

## The End of Library Service as We Know It

*Richard Callaghan, MLA President*

You would think this scenario (right) in today's interconnected and interdependent libraries would be impossible. Unfortunately, if Question 1 passes, this will be library service in Massachusetts. If your public library stays open at all.

### Vote No on Question 1: Save our Libraries

The fiscal crisis triggered by the passage of Question 1 would be unprecedented.

The repeal of the state personal income tax would eliminate 12 billion dollars or 40 percent of the state budget. All that we have worked for to build the networks and regions would end. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners would cease to exist. No funding for the regions, no state aid to libraries, no databases, no federal grants, no delivery, no matching funds, and no funds to the networks. Cities and towns would not have to abide by reciprocal borrowing rules because there would not be any. Networks would drastically shrink or disband. Library construction grants would be in doubt because the MBLC would not be able to administer the funds. In any case, financially strapped cities and towns would not be able to raise the needed matching funds. Services to the blind and physically handicapped would also be eliminated.

If you were lucky your town would still maintain library service. Many libraries would close. Free access to all public libraries in the state would end. Hours and staff would be cut along with other municipal departments. There would be no state aid regulations so libraries could close or hours cut at the whim of each town. Since local aid would be eliminated, most towns would not be able to fully fund the library or the police, fire, or schools for that matter. The cooperation among libraries we have built into an efficient system of sharing materials would go by the wayside.

What can be done to defeat Question 1? The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) has taken a stand on Question 1 and approved the following motion at their September 4 monthly meeting:

Be it resolved that as the primary stewards of library service for all residents of the Commonwealth, the Board of

### A conversation overheard in a Massachusetts library in 2009:

**Patron:** I want to request a book from another library.

**Librarian:** Sorry, but we no longer have the funds to get materials from other libraries. Even if we did other libraries would not have to send it to us anyway.

**Patron:** Why not? I used to be able to get books in a couple of days.

**Librarian:** That was before ballot Question 1 passed. Now there is no money for delivery and many public libraries have closed altogether. We are back to being a stand-alone library with little ability to get materials outside our building.

**Patron:** Who voted for this Question 1?

**Librarian:** Unfortunately, too many people who thought they would be able to eliminate income taxes and still get the same services. There is no such thing as a free lunch you know.

## INSIDE...

Massachusetts Librarians Are...

MBLC on Question 1

IFC: Privacy and Crime

Volume 95 Number 4  
Fall 2008

## IFC: Privacy and Crime

By Jennifer Inglis, Director of the Whitman Public Library

As a member of the Intellectual Freedom Committee, and a fervent believer in our First Amendment rights of free speech and press, I bring a dedication to privacy to my job as a library director every day. I spend time training staff about the privacy laws in Massachusetts, educating patrons about the reasons why we require a library card, and thinking about ways to defend patron privacy if necessary. Because it's always with me as an ideal, I was surprised one day when confronted with an act of violence at my workplace. My heart said to immediately call the police, but my head wondered about the legality of releasing patron information in a potential criminal matter.

In a nutshell, one of my staff witnessed a parent disciplining a child in a manner she thought abusive and certainly not within our behavior policy. She wondered if she should have called the police; instead, she tried to calm the caregiver and finished the transaction as quickly as possible. When I was notified about the incident, it took me a moment to sift through the situation. Did I witness it? No. Did we know who the patron was? No one could remember. If we had known who the patron was, would it violate their privacy rights to call the police? To this I didn't have a quick answer.

In retrospect, it seems obvious. An act of violence is a crime, and if there's a crime, the police should be called. It is my training as a librarian, however, to NOT release patron information at any time—and this includes name and address. This clinical interpretation didn't match the emotional situation, though, and I pursued the issue with the state and with our local police department. I also asked my peers in the profession how they would have handled a similar event.

I highly recommend speaking to the police about questionable situations like these. They are not our enemy, and when there is a common understanding about the laws, a real partnership can develop. The Chief of Police in my town and I discussed this particular situation, and concluded that my staff should be charged with using their best judgment in a case of violence. With this caregiver, a staff person should have tried to find the license plate of the adult. This is public information, and therefore outside the privacy laws. If we knew who the patron was, we too could provide the name of the person involved. We witnessed an act of

violence; we were not violating the patron's privacy by calling the police.

The privacy laws of the state of Massachusetts actually refer to the fact that most records kept by government agencies are "public records" and therefore not private. There is an exemption to the public records law for library circulation records. This exemption does not cover criminal acts or computer use (as the laws are currently written). If a police officer wants information pertaining to a patron, they are required to show a subpoena or warrant. If however, the library is concerned about violence or a criminal matter, the police should be called immediately. If a patron can

be identified without opening their circulation record, it is not a violation of their privacy to report them for criminal acts.

I hope no one else has to make a gut decision about a violent manner, but by all means call the police. This should be a no-brainer (as many of my peers were quick to tell me), and the police can guide you to the next step. Identifying information, like appearance and license plates, are not private. As librarians, we have enough to do when protecting actual rights and providing vital services to parse the details of violent activity. Let's release

ourselves of the responsibility in criminal matters and let the police do what they are trained to do.



The MLA Personnel Issues committee want's to know what matters to you.



Look for their survey of MLA members coming soon to the MLA web site: [www.masslib.org](http://www.masslib.org).

The Massachusetts Library Association accepts advertising to support the newsletter. The presence of these ads does not constitute an endorsement by MLA.

Congratulations to Wakefield's Beebe Library for First Prize in MLA's 2007 PR Awards in the News Coverage category.

## MLA PR Awards: FIRST PLACE WINNER IN NEWS COVERAGE

By Mark Sardella, Lucius Beebe Memorial Library

For Wakefield's Beebe Library, winning First Place in the MLA Public Relations Awards "News Coverage" category was mostly the result of using local newspapers throughout the year to effectively spread our message.

In order to create a successful entry in this category, Beebe Library first had to generate newsworthy newspaper publicity on a regular basis, year round. Wakefield is fortunate to have two daily newspapers and one weekly. The Wakefield Daily Item has published our weekly Beebe Library Column for over ten years. Local residents have long known to turn to that column each Thursday for library information and news of upcoming events.

We also send out regular press releases to all three newspapers, as well as to the regional Boston Globe "North" regional section. The best way to get newspapers to publish your releases is to make them read like real news stories, rather than like cute PR pieces. Also, newspapers love photographs. Even if you don't have time to write lots of press releases, a photo of a program with a short caption can have a lot of impact.

By providing all this publicity to the local newspapers, we are also able to attract their attention to the fact that lots of worthwhile things happen at the library. This leads to additional features focused on the library written by newspaper staff.

In addition to generating all of this newspaper coverage, we save most of these clippings throughout the year. Using a medium size box for collecting news stories about the library works well.

As the deadline for entering the MLA Public Relations Awards approaches, we purchase a large scrapbook or two from a craft store. We then sort through the clippings that we saved throughout the year to select those that best illustrate the ongoing news coverage of the library.

**Don't forget to save your best public relations pieces for entry in the 2009  
MLA PR Awards.**

We place the clippings in the scrapbooks and may dress the entry up by using some colorful graphics to fill in any blank spaces on the page. For some of us, this is not our particular strength, but over the years and many entries, we have gotten much better at it. If you're good at writing press releases but not so good at scrapbooking, chances are that someone on your staff who is more craft oriented can assist you.

Another thing we've learned over the years is not to wait until the very last minute to start throwing entries together. Your other job duties aren't likely to go away in the week before the deadline so that you can spend all of your time creating a winning entry. So, start working on it at least a few weeks ahead of the deadline. Chances are you'll still find yourself scrambling to get to the post office before closing time on the last day.

Even if you don't win, you will still have, as a result of all your work, a well-organized sampler of your library's newspaper publicity covering the last year or two.

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## The Paralibrarian Section and My NELLs Experience

By Gerry Deyermond Chairperson of the Paralibrarian Section

*Through support and increased awareness of paralibrarians, the Section advocates for recognition and participation in the library community. The Section promotes and provides a forum for networking and career development opportunities.*

This mission statement reflects the views of the Paralibrarian Section of MLA. The section has many great programs for paralibrarians in Massachusetts. For the fall newsletter I would like to talk about the Paralibrarian Recognition of Achievement-PARA for short.

The **PARA** is a voluntary program designed to recognize and encourage the involvement and contributions of paralibrarians in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Paralibrarians support the missions of school, public, academic and special libraries located throughout the state by providing important support services, involvement in professional development activities and commitment to their work. It is not a substitute for the Master of Library Science degree, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioner's (MBLC) Subprofessional Certificate of Librarianship, or any other degree or certificate. \*

This program is designed to identify the achievements of participants by assigning point values to various activities. Applicants register for one of three increasingly challenging achievement levels. Each level is reached by accumulating a minimum number of points from within five categories (Public Services, Technical Services, Technological Competency, Administration /Management and General).\*

I received my PARA II in 2007. It is gratifying to see all the workshops I have attended, committees I have been on and programs I have been involved in at my own library gathered into one place. I can actually see what I have done, learned and contributed to the betterment of my library, consortium and state library association and most importantly, myself. College credits time I have worked at the library also played a part in earning points for this level. It also told me what areas I may be weak in so I can find a way to strengthen that area. I was able to attend workshops at my library, local library consortium, regional library system and online! The Paralibrarian Section Career Development Committee can and will be glad to guide you in helping you earn the PARA. They are available to visit your library to review forms, answer questions and guide you. There is a special award

presentation at the annual conference where you will be recognized for your achievements. For more information and the PARAlibrarian Recognition of Achievement (PARA) Program Guidelines please visit the MLA web site at [www.masslib.org](http://www.masslib.org).

### New England Library Leadership Symposium (NELLs)

This past summer I had the privilege of attending the New England Library Leadership Symposium. This symposium is a tool to realize your own leadership capabilities through your own beliefs, style and personality. It was held at the picturesque Rolling Ridge Conference Center in North Andover overlooking Lake Cochichewick. The Georgian Style mansion was built by Ethan Allan (not the furniture) in the early 1900. The gardens were designed by landscape architect Fletcher Steele. The place was beautiful, and at one point I had forgotten I was only in North Andover, only 10 minutes from home.

When I am asked how the symposium was, I tell people that it was enlightening and empowering! I met many people from all over New England in all size libraries, from larger libraries like West Springfield to a small library in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. Many of the people there were librarians. After a few days I realized that I was not the only paralibrarian in the group of 25 people. There were about 5 non-MLS people in the group. On Wednesday, representatives of each of the New England States Library Associations spoke to us about being involved. I soon learned that the President of the Maine Library Association is a paralibrarian. She has truly inspired me and has given me confidence in my position as a paralibrarian in my library and as the Chairperson of the Paralibrarian Section.

We would spend about 8 – 10 hours each day discussing communication, management styles, risk taking, conflict resolution, problem solving, influence and organization. We worked in small groups, one on one and in large groups. We had a learning partner that we met with throughout the day. In my case it was Pat from Connecticut. We would talk about a situation that had happened to us or something at our library and talk about a solution. Talking with someone from a different library in a different state was

Continued on p. 11

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## MBLC Takes a Stand on Question 1

An initiative to repeal the state income tax has qualified for the November 2008 ballot, as Question 1. A previous income tax repeal initiative appeared on the 2002 ballot, and received 45% of the vote (885,000 votes).

At its September 4, 2008 monthly Board meeting, The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) voted to oppose Question 1 on the basis on that its enactment would essentially eliminate library services, programs, networks and entire systems that have made Massachusetts libraries among the strongest in the nation.

The Board unanimously approved the following motion:

Be it resolved that as the primary stewards of library service for all residents of the Commonwealth, the Board of Library Commissioners opposes Question 1 on the basis that its enactment would have a severe impact on all types of libraries in Massachusetts and would result especially in an overwhelming and wholly destructive loss of public library services that are fundamental to the educational, social and economic well-being of all residents of the Commonwealth.

Income tax revenue generates about \$11 billion of the state's \$28 billion annual operating budget. The Secretary of the Executive Office of Administration and Finance stated that the loss of the income tax would result in a 60% across the board cut in state budgets. Rather than a single across the board budget reduction, the Board believes that it is much more likely that all state funding for library programs would be eliminated.

"Everything that the MBLC and the libraries worked so hard to create since the Board's inception in 1890 would be destroyed," stated MBLC Chairman, George T. Comeau. "Instead of every resident in the Commonwealth having equal access to library services, libraries would be a luxury reserved for wealthy communities that can afford to pay for them." Commissioner Em Claire Knowles added, "At a time when we are seeing library use surge, the repeal of the state income tax, would take us back to the library of 1890 and really hurt our residents."

Massachusetts Libraries have experienced an increase in usage for the eighth straight year. In 2007 there were over 31 million visits to the library (an average of 4.8 visits per resident), patrons borrowed more than 52 million books and materials from public libraries (an average of 8.1 items per resident) and patrons used the public Internet computers over 10 million times.

The elimination of the state income tax would impact Massachusetts libraries in the following ways:

### Impact on programs of the Board of Library Commissioners

- The Board of Library Commissioners itself would continue to exist, but it would have no budget and no staff

- Elimination of State Aid to Public Libraries in place since 1890
- Elimination of regional library systems and library of last recourse
- Elimination of talking book libraries for the blind and disabled
- Elimination of funding for automated networks and licensed electronic content
- Elimination of matching funds for private fund raising
- Elimination of the public library construction program
- Elimination of Federal Library Services and Technology Act grants and statewide services

### Impact on local public library service

- The public library system of 1889 which is no system at all, but rather a stand-alone library in some towns and no library at all in others.
- No assurance of free access to other public libraries either for direct borrowing or for interlibrary loan.
- Public libraries would be able to charge fees for service to non-residents and they would be able to charge for interlibrary loan requests.
- Interlibrary loan would exist in a dim shadow of what it is today as there would be no regional delivery system to move materials among libraries.
- Many public libraries would have vastly reduced hours of service as the standards and requirements of the state aid program would not apply.
- Local municipal budgets would feel the strain of losses of all varieties of state aid with many libraries threatened with closure and many would close.
- Automated networks would decay very rapidly as grant funds for capital improvements would not be available, annual state support would be eliminated, and libraries simply could not afford the increased ongoing cost of membership.

### Impact on public library users

- Residents of towns that choose to fund a public library would have access to the collections and services of that library.
- Residents of towns that choose not to fund a public library might not have any library service at all.
- Library hours would be cut back severely.
- The user would not have free access to any other public libraries and would not be able to go online and request materials from other libraries.
- The user would not have access to any online electronic content currently provided by the state, the region or the network.
- This is the library of 1889.

Commissioner Irving Zangwill summarized the impact, "This is the very worst that could happen. To try to rebuild after something like this would be impossible."

## MLA TSS Presents: Introduction to Library Digitization

MLA Technical Services Section proudly presents  
 "Introduction to Library Digitization", a one day program.

Tuesday October 28th, 2008, at the Worcester Public Library.

9:00 p.m.--4:00 p.m.

This program will cover what libraries need to consider before starting a digitization project including:

- \* How actual libraries began their digitization project
- \* Selection and stewardship of materials
- \* Project planning and management
- \* Hardware/software needs
- \* Staffing & cost to start up a project
- \* Copyright considerations
- \* Metadata Standards used for data creation

### Sessions will include:

*Virtual Archives: Preparing to Create a Digital Collection*  
 Speaker: **Gregor Trinkaus-Randall**, M.A.L.S., C.A.,  
 F.S.A. Scot; Preservation Specialist, Massachusetts  
 Board of Library Commissioners

*Digitizing Dissertations at UMass Worcester*  
 Speakers: **Mary Piorun**, MLS, AHIP Associate  
 Director for Technology Initiatives and Resource  
 Management, Lamar Soutter Library, University  
 of Massachusetts, Worcester

**Lisa Palmer**, MLS, Catalog Librarian, Lamar  
 Soutter Library, University of Massachusetts,  
 Worcester

*Digital Copyright in the 21st Century*  
 Speaker: **Andrew D. Epstein**, J.D. Barker, Epstein &  
 Loscocco Copyright and Trademark Law;  
 General Civil Litigation; Photography and Visual  
 Art Law; Publishing and Licensing Agreements;  
 General Business, Corporate and Real Estate  
 Law.

### Panel Discussion:

The day will end with a panel discussion with  
 Massachusetts & Connecticut librarians who  
 have implemented successful projects including  
 Digital Treasures for Central Massachusetts,  
 Connecticut History Online, and Watertown's  
 Online Image Collection. There will be time for  
 questions and discussion about the ins and outs  
 of individual projects.

### Speakers:

**Dodie Gaudet**, Consultant for Bibliographic &  
 Technical Services, Central Mass. Regional  
 Library System; **Kristi Chadwick**, Digital  
 Services Librarian, C/WMARS; **Jeffrey Monseau**,  
 Archivist, Springfield College speaking on  
 Central Mass Memory Project to increase the  
 holdings of Digital Treasures  
 (<http://dlib.cwmars.org/>)

**Kathy Foulke**, Connecticut History Online project  
 director.

**Leone E. Cole**, Library Director, Watertown Free  
 Public Library on Watertown's Online Image  
 Collection.

To register online see our website: <http://www.masslib.org/tss/Fall08DigitizationProgram.htm>

For registration questions, please contact: [LBacon@EBSCO.COM](mailto:LBacon@EBSCO.COM)

For questions about the program, write to [Cecile.bianco@umassmed.edu](mailto:Cecile.bianco@umassmed.edu)

## MSLA Fall Update

By Sandy Kelly, President, MSLA

The summer has been a busy time for MSLA executive board members. Several of us attended the press conference in which Governor Patrick released the findings of the state's Readiness Project. Five board members traveled to the ALA conference in Anaheim. In addition I, along with Executive Director Kathy Lowe and President Elect Gerri Fegan, had an hour long meeting with the newly appointed Commissioner of Education, Mitchell Chester. During the meeting, the Commissioner was very receptive to the information we provided about school libraries in Massachusetts. We asked that he be a strong educational leader by bringing direction and equity to the Commonwealth's school libraries by providing a knowledgeable library representative at the DESE to develop long range planning. We also asked him to pose for a photo which we are having made into an ALA type READ poster. Additionally, we continued planning for our annual conference to be held November 2-3 at the Sturbridge Host Hotel. The theme is "Survivor MSLA, 2008" and all the sessions are focused on the new AASL standards and the draft

MSLA Infofluency Standards which we hope to have approved soon by our membership. All conference attendees will receive a free copy of the AASL Standards along with the MSLA Standards. On Sunday, November 2, our President's Reception will host over a dozen authors signing their books, which can be purchased at the Barnes and Noble Bookseller at the conference. In addition, keynote speaker Michael Tougis will join our evening dinner presenting Survival Lessons: Peak Performance Under Pressure.

Monday's keynote speaker is Terry Young, sponsored by Scholastic Library and Classrooms. He is the author of School Libraries Work, a monograph which presents numerous research studies on the impact of school libraries.

Members of the MSLA executive board voted to join MLA in the coalition opposing Question 1 on the ballot in November. Our legislative representatives will continue to work with MLA to advocate against the passage of Question 1 and the effect it would have on libraries of all types.

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Visit us online at: [www.MLASolutions.com](http://www.MLASolutions.com)

## Libraries: The Anchors of Our Lives

By Elizabeth Hacala, MLA Executive Manager

As you have heard, Question 1 threatens library service throughout the state. Once again, we find ourselves having to answer the question: Why are libraries important? I would argue the greatest value of libraries is giving people the tools they need to navigate their lives.

When we are the most adrift in our lives we need libraries the most. If you will indulge me in a personal story to illustrate.

When I was in my early twenties, I had a series of unexplained near fainting spells and was sent to the hospital. A few days later, my work phone rings and the doctor tells me I have temporal lobe epilepsy. She says I need to get there right away, need to be on medication immediately, and I cannot drive any more. My world was in a tail spin. I called my parents and shared the news. A co-worker drove me to the hospital. What followed was a multi-month odyssey resulting in my diagnosis being reversed.

In the midst of this, my mom, a career librarian, did what librarians do best; she gave me power, knowledge, and hope. She found articles and books to help me understand what epilepsy was and how it might

impact my life (this was all pre-Internet). I found courage in those pages and took charge of my situation.

Does any of this sound familiar? Most of life's journeys begin at the library. Getting a new dog? Go to the library. Starting a business? Go to the library. Planning a trip? Go to the library. Having a baby? Go to the library. Learning English? Go to the library. Finding a new job, relocating, or helping a frail parent? Go to the library.

Behind the circulation numbers and the delivery statistics are hundreds and thousands of people whose story you all help shape. With Question 1 on the horizon, we need to share these stories with voters and law makers. Stories provide emotional impact and an intuitive sense of value above pure numbers. Stories give people a reason to vote their community's best interest, over their wallets.

Do you have a story about how libraries impacted your life? Coming soon to the *Save Our Libraries* section of the MLA web site ([www.masslib.org](http://www.masslib.org)) will be "Share Our Stories", where you can share how libraries impacted your life.



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- Mary Joe Stanislaw, Boseman Public Library, Montana



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### The End of Library Service as We Know It (cont.)

Library Commissioners opposes Question 1 on the basis that its enactment would have a severe impact on all types of libraries in Massachusetts and would result especially in an overwhelming and wholly destructive loss of public library services that are fundamental to the educational, social and economic well-being of all residents of the Commonwealth.

From the MBLC press release of September 5:

“Everything that the MBLC and the libraries worked so hard to create since the Board’s inception in 1890 would be destroyed,” stated MBLC Chairman, George T. Comeau. “Instead of every resident in the Commonwealth having equal access to library services, libraries would be a luxury reserved for wealthy communities that can afford to pay for them.” Commissioner Em Claire Knowles added, “At a time when we are seeing library use surge, the repeal of the state income tax, would take us back to the library of 1890 and really hurt our residents.”

MLA fully supports the MBLC in their opposition to Question 1. We need to spread the word on the devastation the passage of this ballot initiative could cause. MLA has joined Coalition for Our Communities, a broad based group that has been formed with the sole purpose of defeating Question 1. The Massachusetts

Municipal Association and the Massachusetts Teachers Association area among the many groups who have joined together to defeat Question 1. Please check [votenoquestion1.com](http://votenoquestion1.com) for more information on the severe and immediate cuts the passage of this ballot question could cause.

We need your help in defeating this ballot question. The threat to libraries is very real. A similar question in 2002 received 45% of the vote so we cannot be complacent about its chance of being defeated. We need to educate the voting public about the harm this measure could cause libraries. Please go the [votenoquestion1.com](http://votenoquestion1.com) and sign on to the pledge to vote no on Question 1. Speak to your fellow staff members and inform your trustees as to the seriousness of the threat that Question 1 presents. We must all work together to defeat the ballot question and protect Massachusetts libraries.

Help fight Question 1 the right way. Remember that employees and elected officials of cities or towns may not use public resources to advocate. For more information, read the ethics advisory at: <http://www.mass.gov/ethics/adv8401.htm> If you need legal advice about specific situations, you can call the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission legal division at 617-371-9500.



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## Massachusetts Librarians Are...

Karen Brown has been appointed to the position of Assistant Director for Public Services at the Cambridge Public Library. This position was formerly held by Madeline Amorosi, who retired in the spring.

Sue Jefferson, (formerly at the Beebe Memorial Library in Wakefield), has accepted the position of Literacy Coordinator & Reference Librarian at the Nevins Memorial Library in Methuen, MA.

The Brockton Public Library System's new fall library hours began on September 15th. You can find the new hours at: [www.brocktonpubliclibrary.org](http://www.brocktonpubliclibrary.org).

### The Paralibrarian Section and My NELLs Experience (cont)

helpful to have an outside opinion, insight on how their library is structured and new ideas including programming, displays and management.

In the evening, our conflict resolution and problem solving skills were put to the test with a game of *Liebrary* –yes, that is the correct spelling. It is a game developed by Daryl Hannah. Players have to make up the first line of a book in a specific genre. The “librarian” collects and reads all the first lines, including the real first line of the book. Each player earns points by guessing the actual first line of the book. Players also earn points by having their made up first line chosen by others. Well, there were some pretty creative people playing that game! That game was brought out on the last night too!


Teamwork and organizational skills were apparent on Tuesday at the campfire where fire wood had to be gathered, marshmallow sticks sought and the fire lit to some nice glowing embers. Helen from Vermont, with the help of Deborah from Massachusetts, and Alex from New Hampshire, made some delicious campfire nachos! Then, everyone, descended on the fire with their sticks and marshmallows to make their s'mores. Gail from Connecticut, who is also a talented story teller, told us some wonderful and frightening ghost stories. Wednesday night after dinner, we were able to quietly reflect on what we learned over the past 3 days on the Labyrinth Walk. The evening ended with a cut throat highly competitive game of library Jeopardy! Thursday evening didn't end until the wee hours of Friday morning. It seemed that we all didn't want our time to end. We enjoyed each others company with

card games, more *Liebrary* and talking. Friday morning, we summarized the week's events and had our “Graduation” ceremony. As the lump in my throat was swelling and our emotions were getting the better of us, a bat- yes, I said a bat- swooped out from behind the projection screen, circled around the room, swooping down and around everyone. Those near the doors and windows opened them wide. Others took their notebooks and tried to coax the bat outside with success! Oh, yes, did I mention teamwork! I sometimes wonder if that was our final test!

We have all kept in touch with our Facebook group. Thank you Kathy Lussier (SEMLS) for setting that up. We are looking forward to a reunion at NELA in October.

I would like to thank our wonderful mentors who were there to help us find our leadership style: Mike Moran (CT), Barbara McDade (ME), Krista McLeod (MA), Shirley Barron (NH) and Melody Allen (RI).

A big thank you to Betsy Brey (CT) and Cheryl Bryan (MA) and Maureen Sullivan (Maureen Sullivan Associates) for planning and coordinating an experience that I will never forget!



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Mark your calendars for the 2009 MLA Conference in our fabulous new location: the MassMutal Center in Springfield.

Tuesday, May 5, 2009, the MLA Legislative Committee will sponsor a pre-conference on Advocacy. The Exhibit Hall will be open Wednesday and Thursday along with ten tracks of programming to meet a wide range of interests, including Library Spaces, Self-Improvement and Technology. A graphic novel symposium will take place on Friday, drawing many graphic novel exhibitors and speakers.

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