NEWS FROM CUNY LIBRARIES
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Soiree for Sharon Bonk

On Thursday, November 17, Queens College’s Rosenthal Library hosted a soiree for Sharon Bonk, who is retiring as Chief Librarian after more than 12 years at the helm. More than 140 people responded to the announcement, and more than 100 actually came to the party in the South Patio Room of Queens’ Dining Halls. Among the guests were two CUNY chief librarians and the director of METRO. Featured among the refreshments were bottles of New York State wine from the Finger Lakes region and elsewhere to celebrate Sharon’s native state.

After the guests schmoozed for one hour, mistress of ceremonies Nancy Macomber officially welcomed everyone and introduced Queens College President James Muyskens. The President repeated one of his favorite themes: that the library is the “center of the campus.” Next, our stern-faced Provost, Evangelos Gizis, Sharon’s boss for much of her tenure here, commenced the roast and suggested that Sharon would be a good candidate for the next FEMA director.

Shoshana Kaufmann, our Acting Chief, related many of Sharon’s accomplishments and the privilege of working with her, twitted her about her illegible handwriting, after which she wished Sharon well in her “hick town” of West Sand Lake, between Albany and Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

Dick Wall, lauded Sharon’s legendary energy, allowing that she was “never content to be merely proactive where she could be hyper-active.” Not letting Sharon off the hook, Dick made extended remarks about her fabled but poor handwriting. For Dick, Sharon was a “hands-on leader…. Unfortunately, this was not a good thing when her hand was on her pen.”

Noting Sharon’s love of the outdoors and her forthcoming trip to Antarctica, a more sedate but still light-hearted Rolf Swensen presented two gifts to Sharon: an L.L. Bean gift certificate for snowshoes and a larger gift certificate to help her with her worldwide adventures. Sharon reciprocated with a buss.

by Rolf Swensen (Queens)

Interview with Sharon Bonk

Editor’s note: The following is an excerpt from an interview with Sharon Bonk, outgoing Queens College Chief Librarian. Lisa Flanzraich conducted the interview for Queens’ PageDown Newsletter: qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/Library/pagedown/index.html.

After 12 years of dedicated service and leadership in bringing Rosenthal Library into the age of digital information access, Chief Librarian Sharon Bonk has retired. Professor Bonk began her Queens College career following 15 years at the State University at Albany Libraries, where her positions included Assistant Director of Technical Services, Interim Director, and Assistant Director for User Services. Prior to SUNY/Albany, she served for nine years in collection development and serials management at Northeastern University in Boston, where she also taught library science courses.

Q. What do you consider to be your greatest accomplishments?

A. First, I must say that my accomplishments are built on the work of all my colleagues at the library as
is not the “imperial we.” We transformed ourselves into an electronic library from a print library. Our electronic journal subscriptions and databases have made many more resources available than we could have possibly purchased in print. We brought wireless capability to the library. We expanded and formalized our communications with users through our Web site and newsletter. We reached out into the community to make contacts for fund-raising and have been very successful. We transformed our role from deskbound collection building to one which emphasizes teaching. We intensified and expanded our instruction program, which now is only limited by the number of librarians available. I look forward to more faculty incorporating information literacy (IL) into their Gen Ed courses and their majors so the concept of IL is seen through the lens of the discipline.

Q. What will you miss about Queens College?

A. The college, including the library, has its own unique culture. I will miss the mixture of intellectual stimulation of the academic environment, the conversations and debates with faculty and the presence of eager-to-learn students from all over the world. This is what has made the college so exciting for me. I believe that working in an academic environment is one of the most rewarding of careers. Also, I will miss my teaching in the GSLIS, where I also had the opportunity to educate the next generation of librarians as well as advise them on career choices and publishing. And, of course, I will miss all the personal and professional relationships that I have formed in 12 years at the college, within CUNY and among academic and public librarians in the metropolitan area.

Q. What are your plans for the future?

A. I will still be professionally involved in librarianship as an adjunct and within the Advisory Committee of the New York State Library in Albany. I want to do volunteer work in upstate New York for an environmental organization and contribute my management expertise to the group. I also plan to garden, travel, and hike. I do not intend to sever relationships with friends here, but have the time to explore NYC with them. Although I worry that I will have too much time on my hands, my friends reassure me: “Sharon, you will still be saying, ‘There’s never enough time.’”

by Lisa Flanzraich (Queens)
London Information Literacy Conference

Editor’s note: Jeanne Galvin received a LACUNY Professional Development Grant to attend a conference in London. The following is her report on the event.

The Librarians’ Information Literacy Annual Conference (LILAC), held at Imperial College, London, in April 2005, afforded me the opportunity to learn about the challenges of information literacy in other countries. Twelve countries were represented among the participants. As a presenter, I was able to share some of our questions and possible solutions.

Papers included a variety of familiar topics, such as enhancing collaboration with classroom faculty, search interfaces, Web-based instruction, and dealing with underprepared students.

I found the session on information literacy and plagiarism particularly enlightening. By using interesting examples, the presenter showed how complicated the issue of plagiarism can be. She then pointed out how the actions taken to forestall plagiarism, such as teaching students how to use sources properly, can also help students to become information literate.

It was a revelation to me to find that European librarians also face the challenge of dealing with underprepared students. A UK initiative called “widening participation” has brought students into higher education who would not have previously considered attempting a university. Like our “open enrollment” students, these students have little or no experience using libraries and are frequently intimidated by them. Strategies for preparing such students and for breaking down the barriers to appropriate information seeking and use were discussed in several sessions.

Another engaging session involved a presentation of cogent arguments for not “dumbing down” search interfaces. A librarian explained what is lost if we try to make library searching too much like Google.

The overriding theme in almost every presentation was the idea that librarians are moving from a “provider (of information)/user” paradigm to a “facilitator/learner” standard. The insights I got at this conference will be most useful to me in my role as an information literacy librarian.

Thank you, again, LACUNY, for the Professional Development Grant that helped to make the trip possible.

by Jeanne Galvin (Kingsborough)
Professional Development Committee Sponsors Grants Workshop

The LACUNY Professional Development Committee sponsored the annual PSC-CUNY Grants Workshop, September 16, 2005, at Baruch. Twenty-five people attended the event, which included presentations by four CUNY library faculty who received the award this year: John Drobnicki (York), Rita Ormsby (Baruch), Catherine Perkins (Staten Island), and Philip Swan (Hunter).

Gerry Jiao (Baruch), Chair of the Library Panel for the PSC-CUNY grants, opened the workshop with a discussion of the nuts and bolts of the application process.

John Drobnicki spoke about his research project, a bibliography on the denial of the Armenian Genocide. John’s project will result in an article-length publication.

Rita Ormsby discussed the Web site she is developing with her co-researcher, Eric Neubacher, also of Baruch. Their site will make available the writings of Professor Abraham J. Briloff, an influential accounting professor at Baruch and will also include videos and speeches about him.

Catherine Perkins’ research focuses on understanding how college students use their libraries, both public and academic. Catherine’s study will be based on surveys taken by college students at the CSI library as well as at branches of the New York Public Library in Staten Island.

Philip Swan concluded the panel with a presentation on his historical study of pre-revolutionary South Carolina. Philip’s project included travel to South Carolina, where he conducted original research.

Complete descriptions of the panelists’ projects are available at lacuny.cuny.edu/committees/pscgrants36.html.

The workshop concluded with questions and discussion. Members of the audience left the workshop inspired to pursue funding for their own research projects.

by Dawn Amsberry (LaGuardia)

GOT NEWS FOR NEXT TERM’S NEWS FROM CUNY LIBRARIES? DON’T WAIT!! SEND IT TO US NOW. EMAIL MICHAEL ADAMS or VALEDA DENT WITH YOUR NEWS.
Spring Membership Meeting

LACUNY’s Spring Membership meeting was held on June 10, 2005, at Hostos Community College’s beautiful Longwood Art Gallery. Thirty-seven CUNY librarians gathered to hear Dr. Alan Bailin and Professor Lisa Ellis describe Baruch College’s Information Studies minor and to enjoy each other’s company and indulge in catered delicacies. Professors Bailin and Ellis summarized more than twenty years of varying success with credit-bearing courses until 2003, when a new set of requirements for business students was presented the library with an opportunity to establish an Information Studies minor. The presentation was of interest to CUNY librarians because each campus library works on ways to teach information literacy and research skills. Credit-bearing courses are one of several ways of doing this, and Baruch’s Library generously offered its experiences for examination.

Outgoing LACUNY President Kenneth Schlesinger proudly presented LACUNY’s first $250 Library School scholarship to Ms. Cindy Rodriguez, of Queens’ GSLIS program and Queensborough’s circulation department. We congratulate her and look forward to welcoming her to our profession.

LACUNY election ballots were tabulated, and while we salute and thank our outgoing President Kenneth Schlesinger and Sydney Van Nort (outgoing Secretary), we welcome our new officers and wish them a successful term: LaRoi Lawton (Bronx CC) is our new President; Lisa Finder (Hunter) is Vice President/President-elect; Amanda Bielskas (BMCC) is our new Secretary; Ellen Sexton (John Jay) is our Treasurer. LACUNY’s Bylaws were changed to allow for co-editors of Urban Library Journal, and they are Beth Evans and Martha Corpus, both of Brooklyn College.

Kenneth Schlesinger informed us that membership currently stands at 251 and that this year’s LACUNY Institute was so successful that is has helped raise our balance to over $29,000. This past year was full of activity and new programs. We held ten events; we revived our Web-based newsletter, and two issues have appeared through the efforts of co-editors Michael Adams (Graduate Center) and Valeda Dent (Hunter), as well as production-and-design manager Scott Johnston; LACUNY’s updated online and print directory is out, thanks to LaRoi Lawton and Joanne Canales. Four new Roundtables were launched: Disability Services, Multicultural and Diversity, Reference, and Web Management. In addition to LACUNY’s new Library School Scholarship described above, two $500 Professional Development Grants were awarded to Jeanne Galvin (Kingsborough) and Catherine Perkins (Staten Island).

by Miriam Laskin (Hostos)
Scholarship Essay

Editor’s Note: The first LACUNY library school scholarship was awarded at the spring membership meeting to Cindy Rodríguez, student in the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies at Queens. Cindy, who works in Queensborough’s circulation department, won for the following essay.

Although I am not a librarian, the opportunity to work in a library has been invaluable. The library environment is the key of what to expect in my future profession. My current position has given me a unique perspective of the library profession for two reasons. First, I understand how it is important that a librarian is knowledgeable about accessing information by using a book or the computer. Secondly, the role of the library is misunderstood and minimized by some in the college community.

As a graduate library student, a class in reference work was required. I remember the professor insisted that we use both online and print resources. Now in my present job, I realize the importance of that knowledge. There has to be a balance of knowledge regarding this information, and we cannot give in to the quick access that a computer provides. It is a wonderful resource, but it is not the only one. This has been a lesson that I have observed and value from working at Queensborough Community College Library.

Furthermore, the library is undervalued in our society. For example, budget cuts have forced library branches to close their doors all across the United States. It’s surprising to me that the case is similar in an academic library. It always seemed to me that an academic library is the center of academia. However, I have learned that another challenge is to justify the importance of the library and the librarian within the academic setting.

As a future librarian I see that there will be challenges in this profession. Although there is much more to learn, the opportunity to observe librarians has assisted in my understanding of the intricacies of academic librarianship. I believe that libraries are an important asset to our society. Vartan Gregorian, the former President of the New York Public Library, says it best, “Libraries keep the records on behalf of all humanity.” I hope to always remember these important lessons when I become a librarian.

by Cindy Rodríguez
Awards and Grants

An article by Lisa Ellis (Baruch) has been selected as one of the top-twenty library instruction articles of 2004 by ALA’s Library Instruction Round Table. “Approaches to Teaching Through Digital Reference” appeared in *Reference Services Review* 32 (2004): 103-119. According to the LIRT News (June 2005), LIRT's Continuing Education Committee cited Lisa’s “well-written” publication for addressing “the confluence of instruction and digital reference, two major trends in the library field.” It was also named Article of the Year by Reference Services Review.

Jeanne Galvin (Kingsborough) and Catherine Perkins (Staten Island) were winners of the 2005 LA-CUNY Professional Grants. Abstracts of their projects can be seen at lacuny.cuny.edu/committees/pdcom.html#winners.

Wilma Jones (Staten Island) received the 2005 William A. Morris Humanitarian Award from the NAACP Staten Island Chapter in September. Professor Jones was honored for her work as a founding member of Nah We Yone, a non-profit organization that provides support for African immigrants whose lives have been severely disrupted by war.

Katherine Shelves (Baruch) co-authored an article named one of the best business articles of 2004 by Seton Hall University’s Stillman School of Business and the NJPRO Foundation, the public-policy research affiliate of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association. “Smart Cards” appears in *Advances in Computers* 60 (2004): 147-192.

Rolf Swensen (Queens) won the 2004 Arrington-Prucha Prize from the Western History Association for his article “Pilgrims at the Golden Gate: Christian Scientists on the Pacific Coast, 1880-1915,” Pacific Historical Review 72 (May 2003): 229-262. Swensen accepted the award at the annual conference of the association in Las Vegas on October 15, 2004. Rolf was also awarded a month-long summer 2005 fellowship at the new Mary Baker Eddy Library for the Betterment of Humanity in Boston for work on the “Rise of Christian Science in New York City, 1885-1910.”

The fifteen recipients of the 2005 PSC-CUNY 36 Awards were cited in the previous edition of News from CUNY Libraries. Abstracts of their projects are available at lacuny.cuny.edu/committees/pscgrants36.html.

Exhibitions

Suzanna Simor and Alexandra de Luise (Queens) organized the following exhibits at the Queens College Arts Center (qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/Library/art/artcenter05_06.html): “Wiggle & Wave: Paintings by Roberta Crown; Sculpture by Barbara Lubliner,” September 8-October 27, 2005; “Monologue: Works on Paper by Seongmin Ahn,” November 3-December 23, 2005.

Professional Involvement

Miriam Laskin (Hostos) has been appointed to a two-year term on the Instruction for Diverse Popula-
Michael Miller (Queens) has been elected to a three-year term as Councilor-at-Large to the Council of the American Library Association.


For the last three years, Cecilia Salber (Kingsborough) has helped choose the books featured in the KCC Reads program. For the 2005 program, she also compiled “Bibliography for Kingsborough Reads: The Namesake”: www.kbcc.cuny.edu/kccread/namesake.html.

Publications


Gretchen Gross and Maria Kirakova (John Jay) have contributed “Websites, Media, Journals, and Professional Associations” to Introduction to International Criminal Justice (McGraw-Hill, 2005).

Maria Kirakova (John Jay) contributed “Fitch Creche,” “Nursing Home Scandals,” and “YMCA” to The Encyclopedia of New York State (Syracuse University Press, 2005).

Louise Klusek (Baruch) contributed to the research for NYCdata (www.baruch.cuny.edu/nycdata/). The database offers statistics about sixteen areas of life in New York City, contains more than 400 pages of data, and provides links to over 4,000 Web sites. A project of Baruch’s Weissman Center for International Business, NYCdata was created by Professor Eugene J. Sherman. Louise has also created the tutorial “Beginner’s Guide to Business Research” (www.baruch.cuny.edu/tutorials/zicklin/research).

Michael Miller (Queens) published “Cross-Disciplinary Prospecting: Educational Technology Offers Up Gold for Library and Information Science Curricula” in Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Li-

Patricia Woodard (Hunter) published “Joseph Lincoln Hall: Gospel Song Composer, Editor, Publisher” in The Hymn 56.2 (2005): 6-17.


Presentations

Sheila Beck and Devin Feldman (Queensborough) presented “World of Information Literacy in the Community College: An Evaluative Analysis” at the Second Annual Teaching, Learning, and Student Support Atlantic Regional Conference at Sussex County Community College, Newton, New Jersey, October 24, 2005.


Monica also presented “Need to Know Now: Scholarly Communication Today” for City Tech’s Professional Development Advisory Council, November 17, 2005.


Julie Cunningham, Polly Thistlethwaite, and Scott Johnston (Graduate Center) presented “Teaching Information Literacy” to new CUNY Graduate Teaching Fellows on August 23, 2005. The Graduate Teaching Fellowship Program prepares doctoral students to teach undergraduate classes at campuses throughout the CUNY system.

Valeda Dent and Wendy Tan from Hunter College presented a paper titled "A Self-Paced Virtual Library Tutorial: International Application of the VOILA! Project" at the China Society of Library Science in Guilin, China, in July. This same paper also won the Best Paper Award at the conference.

Jeanne Galvin (Kingsborough) presented “Promoting Information Literacy through Involvement in Educational Initiatives” at the Librarians’ Information Literacy Conference, Imperial College, London, April 5, 2005. Jeanne’s paper is available at www.cilip.org.uk/groups/csg/csg_ilg/lilac_parallel.html. The expenses for her trip were defrayed by a LACUNY Professional Development Grant. Jeanne also gave the poster session “Educational Initiatives and Information Literacy” at ENY/ACRL, College of Saint Rose, Albany, New York, May 16, 2005.

Joseph Harnett and Janey Chao (Baruch) presented a poster session, “The Digital Medial Library (DML),” at the Seventh Annual Nylink Information Showcase at the Syracuse University Sheraton Hotel, November 17, 2005.

Michael Miller (Queens) presented the poster session “Technology Literacy of Support Staff: A Check-list Derived from Supporting Electronic Reserves” at the April 2005 ACRL National Conference in Minneapolis. An abstract of this poster session is available at qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/~mjmiller/ACRLposter05.htm.


Lauren Yannotta and Valeda Dent from Hunter College presented a paper titled “Studies from A Rural Library in Africa”, at the 4th Pan-African Conference on Reading in Swaziland, Southern Africa, in August.

**Milestones**

**Appointments**

Shoshana Kaufman (Queens) is Acting Chief Librarian following the November 1 retirement of Sharon Bonk.

Brian Lym (Hunter) was appointed Reference-Instructional Librarian. Brian previously managed the library of the City College of San Francisco’s John Adams branch. At CCSF, he co-developed and taught the library’s online information-literacy course. Brian received an MLIS and an MS in Wildland Resource Science from the University of California, Berkeley.

Katherine Shelfer (Baruch) was appointed Outreach Librarian in August.
Degrees Earned

Anne Leonard (City Tech) received an MS in Urban Affairs at Hunter in June 2005.

Promotions

Sheila Beck (Queensborough) has been reappointed Assistant Professor with tenure.

Jeanne Galvin (Kingsborough) has been promoted to Professor.

Anne Leonard (City Tech) has been promoted to Assistant Professor.

Josephine Murphy (Kingsborough) has been promoted to Associate Professor.

Cecilia Salber (Kingsborough) has been promoted to Associate Professor.

Rolf Swenson (Queens) has been promoted to Professor.

George Thorsen (Queensborough) has been reappointed Assistant Professor with tenure.

Resignation

Mike Purcell left the Graduate Center in December, 2005, after more than three years as Systems Librarian, to take the same position at the University of Northern British Columbia.

Announcements

The Lloyd Sealy Library received the inaugural Nylink Achievement Award for Resource Sharing and Metadata for “Crime Web: Cataloging Internet Resources in Criminal Justice and Public Safety.” The project, supervised by Marlene Kandel, Coordinator of Technical Services, and funded by the Student Technology fee, has cataloged over 500 electronic documents and Web sites in criminal justice and related fields, making these resources available through CUNY+ and WorldCat.—Bonnie Nelson (John Jay)

Lehman has received a $29,542 New York State Discretionary Grant for Conservation and Preservation of Library Research Materials for its Bronx Oral History Reformatting Project.

Walter Scott (Bronx) and Sylvie Richards (Brooklyn) are co-chairs of the 2006 LACUNY Institute. “Information Commons: Are We Being All Things to All People” will be held at Baruch on May 19.

The first meeting of the LACUNY Multicultural and Diversity Roundtable was held November 4, 2005, at City Tech. The Roundtable adopted a mission statement and will explore ways of sharing multicultural resources within CUNY and enhancing the diversity in CUNY libraries. Madeline Ford (Lehman) and Tess Tobin (City Tech) were elected co-chairs, with Scott Sheidlower (York) as secretary.