

Annual Reports of the MSLA Executive Board, 2010

Awards

Carrie Tucker and Margaret Phoenix, Co-Chairs



The Awards program allows MSLA to achieve three goals. First, we advocate for strong school libraries throughout Massachusetts by celebrating examples of excellence and service in school librarianship. Second, we recognize supporters of school libraries. Third, we offer grants and scholarships to foster growth and encourage new school librarians.



The awards were presented at the MSLA conference in October 2009 (* indicates NEW Award):

Administrator Advocate for Excellence in School Libraries

Liz Murray, Middle School Director at Prospect Hill Academy in Somerville, nominated by Mary Kelleher;

Dr. Dale Hanley, Superintendent, Southbridge Public Schools, nominated by Lynn Loftus and Lynda Shoup

**Web Seal of Excellence*

Lynnfield High School - Janice Alpert
Avon Middle/High School - Tricia London
Fay School - Susanne Levasseur and Laura Beals D'Elia
Watertown Middle/High School - Linda Picceri
Austin Intermediate School, Freetown-Lakeville - Lisa Ryder
Audrey Friend Scholarship Alexis Brown, Simmons College
**Area Director's Award: Massachusetts Super-Librarian*
Central Region—Diane Libbey, Westborough High School
Northeast—Mary Melaugh, Marshall Middle School, Billerica
Southeast—Laurie Belanger, Freetown-Lakeville Middle School
Metro West—Robin Cicchetti

**MSLA Lifetime Achievement Award*

Doris Smith, Carolyn Markuson, Valerie Diggs

**MSLA Service Award*

Kathy Lowe

**School Library Advocate Award*

Janet Allison, NEASC

**School Library Innovator Award*

Mitchell D. Chester, Commissioner of Education

MSLA Forum

Jan Koleszar & Patsy Divver, Co-Editors

As we complete our third year of collaborating on this newsletter, we have encountered several changes to our 2009 Action Plan.

In reviewing our Action Plan for 2009, we met the objective of the continuing a quality online newsletter, *The Forum*, as evident in the Fall print issue (2009) and the online Winter issue (2010.) Objective 2, to publish three online issues, will be met with the Spring online issue (2010), to arrive by the end of May.

With the expertise of Webmaster Ann Perham, the *Forum* successfully offered as a PDF file linked to the MSLA webpage. Ann's thoroughness and design ability truly bring the articles together in a professional, high-quality presentation.

Objectives 3 and 5 were not met. Involving new writers and expanding the articles to include other library professionals continue to present difficulties: either people have no interest or no time to add to the newsletter. The recent survey did ask whether people would be

interested in receiving the *Forum* in a different format (such as a blog). We will continue to look into whether this might be an option.

Overall, we have enjoyed working on the MSLA Board as well as interacting with library staff statewide. So many people have great ideas to share – we were pleased to be able to put some of their inspirations into words in the newsletter. Meanwhile, it has been a frustration to continue to ask for material, seek and send reminders to others, and collect timely articles. As discussed in early conversations, we feel it is time to step back and encourage a new person to present this newsletter.

Our sincere thanks to the board and to the membership for their support.



Public Relations

Linda Picceri and Laura Larsson, Co-chairs

The continuing goals of the Public Relations Committee were information dissemination and event promotion and planning. In keeping with these goals much was accomplished. Co-chairs, Linda Picceri and Laura Larsson, began the year by updating the display boards to reflect the 2009 annual MSLA Conference's theme of *Now More Than Ever*. The boards were set up at the Conference with other promotional literature for conference attendees to look at and take with them. Winning bookmarks from the 2009 contest were also displayed at the Conference.

We wrote and sent out several press releases to publicize various MSLA events and activities. These activities included the MSLA Conference, the Bookmark Contest and our joint Legislation Day with MLA. In addition we attended the Bookmark Contest judging, took pictures, and submitted an article to the MSLA Forum.

We continued to have a presence in the Massachusetts Library Association's Newsletter. Several articles highlighting various MSLA activities were written and appeared in the MLA newsletter throughout the course of the year.

This was our final year as Public Relations co-chairs. We have enjoyed the opportunity to assist our organization in getting the good word out about school libraries.



Annual Reports of the MSLA Executive Board, 2010

Standards

Valerie Diggs, Chairperson

The Standards Committee had two objectives for the 2009 – 2010 Executive Board term:

Objective 1: Plan professional development for our members around the marketing and adoption of the L4L initiative. Presentations at our conferences around the topic of the AASL standards address this topic. Additionally, the opportunity recently presented for "Empowering 21st Century Learners: P21." This is a one-day institute designed to help school librarians understand how AASL's "Standards for 21st-Century Learner" and the framework of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) align to make it easier for integration into a school or district's current and future



practices. The institute will show how the learning standards and framework are aligned and how they are different. "Empowering 21st Century Learners" will also address how the learning standards can empower students and what skills students will need to succeed in the future. Attendees will leave the institute with a customized plan of action to implement 21st century skills into their school's curriculum.

Objective 2: Develop a brief document on MSLA Standards for NEASC Visiting Committees. NEASC Visiting Committee Document has not been prepared. It is hoped that by keeping this objective on the Standards Committee's 09-10 Action Plan and will be accomplished during this time frame. The review of the standards document and the completion of the ELA review dominated the year's activities.

Student Interest Group

Jamie Phillips and Alissa Rosellini co-Chairs
MSLA-SIG's objectives for this school year included:

- Hosting fun events for School Library students related to children's and young adult literature and interests.
- Providing professional development opportunities for aspiring school and youth services librarians
- Mentoring students who were new to the program

We held monthly meetings for members. During these meetings we advertised upcoming MSLA-SIG events and provided a forum for students to discuss the School Library Teacher Program at Simmons. During one meeting we invited students to come with questions regarding the required fieldwork and practica experiences in the program. Students who had already completed a practicum were able to share their experiences, and faculty members were also available to answer questions about licensing and other procedures.

We hosted a number of events for students this year. They included a trip to the Museum of Science to see the *Harry Potter Exhibit* and a movie outing to see *New Moon*. We also collaborated with the Scott Ross Center to advertise and organize a volunteer opportunity at the Mission Hill Elementary School library. The Mission Hill experience was successful, and well received by students, many of whom expressed



gratitude for this opportunity as they were able to get some "live" experience in book processing, a skill lacking in the School Library Teacher Program.

We held two professional development programs this year: one in the fall and one in the spring. Our fall "Career Panel" was a huge success. Four librarians shared their experiences and advice on how to "get the job" and then "what to expect when you have it." The attendees of the panel left with a plethora of interview advice and information about working in both independent and public schools. A recent Simmons grad even shared some of her "first year" stories with the group. It was an excellent evening. The spring conference, "A Librarian's Toolkit" was a daylong workshop with topics ranging from librarian-teacher collaboration to library architecture and planning to grant writing. This day was also widely received by the attendees, and one of the only downsides was that attendance was low. For next year, we have already begun brainstorming ways to boost attendance and open the conference up to a larger community.

Overall, the year began with a few bumps and some changes in leadership, but MSLA-SIG was able to provide members with some sound advice, great opportunities, and instill a sense of community among the members. Next year's talented board is already planning, and will without question continue to strengthen the MSLA-SIG.

Webpage

Ann Perham, Webmaster

The webpage continues to support the activities of MSLA and serves as our public face. The work of the webmaster has centered on the Conference, Bookmark Contest, Legislation Day, Awards, and the Forum. Posting the Conference registration links, presenter information and schedules is vital to the success of our conference. The MSLA webpage is a resource for the Bookmark Contest rules and entry information and posts the winners and honorable mentions. Awards and Legislation use the webpage for information and announcements.



Ethel Downey is the Spotlight Editor, recruiting new schools every 2-3 weeks. Although she does not do the actual posting because of the complexity of Joomla, her work is quite important for keeping the webpage interesting. Kathy Lowe continues to edit the headlines section of the front page to maintain the current issues for MSLA and the Library World in general. LaurieAnn Riley has been the Jobs Editor since the fall of 2006, performing a critical role for our members. She is stepping down and will be missed.

With the reorganization of the eBoard, the Forum will be the direct responsibility of the Webmaster. The vision for the Forum to enable easy editing by multiple contributors, use an RSS feed, and encourage member feedback. An appeal has been issued for feature editors.

Annual Reports of the MSLA Executive Board, 2010

Central Area

Linda Kimball & Cecily Houston, Area Directors

We contacted several members of the region who have lapsed memberships to encourage them to re-sign up to the region.

Working with our YA consultant Maureen Ambrosino throughout the year as always has been a plus. Maureen is always there to help with advice and develop ideas; this personal support will be greatly missed as we transition to a one region system. On January 19th at Westborough High School over 30 Librarians and Para, from the Assabet Region and several from outside, gathered for an all day Professional Library Day, hosted by Westborough High Librarian Diane Libbey, and Middle School Librarian, Linda Kimball.

Maureen Ambrosino, began the morning presentation with the AASL Top 25 Websites for Teaching and Learning. Keynote Speaker Kathy Lowe presented the AASL Standards for the 21st Century Learner in Action and the plan to implement the standards.



On May 4, 2010 at Nashoba Valley Regional High School 15 librarians from across the region met with Maureen Ambrosino and Jackie Belisle from the Central Region to discuss the merger of all the regions and the impact on school libraries. Interlibrary loan system will be through the Thomas Crane Public Library.



Metrowest Area

Linda Coviello & Char Sidell, Area Directors

We had a successful year of collaboration with Sarah Sogigian (MetroWest), providing a multitude of professional development opportunities for our MSLA members. In addition to professional development, the events presented opportunities for networking and impromptu sharing of best practices among school librarian members. The potential lack of MBLC support in the future will be a serious loss to our membership.



Collaborative events included: Technology Share; Storytelling Workshop by Doris Smith; Can't Miss Books presented by Pat Keogh

Lapsed members were contacted and encouraged to consider re-joining to take advantage of the benefits of membership and participate in the conference and various other activities throughout the year. We participated on the MSLA Conference Committee, the MSLA/MLA Legislative Day, and the Bookmark Contest Awards Ceremony.

Northeast Area

Katie Cerasale-Messina & Chris Steinhauser, Area Directors



This year has been busy and productive. An ongoing focus as Area Directors is to contact school librarians who are not members of MSLA to encourage them to join our organization. We used e-mail, phone, and snail mail, sharing information as to why joining MSLA would be beneficial to them, their students, teachers and school districts. We also communicated with



MSLA members whose memberships had lapsed. We find that the personal touch makes the difference.

The Northeast Area continued its MSLA/NMRLS "Making the Connections" Series. This year four meetings were held at a variety of sites within the region with attendance ranging from 20 to 30+.

Citations and Ethical Use of Information with Nancy Anthony of Salem State and Marblehead Schools was very well attended by over 30 school librarians. Web 2.0 tools to use in the Library was presented by Chris Steinhauser and Katie Cerasale-Messina. Advocacy and Legislative Day, was cancelled due to low interest. The final workshop, He said/She Said- 100 Books to talk for Boys and Girls was a tandem style new and noteworthy fiction and non-fiction book talk by Nancy Keane and Michael Sullivan.

We attended and participated in MSLA's joint Legislative Day with MLA. During our time at the State House, we lobbied our legislators, celebrated the winners of the MSLA Bookmark Contest, and heard testimony concerning the importance and worth of public and school libraries in Massachusetts. We participated in the MSLA Conference committee and created the "Day in the Life of..." (<http://mslapics.pbworks.com>) wiki for the board.

Boston Area

Jen Varney and Rose DeNucci, Area Directors

Progress toward our Action Plan goals was difficult this year. The position of director of Library and Media Services in the Boston Public Schools remains unfilled. Issues and concerns such as maintenance contracts, software renewals, book donations and professional development were not addressed. The Administrative Assistant position has only been filled off and on with temporary employees.

Without this support, identifying which schools have libraries, support staff and/or professional librarians is next to impossible.

We anticipate a successful outcome to the next round of interviews for the Director position. It is our hope that the 2010-11 year will have administrative support in place to advance the cause of school libraries in the Boston Area.



Annual Reports of the MSLA Executive Board, 2010

Southeast Area

Heather Macpherson & Lynn Weeks, Area Directors



Area meetings were offered to Southeast members as professional development and networking opportunities. Our first area meeting was hosted by Laurie Belanger at Freetown-Lakeville Middle School on February 10, 2009. The topic was "Award-Winning Literature"; participants shared ideas about how they promote and utilize award-winning literature in their schools. The second area meeting was held at the Bourne Middle School on March 19, 2009 in collaboration with the Southeastern Massachusetts Library System. Kathy Lussier and Vicki Beene-Beavers of SEMLS brought the "Technology Sandbox" for participants to be introduced to and have "play time" with new technologies.

To increase membership and involvement, lapsed members were e-mailed and called to encourage them to renew their membership online. Messages were also sent through the SEMLS list-serve to reach SEMLS members who were not in the MSLA database. Potential members were contacted prior to area meetings and invited to attend.

Communication and resource-sharing took place through the MSLA listserv as well as the Southeast area wiki. The wiki can be accessed at: <http://mslasoutheastshares.pbworks.com/>

Lynn Weeks attended the Legislative breakfast and arranged for a parent to speak about school libraries. Heather Macpherson attended Legislative Day in Boston. She also attended the annual meeting of the MTA and presented a resolution in support of school libraries.

Western Area

Leigh Barnes and Vicky Biancolo, Area Directors

We may be in a remote location, but that didn't stop the directors of the Western Region from attending the MSLA Conference in Sturbridge on November 3, or from attending and participating in monthly executive board meetings in Concord. We brought those discussions home with us, and shared them with the membership at a general meeting at Capeless Elementary School in Pittsfield on October 21. We are lucky to have such experienced, enthusiastic members, who were full of good ideas and willing to share their opinions and suggestions.

The MSLA Western Region was a presence at several legislative events this spring, both locally and in the state capitol. Representatives attended the annual Library Legislative Breakfast at the Berkshire Athenaeum on March 6, the joint Legislative Day with the Massachusetts Library Association in Boston on April 2, and the

Governor's Community Forum at Pittsfield City Hall on May 12. This was essentially a "listening tour," and we hope to have a more vocal presence when these events roll around next year. Our regional representatives also attended this year's Librarian Open House Day at the Eric Carle Museum in Amherst on March 24. What a wonderful resource to have right in our own back yard! In addition to presentations by the likes of Jim Trelease and free poster giveaways, we awarded a one-year membership to one lucky raffle winner. We hope to see many more members there next year.

We are planning additional professional development opportunities to be offered in the Western Region next year. Throughout this year, we contacted lapsed members of the region by email to encourage reenrollment, and we contacted area non-members by email and by phone to encourage them to join our organization.



Advocacy

Sandy Kelly, Chairperson

The Advocacy position was newly created to coordinate public relations, legislation and Legislation Day. A database of contact information has been updated with professional organizations, legislators and media outlets that the board can access to expedite communications.

Several MSLA regions participated in MLA Legislative breakfasts providing both funds and members who spoke on behalf of the services that school libraries provide and those we highly value from the regional system.

A rally was held at the State House during this year's joint MLA-MSLA Legislative Day in March. Speakers and legislators representing all library types advocated for continued funding for the regional library system. Local television and the Massachusetts Teachers Association provided media coverage.

The day also included another successful Bookmark Contest celebration on the Grand Staircase. This contest continues to grow in popularity with members, their students, parents and legislators. Students received citations and State House tours from their local legislators.



Additionally, the executive board has acquired data from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. President Gerri Fegan has been collating and assessing this information to determine its currency and accuracy. It will be used to determine which schools in Massachusetts are served by certified school library professionals.