josh Cohen, Executive Director (20 years); Karen O'Brien, Cataloging & Database Maintenance Supervisor (15 yrs.) [Karen is shown above with Josh upon receiving her service award]; Laurie Shedrick, Automated Systems Manager (5 years).

*"Whenever we bring new people into a library, it is incumbent on us to keep them coming back. One way is to ensure that they receive quality service every time they enter the library."*

*-Josh Cohen, MHLS Executive Director, 48<sup>th</sup> MHLS Annual Meeting Program*

President Smith thanked departing MHLS Board members **Margaret Feldman (Dutchess County)** and **Camilla von Bergen (Putnam County)** for their valuable contributions and service to the Board.

Mr. Cohen then highlighted the charge and accomplishments of each of the System's four **Advisory Committees**, and introduced and thanked the Chair of each committee. He then introduced the **Directors Association Steering Committee** members and recognized them for their leadership efforts throughout 2007.



Jennifer Lange, Chair of the Trustee Services Committee, then presented certificates to the recipients of the County **Trustee Success Story Recognition Awards**. The five trustees awarded \$200 for their libraries were:



**Columbia County:**

Matthew D. Perry, Philmont Public Library

**Dutchess County:**

Carol A. Decker, NorthEast Millerton Library

**Greene County:**

Fran Monahan, Cairo Public Library

**Putnam County:** Alice Walsh, Mahopac Library

**Ulster County:** Albert Ahlstrom, trustee emeritus, Kingston Library



[From top to bottom: Philmont Public Library trustee, Matthew Perry and Josh Cohen; Cairo Public Library trustee, Fran Monahan receives her award from MHLS trustee Jennifer Lange; Kingston Library trustee emeritus, Al Ahlstrom addresses the audience after receiving his award.]

A summary of each award winners' accomplishments is included on page 4 of this week's *Bulletin*.



Following the presentation of the County Trustee Awards, President Smith closed the Business Meeting and Mr. Cohen introduced the keynote speaker, **Marilyn Johnson, author of "The Dead Beat: Lost Souls, Lucky Stiffs, and the Perverse Pleasures of Obituaries"**. In her entertaining presentation, Ms. Johnson not only shared excerpts from her published work but some interesting obituaries of "visionary" librarians as well. The author is currently working on a new book about librarianship in the digital age.

Following Marilyn's presentation, there was a lively question and answer period. Lunch was served in the Catarina de Medici Ristorante and guests, including Assemblyman Marc Molinaro, enjoyed a period of informal networking and conversation.

The next **MHLS System Tour** will be held on Thursday, November 1<sup>st</sup> from 9:30am – 12:30pm beginning in the MHLS Auditorium. The System Tour is offered to introduce member library staff and trustees to System services and the staff that provide them. The tour will cover:

- An introduction to the MHLS organization, web site and electronic resources (the online library catalog and **HOMEACCESS**)
- Technology: Automated Services, Data Entry, AV Services, and Computer Operations
- Public Services: Youth Services, ILL, Print Services, Member Information, Outreach & Continuing Education
- Administration: Business Office, Shipping & Delivery

There will also be built-in time to talk one-on-one with department staff. Register today at: <http://midhudson.org> → *Calendar* or by calling 845.471.6060 x46. Directions to MHLS: <http://midhudson.org/help/directions.htm>

**Professional Development**

**Small Libraries Roundtable** to meet in Coxsackie on Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00am – 12:00pm to talk about **Managing Growth** in a small library setting. This users group is designed for the administrators of small libraries (3FTE or less). The purpose of the group is to discuss the issues surrounding running a small library. The meeting will be facilitated by Josh Cohen, MHLS Executive Director and Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Coordinator of Member Information. This instance of the users group will address issues and solutions to such issues as:

- As staff size grows what needs to change?
  - What new issues arise for boards as an organization grows?
  - How to allocate limited resources in the face of growth?
- Register online at <http://midhudson.org> → *Calendar*

**Reference & Collection Development**

**Tips From the 2007 MHLS Reference Summit:**

At the MHLS 2007 Reference Summit, Jo-Ann Benedetti presented "*Take 2 Aspirin and call your librarian*". Jo-Ann has developed several consumer health reference classes for the National Library of Medicine, and showed MHLS participants how to respond to health questions from patrons and build their health reference skills. Tips included:

- Do provide a safe and private place for your reference interviews.
- Do say something like "You must be worried (or concerned)"
- Do be sure you are searching for the correct health issue. The patron may come to you with misinformation or inadequate information. To help refine this you can say "This may be difficult because you don't have the name of the disease. I really want to help you. Call your doctor and call me back when you have the name of this disease." More info about the health reference interview

"Thanks to the astute library community, technology was not limited to only those who had the means to gain access.

Libraries made technology available to all."

-MHLS Board President, Marie Smith, 48<sup>th</sup> MHLS Annual Meeting Program

at <http://midhudson.org> → *Reference and Collection Development* → *Providing Reference*

- Do keep the information confidential.
- Do not judge, give an opinion, or tell the person "it's probably nothing."
- Do not speak from personal experience or knowledge.
- Do not pretend to have medical knowledge or guess at the condition. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know." Once you have gone as far as you can go, refer them back to their health care provider or to a professional organization.
- Do not interpret medical information – It is easy to get into the trap of translating medical information into lay language. If they ask about terminology, refer them to a good medical dictionary.
- Know the limits of your collection. Jo-Ann recommends that the most important medical book for a library to have is a good medical dictionary. Everything else can be looked up online using reliable resources.



Reliable medical resources are available from **Quick Answers for Library Patrons on the Go!** at <http://midhudson.org/answers>. In the *Healthy Living* section there are links

to frequently asked health and wellness questions, a link to Consumer Health Information from MHLS' *Health Information Project* (which includes all the resources Jo-Ann recommended during the training) and additional health information through *Useful Links from Adriance Memorial Library*.

*This Reference Summit was the first of an annual program designed to bring public library front desk staff together to enhance their ability to answer patrons questions, and discuss their needs for support in this area.*

## Trustee Resources

Register now for one of the **MHLS Advanced Trustee Education Sessions in October** on the topic of *Smart Growth For Your Library*. Your library is growing in many ways.

- Learn how to make the most of your efforts and create equilibrium between the important elements of finances, services, planning, facilities, division of labor, public relations and more.
- Learn how to be smart about growth and spot the red flags before they become problems.

Presented by Josh Cohen - MHLS Executive Director, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich - MHLS Coordinator of Member Information and Merribeth Advocate - MHLS Outreach & Education Coordinator. Advanced sessions are designed to focus on issues benefiting and affecting libraries in our system, and address a different topic each year. They are designed for trustees who have been on the board at least a year.

- Saturday, October 27 from 10:00am-12:00pm at the Kingston Library (55 Franklin Street, Kingston)

OR

- Monday, October 29 from 6:00pm-8:00pm at the Mid-Hudson Library System Auditorium (105 Market Street, Poughkeepsie: <http://midhudson.org/help/directions.htm>)

There is a \$50.00 incentive grant to libraries in 2007 if at least one of their trustees attends a MHLS Advanced Trustee Education session this year.

The System will mail checks based on attendance. Light food will be served. 100% of past participants said they recommend this training for public library trustees. Comments from participants in the Spring session on this topic:

- "Great workshop! Thank you for bringing us together today to take the time to think about the important issues and how to improve and help our libraries!"
- "Very good workshop. Lots of good suggestions."
- "Although I always find MHLS workshops beneficial, this has been an even better experience than usual. Much to take back to my board. Great!!"

Registration is required. Register one of 2 ways:

1. <http://midhudson.org> → *Calendar*
2. call 845.471.6060 x46

## Job Openings

The Grinnell Library Association of Wappingers Falls is seeking a **(temporary) part-time weekend reference librarian** to work approximately 10.5 hrs every other weekend. Applicants must possess a MLS or be enrolled in an ALA accredited MLS program and be available to work Saturdays 9:30am – 5:00pm and Sundays 1:00 - 4:00pm. Position expires 12/31/07. This is a wonderful opportunity for an IST student looking for experience working in a public library. Please send resume, cover letter and references to Grinnell Library Association, 2642 East Main Street, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590, Attn: librarian search, fax, 845.297.1506 or e-mail [glsearch@gmail.com](mailto:glsearch@gmail.com)

MHLS recommends that the minimum starting salary of a full or part-time librarian with an MLS degree be at least equal to that of a teacher with a master's degree in the same community.

Member Libraries are welcome to submit items of interest and job openings to the MHLS Bulletin: [bulletin@midhudson.org](mailto:bulletin@midhudson.org). The MHLS Bulletin is available on line at <http://midhudson.org/bulletins/main.htm>.

"Would you invest in a company that attracted over 9,000 new customers in a year? That has an increase of over 160,000 store visits and over 200,000 more sales transactions? That is the record of the libraries in the Mid-Hudson Library System, and you have invested in that company with your time, energy and support. It is a record each one of us can look to with pride."

*-Josh Cohen, MHLS Executive Director, 48<sup>th</sup> MHLS Annual Meeting Program*

# 2007 Trustee Success Story Recognition Awards

These awards annually highlight efforts by library trustees that resulted in positive outcomes for their library. The award consists of \$200 to the trustee's library and a certificate of recognition for the trustee.

Columbia County

## Matthew D. Perry, Philmont Public Library



Since joining the board Matthew has demonstrated a high level of commitment and energy to ensuring that the library is an integral part of the community.

- Management of Philmont.org, a community web site that includes the library's web site
- Active participant, representing the library in town venues: the local Zoning Board of Appeals, the town Signage Committee and the Main Street Committee
- Writing press releases and articles about the library for the town website and in newspapers

Dutchess County

## Carol A. Decker, NorthEast-Millerton Library

Carol's long-term commitment to the library has seen the library through much proactive growth:

- Extensive renovation of the building and grounds, including a handicapped accessible entrance and restroom.
- Creative fundraising ideas including "The Recognition Bookcase," with engraved book spines to recognize significant donors
- Stepping up to serve as first the treasurer for several years and then the president of the board for multiple terms.

Greene County

## Fran Monahan, Cairo Public Library



Fran's involvement in the library begins at the beginning. She was part of the organization that began the library! She has served as secretary, vice-president and president over the years and has helped solidify the operations of this growing library:

- Core author of the library's mission statement;
- Instrumental in revising the library's policy and procedures manual;
- Supportive of continuing education for library staff

Putnam County

## Alice Walsh, Mahopac Library



Alice's dedication and commitment has helped to redefine the physical structure, internal policies and public perception of the Mahopac Library.

- Chair of the Advancement and Public Relations Committee;
- Produced a 7-minute DVD to promote the library in the community
- Developed an orientation presentation for new trustees
- Coordinated a "get out the vote" campaign for the library's re-vote
- Spearheaded a 2-year capital campaign, raising over \$700,000

Ulster County

## Albert Ahlstrom, trustee emeritus, Kingston Library



Al served as president of the board from 2002-2006. Among his many accomplishments:

- Instrumental in the re-chartering of the library to a special district public library to help stabilize the library's funding;
- Negotiated the transfer of ownership of the library building;
- Leader in the passage of a \$1,000,000 bond issue for capital improvements
- Worked to bring pay equity to library staff by initiating a comparative wage study
- Continues to serve the library as president of the Friends Group