

QUEENS LIBRARY GUILD

LOCAL 1321 NEWS

DISTRICT COUNCIL 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO,
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Queens Library Guild Local 1321

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President's Message—

We Succeeded: Members' Activism Stopped Major Budget Cuts



John Hyslop
President

ON JUNE 25, 2012, the Mayor and City Council announced a budget deal that cut the library budget slightly but provided enough funding for at least five-day service and NO LAYOFFS. This is great news for the hard-working union members of the Queens Library. We can continue to provide all the excellent services our customers need.

We received this positive budget because we took action and responsibility for its outcome.

We reconstituted the Local's Budget Action Committee (BAC) with Kerline Piedra and Mike Wong as co-chairs. BAC facilitated the Community Libraries' successful rallies throughout Queens. All their work was voluntary and they did an amazing job.

The staff at Government and Community Affairs (GCA) made sure that the Community Libraries had petitions, postcards and posters. They also ensured that local politicians were aware of the events. They did a great job.

All the Community Libraries that held rallies, large and small, made a difference. Combined, we blanketed the borough with library advocacy. Everyone in every corner of Queens heard about the plight of the library's budget, thanks to your activism.

Creative advocacy by Urban Librarians Unite (ULU) brought attention to the proposed budget cuts. As usual, their advocacy is vital to NYC's libraries.

DC 37's Political Action and Research & Negotiations Departments, Professional Division and Executive Office worked tirelessly to advocate on our behalf. Their work was vital to our success.

Our elected officials, faced with proposed, daunting budget cuts to many city services, constructed a budget that is balanced and provides enough money to keep us open and employed. Throughout the long and tiresome budget process, the City Council was adamant that they would provide enough funding for the libraries to avoid layoffs. They recognize our value and we appreciate it.

This budget year was a difficult one. Years of proposed budget cuts, advocacy and then restoration created cynicism and apathy among most of us, including me. However, all of us know, deep-down, that if we do not advocate then our politicians will ignore us and we will not get the funds we need to avoid layoffs. Fortunately, we have strong advocates, leaders and membership who slough off apathy and cynicism and fight! We succeeded! Thank you!

In solidarity,
John Hyslop
President

Despite budget victory—

Administration Changes Hours of Service

LOCAL 1321 members did it again! Our activism saved the library from drastic budget cuts! Time to celebrate? Only two weeks later our euphoria over saving the Queens Library was changed to dismay and anger over the administration's announcement that the Community Library's hours will be changed. In FY 2013, we received a few million dollars less than FY 2012 for a minimum of five-day service. The administration has not hired a public service staff member since 2008 and has lost over 170 public service staff members. Instead of decreasing hours to mitigate this loss, the administration changed the hours, making our lives more difficult.

At this year's President's Forum, staff were informed that beginning September 4, 2012, all Queens Library locations, with the exception of the Central and Flushing libraries, will follow an 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. service schedule for Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday. The administration justified this

decision citing gate count and the need for consistency of service hours for customers, despite the effect that these new service hours will have on the public service staff as well as on working conditions.

Despite the justification for these new service hours, public service staff found it puzzling that many things were not taken into account such as children's morning programs, class visits, professional development workshops, opening procedures before customers enter the building, seniors who prefer early morning hours, among many other items. Inevitably, all public service staff will be affected in some way, some more than others, especially those with young children and families. While staff expressed the toll that this new service schedule would have on their quality of life (especially those with families), such as additional child care costs, longer commutes travelling to and from work during off-rush hours, less pay due to the elimination of shift differential and the emotional hardship of seeing their children/families less, Mr. Galante seemed

disconnected from these concerns and told staff to make the adjustment.

After three years of living with potential layoffs, advocating and working diligently for budget restorations, dealing with minimal staffing levels, clustering and low morale, public service staff are faced with yet another burden of maintaining a difficult service schedule, compromising their quality of life and the continued challenge of providing quality customer service.

According to our contract, Article III Management Rights Section 2:

"The Library, except as expressly limited by the written terms of this Agreement, is vested with and reserves to itself all rights not otherwise covered by the terms of this Agreement, including but not limited to the following: the right to determine its services, staffing and the scheduling thereof, including the hours of performing these services..."

We argue they should use these rights to improve the lives of their employees, not hurt them.

President's Forum—

Unanswered Questions

THE following questions were asked at this summer's President's Forum and were not answered adequately. It is acknowledged that staffing is thin. Since staff is needed, can we recall the ones who we laid off, if not with city funds then with grant funding? Queens Library is great. However, it can be better. Great companies try to retain their staff and listen to their concerns. Staff are concerned about family responsibilities – taking care of their kids or elderly relatives; commuting

which becomes more difficult during non-rush hours; and going to school to do better in their jobs. Everyone wants to do better for themselves. The new service hours will be a hardship in these ways. People make a lot of effort to get to work and provide high-quality customer service. As for retention, HR needs to orient, train and retrain new managers and staff when people leave. Is the library doing enough to retain their great staff who provide high-quality customer service, and can you say specifically how the new hours were determined?

RALLIES!

ANOTHER YEAR and another proposed budget cut. Another year and Local 1321 fights to save our library! Here's how we did it:

January 2012 – Mayor Bloomberg proposed a library cut that would force the administration to lay off hundreds of library workers and devastate library services.

February 2012 – The Local reconvened its Budget Action Committee (BAC) and the committee held a series of meetings to discuss strategy.

February 13 – President John Hyslop and Executive Vice-President Margaret Gibson met with City Council member and Chair of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations Jimmy Van Bramer.

March 2012 – The BAC updated its informational handouts for creating and hosting events.

March 13 – Local 1321 testified at the City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations hearing on the Mayor's proposed budget.

March and April – The BAC encouraged and contacted Community Libraries to hold events at their library.

April 18 – Council Members Gentile and Van Bramer kicked things off with "Library Day at City Hall Park."

May 2 – Queens Village Community Library held an event at Toddler Time.

May 8 – Flushing Community Library held a rally.

May 11 – Queens Village Community Library held a petition and postcard event.

May 12 – ULU held the UniRead at the Unisphere.

May 17 – Rockaway Community Libraries held the "Boardwalk for Books" march.

May 21 – Windsor Park Community Library held a postcard event.

May 23 – South Hollis Community Library held a postcard event.

May 24 – Corona Community Library held the "March to Save our Libraries."

May 30 – Broadway Community Library held Broadway's "Stroller Brigade for Books."

May 31 – Queens Library held a rally on the steps of City Hall.

June 1 – Richmond Hill Community Library held a rally.

June 4 – Laurelton Community Library held the "Campaign to Save our Libraries."

June 5 – Local 1321 and the administration held the "Speak Up for Queens Library."

June 6 – Local 1321 testified at the City Council Committee on Finance's hearing on the Mayor's budget.

June 9 & 10 – ULU held the 24 hour Read-In at Brooklyn Public Library's Grand Army Plaza.

June 14 – Long Island City Community Library held the "Broke Down Carnival," and Lefrak City Community Library held a rally.

June 25 – We learned our efforts paid off and the City Council and Mayor restored most of our funding!

This newsletter includes summaries of the events, written by the union members who worked so hard for all of us. Without them volunteering their time and participating in the city's budget process, we would not have succeeded. Thank you and everyone else who made the effort.

(Continued on pages 4-8)

Patrons "Speak Up For Queens Library" at Central Rally June 5

The "Speak Up for Queens Library" rally at Central on June 5, 2012, started out very light. I thought that there would be scheduled speakers. There were people milling about, but only a few people wanted to speak. The few that did said pretty much the same thing: "I love this library, they let me do _____ here" or "Please don't close my library."

When you called their name to speak, people were shy and did not want to come forward. Then after Queens Borough President Helen Marshall spoke with passion and from the heart about the importance of our library to her, it became clear that she was not just speaking politically. She meant it! Then like a broken flood gate EVERYONE wanted to say personally how important the library was. I wanted to say something, but everyone wanted to speak up and the time was running out.

A young lady came to the podium, looked at everyone and said, "The library is not just about books and doing our homework, it is a place meet, learn and grow." I realized then that was what it is all about is community. If that was not worth fighting for, I don't what is.

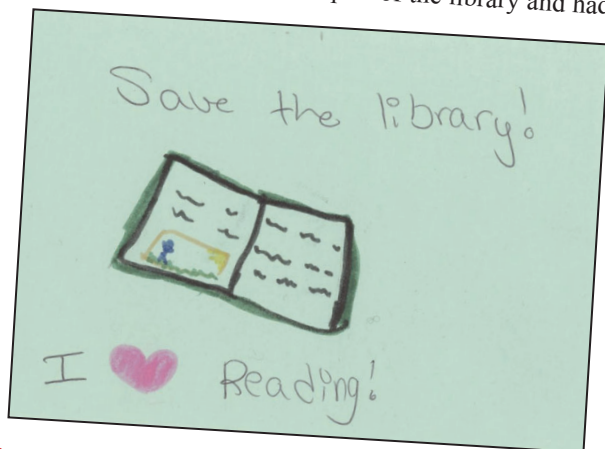
—Edith Capellan
Jackson Heights Community Library

(Continued
from page 3)

Windsor Park Library Postcard Advocacy

Windsor Park Library was excited to take part in the grassroots advocacy efforts that took place in community libraries across Queens. Our program took place May 21, 2012. Despite the weather, we had a number of enthusiastic and creative children and teens who designed some beautiful and memorable postcards and signs for the advocacy effort.

As the children's librarian, I created postcards that contained the message "I love my library because..." with contact information for Council member Jimmy Van Bramer. Children and teens could complete the message with their favorite part of the library and had



the option to add a related picture. On the dry erase board, I wrote some eye catching phrases for the signs. Phyllis Fassler, the part-time children's librarian, also found and encouraged children and teens to participate in the program, and they did a great job of interpreting the phrases with pictures that resonated with these memorable words.

Children and teens were concerned about the possibility of the library closing. They were also confused — since such a beautiful and modern new library was created for us, why would they close it?

John Hyslop, Local 1321 president, and Kerline Piedra, head of the Budget Action Committee and a union Board member, attended our program. They were helpful in engaging the children about the library advocacy issue and encouraging other children and adults to participate by creating or filling out a premade postcard. Kerline also collected the postcards and signs and took them to be sent by Queens Library's Government and Community Affairs office to Council member Jimmy Van Bramer.

Although the program was officially on Monday, May 21, children, teens and adults filled out postcards all throughout the week and made this program a resounding success.

— Michelle Marcus
Windsor Park Community Library

"Forest of Favorites" at Woodhaven Community Library

On May 30, 2012, over one hundred people participated in a rally at the Woodhaven Community Library. Leading up to the rally, dozens of community members posed for pictures of themselves holding a favorite book that they discovered at Queens Library. A large cardboard tree displayed the photos, the "Forest of Favorites," and served as the centerpiece of our month of advocacy efforts.

A documentary film called "Save the Library," a result of five weeks of effort by Children's Librarian Ken Gordon and twenty children, was shown in the library. Then all gathered on the steps to speak up for library funding. In attendance were representatives of Council member Elizabeth Crowley and State Assembly member Michael Miller. Ken Gordon performed a rousing version of a Beastie Boy's hit urging all to "fight for your right to keep libraries open." The rally was followed by a popsicle social in the auditorium where community members could enjoy a free popsicle after participating in a postcard and petition signing campaign.

The Woodhaven community has been active in supporting their library over the past three difficult years, and still managed to put forth a touching effort this year as well. A group of adults with disabilities who volunteer weekly collected over 50 postcards from their friends and colleagues in support of their "work site," and although they couldn't attend the rally, they made signs and contributed their photos to our display.

As one of Mr. Gordon's young documentarians said, "The



library is my second home; it has everything I need." He helped interview people for the film and found that others feel likewise. Watch his efforts at www.youtube.com/woodhavenfilms. As the end-of-year budget drama unfolded and much of the funding for New York City libraries was again restored, we hope that these small actions were meaningful and helped show that libraries are important and library funding is an investment in our society and our future.

— Kendra Kuzai
Woodhaven Community Library

Save Queens Library—

“Broadway Stroller Brigade”

The idea to organize a parade and include little ones came from Logan Ragsdale, the Broadway Library manager. We all thought this was a great way to make officials hear the “cry” of all the people who need the library and come for our TLC...and Toddler Story Times; coloring and craft programs; homework help or just to read and borrow some great books.

We rolled our sleeves up and started working. Everyone got involved. We made fliers advertising the event and talked to parents who came to the library or participated in any library programs. Parents got involved. They could not imagine “their” library being closed or losing all free activities for children. They spread the information about the rally, invited friends and neighbors with babies, and

signed petitions. The manager also contacted special groups who in the past had made use of the meeting rooms: working mothers, first-time mothers, and Astoria Homeschoolers. They were all happy to come down to lend support. And on his lunch hour, when the manager recognized two moms and their children from the library, he personally chased them down to invite them to the rally. So outreach was done.

Older kids got involved by making “Save the Library” posters (during after-school programs) with the help of our activity assistant Sabrina Ramsingh. Kids used poster boards, crayons, markers, stickers and their imagination to create one-of-a-kind posters with expressions such as:



Poster made by Jessica Singh

“Imagination Grows in the Library,”
“I Love to Read in the Library Every Day,”
“Please Help Save Books,”
“I Love Library and Diary of a Wimpy Kid,”
“Let’s Read and Have Fun in the Library” and
“We ♥ Library!!!!”



Poster made by Feeza Asif Ali

On the morning of May 30, the day of our rally, by 11:30 a.m. there were close to 100 strollers in front of Broadway Community Library. Toddlers, babies, parents and grandparents were proudly holding posters and marching around the library singing “no more cuts” to the tune of “Jingle Bells.” Yellow, orange and red balloons floating above with handwritten slogans on each of them (thanks to our page Antonia Duda) – “Save the library” and “Keep Them Open” – made it the cutest “stroller brigade” ever! Parents and children joined with eagerness, enthusiasm and hope that libraries would stay open and programs continue. On Wednesday, June 27 during our Toddler Story Time, I shared the good news with them: “Most of the funds were restored and there will be no layoffs or

closures!” They cheered and applauded and felt proud! Their voices counted and they were heard – the library will stay open!

—Lubomira Kierkosz
Broadway Community Library



Corona Library Rally and March Held May 24

During the week leading up to the May 24, 2012, rally at Corona Library, the whole community was busy with preparation. After school, students and parents made posters, wrote postcards, and practiced and wrote chants. Publicity concerning the rally was provided in English and Spanish. On the day of the rally, both children's librarians spoke and explained the budget situation to the audience in English and Spanish. Two students spoke to the audience about the importance of the library in their lives. The president of the friends group gave a motivating speech in Spanish. Our special guest speaker, union President John Hyslop, hyped up the crowd. We raffled off books and museum tickets throughout the presentation in order to keep the attention of the audience and raise excitement. The chants for the march, which were handed out, were then practiced in English and Spanish.

Finally, it was time to march. The families collected the posters that they had made earlier and joined us on a walk around the blocks surrounding the library. We coordinated with the local police to plan a walking route. Two police officers stopped traffic for us and kept us safe. We sang songs and shouted chants in support of the library. Onlookers clapped for us and shouted their support. Other community members joined in when they saw us. We returned to the library worn out and with hoarse voices, but with a sense of accomplishment. This event was a true community effort with library staff, parents, and children all coming together. About 200 attendees joined together to make their voices heard and to stand up for the importance of library services. The children especially took to the rally and march, and showed both excitement and conviction in their participation.

—**Mary Jacobi**
Corona Community Library

ALC Students Join Flushing Library Rally

The Flushing Library Alternative Learning Center (ALC) students rallied with elected officials and library workers against budget cuts. They not only brought signs and flags they made by themselves, but brought their own voice to protest the proposed budget cut. One student did an interview with CBS, vividly telling her story of the importance of the Queens Library. Besides the CBS and NY1 television, local English and Chinese media reported the rally.

The support from the public was tremendous. Many Chinese-speaking customers approached me when I talked to Chinese media reporters to show their support. Alice, a regular customer and a home care worker, said the Flushing Library opened a new window to her life after she moved to Flushing from Shanghai. "This is the only place we go without paying anything but gaining everything," she said.

—**Xinye "Paul" Qiu**
Flushing Library

Richmond Hill Rally and Speak-Out

With the endorsement of the Friends of Richmond Hill and Local 1321, we had a successful rally at Richmond Hill library. Local 1321, Richmond Hill staff, State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo and Council member Elizabeth Crowley's Assistant Kate Mooney represented our community. They all spoke favorably of their support for the library. Also, customers present at the time advocated for increased funding and shared testimonies of the importance of this library to them.

—**Rebecca Alibatya and Leah Goldschmitt**
Richmond Hill Community Library

A safe place to go and grow—

Patrons Sign Postcards to Support Hollis Library

South Hollis is a very unique neighborhood made up mostly of African Americans and immigrants from the Caribbean. This middle class community in the 1990s saw a significant increase in crime due to drugs and gang activities. Some famous rappers hail from the neighborhood including Run DMC, Joseph Simmons and his brother Russell Simmons. The South Hollis Community Library is located on 204th street, one block from Run DMC JMJ Way, named in the memory of the slain rapper. Over the years the community has increasingly been plagued by illegal activities such as crime, drugs and prostitution.

The library plays a pivotal role in the community and it is one of the few positive institutions for residents who seek recreation, information and a safe place to spend time. Parents rely heavily on the after school program and homework help offered to their children. For the job seeker who is unemployed, the library is a pivotal place for Internet access and other important resources

and programs.

At the postcards signing event on May 23, 2012, the anecdotes from patrons describing how important the library is to them and their families really defines what our advocacy work is all about. Working there in the early '90s and returning in 2010, I've observed significant changes in the community. Most of the community centers have been closed due to budget cuts and the library remains one of the few positive places for teens to gather with friends or study in a safe environment.

We need to continue to emphasize the message that the main purpose of the library is not only about circulation and gate counts. For many communities it is about providing a safe place for our children to go and grow, and it also up to all of us to preserve these pivotal institutions and the many vital services provided.

—**Kerline Piedra**
South Hollis Community Library

Laurelton Rally: "Speak Up for Queens Library"

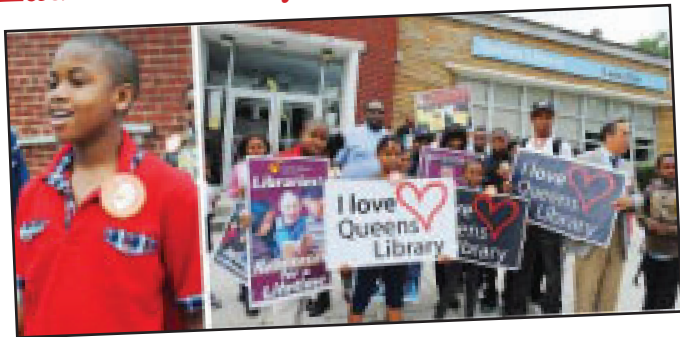


Photo by AnnMarie Costello,
Assistant Editor, Queens Chronicle

On June 4, 2012, over 30 residents from the community gathered in front of Queens Library at Laurelton and told the city, "We need Queens Library." During the rally the kids told the city about why libraries are vital to them. They waved signs and chanted "Save our library," protesting the Mayor's proposed budget cuts to libraries in the city. Many of the students said that they used the library to do their homework and other assignments. They said that they won't be able to conduct their research projects without the library's materials. Parents said they consider the library a safe haven where their children can learn and engage with others of similar age.

Robert Glover, the first vice president of the Federated Blocks of Laurelton, said at the rally, "It is very important that they do not cut any more. They are taking education away from our kids." Donovan Richards, chief of staff to City Council member James Sanders Jr. (D-Laurelton), also spoke. He said, "The book I'm recommending for the Mayor is 'How not to balance the budget on the backs of our young people for dummies' and when he looks in that book, he's going to find the solution to not having to cut our young people's services." John Hyslop, president of the

library workers union, told attendees that many people depend on the free services the library offers. "If someone doesn't have a job, and they are counting every penny," he said, "where are they going to go for free services, free Internet, free books, free entertainment, and free education for their kids?"

It is widely believed that voices from the Laurelton rally and other rallies across the borough were heard by those who decide the library's budget.

The Queens Chronicle carries an article about the rally. It can be accessed from the link below:

http://www.qchron.com/editions/eastern/we-need-the-laurelton-library-residents-say/article_5c67a8b6-fb90-5fe1-9122-10e4da652330.html

— Dave Wang

Laurelton Community Library



Photo by Donovan Richards,
Chief of Staff for Council member James Sanders

Being a Bear for a Day

These days, as you know, library staff take on different roles, like advocate, babysitter, mediator, and even a bear! Or at least that was my experience on June 14, 2012, at Queens Library at Long Island City at the "Broke Down Carnival Rally to Save Libraries!" This was such an exciting carnival organized by Tienya Smith, the CLM of LIC for QBPL!

Being a bear is a really interesting experience! I was a bear with a sign that read, "Can't bear cuts to libraries." It's hard work being a bear because it's so warm inside, and it's like a heavy costume! But like everything in public service, the more you put in, the more you get. Kids were giving me high fives, and one kid even asked me, "Are you a real bear or a fake bear?" During the part of the rally when people gave speeches, it was amusing to see City Council member Jimmy Van Bramer pause his speech and say, "There's a bear in the room." Of course, budget cuts are never funny! They are so sad! That's why, as a bear, I hope that I helped to do my part to take a bite out of budget cuts!!!

As Vice President of Librarians in Local 1321, I just want to tell you all how much you mean to me! Now that our moment



of crisis has been momentarily averted, I am happy to use my bear costume in spirit to give you all bear hugs!

— Kacper J. Jarecki
VP of Community Librarians

Queens Village Community Library Petitioned and Rallied

As I sat at my table on a beautiful May afternoon outside of the Queens Village Library, I spotted Ronald, one of our many regular library users. Like many of our customers, Ronald, a teenager who comes to do homework, meet friends and check out materials, was surprised to learn about the impending budget cuts.

Ronald, and dozens of others like him, eagerly signed our petition and spread the word about our advocacy efforts, both at Queens and throughout our many community libraries. The May 11, 2012, event at our library was a huge success and helped rally our community to speak out to our local officials and community leaders. During the event patrons voiced their concerns about the devastating effect the budget cuts would have on the community and the potential loss of many vital programs such as

Mail-A-Book for homebound customers, ESL classes for newly arriving immigrants and specialized programming for children.

Queens Village residents truly value and use their local library as evidenced by the 7,375 adult materials and 5,599 children's materials circulated in May. Our advocacy efforts went beyond that one event. We visited neighborhood schools to spread the word about our advocacy and dozens of postcards and petitions were signed. Staff at all levels participated in making the event and all of our efforts a success. I'd also like to acknowledge the support of our local's president, whose efforts were tremendous and greatly appreciated.

—Kerline Piedra
Queens Village Community Library

Rockaway Libraries Hold "Boardwalk for Books"

In early April 2012, I was contacted by GCA about doing the "Boardwalk for Books" again this year. A few things were different from last year. The idea evolved from the budget cuts two years ago and was a former manager's idea. We wanted to involve more than just one library and have it be more for all the libraries in the Rockaways, because it is a unique service area. The idea was to walk on the boardwalk from Seaside and Arverne, and have the rally part at Peninsula. Two years ago, after frantic last minute planning, the event was cancelled because City Council agreed on the budget two days before. Last year was a relative success, and was on Saturday to try to demonstrate that both Arverne and Seaside were closed on Saturdays.

This year presented some obstacles. Two of the former managers left the system in the past year, and one library was without a manager at the time. Also, three of the four libraries in the area were short staffed for a variety of reasons. I sent out emails, and had some meetings. The union's Budget Action Committee was really helpful. They emailed a rally prep guide. The BAC answered our questions and took our rally seriously. GCA helped with the details and contacted the elected officials for us. Prior to the rally three of us went to Community Board 14's May meeting and promoted the rally. Also, schools were contacted and local businesses notified.

I was worried at the early stages, but as the rally came closer, staff of the Rockaway libraries and the special services, the ALC and BTOP really started to promote the event. We changed the day from a Saturday to a Thursday evening, which led to some debate.

May 17 arrived, and the weather was perfect. Several of



us from Peninsula went to Seaside, and we were joined by President John Hyslop and other library supporters. About twenty of us marched from Seaside, and we all stayed together and walked at a brisk pace. We got several thumbs up and encouragement from people we passed. With perfect timing we met the Arverne group a little bit before 6 pm. Mike Wong from the union marched with the Arverne group, which was slightly larger with thirty people, and together we marched to the Peninsula library. With the help from GCA, the rally was set up. Moderating the event was easier for me than speaking. I think we had about the same turnout as last year or a little more, about 60 to 80 people. The speeches were good though, and we had more elected officials. All four elected officials – Assembly member Philip Goldfeder, Donovan Richards from State Senator Malcolm Smith's office, City Council member Eric Ulrich and Assembly District Leader Lew Simon – mentioned the importance of libraries and library staff. The staff that spoke all made good points. At the end we opened up the mike a bit to customers and kids. The rally lasted about a half hour, but created a very positive feeling, made it worthwhile, and created a sense that libraries are a worthy cause. Thanks to all the libraries and agencies involved with making this happen.

—Matt Allison
Peninsula Community Library



Customer Service?

A CONSTANT refrain from this administration is, “Make the customer happy because that will increase circulation.” We could not agree more. However, that may be the only thing we agree upon and wonder, “Who do they think their customers are?”

In our opinion, the administration has at least two customers: the public, including politicians, and the staff. We strongly contend that both of their customers form a symbiotic relationship that makes the public library. The staff serve the public and the public come to the library to be served. Therefore, the well-being of one affects the well-being

of the other. If one of these customers is hurt by the administration’s actions then, in this symbiotic relationship, the other is hurt.

Consistently from 2008 until now, the administration has hurt one of its customers: the public service staff. They have laid us off. They have not hired new public service staff since 2008. They have increased our hours. They have re-deployed us with little consideration. They require each of us to do the work of two or more people. They have changed our hours disregarding the hardship it will impose. They have hired non-union administrative staff. They have given themselves

raises. They have hired part-time employees to do full-time employee work. All of these actions have damaged the morale and well-being of the public service staff and have had a negative impact on the needs of the public.

We strongly recommend the administration re-evaluate its service schedule to meet the needs of both its customers. We strongly recommend they start hiring essential full-time public service staff. We strongly recommend they focus on improving the morale of the public service staff. The administration needs to remember that the library’s public service staff is as important as the public.



Abigail Goldberg

Testifying at City Council

I TESTIFIED at the public hearings at City Hall in June 2012. While waiting to be called to the podium, I heard testimony by workers from other non-profit agencies. Everyone described painful health benefit cuts and potential layoffs. The Museum of Natural History’s union chief got a round of wild applause when he said, “Museums and libraries are the reason people come to this city. This city’s becoming a playground for billionaires.” Council member Domenic Recchia told BPL’s union chief that the projected layoffs were “too many” and “that’s not going to happen.” In my testimony, I shared stories about our personal commitment to our customers and neighborhoods. Afterward, Council member Letitia James stated that the Council had fought mightily to extend service to six days and they were on our side.

—Abigail Goldberg
Sunnyside Community Library

Your Safety, Your Time, Your Wages

AS WE ALL KNOW, despite an eleventh hour funding restoration, the library’s budget remains substantially reduced, and despite reductions in hours our community libraries remain desperately short-staffed. Coverage in most agencies is barely adequate at its fullest, and any absences can spell disaster. As a result many staff members are experiencing requests to travel to cover in another agency or to work extra hours. Make sure to protect your safety and your salary!

Don’t try to operate a branch alone! This puts you, the customers and the Queens Library at risk. If at any time staffing drops, or is soon to drop below a level where safety cannot be maintained, ask for help! Notify your supervisor and follow

the chain of command. You can contact Community Library Services directly at: (718) 990-0750. If in doubt, ask! It is management’s responsibility to see that adequate coverage is maintained, but they have to be notified.

If you work overtime, voluntary or otherwise, make sure you record it on your time sheet and submit for overtime pay or compensatory time. If you are required to travel to another agency in the course of the work day, you are entitled to travel time and expense. You are NOT required to “contribute” your lunch break or other time without compensation.

If these are happening to you, contact your union representative to discuss the matter.

Work smart, work safe.

DC 37 Professional Committee's

Professional Conference

Saturday September 22, 2012

9:30 AM – 2:00 PM

**DC 37 Headquarters
125 Barclay Street, New York, NY**

All are welcome

Agenda

9:00 AM Continental Breakfast

9:30 AM Opening

9:35 – 9:45 Welcome remarks

Panel I Mobilizing the Professional Worker

- The role of the professional worker in the labor movement
- Participation, means to mobilize and mobilization
- Creating effective mobilizations
- Road to protect Civil Service
- Next Wave

Panel II Labor and Politics

- Our agenda for the next 20 years
- Conservative politics in government
- Labor movement: Fighting back against the slash-and-burn politicians
- Civil Service: yesterday, today and tomorrow
- Educating the public
- Joining the community and clergy agenda

Lunch 12-12:30 PM

Panel III Challenges of technology to professional and technical workers / labor-management relations

- The role and challenges of professional and technical workers in the current work environment
- The role of professional workers in public service



***Join DC 37 Working Families
for the 2012***

Labor Day Parade

Saturday, September 8

**DC 37 members will assemble at 11:00 a.m.
on West 46th Street between
5th and 6th Avenues**



- *March with NYC's largest public employee union*
- *T-Shirts, Snacks and thundersticks will be distributed at the site*
- *Voter registration*

For more information contact your local or union rep or go to www.dc37.net.
District Council 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, 125 Barclay St., New York, NY 10007 • 212-815-1000
Lillian Roberts, *Executive Director*

New Administrative Hiring

LOCAL 1321 members' activism ensured the three library systems received almost their entire requested budget. The City Council ensured that we would not have layoffs and a minimum of five day service. Unfortunately, we could not convince the library to hire more public service staff. FY 2013 is turning out to be another year of a "hiring freeze," the fourth year in a row. This means no new public service staff hiring. We face another year of custodians running around the whole borough trying to keep branches clean; branches opening with three or even two staff members; staff working through their contractual breaks; all while the administration hires more administrative employees.

Obviously the administration has not instituted a "hiring freeze" because since 2008 the library has continued to hire administrative staff. FY 2013 has proven no different.

Throughout this year's budget activism and negotiations, the administration cried poverty and threatened layoffs all the way to the bitter end. As soon as the budget was announced, a budget that is a few million dollars less than FY 2012, the administration sent out job announcements for two brand new administrative positions and hired someone into a brand new position.

We strongly oppose these new positions and we believe the customers, whom we interact with every day, would as well. We strongly believe the administration's customers need cleaner bathrooms; material that caters to the needs of their community; assistance with returning material; an open, safe and free space to read; and programs for all ages. Instead, the administration decides to spend its money on administrative staff that indirectly serve its customers while leaving the public underserved.

UPDATE: Working Conditions and Economic Contracts

IN REGARDS to our Working Conditions Contract, the union completed the final edits to the contract and sent them to the Administration. Once they incorporate the edits, we can get it signed and distributed. As a reminder, this is an update to the contract dated October 1996 – September 20, 1999 and incorporates all the agreements we have had from 1999 to present. This contains no new agreements.

In the fall of 2012, we will begin bargaining for a new contract, in which we will bargain for your demands. The Negotiat-

ing Team will solicit your demands after it has been formed.

Regarding our Economic Contract between the City of New York and DC 37, both sides are setting a date for sometime in September 2012.

Thank You's

Check out our "Thank you's" to the City Council at <http://www.local1321.org/>.



Queens Library Guild
Local 1321 News
DC 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
125 Barclay Street, New York, NY 10007