

**New Jersey Library
Trustee Association**

P.O. Box 1505, Trenton, NJ 08607

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Contact us

email: ptumulty@njla.org

phone: 609.394.8032

fax: 609-394-8164

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New Jersey Library Trustees Newsletter

Spring 2012

NJ TRUSTEE INSTITUTE

JUNE 2, 2012

Sheraton Eatontown

“The Evolution of the 21st Century Library: Building Community”



New Jersey Library Trustees Newsletter

Keeping the Vision While Keeping the Lights On Make Your Voice Heard

The New Jersey State Library, LibraryLinkNJ and the New Jersey Library Association are sponsoring an event on May 23, 2012 that will help us plan the future of libraries in New Jersey. We have invited Joan Frye Williams and George Needham to lead us in a discussion of the issues facing us, including making hard choices and sustaining the services that are of most value to our customers.

We invite staff from all types of libraries, trustees, Friends and foundation members to join us for this FREE event. It will be held at the Sheraton Eatontown and will be a full day event, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Morning coffee and a full lunch will be provided. For more information: http://ldb.njstatelib.org/ldb_files/Sustainability%20and%20Funding%20Issues.pdf

Do We Have Your Email Address?

NJLTA sends our email messages to our members. Have you been getting yours? If not, please check with Pat Tumulty at ptumulty@njla.org and she will check our database and make sure we have your correct address. There are so many things going on that you don't want to miss out.



The New Jersey State Library, in partnership with the New Jersey Library Trustee Association and the New Jersey Library Association is sponsoring the 8th Trustee Institute on June 2 at the Sheraton Eatontown. The Institute is recognized as the premier educational and networking opportunity for all trustees in the state. A full day of workshops will be offered on a wide variety of topics. The keynote address is “Libraries Build Communities” by Andre Sayegh and Julio Tavarez, Councilmen for the City of Paterson. Other topics include: library law, capital planning, working with Friends, roles & responsibilities of trustees and marketing for libraries, just to name a few. The New Jersey Library Trustee Association's annual meeting will also be conducted at the Institute.

This Institute is valuable for both new and “seasoned” trustees.

Those who have attended the conference in the past have given it terrific reviews. Here are a few examples:

Good, informative sessions in a well-planned time schedule.

A good conference—even after attending for three years.

The Trustee Institute gave me enough information to go back to my board and library and make a difference as a trustee.

Great place to network with other trustees.

I am reenergized to be a more committed trustee.

It was a real eye-opener!

Participants to the conference will receive 7 hours of continuing education credit which your library needs to qualify for state per capita aid. The NJ State Library will pay for one trustee from each library to attend (up to a total of 200). Additional trustees, library directors and

administrators are welcome to attend but will be charged the full cost of the conference at \$75.00.

Room accommodations for the evening of June 1, 2012 must be made on your own through the Sheraton Eatontown for a special rate of \$108.00 each. Please contact the hotel directly at 732-542-6500 to reserve a room. Members of the NJLTA Executive Board will host a reception for all overnight attendees on June 1 at the hotel.

For more information and to register online see: <http://ldb.njstatelib.org/Trustees>

Michele Stricker, Assistant Director, Library Development Bureau, NJ State Library will be happy to answer any questions regarding the Institute. Contact her at mstricker@njstatelib.org or 609-278-2640 ext. 164.

Every library in the state should be represented at this valuable program.

Two Trustee Leaders Speak on the Importance of Advocacy with Local Officials.

The purpose of my column is to urge library trustees to become more involved with their municipal government officials.

I have been a trustee of the Denville Free Public Library for over eighteen years and prior to being appointed by my Mayor I served as liaison from the Denville Township Council for four years when I served on our township council. I have an understanding from both the perspective of the council and of the trustee. I have served five mayors so far and have maintained a cordial relationship with all of them, seeking always to present the library to them in a positive, community building and supportive way. Our library has for many years prior to my involvement presented our budget and year-end report to the mayor and council at a breakfast meeting on a Saturday morning in January. It has evolved into

something that is looked forward to by the mayor and council and the trustees each year. We also invite the township administrator and the director of finance to participate and they both nearly always make it.

In addition our board members each in their own way try to adopt a council person to keep them up to date on what is happening in the library, what special events or programs are being held to benefit their constituents, and they are always invited to any special events being held. A brief ten to fifteen second update on current library topics always helps.

As openings on the board of trustees occur and new mayors assume office I have always contacted our mayor with what the needs of the board are when it comes to trustees. It is my belief that the board should represent to some degree the demographics of the

community it serves and that trustees need to be aware that it is not a one evening a month commitment. Trustees should also bring to their meetings an understanding of their role and their responsibility to the community through their appointment. I share the roles and responsibilities information with our mayor.

These steps have proven over the years to help the library keep a good relationship with our municipal government and afforded them a better understanding of how important the library is to our community.

Trying a regular program of reaching out to your municipal government officials and encouraging their participation in library events can only lead to better relations.

Al Atkinson, Treasurer
NJLTA, Trustee Denville
Free Public Library

Budget Time- The Role of a Library Trustee

It's budget time again and everyone is posturing to get their fair share of the pie. Budget time is the time of year when relationship building can really pay off. Libraries are struggling to maintain services while funds are shrinking. So when it comes time to go before your legislative body to present your budget, a relationship with just one councilman/woman can make a difference and get you what you are asking for.

When was the last time you attended a council meeting? Do you know the members of your town government? Attending council meetings is a great way to get to know who's who. I attended a recent meeting and gave each member of the council a new library card and a copy of our web page to encourage them to visit the library and see what we offer to the community. It's good to have a visible presence down town. Plan an event and invite your legislators. Tell them a story

about how your library helped or assisted or made a difference in someone's life. It's important for them to see how their community values the library and uses its services to better their lives.

Building relationships within your community is part of the job of a trustee. When it comes to asking for something you need or want for your library, relationships can be helpful. When it comes to securing enough funding to keep your library doors open, those relationships can be critical. Libraries seem to be at the bottom of the barrel when it comes to "essential services". And with legislation allowing municipalities to take back un-encumbered funds, we have to be extremely careful of the funding we get.

If you have a relationship with members of the town government, it can help during budget time and any other time you need to ask.

Make a goal for yourself. Establish a relationship with one council member this year. And take the time to build that relationship by attending meetings and understanding what else is going on in town. Attend other town events as well. Put a positive face forward and advocate for your library. If you adopt a councilman/woman this year and get them to be a supporter of the library, maybe you can adopt another one next year. Before you know it, you may have support that you didn't expect.

So during budget time, remember this is the time for advocacy and relationship building as we all fight for a piece of the pie.

Margaret Shapiro, President of the Board of Trustees Demarest Public Library and President of NJ Library Trustee Association.