



# Trustee Update

## Library News You Can Use

### Strategize now to find ‘common agenda’ for 2011 budget

Now that it’s November, your library’s budget process is probably nearly over. Reports seem to indicate that for many libraries, 2010 budget allocations will be less than adequate to maintain their current level of service. It also seems unlikely the budget picture will improve markedly in the near future.

While your library seeks creative solutions to deal with any budget shortfall for 2010, it is also time to strategize for future budget deliberations. The method described in “The Importance of Creating A Common Agenda” in Issue

#3, 2006, of *Feliciter* (the publication of the Canadian Library Association) is an excellent read, and

libraries should consider following the advice to “create a common agenda with your... elected officials.” So if your municipality has announced that its goals for the coming year are Economic Development, Youth, and Revitalization, it makes sense to demonstrate how the library specifically contributes to meeting these goals. The article acknowledges that your agenda and the municipality’s agenda may not be the same, but encourages you to find agreement.

Similarly, the “Readers Respond” column in the September/October 2009 issue of *Public Libraries* (the journal of the Public Library Association) contains a well-worded

description of how the San Diego County Library aligns its services with the strategies its elected officials repeatedly deem

—please see Common agenda on page 2



### SCLS offices to be closed Nov. 19-23

From Thursday, Nov. 19, through Monday, Nov. 23, the SCLS Administration and Automation offices will be closed as we move to our new facility at 4610 S. Biltmore Lane in Madison.

The new location will house staff from the SCLS

Administration location (currently 5250 East Terrace Drive), and staff from our Automation location (currently at Madison Public Library), as well as all network services. This will result in cost savings, efficiency, and better communication between the two units, and we believe it will also help us enhance our service to member libraries. An open house is being planned for January 21, 2010. ♦



### SCLS Advocacy Committee developing trustee training

During the past month, SCLS library board presidents have completed a brief online survey to help guide the development of a new trustee advocacy training program.

The goal is to develop a program that not only reinforces the importance of engaging in advocacy, but provides some easy-to-follow guidelines so all

trustees will feel confident in their ability to speak on behalf of their library.

The tentative plan is to have a program in place by February, and test it with a library board. After that, we’ll gather input from board members and directors and then roll out the final product for training system-wide. You’ll hear more about this later. ♦

### New ILS agreement and SCLS governance structure

Starting in January 2010, SCLS will have a new governance structure. For those libraries that participate in LINK, the board will need to approve a new ILS agreement at the November or December board meeting. Copies of the new agreement, along with a memo outlining the changes, have been sent to

participating libraries. The new governance structure will simplify decision-making, allow for more flexibility, provide new opportunities for involvement for member library staff, and establish clearer lines of authority. More information is available at <http://scls.typepad.com/techplan>. ♦

# 'Libraries for Real Life' project launched

Public libraries have been improving community life for many years, and in the process have had significant impact on the lives of individual residents. Many of these are inspirational stories that deserve to be told, and a new project is underway to do just that.

The South Central Library System's Marketing and PR Advisory Committee has developed a project called "Libraries For Real Life!" to collect and share the stories of library users



in the seven counties served by SCLS (Adams, Columbia, Dane, Green, Portage, Sauk & Wood). The project title—"Libraries For Real Life!"—reinforces the reality

that today's public libraries are vibrant, dynamic community resources that meet the information, education, and recreational needs of residents of all ages.

Encourage others in your community to tell their stories at [www.librariesforreallife.org](http://www.librariesforreallife.org). ❖

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essential: Safety, Education, Employment, Housing, and Health. For example, to contribute to safety, the library offers after-school programs when many young people are without adult supervision.

Of course, the way you make your case is also important. Again from the *Felicitier* article: "We do not get on the radar screen by singing, 'me, me, me.' We get on [it] by...saying... 'here's how my library can help.'" Advocacy is about respecting the decision makers, and their time. ❖

## SCLS staff contacts:

If you have questions about preparing library budgets, contact Cheryl Becker at (608) 246-7973 or [cbecker@scls.lib.wi.us](mailto:cbecker@scls.lib.wi.us).

If you have questions about library advocacy or marketing/public relations, contact Mark Ibach at (608) 246-5612 or [mibach@scls.lib.wi.us](mailto:mibach@scls.lib.wi.us). ❖

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