

Harold and Junice Wusterbarth Volunteer Service Award Nomination Form

We nominate Sharon Jordan, a member of the Schenectady County Public Library Board of Trustees Library, for the Harold and Junice Wusterbarth Volunteer Service Award.

Submitted by Karen Bradley and Cheryl Cufari

1. What was the focus of this volunteer effort and why were these activities important to your library?

Working diligently and tirelessly as the SCPL Board of Trustees Building Committee Chair, Sharon Jordan has been instrumental in meeting goals of SCPL's long-range plan of service pertaining to buildings and grounds. These include construction projects, revenue raising, as well as establishing an annual facilities walk through and evaluation ensuring repair, updating, maintenance, and cleanliness projects for the buildings. This had not been done on an annual, formal basis before Sharon's leadership. As a result of her efforts, many improvements and totally new constructions have been made to SCPL branches and in turn for the communities they serve. Our buildings are safe, clean, and vibrant gathering places.

Sharon brings her past connections with her into her trustee work. Her involvement with Metroplex has also brought revenue to the system. However, she does not let other leaders do the work but stands side-by-side (along with Executive Director Karen Bradley) as a library trustee representative to achieve the most for the maintenance and physical improvements of the nine libraries in the SCPL system. She is often the one on site, on the phone, or at meetings making sure contracts are being carried out and following up on major projects. Sharon is the one along with Karen making sure the punch lists are completed and often the one insisting what was agreed upon is done. Examples of her advocating for the library with Metroplex revenue raising include:

Phyllis Bornt Branch - Sharon worked with Metroplex to gain funding for the fence in the back of the property and dealt with Family Dollar Corporate on the parking lot construction.

Mont Pleasant Branch - Sharon worked with Metroplex for the purchase and demolition of two buildings that were previously at that site so the new branch could be built. Metroplex funneled money from the County and City IDA's for this thanks to Sharon's advocacy. The Family Dollar was slow to sign the lease agreement; Sharon worked with the Metroplex chair to expedite this so that construction could move forward.

Sidewalk work at the Karen B. Johnson Branch - As a NYS Construction Grant project, the sidewalk and landscaping project was also coordinated by Sharon. She arranged for funding in addition to the County portion through Metroplex. Now it is a pleasant Schenectady area for patrons and passers-by also housing a sculpture which Sharon arranged for relocating and refurbishing.

Sharon, however, is not done. Major Projects are underway with the soon to be completed renovation of the Woodlawn branch library and the addition of program space at the Scotia branch library, in which Sharon is heavily involved with the planning and coordination.

Other examples of Sharon's work include as mentioned above the annual building walk throughs. This is a major goal of the long-range plan. From these walk throughs, a list of maintenance tasks is generated. This is a list that is prioritized and followed up by Sharon. As a result, carpets have been cleaned, parking lots repaved, replacement items obtained, etc. The Quaker Street Branch is now handicap accessible as

well as revamped for patron use. She sets goals and reports to the Board of Trustees each month as to the progress of all undertakings. She has established a model for other committees to follow as they work to reach their own goals as outlined in the long-range plan of service.

The walk throughs have also been open to all trustees and appropriate County personnel. This has created more awareness at the County level about the buildings as well as the climate of each branch and its position in their respective communities. This did not occur on such a formal basis before Sharon became Building Chair.

Sharon has been instrumental in writing and advocating for library project grants. Her efforts have gleaned significant funds from the Wright Foundation, the Little Foundation, the Neil and Jane Golub Foundation and The Schenectady Foundation. Her input for the NYS Construction grants and her follow-up attendance at the MVLS meetings have also helped in securing this funding.

2. Where and when did the volunteer activities and services take place?

Throughout the 9 branches of the SCPL system over the last 9 years. Each branch has been scheduled for upgrades as a result of the annual review coordinated by Sharon which leads to these construction projects. Her persistent endeavors and connections resulted in much being done for the longevity of the buildings as detailed in question one.

3. How did your library/community benefit from this volunteer effort? How was it successful?

Constructing buildings deals with bricks and mortar. However, as a result of Sharon's efforts the bricks and mortar she oversaw have been turned into community centers making available specific needs of the communities:

A digital divide exists in Schenectady and one of the goals of the new Bornt and Mont Pleasant branches was to bridge this by making available the necessary technology for members of the neighborhood to write resumes and submit job applications creating a business center focus.

A decision was made for the Bornt to become a certified Family Place Library. Over the first year of operation this was achieved. Families come for early literacy programs which help the children and parents/caregivers to actively participate in parenting and educational programs. So much of this was being scheduled, the Bornt created its own calendar of events in addition to the system's calendar. This concentration was not possible when the Duane and Hamilton Hill Branches were in existence. They were small with little or no programming space and small collections. All of this was updated and expanded upon with the construction of the Bornt Branch. The same holds true for Mont Pleasant. The former dilapidated building again had no designated program space for its vibrant program calendar. Now it is a calming space with room for patrons to work alongside active children participation.

The Quaker Branch became handicapped accessible with the reconstruction of its front entrance. A total revamp of the space also was completed. Several branches have had parking lot upgrades making them safer to navigate especially for older patrons. The second floor of the Karen B. Johnson branch has been the focus of a cleanup for eventual repurposing of the space led by Sharon.

Anyone who has been involved with any kind of construction project knows how time consuming this is. Multiply Sharon's work with the construction of 2 library branches, pavement projects, roofing projects, remodeling projects, and replacement purchases. This is her dedication to SCPL as a Board of Trustee

member and chair of the Building Committee; indeed, she is a worthy recipient of the Harold and Junice Wusterbarth Volunteer Service Award.

See next page for additional information.

Additional Information

This is the goal from the SCPL Long Range Plan of Service 2016-2019 along with what was accomplished to meet this goal that centers around the main work of the Building Committee under Sharon Jordan's leadership:

Goal Six: Provide spaces and resources for people to come together as a destination center.

*The SCPL will conduct an annual branch library facilities review.

2016-2019: This has been done each spring as a walk through with the Library Director, chair of the Building Committee (Sharon Jordan) and trustees, member of the County Facilities Department and the County Chair of the Education and Library Committee.

*Based on the facilities review a project plan will be developed to address identified needs.

2016-2019: The Branch Committee Chair meets quarterly with branch representatives at which improvement ideas are discussed. Through the Building Committee, capital projects have been determined based on the annual walkthrough and set up within a timeline to be completed. Branch updates have been completed including the building of the Phyllis Bornt Branch and the Mont Pleasant Branch. Other highlights include the Glenville children's area redesigned for family appeal, a Quaker Street remodel, new roofs at Rotterdam, and Niskayuna, Electric Vehicle Charging stations at the Central (KBJ) Library in addition to second floor and computer room cleanup for repurposing. The Central Library parking lot was repaved.

*We will provide safe, clean spaces for our staff and patrons.

2016-2019: More security hours have been added working with the Schenectady County Sheriff's Department. The Security Committee meets on a regular basis to address procedures and concerns. Policies have been added or updated to meet current safety needs. Custodial concerns are addressed when needed, carpets cleaned, and windows washed. Repaved parking lots and grounds upkeep add to curb appeal and safety for patron's entry.

Submitted March 30, 2021 by Trustee Cheryl Cufari and Library Director Karen Bradley