



# STATE LIBRARY NEWS

For the People, the Government and the Libraries of New York State

Fall 2010

## LEGISLATORS: MAPS HELP

Do you need to:

- o Answer a constituent's questions about your district's libraries?
- o Get information for a speech at your local library?
- o Identify communities that need library services?

You can find answers to these and many other questions by going to the State Library's website and viewing maps of public library services. Each map shows district boundaries, locations of public libraries, library service areas, and areas needing library services. The map page is linked to the official website for Senate and Assembly districts.

To see these maps, go to: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/libspidtools/plsmaps/index.html#senate>, scroll down to Senate or Assembly district maps, and choose the district you want.

## UPWARD AND ONWARD

Excelsior, the online catalog of the State Library, Archives, and Museum, has a new look and improved capability. These new features make it easier to locate and request materials. They also simplify reviewing and changing your account, placing holds, and making recommendations for Library purchases.

## NOW ON SATURDAY



Reference Librarian **Stephanie Barrett** assists a customer on the inaugural day of Saturday hours at the State Library.

On October 16, the State Library returned to one of its great traditions. The State Library (and the State Archives) are now open Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. In 1971, severe cuts to State Library funding terminated week-end service. This meant countless New Yorkers, because of their week-day working hours or other responsibilities could not use the Library's vast resources.

"The New York State Library recognizes its responsibility to serve all the people and to be open during the hours when they can visit the library. In addition to our service to state government, we are truly a library for New Yorkers," said Jeffrey Cannell, deputy commissioner for Cultural Education. In the face of budget cuts, labor union issues, and early retirement, long and

patient negotiations enabled the Library to open Saturdays without any extra costs.

The efforts of many people contributed to the return of Saturday hours: persistent voices of historians, genealogists and people who need free Internet access; library staff, including Mr. Cannell; Bernard A. Margolis, state librarian currently on extended medical leave; the dedicated library staff who agreed to rotate Saturdays into their work schedules; and the Friends of the State Library.

"We are pleased to restore this vital service to our users," says Research Library Director Loretta Ebert.

Free parking is available on Saturdays in the Madison Ave. parking lots adjacent to the Cultural Education Center.

## VISIT THE NEW NNRC



Office of Cultural Education Deputy Commissioner **Jeffrey Cannell** welcomes visitors at the NNRC opening ceremonies.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony on Wednesday, November 3 officially opened the New Netherland Research Center (NNRC) on the seventh floor of the New York State Library. The NNRC will focus attention on New York state's rich collection of historic Dutch colonial documents and facilitate access to them for future scholars, teachers and students both here and abroad.

Seventeenth-century documents in the collections of the State Library along with the New York State Archives constitute the world's largest collection of early Dutch-language documentation of the New World colonies. Scholars regularly explore these collections for insights into 17th-century life in New Netherland, the sprawling early Dutch colony that once encompassed what is now a large part of the north-eastern United States.

The NNRC is the culmination of a decades-long translation effort, the New Netherland Project, at the State Library.

In 2009, when the Prince of Orange and Princess Maxima of the Netherlands came to the Cultural Education Center to see the exhibit, "Light on New

Netherland," the government of the Netherlands committed to a grant of €200,000 (approximately \$275,000) to the New Netherland Institute to continue and expand the New Netherland Project by establishing a New Netherland Research Center.

This gift, with matching support from the Institute, will transform what started as a translation project into a collaborative research initiative with international scope and context. It is the first step in an international effort to launch a collaborative digitization project to share collections and archives from the Netherlands and former Dutch colonies. For further information about the New Netherland Research Center, call (518) 486-4815 or visit the New Netherland Institute website at <<http://www.nnp.org>>.

## NOVELNY MEETS FACEBOOK

NOVELNY, the State Library's statewide online library, just got better. Addition of a page for Facebook, the social networking website, offers a forum for questions and comments about NOVELNY. It also provides news about NOVEL, training programs for using the online library, database changes and other information about NOVELNY.

To access the new FACEBOOK page, go to <<http://www.facebook.com/NOVELNY>>.

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Editor: Miriam S. Soffer  
Student: Sarah Morse  
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## MAKING A DIFFERENCE



**Mary Redmond**, treasurer, Friends of the New York State Library, and **Lambert Shell, Ph.D.**, director of programs & services at the Queens Library, display the plaque for the Joseph F. Shubert Award.

The Queens Library won the 2010 Joseph F. Shubert Library Excellence Award for their "Queens Library for Teens" program. Named in honor of State Librarian Emeritus Joseph F. Shubert, the award salutes libraries and library consortia that took major steps within the past two years to improve the quality of library service.

The plaque and \$1,000 were presented at the New York Library Association's banquet during their annual conference in Saratoga Springs. The New York State Regents Advisory Council on Libraries sponsors this award and the Friends of the New York State Library funded it.

This annual award recognizes the many ways libraries make a significant difference in their communities. SUNY Geneseo's Milne Library garnered honorable mention for their project, "Library Instruction Leadership Academy" (LILAC).

For more information about the Joseph F. Shubert award, call (518) 474-5930.

## Visit the State Library's Website

<<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov>>



- o Access national and regional databases
- o Search Excelsior, the Library's online catalog
- o Access NOVEL, the State Library's online library

For more information, call (518) 474 5355

Or email: <[refserv@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:refserv@mail.nysed.gov)>

## SURVIVORS

During the early morning hours of March 29, 1911, a fire swept through the State Capitol. The State Library was housed on the third and fourth floors. The blaze destroyed and damaged 450,000 books and 270,000 irreplaceable documents. The Van Rensselaer Manor Papers were severely scorched. Dating from 1630 to 1899, the collection documents daily colonial life and early land transactions in parts of areas that are now Albany and Rensselaer counties.

In May, 2009, the State Library sent a portion of the earliest segments of these papers to the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia. Conservation experts gave new life to the collection by cleaning, stabilizing and repairing over 1,000

fire-damaged leaves. Bursting with information, these survivors were returned to the State Library in July, and will be available online.

This restoration was made possible by a National Park Service Save America's Treasures grant of \$58,000, the Friends of the State Library, and other donors.

## IN MEMORIAM

Melinda Yates, reference librarian who was on the State Library's staff from 1974 until her 2005 retirement, died October 5, 2010. She was well known for her intelligence, dedication, and kindness in both her professional and her personal life. The Friends of the New York State Library are sponsoring a collection to add books to the State Library's holdings in her memory.

*To join Friends of the New York State Library, complete the form below and mail it with your check.*

## New York State Library News

- Yes, I want to join Friends of the New York State Library.  new member  renewal

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Make check payable to *Friends of the New York State Library* and mail to: Treasurer, Friends of the New York State Library, PO Box 2247 Empire Plaza Station, Albany, NY 12220.

## BE A FRIEND

Join the Friends of the New York State Library. Get the deep satisfactions of preserving your heritage and sustaining a world-renowned public research library. You can also get special discounts at local bookstores. Select:

### ■ Sustaining Membership.

\$25. Receive a 20% discount on any single, in-stock title at the Book House & Little Book House (Stuyvesant Plaza) or Market Block Books (Troy) and 25% off one purchase at the Open Door Bookstore in Schenectady.

### ■ Contributing Membership.

\$50 or more. Receive all of the above plus database access, a gift, and recognition in *New York State Library News*.

### ■ Excelsior Membership.

\$100 or more. Receive all of the above plus a behind the scenes tour of the State Library, a \$10 copier card, and an invitation to a private special exhibit or program.

Every Friend also receives:

■ **Free admission** to the Friends Annual Meeting featuring a talk by an author of a recently published book

■ **Invitations** to other stimulating programs at the State Library.

■ **A subscription** to the *New York State Library News*, an illustrated quarterly newsletter.

## TRAILBLAZER



**Louisa Lee Schuyler**

It all began in New York city. On May 11, 1872, a distinguished group of New Yorkers gathered together at 19 West 31st Street, the home of Louisa Lee Schuyler's parents. The granddaughter of Philip Schuyler and Alexander Hamilton, Miss Schuyler organized the group, which included William Cullen Bryant, Frederick Law Olmstead and other national figures. Sitting around the dining room table, they founded the State Charities Aid Association (SCAA). Now known as the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, it continues to be referred to as the SCAA. The State Library's collection, "Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy Records, 1872-2004," traces Miss Schuyler's insightful leadership in the formation and growth of this powerful agency designed to improve the appalling conditions at hospitals and other

health and welfare institutions.

Miss Schuyler's effective activism harks back to the Civil War and her leadership in the organization of the Women's Central Association of Relief, forerunner of the U.S. Sanitary Commission, and a major factor in the development of the International Red Cross. The Sanitary Commission addressed the squalid medical conditions and nutritional deficiencies endured by Union soldiers.

Several years after the war ended, Miss Schuyler read reports documenting the deplorable conditions at hospitals and poor houses and began visiting these institutions. She recognized the need to change such wretched places and initiated committees to inspect them and bring about improvement. Recognizing the size and complexity of the problem, Miss Schuyler called the meeting in May to expand these efforts.

The SCAA worked fast. Through its efforts, Bellevue Hospital established the nation's first nursing school in 1873. By 1875, the state legislature passed the Children's Law removing children from state poorhouses, and in 1881, the Right of Entrance Law guaranteed SCAA visiting committees a legal right to inspect state facilities. Motivated by the SCAA, the legislature also passed the State Care Act making the state responsible for care of the insane in 1890. It

was the most sweeping legislation for the insane in the nation.

From the beginning, advocacy was SCAA's mission. Finding funding for eleemosynary institutions was never part of its purpose. The word "charities aid" in its title created confusion. And so in 1967, maintaining its well known initials, SCAA, the agency changed its name to the State Communities Aid Association. In 2000, the name was changed again to honor Louisa Lee Schuyler, founder and major influence in its formation and success.

SCAA continues to be a powerful force in advocating legislation for public health and welfare. The State Library's collection documents the SCAA's many accomplishments and the forward looking people who made them possible.

You can access the finding aid at: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/msscfa/sc19816.htm>.

A timeline of SCAA milestones from 1873-2003 is available online at <http://www.scaany.org/about/milestones.php>. For more information, call (518) 474-6282.

### TELL US

Send comments and questions about the New York State Library and its newsletter to:  
Mary Redmond  
<[mredmond@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:mredmond@mail.nysed.gov)>

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New York State Library  
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Albany, NY 12230

### State Library Hours

Monday through Friday  
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
For more information, call  
(518) 474-5355 or e-mail  
<[refserv@mail.nysed.gov](mailto:refserv@mail.nysed.gov)>