

## Pols Get New Powers over Queens Library

New legislation passed by the New York State House and Senate and signed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo gave the mayor of New York and Queens borough president new authority to appoint and eliminate members of the Queens Library (QL) Board of Trustees. The new law is sponsored by State Senator Michael Gianaris and Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry and authored in part by Borough President Melinda Katz. It is widely seen as a response to the need for more oversight and transparency from the board as questions about the compensation of QL CEO Thomas Galante and his relationship with contractors doing library construction work have gone largely ignored by the current board.

The bill, S-6893, passed the state senate by an overwhelming 59–1 margin on June 19. Prior to its signing by Cuomo and passage into law, though, the current Board of Trustees attempted to schedule an emergency meeting on June 26 that could have changed the terms of Galante’s contract, which netted him \$392,000 in compensation in 2013. The *Daily News* reported that the meeting would have seen board members con-

sider a proposal to remove Galante as CEO and president. Instead, Galante would have become an independent consultant for the library system for the next two years. Working on an as-needed basis, Galante reportedly would have made more than \$800,000 in compensation during that time. According to television station NY1, the library characterized the *News* report as “inaccurate,” adding “a confidential draft of a proposed agreement was provided to the members of the board as the first step in an effort to begin a conversation on the conditions of a possible transition of leadership at the library.”

Galante has been at the center of controversy swirling around QL since the *News* reported that he held a lucrative second job at a Long Island school district and has a personal relationship with a contractor who did significant work on Queens libraries. That relationship is currently the subject of a federal investigation, and the past several months have seen numerous calls by local politicians for Galante to step down from his post.

John Hyslop, president of Local 1321, the Queens Library Guild, told *Hotline* that even though the proposal on Galante didn’t go through, it raised serious questions about the

## Interview

### Mimi Pond

Hard-core fans of *The Simpsons* may recognize Mimi Pond’s name—she wrote the first full-length broadcast episode in 1989. Pond has been a professional cartoonist and



illustrator for more than 25 years but never tackled a full-length graphic novel until her latest work, *Over Easy*.

#### How long had the story of *Over Easy*, percolated before ideas were put to paper?

I started working [at the Imperial Café in Oakland] in 1978. I took notes over the years, little by little, I visited there again and again, I talked to people who had worked there at the time.

#### How did you decide whom to include in the story?

That was really hard. There were legions of fascinating characters who came and went over the years. I just had to go with characters who would serve the narrative.

#### Can you give words of wisdom from your own journey?

Lately everyone wants me to tell them how to “monetize” this. I don’t know if you can tell, but I am not in it for the dough.

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state of the current Board of Trustees. "The announcement of this consultant plan is gross negligence, and 1321 was deeply concerned that the Board of Trustees would go through with it," Hyslop said, especially in light of the system's refusal to open its private donation books to outside auditors, a call that has left more than \$20 million in funding from the city of New York frozen and unavailable to the library.

Once the proposed meeting became public knowledge, it was canceled following protests by Borough President Katz, as well as the office of New York City public advocate Letitia James and state attorney general Eric Schneiderman. "I am getting tired of calling the behavior of this Board 'an outrage,'" said Katz in a statement condemning the proposed meeting, which she went on to refer to as "another painful example of how several of the Trustees of this Board have consistently blocked any sort of good governance or increased oversight reforms."

#### TRUSTEES IN THE HOT SEAT

James Sheehan, charities bureau chief in the office of the New York attorney general, complained of the short notice given with regard to the meeting, which was announced less than 48 hours before it was scheduled to take place. In a letter to board chair Gabriel Taussig, Sheehan wrote that "we do not believe that the trustees can fulfill their fiduciary duties to the library by voting on the proposed agreement, which we are concerned provides terms that may be unfair to

the Library, on such short notice."

Taussig told the *New York Times* that his decision to scrap the meeting had nothing to do with the bill or pressure from public officials. He said he did not know if the board would go forward with the vote later and that the meeting had not been rescheduled.

The cancellation of the meeting provided time for Governor Cuomo to sign the QL reform bill into law, seemingly taking the consultant proposal off the table. In a statement, Cuomo told *Hotline* that the legislation was necessary because those "entrusted to serve the public have a responsibility to act in the public's best interest. It's clear that wasn't happening here and additional accountability was needed."

QL spokesperson Joanne King condemned the new legislation, telling *Hotline* in an interview that "in terms of independence of governance, it is extremely threatening, because the board will now be subject to political control."

While Hyslop welcomed the passage of the reform bill, he shared some of King's concerns. "Local 1321 is very encouraged by the reform legislation that provides more transparency and good governance on the Queens Library Board of Trustees. We have some reservations, being that politicians have more power over the Board of Trustees now," he said. "However, these trustees have not lived up to their fiduciary responsibility, and the consequences that will have are unknown."

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### Library Hotline Is Moving Downtown

Please note that as of July 21, the staff of *Library Hotline* will be settling into new offices in New York City's Financial District.

Our email addresses and phone numbers and fax numbers will remain the same. However, please plan to send materials for review and other mail to our new address: 123 William Street, Suite 802, New York, NY 10038.

Asked to predict what the new legislation would mean for QL, Hyslop predicted that Katz would soon begin individual interviews with current board members to determine their feelings on the current state of the library and learn whether she thinks they're suitable to remain on the board. That could be bad news for Galante's future with the system, he said. "I imagine one of the qualifications she's looking for will be asking for Galante to go."

## College Libraries Publishing Student-Led Journals

At the recent American Library Association (ALA) annual conference in Las Vegas, academic librarians working as publishers gathered to discuss the state of their partnerships and what needs to happen to move the budding library publishing industry forward at the panel "Libraries in the Publishing Game: New Roles from Content to Access." Melinda Dermody, head of access and sharing at New York's Syracuse University libraries, moderated the panel, which included Catherine Mitchell, director of the Access & Publishing group at the California Digital Library (CDL), Rebecca Kennison, director of the Center for Digital Research and Scholarship at Columbia University, New York, and Cyril Oberlander, library director at the State University of New York (SUNY) Geneseo.

The panel stressed the need for a rethinking of how academic libraries view publishing, looking at it not as an experiment but as a new key value that needs an improved infrastructure and more support to thrive. "We're not dabbling anymore," said Mitchell. "We're in the midst of a transition from amateur to professional library publishers." As more and more libraries work to carve out niches in the world of publish-

ing, Mitchell and her fellow panelists made the point that library publishers have a role to play in making the work of students as well as faculty accessible to wider audiences.

Publishing student work online gives libraries an opportunity to make

unique content available to a wide audience, and readers are already taking advantage of it. At Columbia, where dissertations and graduate theses in the School of Arts and Sciences are openly available in the Columbia repository, each thesis has been down-

## Klassen and Brooks Take Home UK Literary Prizes

Grim, honest stories prevailed at the 2014 CILIP Carnegie and Kate Greenaway Medals ceremony on June 23. Caldecott-winning Jon Klassen's *This Is Not My Hat* (Candlewick, 2013; Walker Books, UK) and Kevin Brooks's *The Bunker Diary* (Puffin UK, 2013) took top honors in the UK's longest-running and most prestigious awards for children's literature. Both creators are first-time winners, having been short-listed previously, and beat out illustrious past recipients. The presentation was live-streamed for the first time from London's Unicorn Theatre.

The winners noted that children benefit from stories that don't end happily. The Greenaway, awarded by children's librarians for an outstanding book in terms of illustration for children and young people, went to Klassen's humorous tale of a thieving fish that suffers fatal consequences for his crime. Klassen is the first Canadian and his title is the first Caldecott Medal-winning book to take home the Greenaway. Klassen shared with the audience via live-stream:

"Storytelling is an act of community, of looking at one another afterward and agreeing that we enjoyed it or not. Whether the story itself portrays happiness or doom, the hope is found when we agree we liked it, and I'm so glad you liked this one."

Brooks's Carnegie-winning *The Bunker Diary* is the fictional diary of a kidnapped boy held hostage in a bunker. After his work was rejected for its lack of hope, the author struggled for a decade to get the novel published. Speaking at the awards presentation, Brooks said, "There is a school of thought that no matter how dark or difficult a novel is, it should contain at least an element of hope. As readers, children—and teens in particular—don't need to be cossetted with artificial hope that there will always be a happy ending. They want to be immersed in all aspects of life, not just the easy stuff."

*The Bunker Diary* will be available for American readers in spring 2015.

In response to the backlash over the perceived darkness of both books since the awards were announced, Brooks told the *Guardian*, "I've got no problem with anyone having their opinion, but this just doesn't stack up. *The Bunker Diary* is a book about dark and disturbing subjects—it has to contain dark and disturbing things. And it is aimed at teenagers, whom I know from personal experience are perfectly capable of dealing with that."

Brooks and Klassen each received £500 worth of books to donate to their local library.



Jon Klassen and Kevin Brooks



The \$250,000 renovation at the **Marysville Public Library** (pictured), KS, is nearly complete. The rehab of the 6,800 square foot facility began in January and includes new shelving, fresh paint, a reconfiguration of patron spaces, and a mural in the children's section by high school art teacher April Spicer, according to the *Marysville Advocate*. Staff now have an updated workspace and copy center, while the Internet-connected media area and its holdings of audiobooks and DVDs are in the center of the building. Funding came mostly from donations, including \$100,000 each from the R.L. and Elsa Helvering Trust and the Guise-Weber Foundation. The project architect is Hans Fischer, with general contractor Oetinger-Lloyd.

The **Lexington Public Library**, KY, purchased a plot of land in expectation of creating a new branch in the Hamburg section of the city. The nearly \$4 million parcel includes a 27,000 square foot building. With a time line leading to a May 2015 completion, the new facility will replace the current Eagle Creek Branch, which, though owning one of the system's highest circ figures, is the library's second smallest branch. The new library will feature 25 percent more items than Eagle Creek, meeting

and study rooms, 121 parking spaces, and drive-up service.

Another Hamburg library? The **Hamburg Public Library**, NY, received a state grant to facilitate a \$450,000 interior remodel, per *Buffalo Business First*. The project will include plumbing and electrical system upgrades and is part of the \$14 million allocated for library construction in the state's 2013–14 budget.

Despite a shaky start, the \$2.6 million renovation of the **Downers Grove Public Library**, IL, is moving along nicely. Among the first projects in the interior refurbishment to be finished is the Mouse Cafe portion of the children's area, which replaces the former Mouse House. The café was designed around the concept of imaginative play and serves the library's youngest customers with train sets, puzzles, picture books, and toys, according to the *Downers Grove Patch*.

**UPDATE:** The *Yes!* sculpture at Boulder Public Library (BPL), CO (*Hotline*, 6/30/14), was "canceled after concerns and complaints were raised from some members of the community... It was determined that a more robust public input process needs to be built into the city's Public Art Policy before projects are approved," per BPL.

loaded an average of 2,600 times, said Kennison. She also called for a broader approach to publishing, encouraging librarians to look at other types of publications they're already involved with, from databases and digital collections to staff blogs, as entry points into publishing proper.

Student-run journals are also a great way to enter publishing and provide unique content without making significant investments, a sort of test case scenario. While these kinds of journals may be simpler starting points, they still require some infrastructure, Mitchell pointed out, emphasizing that in the University of California system, which is served by CDL, students are required to fill out proposals that explain why a new journal such as the one they're suggesting is needed; predict the costs of producing it and suggest ways to cover them; and create a sustainability plan that will keep the publication relevant and healthy in the hands of new students after its founders graduate.

Presentation and back end concerns have to be taken into account as well, and a one-size-fits-all solution may not be the best for libraries. CDL uses Open Journal Solutions to produce most of its student-run journals but has found the software doesn't meet the needs of all fields equally. Journals for biology and economics, for example, will have disparate needs, norms, and publishing traditions that demand different platforms. And while many librarians default to open access standards, those may not be a universal answer either. At CDL, an initial push to license student journal content under Creative Commons met push-back from some students, as the license is more suited to STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) journals than it is to those presenting selections of arts and humanities work.

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SUNY's Oberlander suggested an even simpler pilot for getting libraries to dip a toe into publishing—digitizing and providing access to special collections they hold. SUNY Geneseo has also gotten involved in providing open textbooks penned by faculty, which Oberlander said is not only a great way to contribute to the publishing world but also promotes the work of professors at the school. An initial grant provided \$3,000 to each open textbook author, but the library received so many quality applications that the grant was expanded, resulting in the publication of 15 new e-textbooks. The library assists by hosting the titles and ensuring they are discoverable on services like WorldCat and OCLC and through services such as proofreading and copyediting.

While the journals are still used primarily online, Oberlander said that the ability to print copies “is absolutely necessary,” citing the importance of dropping a journal on the desk of university provosts, presidents, and donors in getting attention and sustainable funding for the project. The sentiment was echoed by Mitchell, who said it was hard to overestimate the importance of what she termed “thud factor” in ensuring that university officials understand the impact of library publishing.

## ABCmouse Ed Software Comes Free to Libraries

ABCmouse.com for Schools was launched in 2011, and on June 26, at the American Library Association (ALA) annual conference, Age of Learning announced ABCmouse.com for Libraries. It is a fully featured, free-for-libraries version of the ABCmouse.com Early Learning Academy, its award-winning online curriculum used by millions of children.

ABCmouse.com for Libraries gives children access—through the 16,000

The **City of Upland Library, CA**, has outsourced control of its daily operations to private company **Library Systems and Services Inc. (LSSI)**. The contract will last five years.

Library service **Atlas Systems** experienced a 66 percent user community increase for its **Aeon** special collection management tool. Some 42 institutions now use the product.

**Better World Books** announced the winners of its 2014 **Learning and Education in Action Program** grants: **Biblioteca Comunitaria**, Dominican Republic; **Larchmont Public Library, NY**; **Puertas del Saber Library**, Nicaragua; **St. Louis County Library**; and **Union Beach Memorial Library, NJ**.

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U.S. public libraries—to its comprehensive online learning resource that includes language and literacy, math, social studies, arts, and music—for children ages two through six (and up). According to the Age of Learning website, ALA reported that “there are more than 1.5 billion in-person public library visits and over 300 million sessions on Internet-connected computers at U.S. public libraries annually.” ABCmouse’s library access initiative will significantly increase families’ ability to go online and use this resource.

“For the millions of families without a computer or broadband Internet at home, the local public library may be the only place they can access high-quality online learning resources like ABCmouse.com,” Zachary Katz, senior vice president of corporate development at Age of Learning, told *Hotline*.

Winner of numerous awards from national education, parent, and media organizations, ABCmouse.com offers a highly engaging, expert-designed curriculum for preschool,

Nonprofit **Artstor** has updated its **Shared Shelf** media management service. The new release includes an administration tool for more control over collection management.

**Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service (CCRLS), OR**, entered a seven-year agreement with **SirsiDynix** to use several of the latter’s services. CCRLS is a 17-member system.

**Palm Beach County Library System, FL**, received the **Network Subregional Library of the Year Award** from the **National Library Service for the Blind and Handicapped**. It was honored for its Talking Books program.

pre-K, kindergarten, and beyond with more than 3,500 individual learning activities and 450 lessons.

ABCmouse.com for Libraries was available at more than 140 branches nationwide during its pilot phase, including all Los Angeles Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library facilities. It is now available to all U.S. public libraries for free at [www.ABCmouse.com/libraries](http://www.ABCmouse.com/libraries). Once a library has opened an account, anyone who visits [www.ABCmouse.com](http://www.ABCmouse.com) through the library can access the curriculum. For a step-by-step setup and installation guide, go to [www.morethanjustbooks.com](http://www.morethanjustbooks.com).

## Banned Books Week 2014 To Focus on Comics

The American Library Association (ALA) annual conference in Las Vegas set the stage for Banned Books Week (BBW), scheduled for September 21–27, 2014. This year, BBW will shine a light on banned and challenged comic books and graphic novels. On the show floor, from June 27

to June 30, the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (CBLDF), which provides legal support and expertise to readers, authors, and librarians, debuted a new handbook offering a rundown of commonly challenged comic titles, myths about banned books, and ideas for programming around BBW.

The last few years in particular have seen some high-profile challenges of comic books and graphic novels, including the removal of some financial support from the College of Charleston, SC, after it included Alison Bechdel's coming-of-age graphic memoir *Fun Home* in a schoolwide reading program and the restrictions placed on Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* in Chicago public schools.

Comic books are frequent targets for censorship for a number of reasons, CBLDF executive director Charles Brownstein told *Hotline*. For one thing, many people still see comic books as a low art form, and the free speech and expression of authors and artists have a similarly low value associated with them. The graphic nature

of the medium also means it depends on static images that are easy to take out of context, said Brownstein.

Nevertheless, the recent spate of high-profile challenges to comics makes the medium a natural way to expose censorship. "Comics are a great way to engage readers with the real problem of censorship today," said Brownstein.

The cover of the new handbook was provided by comic artist and author Jeff Smith, whose Eisner-winning fantasy epic, *Bone*, was the tenth-most challenged title in libraries across the country in 2013. As far back as 2010, Ramona DeLay of Apple Valley, MN, has attempted to get the title removed from the shelves of her son's school library.

To support BBW, the CBLDF has released discussion guides for commonly challenged graphic novel titles including *Fun Home*, *Persepolis*, the popular manga series *Dragon Ball*, Craig Thompson's *Blankets*, and Alan Moore's *Watchmen*. In addition to the discussion guides and handbooks,

CBLDF.org will provide what Brownstein described as "tools and springboards" for advocates like librarians and booksellers to create their own local BBW programming. "We provide the flint," said Brownstein. "The fire comes from the community."

Suzanne Scott, performing arts coordinator for the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District, said that comics have always played a role in the system's Banned Book Week programming, with librarians putting together displays of banned and challenged comics at libraries as well as local comics retailers. While plans for this year's event lineup are still being discussed, she told *Hotline* she expects comics to take center stage.

## Free Audiobooks All Summer Long from SYNC

June's "Audiobook Month" is over, but librarians can help to extend it by participating in SYNC's free audiobook program for teens. SYNC is an initiative begun by audiobook publishers and *AudioFile Magazine* to introduce the audiobook listening experience to teens during the summer months. Now in its fourth year, the program offers young adults the opportunity to download two free audiobooks every week from May 15 to August 13. For a period of seven days, SYNC thematically pairs a contemporary YA audiobook with a classic title.

Each set of MP3 titles can be downloaded for free within its scheduled week (through the OverDrive Media Console, compatible for Mac and Windows) and, once downloaded, can be enjoyed via listeners' preferred device or computer. Libraries, schools, and bloggers can access a full promo toolkit.

Participants can sign up for email or text alerts that invite them to download the new titles as they become available.

## People

**Darren Gillgrass** was promoted to Chief Executive Officer, Maverick Publishing Specialists Ltd., Dorset, UK. He was previously its Head of International Business Development. Additionally, **George Farina** joined Maverick as Senior Associate in the United States, **Shona Mullen** as Senior Associate in the UK, and **Alison Jones** as an Affiliate Associate.

**Lisa Mertel** was appointed Head of Adult Services at Geauga West Library, Chesterland, OH. She was previously a Librarian at Shaker Heights Public Library, OH.

**Stephen Podgajny** announced his retirement as Executive Director of Portland Public Library, ME, effective July 2015. He has held the position since 2006.

**Elizabeth Potts** retired as Director of Maury County Public Library, Columbia, TN. She has been with the library for 47 years.

**Rick Stoddard** was named Head of User and Research Services at the University of Idaho Library, Moscow. He was previously Assessment Librarian at Oregon State University, Corvallis.

**Carol Verny** has retired as Director of the Haverhill Public Library, MA. She was previously Director of Library and Member Services at OHIONET.

**C. Brigid Welch** retired as Dean of the University of the Pacific Library, Stockton, CA. She has worked in the field for 40 years.

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