



Inside This Issue

Volume 22 No. 2

Board Meeting Highlights. 2

Info-Trac Brochures
Trustee Forum. 3

Library Happenings. 4

Spotlight on LSTA. 5

Board Meeting Highlights (cont.)
Fast Facts 6

Commissioners Respond to Budget
Maier Testifies
New England Regional Depository. 7

Calendar of Events
Kudos to Authors. 8

Governor's Budget Preserves Program Funding; Leaves Agency Future In Doubt

Governor **Mitt Romney's** fiscal year 2004 budget filed on February 26, 2003, as House 1 calls for level funding of programs administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), but provides \$0 for administration of the agency under a proposal to consolidate the MBLC within a new Executive Office of Education. Further, the two programs for the Blind and Physically Handicapped would be transferred to a new Department of Disabilities and Community Services within the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. The chart below shows what House 1 provides for accounts currently administered by the MBLC:

Account	Program	FY2003	FY2004
7000-9101	Board of Library Commissioners	\$ 965,935	\$ 0
7000-9401	Regions & Library of Last Recourse	\$ 14,980,361	\$ 14,980,361
7000-9402	Talking Book Library—Worcester	\$ 297,126	Transferred Dept. of Disability
7000-9406	Talking Book Program—Watertown	\$ 1,517,940	Transferred Dept. of Disability
7000-9501	State Aid to Public Libraries	\$ 7,830,844	\$ 7,830,844
7000-9506	Library Technology	\$ 341,811	\$ 366,718

By zeroing out funds for the MBLC, there is great uncertainty as to whether the agency will be able to carry out its core mission of supporting library services for the residents of Massachusetts by developing the infrastructure for resource sharing that provides equity of access to information resources statewide. At press time administration officials had not been able to provide any specific information about the level of support for the agency included in the consolidation plan. Under consolidation the Board would be placed within a new Executive Office of Education with the Department of Education and the Board of Higher Education. The MBLC is presently an independent agency. In 1978, the Board was released from the Department of Education by act of the legislature and then was under a Secretary for Education until that office was disbanded.

The Governor's budget does not deal with capital expenditures. The administration will be reviewing all capital projects, including public library construction, in the near future.

(Budget coverage continues on page 7)



The Board of Library Commissioners is the agency of state government with the statutory authority and responsibility to organize, develop, coordinate, regulate and improve library services throughout the Commonwealth. The Board advises municipalities and library trustees on the operation and maintenance of public libraries, including construction and renovation. It administers state and federal grant programs for libraries and promotes cooperation among all types of libraries through regional library systems and automated resource sharing. It also works to ensure that all residents of the Commonwealth, regardless of their geographic location, social or economic status, age, level of physical or intellectual ability or cultural background, have access to essential new electronic information technologies and significant electronic databases.

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Robert C. Maier
Director

339 Municipalities Receive State Aid for FY2003

Three hundred thirty nine out of 348 municipalities with public libraries - an all time high - applied for, and were certified for, State Aid to Public Libraries in FY2003. "Of the 339, nine municipalities applied for, and received, waivers of their Municipal Appropriation Requirement at the February 6, 2003, meeting, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners," said **Dianne Carty**, MBLC Head of State Aid and Data Collection.

"At the board meetings in which the MBLC Commissioners voted the FY2003 State Aid awards, their motion approved an initial payment of 50 percent of the total award for each community," she continued. "This was done because it was uncertain whether there would be additional emergency 9C cuts. However, the last round of 9C reductions made by Governor **Mitt Romney** on January 30, 2003, did not include State Aid to Public Libraries. Therefore, the second half of the State Aid to Public Libraries awards will be processed as soon as the allotment is available, sometime before the end of the fiscal year."

The State Aid to Public Libraries program has statutory and regulatory requirements that municipalities, and their libraries, must annually meet to qualify for Cherry Sheet aid. These requirements include: hours of service based on the population of the municipality, expenditures on library materials for library users based on the population of the municipality, and a local maintenance of effort called the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR).

With reductions in local aid and municipal budgets, it is anticipated that FY2004 will be a difficult year for all municipalities. There are several actions that the MBLC is taking to allow flexibility within the program

(continued on page 3)

Massachusetts Center for the Book Moves

Simmons College in Boston and Hampshire College in Amherst have joined forces to host the Massachusetts Center for the Book (MCB) that promotes and celebrates books, reading and libraries across the Commonwealth.

The new institutional hosts for the MCB will work with its affiliates across the state to plan and execute a number of creative programs aimed at promoting books and book arts that hold a special place in Massachusetts literary culture and history.

(continued on page 3)

Board Meeting Highlights



The **January 9th** board meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) was held at Simmons College in Boston where **Michele Cloonan**, Dean of the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, welcomed the Board and guests to Simmons College.

Chairman **Joseph Hopkins** in his report said that he, MBLC Director **Robert Maier** and **Maureen Killoran**, MBLC Head of Public Library Advisory & Government Liaison, had met with several members of the state legislature to present the Board's mission and goals and to ascertain their sense of the state's fiscal reality for the coming year. He also announced that in broadening the recently renamed Community Relations Committee of the Board, he had appointed **Lee Fogarty** from the Springfield City Library and Co-Chair of the Legislative Committee of the Massachusetts Library Association and **Sharon Morgan** a library trustee of the Tufts Library in Weymouth to the Committee.

MBLC Director Maier in his report gave an update on a number of items. Among them was the unfortunate news of a fire on Saturday, December 28, 2002, that totally destroyed the building that housed the West Warren Library Association; the Board of Library Commissioners would be exhibiting at the Annual Conference of the Massachusetts Municipal Association in Boston on Friday and Saturday, January 10th & 11th during which it would be introducing a hand card that would be the centerpiece of this spring's public awareness campaign. He also stated that he had had a conversation with a member of Governor **Mitt Romney's** Transition Team to inform him about the role of the Board, as well as a meeting with **Bernard Margolis**, President of the Boston Public Library, about the impact of reduced funding on its services. Other items of interest included the workshops being conducted by the Gates Foundation, "Before Your Computer Arrives," throughout the state for the 100 libraries who would be recipients of computers that would be arriving during March and April. News stories he mentioned included an editorial in the *Providence Journal* that announced the closing of a branch of the Swansea Free Public Library, and stated that "The state (Massachusetts) has shortsightedly cut \$7.1 million from its appropriation to local and regional library systems..."; Commentator **Jon Keller** on WBZ News Radio had recently stated "how access to online newspapers and magazines, and primary source material through library sites makes my job so much easier," and that he would be contacting the Beaumont Foundation of America, who had run an ad in *The New Yorker*, about assistance for computers in Massachusetts.

Maureen Killoran, MBLC Head of Public Library Advisory & Government Liaison, in her Legislative Report pointed out that the annual Legislative Breakfasts would be coming up in February and March and that this year an emphasis on library users

would be used. She also mentioned the Massachusetts Library Association's annual Ways & Means Day and Legislative Day. In addition, she stated that the new president of the State Senate, **Robert Travaglini**, had picked his leadership team that included a couple of new positions and it was expected that Speaker of the House **Thomas Finneran** would be doing the same shortly.

Anne Meringolo, MBLC State Aid Specialist, in the first presentation to the Board, presented another 35 municipalities that have met the minimum standards for free public library service. The Board then approved awarding a FY2003 Library Incentive Grant, Municipal Equalization Grant and Nonresident Circulation offset in the amount of \$533,765.50 for these communities. Like the awards in November and December of 2002, 50 percent of the money would be disbursed upon certification with the remainder by the end of the four quarter of FY2003. Ms. Meringolo also presented to the Board for their approval five policies for FY2004 State Aid to Public Libraries Program: *The Closure of a Public Library*, *Minimum Standards of Hours of Service for Public Libraries*, *Municipal Appropriation Requirement Calculation* and *Extending a Grace Period for Increased Population-Based Minimum Standards*. She noted that none of these policies had any changes from those used for FY2003. Following their approval, Ms. Meringolo said that the sixth policy on *Determining Eligibility for a Waiver of the FY2004 Municipal Appropriation Requirement* would be brought before the Board in February.

Dianne Carty, MBLC Head of State Aid and Data Coordination, then introduced the 10 libraries that had requested a waiver of the FY2003 Municipal Appropriation Requirement. However, unlike previous years, each of the libraries appeared before the Board to present their need for the waiver. Among those appearing before the Board were **Tom Scully**, Director of the Beverly Public Library; **Annalee Bundy**, Director of the Ames Free Library of Easton; **Keith Stavely**, Director of the Fall River Public Library; **Janet Meagher**, Director of the Holbrook Public Library; **Ronald Latham**, Director of the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield; **Ann McLaughlin**, Director of the Thomas Crane Public Library in Quincy; **Terry Kyrios**, Director of the Salisbury Public Library; **Emily Bader**, Director of the Springfield Library; **Brain Lowney**, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Swansea Free Public Library, and **Joanne Lamothe**, Director of the Tufts Library in Weymouth.

Although each library had its own particular circumstances that led to the request for waivers, issues such as debt requirements, rising employee costs and cuts to municipal budgets were all mentioned. Commissioner **Elia Marnik** stated that she was "encouraged that the libraries weren't disproportionately cut and thanked the library directors for their work in keeping their cuts to a minimum. Commissioner **Deborah Hill Bornheimer** also thanked the presenters for coming "at considerable difficulty and distance."

(continued on page 6)

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Regional Library Systems and Library of Last Recourse
State Aid to Public Libraries
Statewide Services to Libraries and Library Users

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State Aid (continued from page 1)

requirements for State Aid to Public Libraries, while maintaining the standards. "It is critical that some level of minimum standards for free public library service remain," says Carty. "The danger in any 'suspension' of requirements is the loss of public library service through the closure of libraries and the erosion of services in those libraries that remain open, because there will be no incentive to a municipality to appropriate the necessary operating funds to the public library. The reciprocity of library services for Massachusetts residents will be in eminent peril if regulations have no effect because libraries will be able to charge for nonresidents to borrow books or even use library facilities, and municipal officials might try use this means to generate revenue."

Discussion occurred at the March 6, 2003, MBLC Board Meeting, and it is anticipated that the Commissioners will approve in April, a plan that will most likely include a reduced grant award to libraries that cannot meet the hours open and/or materials expenditure requirement, as long as there is compliance with or a waiver received for the FY2004 MAR, and the reduced minimum hours open and materials expenditure requirements are met.

During the last fiscal crisis in the early 1990's, the State Aid program incorporated flexibility into the requirements and while many libraries suffered losses that took years to recoup, library directors repeatedly have said, that without requirements in place, many more libraries would have closed and services would have been cut much more severely.

Center for the Book (continued from page 1)

Affiliate members of the MCB, in addition to Simmons and Hampshire colleges, are the American Antiquarian Society, Boston Public Library, Five Colleges Inc., Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities.

The MCB will base its literary and library programming in the offices of the Simmons Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences in Boston. It will locate the Massachusetts Book Awards program and related reading promotion activities at Hampshire College, which is also home to the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art and the National Yiddish Book Center.

"We expect the resources of these two campuses to help tremendously in our efforts to expand the circle of committed readers in the Commonwealth and to foster an appreciation for the past, present and future of the book and book arts in Massachusetts," said **Sharon Shaloo**, executive director.

The Center for the Book is a program begun by the Library of Congress in 1977 to promote books, reading, libraries and literacy. The Center has 51 state-affiliated centers around the country, which use themes established by the Library of Congress to develop programs and activities celebrating their states' own book cultures and literary heritage.

Massachusetts programs include "Mother Goose Asks Why," for preschool children to learn about the commonality of reading and scientific investigation; "Letters about Literature," which honors school-age children who write letters to their favorite authors; and the Massachusetts Book Awards, an annual recognition of some of the most outstanding books written by Massachusetts authors or published on Massachusetts themes.

The Center's newest endeavor, scheduled for completion in the fall of 2003, is a statewide Literary Map, highlighting the home sites, monuments, gravesites and historical monuments of famous Massachusetts authors.

Trustee Forum

Q. How do Friends of Library organizations support the local public library?

A. An organization of Friends is an important component of the library team that also includes trustees and library staff. The Friends play a vital role in advocating for the library and building community support, as well as fundraising efforts.

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) in conjunction with the Massachusetts Friends of Libraries has produced an annual Directory of Massachusetts Friends of library organizations since 1999. The information in this directory is compiled from an annual survey that is sent to all public libraries. This year's survey produced some interesting facts about Library Friends organizations in Massachusetts.

Almost 88 percent of the public libraries in Massachusetts responded to the survey. Of the 324 libraries who responded, 271 libraries or 84 percent reported having a Friends organization.

One of the surprising facts that was learned from the survey is that 60,837 individuals are members of Friends of library organizations in Massachusetts. The number of members in a Friends organization varies tremendously with some having as few as 5 to 10 members. Most Friends organizations have memberships of 100 to 500, but several have more than 1,000 in their membership ranks.

Two new questions this year asked about the fundraising activities of Friends organizations.

First was, "What type of library services does your Friends organization support financially?"

The top five responses were:

- Children's programs
- Purchasing equipment or furnishings
- Purchasing museum passes
- Purchasing library materials
- Supporting building renovations or new construction

Some of the unique programs that Friends organizations provided funds to support included:

- ESL classes
- Flyers for Town Meeting in support of library funding
- Conference attendance for library staff
- Discretionary funds for the library director

Water cooler for library staff and users

The second question was, "What is the principal means used by your Friends group to raise funds for the library?"

Most libraries reported that the Friends raised funds through book sales and membership dues. However many additional methods of raising money for the library were mentioned:

- Sale of novelty items (book bags, historical photos, etc.)
- Special events (Christmas concert, garden tour, dinner dances, road races)
- Special sale events (bake sales, plant sales, soup sales)
- Used toy or sports equipment sales
- Raffles and auctions
- Rental fees for videos, DVD's, etc.

The complete listing of the fundraising ideas and library programs supported by Friends organizations is available. A listing of Friends organizations by Region, number of members, etc., is also available.

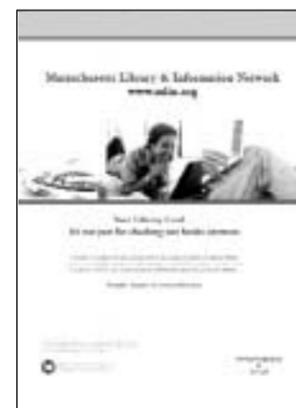
If you would like a copy of this information, or additional information concerning the Friends survey, please contact **Brian Donoghue**, MBLC Friends Liaison.

Maureen Killoran
Head of Public Library Advisory
& Government Liaison

Brian Donoghue
Reference Librarian & Friends Liaison

Info Trac – Getting the Message to Your Patrons

Librarians know and value the commercial databases licensed by the regional library systems and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Last year, the Info Trac databases from Gale were used 1.7 million times, yet usage outside of libraries amounted to only 16 percent. In order to increase and promote the



use of these resources both in libraries and remotely, the Gale Group has designed and printed, at no cost to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners or Regional Library Systems, a four-page color brochure to help library patrons understand what the databases can do for them and how to access them outside the library.

Public Libraries throughout the Commonwealth received a supply of these brochures in March. For other libraries that did not receive these brochures, or for libraries who would like additional copies, there is a PDF version available on MLIN (www.mlin.org).

Here are some suggested ways to use the brochures, but feel free to distribute them

(continued on page 8)



Trustees of the Graves Memorial Library in Sunderland, toss some snow for the new Sunderland Public Library. Marilyn Munn, Chair; Jay Baudermann; Lorin Starr; Ann Dorr; Shirley Graves; Peter Lacey, Vice-Chair; Donna McKemnie; Shirley Ostendarp, Secretary; Sharon Sharry, Library Director, and Richard Morse.

LIBRARY HAPPENINGS

Cheers Break Out at Sunderland's Groundbreaking

Gathering in a the Chapel of the First Congregational Church that has served Sunderland for more than 100 years, more than 100 residents of the town turned out to celebrate the Groundbreaking for a new Sunderland Public Library on Saturday, March 1, 2003.

In welcoming the large crowd that had walked over from the "ceremonial" groundbreaking at the site, **Gary Briere**, a member of the Library Building Committee, said, "This is an exciting day for Sunderland to be able to break ground for our new library that will serve the citizens of this town far into the next century."

Other speakers including Chair of the Board of Library Trustees **Marilyn Munn**; Chair of the Friends Capital Campaign Committee **Jay Baudermann**, who announced that more than \$170,000 had been raised surpassing their goal by \$70,000; Selectman **Tony Leger**, who thanked everyone who helped secure the MBLC grant and reminded the legislators present that this program needs to continue so that other cities and towns across the Commonwealth can continue to benefit from it.

Joseph Hopkins, MBLC Chairman, also relayed his congratulations and said that communities who build libraries are "lovers of books, share the joy and responsibilities of parenthood, have a sense of pride in their community, and an investment in time and money to make the project happen."

In closing, Sen. **Stan Rosenberg** and Rep. **Steve Kulik** both said that "communities like Sunderland put in a great amount of effort to build a new library, but a library is one of the few public institutions where a community can come together."



The Monitor Gallery overlooks the newsroom of The Christian Science Monitor.

Mary Baker Eddy Library Holds Open House

Hundreds of librarians, archivists and historians attended an Inaugural Open House on Thursday, February 13, 2003, at the newly-opened \$50 million Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity in Boston.

The new library houses the writings of **Mary Baker Eddy**, her journals, scrapbooks, reminiscences, historic photographs and objects, as well as the organizational records of the First Church of Christ, Scientist. "Although many of these materials were previously housed throughout different departments in the headquarters of the church, building a new state-of-the-art library to house them was one of the best ways to make this collection truly accessible to the researcher and public at large," says **Lesley Pitts**, Manager of the Archives.

Following a reception and tours, a panel discussion of *The Importance of Being Archival* featuring **Blanche Wiesen Cook**, award-winning biographer of Eleanor Roosevelt; **William Fowler**, Director of the Massachusetts Historical Society; **Pauline Maier**, American Historian at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and **Richard Pipes**, Soviet Historian at Harvard University was held.

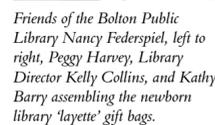


The entrance to the new Mary Baker Eddy Library on Massachusetts Avenue in Boston.

Readers-to-be Welcomed in Bolton

The Friends of the Bolton Public Library began a complimentary "Book Layette" program in December to bring library services to families.

Shortly after a new baby arrives in town, a volunteer from the Friends delivers the gift bag that contains two infant books, bookmark, bib that says, "Read to Your Babycakes: The Bolton Public Library," and information about the library all nicely packaged that says, "Congratulations on Your New Edition."



Friends of the Bolton Public Library Nancy Federspiel, left to right, Peggy Harvey, Library Director Kelly Collins, and Kathy Barry assembling the newborn library 'layette' gift bags.

"It's a nice welcome to town and way to keep the library out front," says **Mary Jo White**, from the Friends of the Bolton Public Library and who designed the bib. With about 75 births a year, the Friends say it is a project that helps to encourage young families to use the library as their family grows.

Brookline Reopens Main Library after Two-Year \$18-million Renovation

It was exactly seven minutes to one o'clock on Sunday, January 26, 2003, when **Peter Epstein**, Chairman of the Brookline Public Library Board of Trustees, declared, "The Brookline Public Library is now open for business" to the roar of excited patrons and supporters of the \$18-million project.



MBLC Commissioner Deborah Hill Bornheimer at the Dedication Ceremony for the Brookline Public Library.

Having opened the dedication ceremonies shortly after noon, Epstein thanked the many individuals who had worked long and hard to make this project come to fruition. Among those singled out, and who made remarks, were **Gabriela Romanow**, President of the Brookline Library Foundation; **Gilbert Hoy Jr.**, representing the Brookline Board of Selectmen, and **Chuck Flaherty**, Town Librarian, who had overseen the construction that restored the original 1909 building and added an additional 18,000 sq. feet of public space.

Representing the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners was Commissioner **Deborah Hill Bornheimer** who brought greetings and heartfelt congratulations on behalf of the Commonwealth and library fans everywhere. "Another sparkling star has been added to the firmament of distinguished library architecture in Massachusetts," she said. "By taking a handsome turn-of-the-century building and adapting it to contemporary needs, you have set a standard. You have also written the book on successful fundraising."

New Paul Pratt Library Opens in Cohasset

The Old Osgood School in Cohasset got a new lease on life March 2nd, when the new Paul Pratt Library opened its doors in the beautifully renovated building.



Commissioner Deborah Bornheimer speaks of her memories of the old school building while Library Director Janet Husband looks on.

About 100 people braved the pouring rain to get a first look at the facility. Supporters raised over a million dollars to provide essential funding for the project.

Speaking of the building where she attended grade school, Commissioner **Deborah Hill Bornheimer** said, "This new library is as alluring and welcoming as the old Paul Pratt library, but accessible to all and equipped for the modern age." State Representative **Garret Bradley** also attended the ceremony, and presented citations from the House and Senate congratulating the town.



The Auditorium of the Old Osgood School is a perfect place for stacks and a reading area.

Blackstone Breaks Ground for New \$5 Million Library

At the site of the former Blackstone High School, enthusiastic library supporters gathered on Saturday morning, January 25, 2003, for the presentation of Colors, the singing of the *Star Spangled Banner* and a ceremonial groundbreaking by library trustees and local dignitaries.

However, due to the cold, **Mary Lou Branchaud**, Chairperson of the Blackstone Public Library Board of Library Trustees and Library Building Committee, who welcomed everyone, urged all to reconvene at the Senior Center for the rest of the festivities. Back at the center she thanked the many individuals who had worked so tirelessly to get the project to this point.

Charles Sawyer, Chairman of the Blackstone Board of Selectmen, said "Today is a beginning for a new future for Blackstone. Nothing compares to viewing the site with the old high school gone, the sign for a new library up and heavy equipment on the site."

Representing the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners were Commissioners **Edward Bertorelli** and **Joseph Hopkins**, along with **Anne Larsen**, Associate Library Building Consultant. Hopkins, MBLC Chairman, congratulated Blackstone on its coordinated effort, and said he "admired the persistence and perseverance that went into a project like this. I look forward to being able to come back in a year to help you open this wonderful new addition to your town."

Also present was State Rep. **Jennifer Callahan**, who said, "The magnitude of this \$5 million project is a huge investment in the future of this community."



Anne Larsen, MBLC Associate Library Building Consultant, Mary Lou Branchaud, Chairman of the Blackstone Public Library Board of Trustees, Commissioner Joseph Hopkins, MBLC Chairman of the Board, and Commissioner Edward Bertorelli, at the site of the new Blackstone Public Library.

Libraries Good for Real Estate

Realizing that a great library makes an excellent community in which to live, the Carlson GMAC Real Estate in Carlisle recently featured the Gleason Public Library in Carlisle on its real estate flyer and report.



The Gleason Public Library in Carlisle was recently highlighted by Carlson GMAC Real Estate.

"We picked the library as a focal point of Carlisle," said **Eileen Furth**, an agent in the Carlisle GMAC Real Estate office, "and that way we communicate to our customers that we know and understand Carlisle." Furth further commented that, "the library is a very important landmark, and it's such a classic library building," said **Ellen Rauch**, Gleason Public Library Director.

Spotlight on LSTA

Adult Literacy: Wilson Reading System

The Haverhill Public Library, through its Greater Haverhill Adult Learning Center, is one of the first libraries in the state to use the Wilson Reading System (WRS) developed by **Barbara Wilson**.

A research-based reading and writing program, the Wilson Reading System is a complete curriculum for teaching decoding and encoding (spelling) beginning with phoneme segmentation. It also includes sight word instruction, vocabulary, oral expressive language development and comprehension.

The Haverhill Public Library works closely with local programs to refer potential students who have dyslexia, and often have difficulty with reading, writing and spelling, to the program.

"This program has made a significant difference in the lives of the adult students who, often after years of failing in school, are enrolled in the program," says **Anne Powell**, Program Coordinator.

One student, **Mary Gallant**, who began the program in October of 2002, has made excellent progress, says Powell. Meeting twice a week, she has moved from the earliest steps in the program to choosing books to read at home. For the first time, Gallant says she enjoys reading, especially biographies of famous women such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Rosa Parks, Georgia O'Keeffe and Mother Theresa.

Other public libraries currently using the WRS program are the Cambridge Public Library, North Adams Public Library, Oak Bluffs Public Library and the Thomas Crane Public Library in Quincy.



Mary Gallant of Haverhill, left, working with Anne Powell, right, Greater Haverhill Adult Learning Center Coordinator, on her Wilson Reading System lesson.

"Although among the general population it is estimated that approximately 15 percent have dyslexia, the percentage is much higher for adults who have never learned to read well," says **Shelley Quezada**, MBLC Consultant to the Underserved. "Use of the Wilson Reading System as an approach with volunteer reading programs holds great promise for other libraries seeking additional tools to improve the literacy level of adult learners in their communities."

Board Highlights (continued from page 2)

Dianne Carty, MBLC Head of State Aid and Data Coordination, presented to the Board the final Recommendations for Regional Regulations. These recommendations take into account all of the comments received following five public hearings that drew 82 attendees and 31 speakers, as well as an additional 79 written comments. Areas that received the most comment were per capita funding and school library eligibility that will now remain unchanged. The Board then adopted the proposed "regulations for Regional Library Systems 605 CMR 7.00 as revised" to be effective once they have been filed and printed in the Massachusetts Register on January 31, 2003. (The updated Regulations can be viewed on the Board's Web site, www.mlin.org).

Commissioner **Joseph Hopkins**, Chairman, in commenting on the regulations, said "The development of these regulations for regional reference centers was a long and arduous process that was brought about by computer technology and telecommunications and their impact upon the historical model of the current Reference Centers." He also noted the work by Commissioner **Elia Marnik**, former MBLC Director **Keith Michael Fiels**, current MBLC Director **Robert Maier**, **Dianne Carty** and himself in this process.

Each of the administrators from the Regional Library Systems then presented their *FY2004 Plans of Service and Programs and Budgets*. The Board then approved the plan, program and budget for the Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Library System for \$2,156,188; for the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System for \$1,372,544; for the Northeast Massachusetts Regional Library System for \$1,506,313; for the Boston Massachusetts Regional Library System for \$781,597; for the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System for \$1,381,063, and for the Metrowest Massachusetts Regional Library System for \$1,266,697.

In the final action before the Board, a nomination for a commendation from the Board for **Miriam Pratt**, a 48-year employee of the North Hadley Branch Library, was brought to the Board by **Donna Kurkul**, Director of the Goodwin Memorial Library in Hadley. After voting to "award a certificate of commendation to Miriam Pratt for outstanding career contributions to library services," Commissioner **Joseph Hopkins** said he would be attending her retirement party on February 2, 2003, where he would give her the commendation.



The **February 6th** board meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners was held at the Board's headquarters in Boston, where Commissioner **John Arnold**, Vice Chairman, welcomed those in attendance. In his brief report, he stated that MBLC Director **Robert Maier** had requested an emergency meeting of the Executive Committee for Saturday, January 18, 2002, to discuss the emergency 9C cuts that were being contemplated by the new Administration.

In his report, Director Maier said that the Executive Committee, along the rest of the

Board, stressed in their response to the Administration that library services had already been cut by 24 percent, and that any cuts be made proportionately across all of the Board's line items. When the 9C cuts were announced by Administration and Finance Secretary **Eric Kriss** on January 30, 2003, there were no cuts to State Aid to Public Libraries (7000-9501) or Regional Public Libraries (7000-9401). However, the other four line items: Board of Library Commissioners (7000-9101), Talking Book Library-Watertown (7000-9402), Talking Book Library-Worcester (7000-9406) and Library Telecommunications (7000-9506) were cut an additional 7 percent (see **Gov. Romney Cuts** on back page).

Director Maier went on to report that President **George W. Bush** had released his FY2004 budget and that the funding for libraries through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) was increased. Although this was good news, the reauthorization for LSTA did not pass the last congress. Bills in both the House and Senate had been filed and he encouraged the Commissioners and others to contact their legislators to be cosponsors for the legislation. LSTA is being funded under continuing resolutions pending passage of a FY2003 budget by Congress.

Other items of interest from the Mid-Winter Meeting of the American Library Association (ALA) that he mentioned were the cuts in many states for library services, the ALA campaign to "Save America's Libraries," and the future need to have attorney's available to assist libraries in responding to the Patriot Act.

Maureen Killoran, MBLC Head of Public Library Advisory & Government Liaison, in her Legislative Report reviewed the dozen or so bills dealing with library issues that had been filed for the 2003-2004 legislative session. She also mentioned the upcoming House Ways and Means Day on February 12th that the Massachusetts Library Association was sponsoring, and the many Legislative Breakfasts beginning in late February that the Regional Library Systems were sponsoring.

Anne Meringolo, MBLC State Aid Specialist, presented the final two municipalities that had met the minimum standards for free public library service, and the Board approved awarding a FY2003 Library Incentive Grant, Municipal Equalization Grant and Nonresident Circulation offset in the amount of \$27,504.95 for these communities.

Dianne Carty, MBLC Head of State Aid and Data Coordination, then brought before the Board nine municipalities that had requested a waiver of the FY2003 Municipal Appropriation Requirement at the January 2003 Board Meeting. Since these communities had presented their individual situations for a waiver before the Board, there was no discussion and the Board approved a FY2003 Waiver to Beverly, Fall River, Holbrook, Pittsfield, Quincy, Salisbury, Springfield, Swansea and Weymouth.

Carty then presented for discussion and approval the FY2004 State Aid to Public Libraries policy for Determining Eligibility

for a Waiver of the FY2004 Municipal Appropriation Requirement.

She said that after following the procedure this year, this policy was very similar, allowing for the municipalities themselves to come before the Board to present their case for a waiver. She also said that her informal survey of libraries led her to believe that due to cutbacks this year in library funding that more municipalities would be seeking a waiver next year.

MBLC Director **Robert Maier** then introduced **Susan Tallman**, Director of the Ritter Memorial Library in Lunenburg, who, along with several others, were there to ask the Board to consider a request from the Town of Lunenburg for an extension of the time to confirm local funding for its provisional grant award under the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. Maier briefly gave an overview of the project in Lunenburg regarding its grant application and subsequent grant award. Following discussion and questions from the Commissioners about the situation and the need for the grant process to move forward, Lunenburg Selectman **David Rogers** asked to withdraw Lunenburg's request without prejudice which was granted.

Brian Donoghue, MBLC Reference Librarian/Friends Liaison, then made a report on the 2002-2003 Friends of the Library Information Survey. He stated that the survey had been mailed to all 370 public libraries in Massachusetts, and a total of 323 libraries responded. Of those, 270 reported having a "Friends" group, with more than 60,000 members statewide. Other items of interest included the types of functions that the Friends supported with programming, equipment purchases, museum passes and other library materials purchased being the most popular (see **Trustee Forum** on page 3).

In other news, the Commissioners reported on several of their committees, primarily *Construction*, in which updates on several projects were presented; *Library Community Relations*, in which a larger meeting with members of the Legislative and Public Relations committees was held to discuss upcoming legislative efforts; *Public Relations*, who distributed copies of the "Why do you use the library?" hand card and a draft of a brochure being developed and printed by the Gale group to promote the use of the licensed databases, and *LSTA*, in which a large number of libraries have shown an interest in applying for funding for FY2004.

Fast Facts

Every penny counts and every penny is counted @ Your Library™

\$175 million of \$13.32 billion general fund dollars were spent by municipalities in the Commonwealth for public library services during FY2001. This 1.31 percent of the General Fund is a decrease from 1.38 percent in FY2000.

Source: The FY2001 Municipal Pie...What's Your Library's Share?



Commissioners Respond to Governor's Budget

On Thursday, March 6, 2003, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), at their first regularly-scheduled Board Meeting following the release of Governor **Mitt Romney's** House 1 Budget, voted three resolutions targeted to the library community and legislature on how the budget as proposed would impact library service across the Commonwealth.

In response to the Governor's proposal to merge the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners into a new organizational structure headed by a new Executive Office of Education, the Commissioners said,

"A visible, strong, independent and properly funded state library agency is essential to the delivery of library services in the Commonwealth. The Board of Library Commissioners initiates and coordinates programs that link libraries for resource sharing through the development of essential infrastructure and the delivery of content that promotes equity of access to information for all residents. Library service could not continue as we know it without the programs and services of the Board."

Secondly, on a proposal to merge the Talking Book Libraries for the Blind in Watertown and Worcester with the Executive Office of Health & Human Services under a new Department for Disabilities and Community Services, the Board said,

"The Talking Book Library at the Worcester Public Library and the Talking Book Program at the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown are specialized library programs for blind and physically handicapped residents of Massachusetts. As library programs that originate at the Library of Congress, we believe that these programs are most effectively administered in Massachusetts by the Board of Library Commissioners."

Finally, recognizing that many communities are undergoing increasingly difficult financial situations of their own, the Board wanted to communicate to the House and Senate Ways and Means Committees its desire to address this reality, and in so doing, provide some flexibility in the requirements for State Aid to Public Libraries, while at the same time insuring that public library budgets will not be disproportionately cut in municipal budgets.

"The Board of Library Commissioners recognizes the necessity of accommodating the State Aid to Public Libraries program to the fiscal realities of FY2004. We reaffirm our commitment to minimum standards of public library service as defined in statute, and we recommend to the House and Senate that, as a first step in accommodation, the Board be permitted an additional 75 waivers of the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) in FY2004 so that municipalities that do not disproportionately cut library funding may continue to receive State Aid, and to reduce the MAR to 100% of the previous three year average for FY2004."

"Public library administrators and trustees are reminded that this is a proposal from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to the legislature which has the

final say," said **Robert Maier**, MBLC Director. The MAR is set in Statute (M.G.L. 78, 19A) at 102.5 percent of the average of the prior three years and just 10 waivers are permitted under statute. During the fiscal crisis of the early 1990s, the MAR was also reduced and only a limited number of additional waivers were permitted. Some municipalities that would have received a waiver did not because only a limited number of waivers were available.

The House and Senate Ways and Means Committees are holding joint budget hearings this year with the MBLC testifying in March. Following these hearings, the House and Senate will develop their own FY2004 budget bills that will include budget language as well as appropriations for each line item account. The House is expected to release its budget the last week of April and to debate the budget in early May. The Senate is expected to release its budget by mid-May. Once the House and Senate have adopted their budgets, a conference committee will be formed to work out any differences. The conference committee budget is then subject to a final vote in both houses before going to the Governor.

This year, in a related action, the Governor is expected to file a reorganization plan on May 1, 2003, under a provision of the state constitution that requires that the legislature either accept or reject the entire proposal with no amendments. If no action is taken by July 1, 2003, it becomes law.

Maier Testifies Before Ways & Means Committees

On March 14, 2003, MBLC Director **Robert C. Maier** testified before a joint hearing of the House and Senate Ways & Means Committees. This is an excerpt from his testimony.

"Libraries depend on the Board for leadership in library development, direct services, infrastructure investment and electronic resources that provide equity statewide."

The Board's direct services that support local library services statewide include:

- Technical assistance on library literacy programs
- Preservation of library materials and emergency assistance when materials are threatened
- Advisory and technical assistance to municipal officials, 2561 library trustees, 370 public library directors, and 272 library friends groups
- Continuing education and training for trustees, staff and friends organizations with 120 programs offered last year
- Electronic access to magazine and newspaper articles with more than 2 million articles available for instant downloading
- Talking books and Braille materials for the blind and physically handicapped
- Regional library systems and the library of last recourse
- Public library construction: advisory and technical assistance, planning and design grants and construction grants
- State aid to public libraries and related management data reports
- Grants to libraries under the federal Library Services and Technology Act.

The Board of Library Commissioners is a small agency with just 14 state funded staff positions and large responsibilities for guiding the development of library services for all of the residents of the Commonwealth. The Board of Library Commissioners initiates and coordinates programs that link libraries for resource sharing through the development of essential infrastructure and the delivery of content that promotes equity of access to information for all residents. Library service could not continue as we know it without the programs and services of the Board.

Libraries need the Board of Library Commissioners as an advocate and a voice for the development of library service. Libraries need the planning that the Board does. They need the infrastructure that the Board and the legislature have established. And they need the electronic resources that are cost effective only if licensed at the state level.

What would happen if there was no Board of Library Commissioners?

Would the state aid standards stay in place? Would reduced local funding and no requirement for lending to residents of other towns have libraries start to charge residents of other towns for borrowing privileges?

What would happen if the regional library systems were so under-funded that delivery didn't work at all? Would libraries mail items to each other?

What will happen if both annual support and capital project support for networks were not available? Would libraries be able to afford ever increasing costs? Would libraries have to drop membership resulting in network failures?

Put another way...what would life be like for all of us if each town had its own library and none of them worked together? Think about what life would be like if each town had its own phone system, but none of them were connected!

The Board of Library Commissioners is the connective tissue of library service. When everything is working you don't even know it's there, but without it the body will soon break down.

We need your help to keep library service working in Massachusetts. It's not broken. Let's not fix it!"

New England Regional Depository Opens

The New England Regional Depository, a joint project of NELINET, Inc. and William B. Meyer, Inc., opened in January of 2003 in Franklin, Massachusetts. This state-of-the-art facility houses paper-based materials in a climate-controlled environment that will help to preserve important, but lesser-used materials and collections from libraries throughout New England.

For the past two years, NELINET and Meyer have worked to develop and implement the project. Under the agreement, NELINET will provide member libraries with training and consulting services designed to assist in the selection and transfer of materials. NELINET will also handle all financial transactions. Meyer has been responsible for the building and inventory control.

Calendar of Events

Board Meetings

MBLC Board Meeting

Thursday, April 3, 2003, 10 am
Perkins School for the Blind,
175 North Beacon St., Watertown

MBLC Board Meeting

Thursday, May 8, 2003, 10 am
Thomas Crane Public Library,
40 Washington St., Quincy

MBLC Board Meeting

Thursday, June 5, 2003, 10 am
Chelmsford Public Library, 25 Boston Rd.

Mass Legislative Days

MLA Library Legislative Day

Wednesday, April 2, 2003, 11 am
The State House, Boston
Registration: www.masslib.org

Workshops

Trustee Symposium

Saturday, April 5, 2003, 9 am – 3 pm
Clarion Hotel & Conference Center,
1 Atwood Dr., Northampton
Registration: Contact Sharon Zitser at 800-952-7403

6th Annual Community Forum on Historical Records

Celebrating History: Anniversaries to Educate, Promote and Preserve History
Friday, May 9, 2003
Merrimack College, North Andover
Sponsors: Massachusetts Historical Records Advisory Board, Essex National Heritage Commission and Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin.
Registration: Contact Bill Milhomme at 617-727-2816 x257 or william.milhomme@sec.state.ma.us

ARIS Workshops

(Annual Report Information Survey)

Tuesday May 20, 2003, 10 am
Acton Memorial Library, 486 Main St.
Coffee 9:30 am, Session 10 am – 12 noon
Thursday May 29, 2003, 9:30 am
Peabody Institute Library
15 Sylvan St., Danvers
Coffee 9 am, Session 9:30 – 11:30 am

Wednesday June 4, 2003, 10:30 am
Middleborough Public Library, 102 North Main St.
Coffee 10 am, Session 10:30 am – 12:30 pm
Friday June 6, 2003, 10:30 am
Brooks Free Library
739 Main St., Harwich
Coffee 10 am, Session 10:30 am – 12:30 pm
Wednesday June 11, 2003, 10 am
Western Massachusetts Regional Library System
58 Main St., Hatfield
Coffee 9:30 am, Session 10 am – 12 noon
Wednesday June 18, 2003, 10 am
Central Massachusetts Regional Library System
8 Flagg Rd., Shrewsbury
Coffee 9:30 am, Session 10 am – 12 noon
Registration information will be mailed to library directors in April.

Leaky Pipes and Broken Windows: Disaster Preparedness for Libraries and Archives

Tuesday, May 6, 2003, 9 am – 4 pm
Leverett Public Library, 1 Shutesbury Road
Tuesday, May 13, 2003, 9 am – 4 pm

Disaster Preparedness Workshops Cont.

Flint Memorial Library, 147 Park Street, North Reading
Thursday, May 22, 2003, 9 am – 4 pm
Milford Town Library, 80 Spruce Street
Thursday, May 29, 2003, 9 am – 4 pm
Agawam Public Library, 750 Cooper Street
Tuesday, June 3, 2003, 9 am – 4 pm
Pembroke Public Library, 142 Center Street
Thursday, June 12, 2003, 9 am – 4 pm
Bedford Public Library, 7 Mudge Way
Registration: Contact Rachel Devin at 617-267-9400 x234 or rachel.devin@state.ma.us

6th Annual Museum & Library Archives Institute

Thursday & Friday, June 20 & 21, 2003
Wilbraham & Monson Academy, Wilbraham
Sponsors: Monson Free Library and Reading Room Association, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, New England Archivists, New England Museum Association and Worcester Historical Museum.
Registration: Contact Theresa Rini Percy at 413-267-3866 or tpercy@cwmars.org

Kudos to Authors

The January/February 2003 issue of *Public Libraries*, contained three articles authored by librarians in Massachusetts. **Shelley Quezada**, MBLC Consultant for the Unserved, wrote the feature article, 'Nothing about Me without Me: Planning for Library Services for People with Disabilities.' "Planning for Library Services for People with Disabilities helps libraries design programs and services to address the specific needs of a growing population of people with disabilities," the article said.

In addition, **Jean Canosa Albano**, Head of Youth and Outreach Services at the Springfield City Library, wrote up her experience in 'You Want Us to Do What?' and **Nancy Alcorn**, Assistant Director of the Newburyport Public Library, wrote about adaptive technology in 'What's New @ Our Library' in the same issue.

Info-Trac (continued from page 3)

in whatever way makes the most sense for your library:

- Reference desk** – hand them out to patrons when they come for help
- Circulation desk** – target groups with particular research needs: high school, college students and other patrons who indicate they have Internet access at home
- Adult programming sessions** – encourage participants to use library resources from home on any topic by logging on to a Gale database
- Bibliographic instruction** – teach your patrons in-house; then give them the brochures to follow-up what they learned from home
- Targeted groups of users** – business people, chambers of commerce, local government officials, retirees

We'd love to hear about the creative ways that you are distributing them. E-mail me at marlene.heroux@state.ma.us.

Marlene Sue Heroux
Reference Information Systems Specialist



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