



## ANNUAL REPORT 2015

### BUILDING THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE



Building projects and enhancements were a big part of 2015. The completion of the Central Library Plaza Project occurred just in time for the Friends of the Library Annual Spring Book Sale. This final phase of the County's Library Expansion and Improvement Project was a collaboration between Schenectady County, the Library Board of Trustees, and the Schenectady Metroplex Development Authority. The project included the replacement of sidewalks, tree planters, new landscaping and the enhancement of public spaces around the Central Library. ReTree Schenectady also donated three birch trees for use in the new landscaping.

The project also included the refurbishment of "Ishmael," a sculpture by Arline Peartree Shulman, which was originally completed in the late 1960's and welcomed library visitors entering from the Clinton Street parking area. Through a generous donation by Werner Feibes, one of the original architects of the Schenectady County Central Library, a re-dedication ceremony was held on June 9, 2015.



After two years of planning for the construction of the Phyllis Bornt Branch Library and Literacy Center, a ground-breaking ceremony was held at the site of the new library at 948 State Street, on June 25, 2015. Construction of the new library remained on track for completion in early 2016. A lovely fall and warmer than usual weather throughout the winter was a help! In September, a third New York State Construction grant was awarded for this branch in the amount of \$151,508. In addition, the Wright Family Foundation donated \$75,000 towards the purchase of technology; the Friends of the Library committed \$150,000 and the Mohawk Valley Library System awarded a \$5,000 Adult Literacy Grant, all to benefit this new branch.

The renovation of the entrance to the Quaker Street Branch Library was completed in December. The Glenville Branch project to enclose the community room and enhance the entrance to the library was successfully bid with plans to begin construction in February, 2016. The Niskayuna Branch improvement project will be done in 2016.

All of our branch libraries received security cameras and viewing software. Thanks to a grant from the Mohawk Valley Library system, we also installed the Meraki wireless management system in three of our libraries, with the remaining libraries to be completed in 2016. The number of wireless users has increased dramatically over the years, as more patrons own digital devices that require wireless access.



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## Author Visits:

2015 programming kicked off with a visit by New York Times bestselling young adult author Jennifer Donnelly, who spoke about her newly published book *Rogue Wave*. We hosted Pulitzer Prize winning author Marilynne Robinson at SCCC, who read from and discussed her latest book, *Lila*. *Ms. Magazine* co-founder Letty Cottin Pogrebin also appeared to discuss her writing career and her latest book, *Single Jewish Male Seeking Soul Mate*.



## Group Discussions & Gatherings:

Numerous writing and book discussion programs for adults and youth were held throughout the year. A highlight was the launch of "Read 'n Greet," which takes facilitated book discussions out into the community at area restaurants. First up was Bier Abbey where the owners agreed to set aside the front room and gave a discount to book club members who brought their library cards. Participants have enjoyed the variety of establishments available in downtown Schenectady that have agreed to host a discussion.

## Electric City Comic Con:

In July we hosted our first Electric City Comic Con that brought 1,400 local patrons to the Central Library. The focus of the convention was on comic books, their creators and family friendly programming. The keynote speaker was author of the popular G-Man graphic novels and creator of the *Mini Marvel* line, Chris Giarrusso. Events included programs on an introduction to Anime/Manga, Quick Draw, Breaking into the World of Comics, an Artists Alley and Comics Common, a Cosplay Costume Contest and a photo booth featuring Voltage, a special superpowered female character who lives at the library. The program was such a smashing success that plans began immediately for a second Electric City Comic Con, scheduled for Saturday, July 9, 2016.



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## Family & Youth Services:

Pre-school programming was a major focus throughout our library system. We responded to the trend of multi-age groups and offered more family programs that included any child under age 5 with a parent or caregiver. We partnered with Capital District Child Care Council, WMHT, miSci, Tang Museum, Girls Inc. and 4-H for programs. MiSci provided GSK Chemistry Camp and an IMLS grant for multiple hands-on science programs at all libraries throughout the year. All libraries participated in Take Your Child to the Library Day, Family Reading Month and the Statewide Summer Reading Program. We introduced Volun-Tween time as a service program for teens serving local agencies like nursing homes and animal shelters. Family focused educational, cultural and recreational programming, such as participation in the annual Holiday DSIC event, provided numerous free offerings at all of our libraries.



## Community Partnerships:

As part of our immersion in the Bridges Out of Poverty initiative, many members of the library staff were trained. Our Bridges Implementation Team met monthly to identify barriers that may exist in our community to those seeking library services and resources, and to seek solutions to breaking down those barriers. As part of this initiative we hosted the Getting Ahead Program and have partnered with S.C.A.P. to have a Community Resource Navigator one day a week at the Central Library. We partnered with the City Mission to create a new Volunteer Application form and procedure for checking references and bringing on individuals who could assist us, such as the provision of one-on-one computer tutoring.

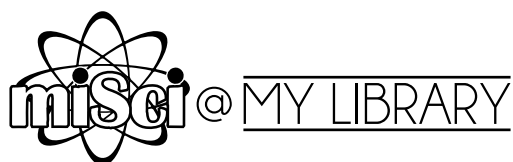




## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2015 has been a year of anticipation. After extensive planning by many key stakeholders, the Phyllis Bornt Branch Library and Literacy Center was well on its way to completion by the end of the year with a scheduled opening in February 2016. With literacy as a focal point, this branch will be a Family Place Library, a national model approved for only 300 in the country. Thank you to the Friends of the Library, The Schenectady Foundation, and the Wright Family Foundation for generous funding for this branch. Especially we pay tribute to the late Phyllis Bornt whose legacy as a system librarian lives on with this branch.

Schenectady County Public Library System continues as a community hub with a bustling event calendar. The honor of SCPL being chosen for one of the 2015 Building Block Awards by The Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation speaks to this. Thank you to Director Karen Bradley, Assistant Director, Serena Butch, and staff for their tireless, dedicated work providing experiences for members. Thank you and much appreciation to the SCPL Friends for the financial support for programming.



Other opportunities for SCPL included a grant received by miSci which allowed STEM classes to be held at the library. In May, more than 2,500 children's and young adult books worth \$4,000 were awarded to SCPL by NYSUT at the request of the Schenectady Federation of Teachers through the union's AFT-First Book program. The Schenectady

Foundation awarded a \$9,500 Planning Grant allowing for research to take place for the Bornt Branch and the writing of a larger grant. We also embarked on securing an AmeriCorps VISTA fellow to serve as a literacy outreach coordinator. Lauren Bendall joined the staff in August. Senator Hugh Farley informed us that Bullet Aid was awarded in the amount of \$13,500.



A community meeting was held in June seeking input for a new strategic plan that is in development. About 30 community members, staff, and board members discussed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats centered around specific topics relevant to the library. The ideas will be incorporated as part of the planning process in 2016.



The Board appointments of Sharon Jordan, Marsha Mortimore and Carmel Patrick were renewed by the County Legislature.

As we look forward to 2016, Carmel Patrick will become president, bringing her expertise to the position; the Bornt Branch will open and begin serving its neighborhood; One County, One Book events will be planned; the Friends 50th Anniversary year will be celebrated; stimulating programming will continue for all ages; and SCPL will maintain its status as a strong place of life-long learning

with a variety of resources to make this possible. I appreciate the opportunity I have had to serve as president. Board members work beyond the monthly board meetings on committees moving the work of SCPL forward. I would like to recognize Jan Martin as an invaluable partner to the Board of Trustees for all she does to help our work.

Respectfully submitted,

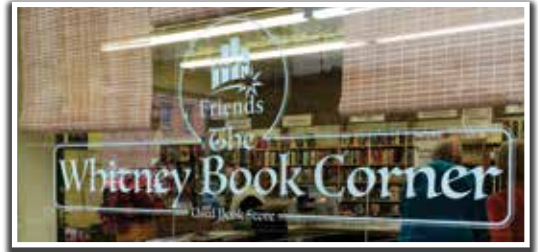
Cheryl H. Cufari, President  
Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees

# FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY



Planning for the 2016 year-long celebration of the Friends of the Library 50th Anniversary began in March with the formation of a Planning Committee and various sub-committees to plan for a series of celebratory special events, including an April 16, 2016 Gala dinner to be held at the River Stone Manor.

Our Friends of the Library organize and carry out programming of their own, from the noon Books Sandwiched In series, to the Beat the Snow music series, Poetry Gala, literary trips, Whitney Book Corner special events, multiple book sales, and many others.



In addition, they financially support all of our programming for children and adults, other than those that are grant funded. Our Friends of the Library have contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years, most recently a large donation toward the construction of the new children's wing at the Central library and for critical enhancements at the new Bornt branch. In addition, they have refurbished the McChesney Room kitchen and purchased new furniture, displays, equipment and supplies for our libraries.

They also support staff training and conference attendance to enable our employees to stay current in our rapidly changing profession.



# GRANTS & AWARDS



## GRANT PROGRAMS

DREAM BIG, READ

*Awarded by the Schenectady City School District*

ADULT LITERACY GRANT & MERAKI WIRELESS

*Awarded by the Mohawk Valley Library System*

AUTHORS AMONG US

*Awarded by the Mohawk Valley Library System*

SCHENECTADY FOUNDATION PLANNING GRANT

WRIGHT FAMILY FOUNDATION

NYS PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION GRANT

miSci GRANT PARTNER

## AWARDS

2015 BUILDING BLOCK AWARD

*Awarded by The Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation.*



# STATISTICS



## Circulation by Location

Location	2014	2015	%Change
Central	443,165	432,244	-2.5
Duane	32,218	27,169	-15.7
Glenville	105,188	106,127	+0.89
Mont Pleasant	40,201	37,752	-6.1
Niskayuna	197,953	201,612	+1.8
QS/Duanesburg	43,113	41,541	-3.6
Rotterdam	152,916	149,001	-2.6
Scotia	36,790	34,719	-5.6
Woodlawn	54,725	47,499	-3.2
<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>1,106,277</b>	<b>1,077,664</b>	<b>-2.6</b>
Electronic Materials	46,636	54,611	+7.1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,152,913</b>	<b>1,132,275</b>	<b>-1.8</b>

## Programs

Adult	2014	2015
Number	395	479
Attendance	6,428	8,018
Children's	2014	2015
Number	1,329	1,341
Attendance	24,675	25,063

Specifics	2014	2015
Circulation	1,152,913	1,132,275
Inter-Library Loan	117,160	115,381
Registered Borrowers	95,709	96,200
Reference Questions	95,067	87,845

# PUBLIC SERVICE ENHANCEMENTS



The Central Library reference area redesign was completed with new furniture, displays and a community bulletin board purchased by our Friends of the Library, which created a more efficient use of our space. Weeding of library materials took on new importance with the anticipated completion of the RFID tagging, which supports a more efficient method of checking out library materials. The Duane Branch received the most thorough weeding, as we made preparations for the move to the new Bornt Branch. Weeding of outdated or damaged library materials goes hand in hand with the replacement and purchase of the latest materials our patrons are seeking. We implemented enhanced processing with our audio-visual materials so they would be delivered in a more shelf-ready state, requiring less staff intervention and providing quicker access to patrons.



DVDs were labeled and shelved by genres to make browsing for specific types of videos easier. LibAnalytics software, an online system of recording reference and other transactions, was implemented to enable us to look at staffing patterns and determine peak hours and the types of questions that are asked. A campaign to encourage e-mail and text notifications was held for six weeks in an attempt to reduce or eliminate the need for print notifications. "Picture Book City" was completed for Duane/Bornt and is in progress at the Quaker and Scotia branch libraries to make it easier for our youngest patrons to find what they want to read.





# SCPL

Schenectady County Public Library

## **Central Library**

99 Clinton Street

388.4500

### **Phyllis Bornt Branch Library & Literacy Center**

948 State Street  
372.4393

### **Glenville Branch Library**

20 Glenridge Road  
386.2243

### **Mont Pleasant Branch Library**

1026 Crane Street  
386.2245

### **Niskayuna Branch Library**

2400 Nott Street East  
386.2249

### **Quaker Street Branch Library**

133 Bull Street, Delanson  
895.2719

### **Rotterdam Branch Library**

1100 N. Westcott Road  
356.3440

### **Scotia Branch Library**

14 Mohawk Avenue  
386.2247

### **Woodlawn Branch Library**

2 Sanford Street  
386.2248

[www.scpl.org](http://www.scpl.org)