Conference Preview

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Ben Bizzle

Ben Bizzle is the director of technology at Craighead County Jonesboro Public Library in Jonesboro, Arkansas. He is a 2013 Library Journal Marketing Mover & Shaker and part of Craighead County Jonesboro Public Library’s 2013 John Cotton Dana Award-winning creative team. He co-authored the 2015 ALA Editions book *Start a Revolution: Stop Acting Like a Library*, offering ideas and tips for innovative library marketing and outreach. He is also a national speaker, library marketing consultant, and the founder of Library Market (librarymarket.com). Prior to joining the library team, he spent seven years as a technologist in the health care industry, eventually becoming the director of information technology, responsible for the technology infrastructure for four hospitals in Arkansas, Alabama, and Georgia. Since joining Craighead County Jonesboro Public Library in 2008, he has focused on virtualizing library resources and extending the library’s reach beyond the library itself. He has developed a number of cost-effective ways to enhance the patron experience and increase community awareness of the value of public libraries.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Jamie LaRue

Jamie LaRue is the director of the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom, and the Freedom to Read Foundation. Prior to that, he was the director of the Douglas County Libraries, headquartered in Castle Rock, CO. He is the author of *The New Inquisition: Understanding and Managing Intellectual Freedom Challenges*, and wrote a weekly newspaper column for over 25 years. He was the Colorado Librarian of the Year in 1998, the Castle Rock Chamber of Commerce’s 2003 Business Person of the Year, and in 2007 won the Julie J. Boucher Award for Intellectual Freedom. Jamie is a frequent keynote speaker for library associations. He has been a featured presenter for regional workshops, facilitator and presenter for staff days, a last-minute panelist, and a moderator and master of ceremonies for everything from debates to awards dinners. He has run hiring processes for non-profit and municipal CEOs, and he enjoys facilitating highly focused planning sessions for organizations that want to know what they do right, and what they need to do next.

125th Annual Conference
Thursday, April 21 & Friday, April 22 at the Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford CT

Libraries through the Looking Glass: reflecting the past while stepping into the future

Registration is now open!

To receive early bird discount, payment must be received by March 15th.
Barbara Blosveren Retires

Stratford Library Director Barbara Blosveren will retire in February. She has been at the Library for 33 years, the last nine as its director. Prior to that role she was Assistant Director, Senior Manager for Personnel and Youth Services and Young Adult Department Head. In making the announcement, Library Board President Judith Hampel said, “Barbara has made a significant contribution over the years to the library. Her creativity and leadership have clearly played a role in making the library the essential town asset it has become.”

Barbara Blosveren was responsible for creating the nationally recognized and award-winning Teen Services Department at the Stratford Library. She established the library’s monthly Youth Review Board in 1987, a program which continues to provide young people with the opportunity to share ideas, impressions and critical evaluations of the books they read. The Youth Review Board was cited by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) and the American Library Association for Excellence in Library Service to Young Adults, one of the nation’s outstanding programs. In addition, the Teen Services Department received the 2001 Excellence in Public Library Service Award given by the Connecticut State Library and the Connecticut Library Association.

Blosveren has served on American Library Association national committees including the 2001 Michael L. Printz Award, which annually selects the outstanding young adult book in the nation and the 2006 Margaret Edwards Committee, which nationally recognizes a young adult author for lifetime achievement. She served on the Young Adult Library Services Association Advocacy Task Force and the American Library Association Human Resources and Development Recruitment Advisory Committee. Blosveren was also an American Library Association trainer, providing professional development for public library staff interested in providing quality service to young adults on topics including collection development, programming and youth involvement. She has presented workshops on youth services at libraries and universities and at state, regional and national conferences. She has also written numerous articles that have appeared in state and national publications.

Blosveren was awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award for Meritorious Contributions to Librarianship from the Southern Connecticut State University Department of Information and Library Science from which she received her Master’s Degree. The Distinguished Alumnus Award is presented to a graduate of the program who has made outstanding contributions to the library/information science profession.

“It’s been an exciting time for the Stratford Library and I’m proud to have been its director”, Blosveren said. “I’m also very pleased with the advances we’ve made including the availability of current technology resources, an extensive collection of materials in a variety of formats, programming for all ages, a continual collaboration with town agencies and a comprehensive outreach to the entire community of Stratford.”

By Tom Holehan
Message from the President

CLA Turns 125!

An announcement from the May 28, 1891 Hartford Courant reads: “The first regular meeting of the Connecticut Library Association will be held in the Wadsworth Atheneum (Watkinson Library) on Saturday, May 30 at 10 a.m.”

The brief article goes on to outline the “programme” which includes papers on “School Libraries,” “Story of the Stonington Free Library,” and “Use of the Card Catalogue.” The article makes mention that the subjects to be presented are “not of a technical character or for librarians alone.” Mrs. Hill’s presentation on the Stonington Free Library is advertised to “all who are trying to solve the problem of founding and supporting a library on nothing a year.” And with that day long meeting, the Connecticut Library Association was born. If you were interested in becoming a member back then you could do so for an annual payment of fifty cents.

According to the abstract of the Connecticut Library Association Inventory of Records held at the State Library:

The Connecticut Library Association (CLA) was organized in 1891 in New Haven to promote library interests by discussion and interchange of ideas and methods, and not to ‘trench upon the province of the American Library Association.’ The original aims of the CLA have grown to include standards for librarianship, advancing types of library services, and providing opportunities for action upon mutual problems by trustees, librarians, and others interested in library affairs.

Although the organization has seen many changes through the years and withstood some difficult financial times, we are still committed to the original charge of promoting the interests of libraries and library workers throughout Connecticut. I admit it does bother me we still have to make a plea for the importance of libraries but as we evolve we must ensure that the thinking about libraries evolves as well. We do this by developing the skills of library staff through the hard work of the CLA committees who plan numerous workshops during the year and at the Annual Conference. The scholarships and PEG grants we provide further help to build our talent pool. From my own eight years on the CLA Board I have developed a wonderful network of colleagues whom I often call upon for mentorship and advice.

Another major strength of having a professional organization represent us is that in times of difficulty, the CLA can be called on to provide a strong and unified voice of support. Whether it is lobbying at the State Capitol for adequate funding, speaking out at a town hearing about an intellectual freedom challenge, or encouraging the administration of one of our colleges to preserve in-state library training, the amazing volunteers on the CLA Board have tirelessly worked on our behalf to ensure we have a robust and thriving Connecticut library community.

As happened on that spring day 125 years ago, library staff and supporters will once again gather in Hartford on April 21st and 22nd to celebrate our history while we also look toward the future to envision all that Connecticut libraries can be. I hope to see you all there.

Beth Crowley
CLA President

Candidates for the CLA Board

Vice President/President Elect
Glenn Grube, Director, Avon

Treasurer
Scott Brill, Circulation Supervisor, Huntington Branch Library, Shelton

Region 2 Rep
Susan Ray, Head of Adult Services, Simsbury

Region 3 Rep
J Drusilla Carter, Director, Willimantic Public Library

Region 6 Rep
To be announced

Look for candidate statements in the April issue of CLA Today.

April is...

Passport to Connecticut Libraries month!
Arthur S. Meyers Retires

Arthur S. Meyers, Director of Russell Library in Middletown since 1997, will retire on Feb. 19. In his nineteen years at Russell, Meyers has spearheaded renovations in the library’s facilities, grown its concert and program offerings, and overseen the expansion of the collection to include thousands of electronic books, videos and other information sources.

Meyers’ tenure at Russell began with a strategic plan, ‘Gateway to the Future,’ to develop library spaces, resources and services to meet the needs of the Middletown community in the 21st century. The library’s facilities were extensively renovated to meet modern building standards while maintaining the beauty of the original brownstone structure. Meyers also oversaw the growth of electronic media collections—on tape, then disc, and now available via download. Although print books remain popular, an increasing variety of electronic books, magazines, music and video are available at Russell. And under Meyers’ leadership, the library now offers a wide variety of world-class concerts, programs and workshops that range from classical music and dance, film series, children’s programs serving infants through teens, and health, job & career, and personal finance workshops.

Arthur Meyers’ special contribution to Russell Library and to Middletown has been to bring the library and the community together in ways that benefit both. Almost immediately on becoming director in 1997, Meyers organized a naturalization ceremony in Middletown that has become a cherished annual event. He is active in the Middletown Rotary Club and the New Haven Philatelic Society, as well as a variety of local book discussion groups.

After his retirement Meyers has a full schedule of activities planned, including travel with his wife, Marcia, to visit relatives in Rhode Island, the Midwest, and Fiji, research into Father John Ryan, a prominent figure in the Open Forum Lecture Movement, and participation in local organizations. He will be greatly missed at Russell Library but will remain a respected, beloved figure in the Middletown community.♦

By Patricia Tully, Interim Assistant Director, Russell Library
Call for NOMINATIONS FOR THE FAITH HEKTOEN AWARD 2016

The Faith Hektoen Award is given annually by the Children’s Section of the Connecticut Library Association to recognize the efforts of an individual or group that has made an impact on library services to children in Connecticut at the local, regional, or state level. Developed in 1979, the award is named for Faith Hektoen, who served for over 20 years as the first State Consultant for Children’s Services.

The nomination form is available on the CLA website.

Please submit nominations electronically or by mail (postmarked by Monday, February 29, 2016) to:

Bernadette Niedermeier
bniedermeier@westhavenlibrary.org

West Haven Library
300 Elm Street
West Haven, CT 06516

Thank you to all for your thoughtful consideration of making a nomination.

Sisters In Crime chose the Meriden Public Library as the December winner of their “We Love Libraries” contest and will be giving them $1,000 to buy new books. This was the winning photo entry: (librarians pictured, first row, Marge Ruschau, Jerry Maust and Susan O’Brien) ♦

Connecticut’s professional organization of librarians, library staff, friends, and trustees working together: to improve library service to Connecticut, to advance the interests of librarians, library staff, and librarianship, and to increase public awareness of libraries and library services.

CLA Today is the newsletter of the Connecticut Library Association. Published every other month, it is posted to the CLA website. Please send submissions for future issues to editor Jennifer Datum at editor@ctlibrarians.org.

www.ctlibraryassociation.org
Take Your Child to the Library Day 2016

**New Fairfield Free Public Library** celebrated during our first Saturday of the month storytime. Families heard stories and made a “love bug” craft.

At the **Kent Memorial Library** in Kent we celebrated the Chinese New Year for Take Your Child to the Library Day!

At the **F. N. Manross Memorial Library** in Forestville, Karen Masi, Chocolatier and owner of it! Candy in Forestville, presented a creative candy-making workshop. Child/adult pairs worked together to create Valentine-themed candy to bring home. Other activities included clay sculpting, a scavenger hunt and Valentine crafts.

Chicken Whisperer Leslie Watkins visited the **Norfolk Library** with her bantam mutt named Love Bug. Watkins entertained young and old with facts about how smart chickens really are! After lots of questions and stories, everyone got a chance to pet the chicken. Miss Eileen, the Head of Children’s Services really took to Love Bug! We had so much fun making crafts and munching on snacks while we took turns with our visitor.

The **Douglas Library of Hebron** enjoyed a community social. Parents visited while the children did crafts and read to Penn the READ dog. Penn is owned by Susan Stewart of Hebron.

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Mark your calendar for next year: **February 4, 2017**
People in the News

Sally Tornow is the new director of the New Milford Public Library as of March 1.

Matthew K. Poland will be the next Russell Library director. Matt will start his leadership on February 22. Current director Arthur S. Meyers is retiring after 19 years at Russell (see article on p. 4)

Jason D. Neely is the new director of the Enfield Public Library. He began his new position on February 1. Neely, who previously served as head of the Information Services Department at the Russell Library in Middletown, replaces Henry Dutcher, who retired last fall.

Rebecca Nugent, formerly the technology librarian at the Wethersfield Public Library, has accepted a position at the West Hartford Public Library.

Claudette Stockwell is Killingly Public Library’s new assistant library director! Claudette has been with the library for 14 years as our assistant children’s librarian and she is so excited to take her new role by storm!

At Case Memorial Library in Orange, Samantha Macelis has been promoted to the position of head of circulation services; Gina Monti has joined the staff as the children’s services assistant; and Marianne Pysarchyk as the adult services assistant.

Myla Christie has recently been hired as the new children’s programmer at Easton Public Library. She replaces Michael Robin, who was promoted in December to library assistant - technology/social media. Myla has previously volunteered at Wallingford Public Library, and she also works part-time at the YMCA.

Joan Overfield, Dean of Libraries and University Librarian Emerita, retired from Fairfield University after serving over 41 years. During her tenure, the collection increased from 126,000 books to over 1,000,000 print and e-books and the size of the building doubled. She will continue to serve on the CLC Advisory Board. Margaret Macri is the new children’s librarian at the Simsbury Public Library, coming from the Bristol Public Library, where she was an assistant children’s librarian.

Matt Earls is the new head of technical services at Hagaman Memorial Library in East Haven.

Stratford Library director Barbara Bloseren, is retiring after 33 years (see article on p. 2)

Governor Malloy has officially proclaimed February 6, 2016 as TAKE YOUR CHILD TO THE LIBRARY DAY in the State of Connecticut!
Last year, the Groton Public Library received a State Public Library Construction grant for $413,875 for building renovations and maintenance projects. The Town of Groton provided the necessary matching funds but challenged the Library to raise $100,000 to offset their match. With the help of the Library Board and Circle of Friends, a fundraiser was organized, contributions from individuals accepted and grant applications submitted. By far, the easiest grant application and the one with the biggest return was the Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program.

The State of Connecticut’s Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Tax Credit Program offers a little-known opportunity for municipal and tax exempt organizations to receive funding by providing a tax credit for businesses that make cash contributions to these nonprofit entities. Businesses can receive a credit of 60% of their approved contribution to certain programs (or 100% in the case of certain energy conservation programs) approved by the Department of Revenue Services. The program has several statutory limits (see http://www.ct.gov/drs/cwp/view.asp?a=1447&q=266058 for complete details).

Each municipal agency or nonprofit that wishes to participate in the program must complete the program proposal application (Form NAA-01). This form must be submitted to a participating municipality for approval. The municipality must then submit all of their approved programs to the DRS by July 1.

In our case, the NAA-01 form was submitted to the Groton Town Council for approval in early June. They had also received a similar application from a nonprofit in town. As required, the council held a public hearing, proceeded to approve both applications, and submitted them to DRS. By mid-August, both the library and the nonprofit received word that our applications were accepted into the program. And that’s when the real work began!

The director of the nonprofit and the library agreed to work together to contact local businesses to make them aware of the NAA Tax Credit. We visited them in person, via phone calls and by letter. Both of our programs were for energy efficiency projects and were eligible for a 100% tax credit. The library’s renovation project included funding for two new rooftop heating and air conditioning units that will replace 20-year-old units that had reached the end of their life expectancy. The new units will be more energy efficient and use a more environmentally friendly refrigerant. The total cost of the replacement units is $200,000; we requested the max-
Nominations Sought for CLA AWARDS 2016

The Outstanding Librarian Award honors the career accomplishments of a librarian who has demonstrated an outstanding record of service to his or her library and to the library profession. The following categories suggest areas in which the nominee may have rendered significant service: outstanding service in his/her field of expertise, e.g. reference, children’s services, administrative, or technical services; involvement in statewide leadership; encouragement of community/institutional support for the library. Preference will be given to nominees who have achieved in more than one area. The nominee must be a member of CLA.

The Special Achievement Award honors an individual who has implemented a significant project or initiated an innovative program during the past year. The achievement being honored should have had significant impact on the library, the community, or the library profession. This award may be given to the same individual more than once. The Awards Committee reserves the right to present more than one Special Achievement Award.

The Edith B. Nettleton Award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated an outstanding record of volunteer service to his or her library. This award is presented in the name of Edith B. Nettleton who served as Guilford Town Librarian from 1933-1978. After retiring, she returned to the Library as a volunteer, organizing the historical collection and serving for 35 years.

The Excellence in Public Library Service Awards honor public libraries that have provided an outstanding program or service to their communities. They are given in 2 population categories (15,000 and under or over 15,000). Nominations are judged on creativity and innovation, service to the community, leadership in creating model programs and programs which will affect the future of the library and its community.

The News Media Award honors an individual journalist or news organization for coverage of libraries and/or the principles of librarianship in an exemplary way during the past year. Exemplary media coverage can be evidenced through editorials, features, news reporting and/or special event reporting. Coverage may focus on library issues such as services to special populations and other appropriate topics. Copies of articles and other relevant material should be submitted with this nomination.

The Adeline Mix Award honors a full or part-time student enrolled in an approved graduate or undergraduate library education program, and enables the student to attend this year’s CLA Annual Conference. A grant of $250 will be awarded to cover conference registration, meals, and accommodations. Applicants must be a member of CLA, and the winner must agree to attend the Awards Ceremony and to write a brief article on his or her impressions of the conference for CLA Today. Applications may be no longer than two typed pages and must include the following information: status of current library school studies, education, degrees and honors, statement of need, and completion of a narrative describing how attendance at the conference will assist the candidate’s professional development.

The Intellectual Freedom Award recognizes an individual for the demonstration of extraordinary personal courage in the defense of intellectual freedom, or for the implementation of a successful and creative project developed to raise awareness of intellectual freedom issues, or for a published work on intellectual freedom.

The Support Staff Award honors an outstanding library assistant or support staff member.

The Supporter of Support Staff Award honors a library administrator or manager who promotes the role of library assistants and support staff.

The application deadline for awards is February 26.

More information is available at the CLA website.
We all need to champion our libraries by Marjorie Ruschau

If you believe in the value of your library, you need to advocate for it. That could mean going to a rally like the one last year at the State Capitol.

But it also means speaking up for your library whenever you get a chance, whether at your town council meeting, to your friends and family, or at your business.

"If you don't do it, nobody is going to do it for you," said Libby Post of the firm Communications Services of Albany, N.Y.

That was her message at an advocacy workshop Jan. 20 at the South Windsor Library. It was one of six free workshops she offered library Friends, staff, trustees and the public. Four workshops have already been held and two more are scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 27 -- 10 a.m. to noon at the Oliver Wolcott Library in Litchfield and 2 to 4 p.m. at the Easton Public Library.

Back up your support with statistics, which you can get from your library or the Connecticut State Library at libguides.ctstatelibrary.org/dld/stats. Funding is always the issue, Post said, but people need to start thinking in terms of how much money their libraries save them. Circulation staff could put a dollar amount to each person's check out -- 5 DVDs or books are saving that patron $100.

Libraries serve two-thirds of the public using less than 2% of all tax dollars. And every year their budgets are cut. But, "we can no longer afford to do more with less," she said. Many school libraries have closed so students depend even more on public libraries.

A Pew Research study showed "people love their libraries even more for what they say about their communities than for how libraries met their personal needs," Post said "What would it say about your community if you let your library close?"

The Pew study said that 90% of Americans, age 16 and older, say closing their local library would impact their communities and 63% said it would have a mayor impact. And 18- to 34-year olds are the fastest growing number of library users, she said. They use the library to find out if what they read online is true.

"Libraries give people a tremendous chance to succeed, and people say they realize that," Post said.

Libraries have a great reputation for customer service and can build on that to advocate. Staff should want to because it's their salaries on the line.

People who have extensive economic, social, technological and cultural resources are most likely to use and value libraries. Library supporters need to target the others -- people who don't use technology, don't have pride in their community and are less likely to take part in cultural activities.

Libraries need to make sure the public knows of all they offer, including doing this through their websites and other social media.

Does your library partner with the schools? Serve veterans and immigrants? Help local businesses and job seekers? Teach technology including the latest things such as 3-D printers? Let people know.

Once you have gathered facts about your library, you need to get them out to the public and elected officials, Post said. Start by figuring out who in your community are the leaders. Officials will expect to hear from your library board but what about the head of the Rotary, the hospital president, the chamber of commerce?

"Reach out to groups [and invite them to] use your meeting rooms," she said. "And while they're there, talk about information you might have on their subject in the library."

If you have Little League sign-up at your library, have a display on baseball books, maybe even buy a sign at the ball diamond. That way you might be reaching people who haven't been using your library and turning them into supporters.

"Volunteer messengers not directly affiliated with the library can be more powerful," Post said.

If you are doing a campaign for an issue, whether it be to expand or whatever, she said it's important to have a strong, clear message. "Giving away bookmarks [with a few facts about your issue] at the circulation desk is one of the most potent ways of reaching people," she said.

Get officials to come to libraries when there are a lot of people there, maybe a kick-off to summer reading. And once you give your pitch to people, don't just say, "I hope you'll support us." Instead ask, "Will you support us on this?"

Don't apologize that libraries need funding. In many towns, they are part of the government. They are as essential to a community as schools, health care and the police.

Appeal to emotions when you sell your library. Post said one library she worked for used a successful grandma campaign, saying such things as: "Grandma says everyone has to pay their fines." "Grandma says you can
Scholarships & Grants Available

The Career Development Committee offers scholarships annually to CLA members enrolled in MLS or LTA degree programs. This year the committee, in partnership with the Association of CT Library Boards (ACLB), is awarding two MLS scholarships in the amount of $2,000.00. The Career Development Committee will also award one LTA scholarship in the amount of $750.00. Application and all materials must be submitted/postmarked by March 18, 2016 in order to receive consideration. In addition to the monetary award, scholarship winners receive complimentary 1-day registration and lunch at the 2016 CLA Annual Conference. Click here for more information and the links to apply.

Calling all MLS/MLIS Students!

FLAG (Fairfield County Library Administrators Group) is seeking applicants for its annual scholarship to be awarded at the CLA conference in April. Students must be enrolled in an accredited Master’s program and have worked for a FLAG member library sometime in the past 5 years. Up to two scholarships of $1000 will be awarded. For more information, application and instructions, please visit the FLAG website at http://www.wiltonlibrary.org/flag/flag.htm Deadline is February 29, 2016.

PEG (Proficiency Enhancement Grants)

* PEG provides funding to help members of the Connecticut Library Association improve their knowledge and skills. PEG funds some expenses for continuing education programs, workshops, seminars, courses, institutes, and other activities.
* PEG is especially designed for CLA members who want to learn something new, or build upon an existing knowledge base, which will improve library service. PEG is not available for course work leading to or part of a professional library degree and is not designed for attendance at events which are general in nature or for the building of expertise in areas which are not related to library service.
* The PEG Committee is comprised of the six elected CLA regional representatives. The Chair is nominated by the CLA President and serves with the approval of the Executive Board.
* Grant applications may be completed by printing the application. The form should be mailed or faxed to the PEG Chair.
* When the program/event is concluded, PEG recipients will complete a Statement of Expenses form for sending to the PEG Chair.
CONTINUED FROM P. 6

Groton Public Library celebrated children’s room mascot Stretch the giraffe’s birthday with a Star Wars themed party.

The Pout Pout Fish visited storytime at the Simsbury Library.

Beacon Falls Library held two fractured fairy tale Readers Theater performances, a valentine votive craft and several drop-in crafts.

Al DeCant gave a fabulous performance Rockin’ with Pete the Cat! at the West Haven Library, promoting Literacy through music. The children sang, played instruments and danced.

The Killingly Public Library had Mr. Magic come to perform on Take Your Child to the Library Day. We had a full house, roughly 150 people, came to watch his show. It was very successful!

At the Milford Public Library, Matt from Turtle Dance Music wowed kids and their families with some big bubbles! There were also coloring sheets for kids and their grown-ups to enjoy.