



STATE LIBRARY NEWS

For the People, the Government and the Libraries of New York State

Spring 2004

LEGISLATORS: SHOULD MEDICAL USE OF MARIJUANA BE LEGAL?

The State Library has the latest on the pros and cons of this issue:

■ *Marijuana: Early Experiences with Four States' Laws that Allow Use for Medical Purposes*, report by the U.S. General Accounting Office;

■ "Nevada's Medical Marijuana Program Works With Some," in *Health & Medicine Week*, May 3, 2004;

■ *Medical Use of Marijuana; Policy, Regulatory, and Legal Issues*, a book edited by Tatiana Shohov.

Full text of the first two items listed above, and many other useful materials about legalization of medical use of marijuana are available online. For information about this and other relevant reports, e-mail <refserv@mail.nsyed.gov> or call (518) 474-5355. The State Library is a rich source of information about this and many other issues confronting Legislators.

New York State Library News is produced by the Friends of the New York State Library and the New York State Library to inform New Yorkers about the collections and services of the State Library.

Editor: Miriam S. Soffer

This newsletter is not published at State expense.

FRIENDS WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Nancy Johnsen Curran and Clesson Bush

Nancy Johnsen Curran and Clesson (Cless) Bush of New Baltimore were elected to the Governing Board of the Friends of the State Library at the April 2004 Board meeting.

"The State Library is one of the nation's top seven locations for researching family histories," says Curran, a professional genealogist. She uses the Library frequently as head of *the Continuum*, which provides information for clients in other states and countries whose families once lived in New York State. Curran, a graduate of Empire State College, worked for *American Heritage*, *The Magazine of History*, and was public information officer at the State University of New York Central Administration.

Clesson S. Bush worked in the State Education Department's congressional liaison office for almost 20 years and led federal advocacy efforts for the last five. Previously, he held positions in both state and local govern-

ment. Bush has been Historian for the Town of New Baltimore and is associated with the Vedder Research Library of the Greene County Historical Society. He holds a Master's in Information Science and Policy and Ph.D in Public Administration from the University at Albany, in addition to a Master's in Urban Studies from Long Island University, Brooklyn. He completed his undergraduate studies at Syracuse University.

Board members re-elected to two-year terms are Jane Schneider (Director) and Joseph F. Shubert (Secretary). Jean G. Burns and Lee Stanton began the second year of their terms which expire March 31, 2005. Curran and Bush will serve two-year terms.

We wish to thank each member of the 2004-2005 Board and to express deep appreciation to Philip B. Eppard, Zebulon S. Robbins, Jr., Jeffrey W. Cannell, Bebe Morehead, and Katherine Storms, whose terms ended March 31.

WHAT'S NEW

As usual, the State Library is teeming with activity onsite and online:

- A new entrance and a computer training lab are among the many renovations now underway at our seventh floor public service area in the Cultural Education Center. The Library will be open during regular hours as work proceeds, but there may be temporary disruptions in some sections. Status reports are posted on our Web site: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov>. For more information call Cara Janowsky at (518) 474-2274.
- Full text of the *New York Times* all the way back to January 1, 2000 is now available on NOVEL. Until now, NOVEL carried issues for the last 365 days only. You can access NOVEL at your local library or, if you are a registered borrower, on your personal computer.

- We redesigned the State Library Web site Home Page to make it easier to use. Check it out and let us know how you like it. Send comments to nyslweb@mail.nysed.gov.

IT'S A GRAND SITE FOR SINGING

"Pack all your troubles in an old kit bag and" sing, sing, sing. What better way to soothe workaday stress than singing it away? Give song a chance to lift your spirits and enhance your sense of community. Come to the State Library/State Museum on the fourth floor of the Cultural Education Center, between 12 Noon and 2 p.m. on the last Wednesday of each month: August 25, September 29 and on into autumn. Songs are based on the State Library's extraordinary sheet music collection of about 35,000 musical scores dating from the 1790s to 2000s. For information: (518) 474-2274.

Visit the State Library's Web Site

<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov>



Search Excelsior, the online catalog of our holdings and access national and regional databases. Use the State Library Web site to:

- **Hit the road.** Learn about the 174-mile NYS Canalway Trail system.

- **Save your sight.** Get tips from the U.S. National Institutes of Health's National Eye Institute.

- **Celebrate the past.** Check out the Library of Congress "Today in History" Web site.

- **Protect yourself.** The NYS Department of Law has advice on fighting identity theft.

And Much More

Instructions for reaching these sites are available at:
<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/friends/nysl.n.htm>

If you don't have Web access from your computer, dial into our catalog at (518) 474-9851. For more information, call (518) 474-0719 or e-mail: excelsior@mail.nysed.gov.

PILOT PROGRAM SOARS

It was June 30 at the Cultural Education Center. Author Paul Grondahl had just completed an engaging review of his newest book, *I Rose Like a Rocket: The Political Education of Theodore Roosevelt*. Interim State Library Director Mary Redmond stepped up to the podium. She presented a library card to a beaming Grondahl, whose book draws deeply on the State Library's Theodore Roosevelt Collection. Redmond's presentation launched "NYS Resident Borrower's Card," a groundbreaking six-month pilot program permitting New York State residents who are 18 or older to borrow items directly from the State Library's circulating collection. Previously, only restricted categories of borrowers—primarily government employees—could take items out of the Library. All New Yorkers were and still are eligible to use Library items on site or through interlibrary loan at their local libraries.

The new program represents

a considerable break with tradition. The Legislature, with the encouragement of Governor De Witt Clinton, enacted the law establishing the State Library in 1818. The Bill declared that the institution was for the benefit of the government and people of this State and specified that books, maps and other publications were not to be taken out of the Library. In its earliest years, the Library, consisting largely of law books, emphasized its importance to Legislators and other government staff and stressed the State Library's role in providing the in-depth information required for good government decisions. The Library continues to serve Legislators and other government staff while broadening opportunities for all New Yorkers to obtain information in an age when being well informed has become more crucial than ever.

Cardholders can also access NOVEL (the New York Online

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STATE LIBRARY MAJOR CENTER FOR STUDY OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT



Theodore Roosevelt

- Documents Roosevelt signed;
- Unpublished photos;
- Records of Roosevelt Wildlife Forest Experiment Station.

These are a few of the thousands of documents, manuscripts, wartime records, articles, pictures, and memorabilia in the State Library's

Theodore Roosevelt Collection. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and a posthumous Congressional Medal of Honor, TR, his courage in combat, environmental concerns, and strong leadership offer much for generations of New Yorkers to study. The breadth and depth of the State Library's Collection make it a major research center for scholars, teachers, students, and others in search of resources about the life and times of Theodore Roosevelt.

TELL US

Send comments and questions about the New York State Library and its newsletter to Mary Redmond <mredmond@mail.nysed.gov>.

SOMETHING NEW ADDED TO STATE LIBRARY'S SUMMER READING PROGRAM

Puppet shows, Internet searches and a host of other activities are encouraging children to read as the State Library's annual Statewide Summer Reading Program unfolds at local libraries around the State. Built around this year's theme, "2004, Read, White and Blue," a manual brimming with imaginative ideas was developed by State Library staff and librarians from all across the State.

For the first time, a statewide committee of librarians and teachers created "Kids Choice," a booklist/brochure supplementing school reading lists. The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library coordinated the project. Each local library adapts the program to the needs of its community. Summer reading programs are free. For more information call Anne Simon: (518) 486-2194.

To join Friends of the New York State Library, complete the form below and mail it with your check.

New York State Library News

- Yes, I want to join Friends of the New York State Library. new member
 renewal

My check for \$25 \$50 \$_____ is enclosed

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Make check payable to *Friends of the New York State Library* and mail to: Treasurer, Friends of the New York State Library, PO Box 2247 Empire Plaza Station, Albany, NY 12220

BE A FRIEND

Join the Friends of the New York State Library. In addition to the deep satisfactions of preserving your heritage and sustaining a world renowned public research library, you can obtain special discounts at local book stores. Select:

- Sustaining Membership. \$25. Receive discounts at three book shops: 20% at Borders Books & Music in Colonie, a one-time 20% discount at the Book House in Stuyvesant Plaza, and 25% off one purchase at the Open Door Bookstore in Schenectady.

- Contributing Membership. \$50 or more. Receive all of the above plus recognition in the *New York State Library News*.

Every Friend also receives:

- Free admission to the Friends Annual Meeting featuring a talk by an author of a recently published book.

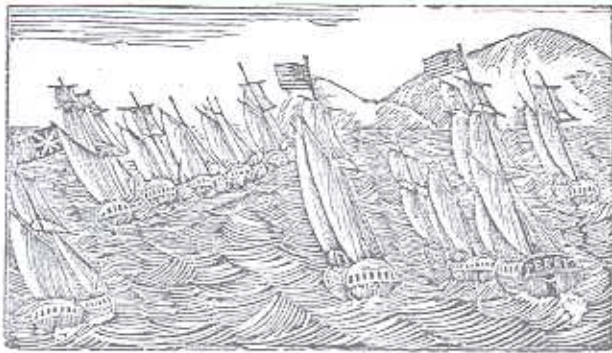
- Invitations to other stimulating programs at the State Library.

- A subscription to the *New York State Library News*, an illustrated quarterly newsletter.

- Remote access to Health Reference Center-Academic, a database for health and medicine.

FINDING AID FOR BROADSIDE BALLADS NOW ONLINE

New York State Library Collections



This graphic illustrates "Jack of Guinea," an anonymous broadside ballad published in 1915.

*"Two Blithesome lads
of Beauteous mould
Did live in Westerlo,
we're told.
Dunbar did slay
these lovely boys
Which put an end
to all his joys."*

From "Dunbar the Murderer,"
(1815) by Henry Backus

Saugerties bard Henry Backus became well known as he traversed the Hudson Valley hawking this and other broadside ballads to townspeople and rural folk. Though Backus is one of many itinerants who wrote broadside ballads, composers of most of these lyrics and poems were anonymous.

Broadside ballads, one or sometimes two songs or poems, on single sides of cheap paper, were published since printing began until the

end of the 19th century. They trumpeted wars, disasters, scandals, and other sensational events of the day. Printers published them hastily to be sure their subjects were still hot. Crude illustrations, stock borders, mixed type faces, and irregular punctuation were common. Often satirical, sometimes written to the tune of popular songs, they express attitudes of their day. Academics classify broadside ballads as street literature foreshadowing modern ephemeral publications such as handbills, single-sheet ads and zines.

The 1,500 pieces comprising the core of the State Library's Broadside Ballads Collection, acquired in 1925, date from the mid-to-late 19th century. The Collection contains much commentary about the Civil War period; in addition to serious sentiments about battle, they include patriotic

and regimental odes, political commentary, comic ditties, and minstrel show and theatrical numbers. Several pieces from southern states champion the Confederacy. Others memorialize the Anti-rent wars. Additions over the years include Revolutionary War-era ballads and British broadsides about famous 18th century murders. The collection's oldest original broadside is a 1640s Dutch piece, about the beheading of England's King Charles I. Photostats of earlier pieces such as an epitaph of an Italian merchant, Benedict Spinola, printed in London in 1580, are included.

The finding aid for this Collection is now online. For information call (518) 474-6282.

PILOT PROGRAM

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Virtual Electronic Library) databases otherwise accessible through local libraries. To obtain your card, bring your current NYS driver's license, or similar photo ID containing name and current home (not a dorm) address. Send photocopies of ID if requesting a card through the mail. For more information, call the Library's Circulation Desk at (518) 473-7895.

New York State Library News
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Albany, NY 12230

State Library Hours

Monday through Friday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, call
(518) 474-5355 or e-mail
<refserv@mail.nysed.gov>.