

RHODE ISLAND COALITION OF LIBRARY ADVOCATES BOARD MEETING

*Thursday, APRIL 13, 2017, 5:00 P.M.
RI CAPITOL, STATE ROOM, PROVIDENCE, RI 02806*

COLA's annual meeting was held in the RI State House, as is our tradition, and was attended by approximately 50 people. Governor Raimondo's executive assistant Dana Wilson managed logistics; refreshments were catered by Venda Ravioli; Chair Emerita Rose Ellen Reynolds and Membership Chair Lisa Ashe welcomed members and guests; and we all enjoyed introductions, reunions, and pleasant schmoozing.

Outgoing Chair Howard Boksenbaum convened the formal meeting at approximately 5:25, welcomed all, and reported highlights of COLA's activities over the past year. Sadly, there were two recent losses to report: current board member David E. Bates and past president Joseph Cimini.

COLA Scholarships: Valerie Karno, Director of the University of Rhode Island's Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, introduced the Linda Aldrich Scholar, Denise Phillips, and the William Bergeron Scholar, Karen Mueller, who are already making dynamic contributions to (respectively) school library media and public library services in the state.

Greetings from Governor Gina Raimondo and Representative David Cicilline: Daniela Fairchild, Director of Education for the RI Office of Innovation, conveyed the Governor's greetings and sense of the importance of libraries to the state's creative and economic development. Annie Pease brought certificates from Representative Cicilline to recognize the achievements of all COLA award recipients.

Business Meeting: Gale Eaton, Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented a slate which was approved by acclamation. Officers: Cheryl McCarthy, Chair; Gale Eaton, Secretary; Neeltje Henneman, Treasurer. Board members for a three-year term ending in 2020: Howard Boksenbaum, Monica Brennan, John Bucci, Ron Heroux, and Steven Porter. Nominating Committee for 2018: Gale Eaton, Emilie Benoit, and Patricia Raskin.

Awards: Howard Boksenbaum presented our Sweetheart of the Year Award to Tom Viall, who in addition to his day job as General Manager of RI.gov and his stalwart service as COLA's webmaster, has chaired the Library Board of Rhode Island since 2010. Neeltje Henneman presented William E. Reeves Friends Awards to the Friends of the Narragansett Library (for fundraising and education) and the Friends of the North Kingstown Free Library (for outreach).

Keynote Address: Joan Ress Reeves introduced guest speaker Emily Sheketoff, Executive Director of the American Library Association's Washington Office, who gave a stirring talk on why advocacy matters more than ever. As one first-time attendee said afterward, she was great.

Adjournment: Inaugurating two new traditions, Howard passed an actual COLA gavel to incoming Chair Cheryl McCarthy, and Cheryl presented engraved trays to Howard and recent chair Gale Eaton.

Respectfully submitted,

Gale Eaton, Secretary