

## ON THE HORIZON



### DANCING WITH NEW IDEAS

A common misconception is still a misconception. If you have ever looked up something on Wikipedia or seen a contestant “ask the audience” on “Who Wants to Be A Millionaire,” you know how wrong the crowd can be.

The traditional antidote has been a detailed Policies and Procedures manual. In theory, it gives standardized information about how to conduct the library’s business. It is not a bad model, per se, but it falls short. Every day we encounter situations that are *not* covered in the manual. And relying on it too heavily discourages use of our most creative instincts and entrepreneurial problem-solving abilities.

There are several strategic workteams that are moving the organization forward by re-imagining our future. One of them is exploring alternatives to the Policies. Perhaps policies should be more like guidelines. Perhaps they should be more like decision clouds. Maybe staff ought to have more latitude to innovate solutions on the spot. Possibly, the Policies will turn out to be the best we can do, even if they are imperfect. We will never know until we try.

We are fielding strategic workteams to challenge other areas of operations, too. We are beginning an initiative on workforce development. What tools do we need to provide to encourage our staff to move ahead in the organization and in their chosen fields?

Challenging the status quo is how we will remain an innovative, forward-looking organization. It is how we invent the exciting ideas and services for which Queens Library is known. I appreciate your ideas, and as always, your hard work.



**Thomas W. Galante**, Library Director



Original Langston Hughes Community Library was in a former Woolworth's

dance interpretation, two annual jazz brunches, a Kwanzaa Celebration, participation in the community’s Family Day, and an annual celebration in February that pays tribute to the Poet Laureate and his contributions to American literature.

For its first thirty years the Library was housed in 1,200 sq. ft., two story, store front, an original Woolworth Department Store building with the original large dis-

play windows. Today, the library is located in an attractive, modern 24,000 sq. foot state-of-the-art building with self service technology, 21 public computers, a children’s room, research room, 100-seat outdoor courtyard, 150-seat performance ready, multi-purpose auditorium, a conference room, art gallery, homework room and two 100-seat informal program rooms. This facility opened for public service in November 1999.

## LANGSTON HUGHES CELEBRATES 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

By **Andrew P. Jackson**, (Sekou Molefi Baako), Executive Director

On April 26, 1969, the doors to Queens Library’s Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center opened for public service. The first public institution named for the Poet Laureate, who died in 1967, the Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center was conceived by a committee of local residents (the *Library Action Committee of Corona-East Elmhurst, Inc., or LAC*), an ad-hoc committee of the local Community Corporation, one of New York City’s anti-poverty programs. They had the responsibility of identifying needed services in response to initiatives derived from the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements. The LAC submitted a proposal to Queens Library Director Harold Tucker, who applied for a federal grant administered through the New York State Education Department. Grants funded this “experiment in community control” through October 1987, when it gained full “branch” status.

For the first eighteen years, service at the Langston Hughes Library was administered by the LAC, who had responsibility for the operating budget, hiring community residents as staff, and developing the programs and services. A professional librarian was loaned to develop the collections. Its first director was Tyrone Bryant. Helen Marshall was one of the original staff and worked there for five years, establishing the Information and Referral Services component. She has remained a good friend and supporter of LH throughout her career as City Council Member, Assembly Member and Borough President.

The primary focus of the Langston Hughes Community Library was and is to house the *Black Heritage Reference Center of Queens County*, a circulating collection of print and non-print materials by and about the Black Experience. Today the collection has over 45,000 volumes of circulating books, periodicals, theses and dissertations, audio and video materials as

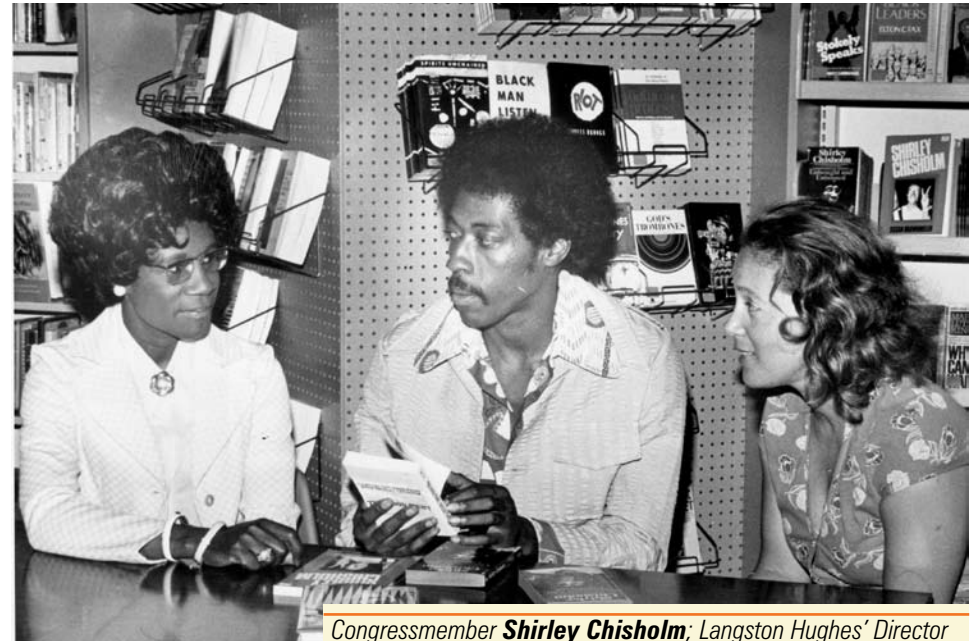


Mayor **John Lindsay** toured the library, 1973. With him are City Councilman **Edward Sadowsky**, now a library trustee, and staffer **Helen Marshall**.

well as reference collections of microfiche and microfilm, databases and a permanent art collection of Africana paintings, prints and sculpture. It is estimated the library has the largest circulating, non-academic, Black Heritage collection housed in a local library, in New York State and possibly in the country.

In 1971, the City’s first funded, off-site educational after-school program was placed at Langston Hughes in response to the needs of local children. Administered by a licensed educator, up to 100 students receive daily assistance with homework assignments and skills development in reading, reading comprehension and mathematics. Local high school and college students are employed as hourly-rate tutors. Reading and math clinics are conducted by educational specialists.

Langston Hughes also features 6-8 artist exhibitions by established and emerging artists, musical performances, seasonal creative writing workshops, literary and poetry readings, periodic lectures, panel discussions, dramatic presentations and



Congressmember **Shirley Chisholm**; Langston Hughes’ Director **Tyrone Bryant** and staff member **Helen Marshall**



L. to R. **Andrew Jackson**; **Barbara Bush**, wife of VP **George H.W. Bush**; Trustee **Dougald MacLean**; Library Director **Constance Cooke**; NYS Assemblymember **Helen Marshall**, 1983



## ON-THE-SPOT AWARD WINNERS!

Young Adult Librarian **Lauren Comito**, Flushing, used her considerable talents to sew slipcovers and set decorations for a recent in-service training session with The Shanachies. It greatly enhanced the experience for everyone.

## Congratulations to the following employees on their promotions:

Name	New Position	New Location	Effective Date
Ali, Sherriza	J Librarian Senior Librarian 1	Rego Park	2/17/09
Anderson, Sharon	CLM-Principal Librarian 2	Far Rockaway	12/9/08
Camusci, Joseph	ADM-Supervising Librarian 2	Social Sciences	1/21/09
Ciampa-Lauria, Donna	Director, Flushing Library	Flushing	1/14/09
Estepp, Jennifer	Children's Librarian - Sr. Librarian 2	Glendale	12/19/08
Fuqua, Eva	Assistant Division Manager	Fine Arts & Recreation	2/23/09
Gordon, Kenneth	Children's Librarian-Sr. Librarian 1	Woodhaven	2/1/09
Herzberg, Ruth	Assistant Director Library Services	Library Services	2/1/09
Lambert, Mark	Jr. Server Engineer	Information Technology & Systems	1/19/09
Mestizo-Yenal, Ebru	Library Literacy Specialist	Peninsula Adult Learning Center	1/23/09
Nenov, Stanimir	Customer Service Manager-Help Desk	Information Technology & Systems	1/19/09
Osokina, Alla	Library Literacy Center Manager-Supervising Museum Instructor 3	Flushing Adult Learning Center	12/12/08
Reddy, Jason	ADM-Supervising Librarian 1	Forest Hills	1/26/09
Rene, Jean	ADM-Supervising Librarian 1	Literature & Languages	1/26/09
Scheper, Christine	J Librarian Librarian Trainee 4	Flushing	2/4/09
Stock, Matthew	Children's Librarian-Librarian	Flushing	2/1/09
Tsekenis, Gus	ACLM-Senior Librarian 2	Woodside	2/9/09
Yu, Jin Lian	Gen'l Librarian Senior Librarian 2	Flushing	1/5/09

## CONGRATULATIONS TO...

**Linda Bannerman-Martin**, Langston Hughes. She was honored by the North Shore Club of the National Association of University Women, with their *Excellence in Education Award*.

**Albert Botros, Finance**. His daughter Raymonda has graduated from St. John's University with a Pharmacy Doctorate. Raymonda is a former QL staff member.

**Capital Facilities and Management Department**. Under their direction, the soon-to-be-built new Glen Oaks and Elmhurst Community Libraries have won 2008 Excellence in Design Awards.

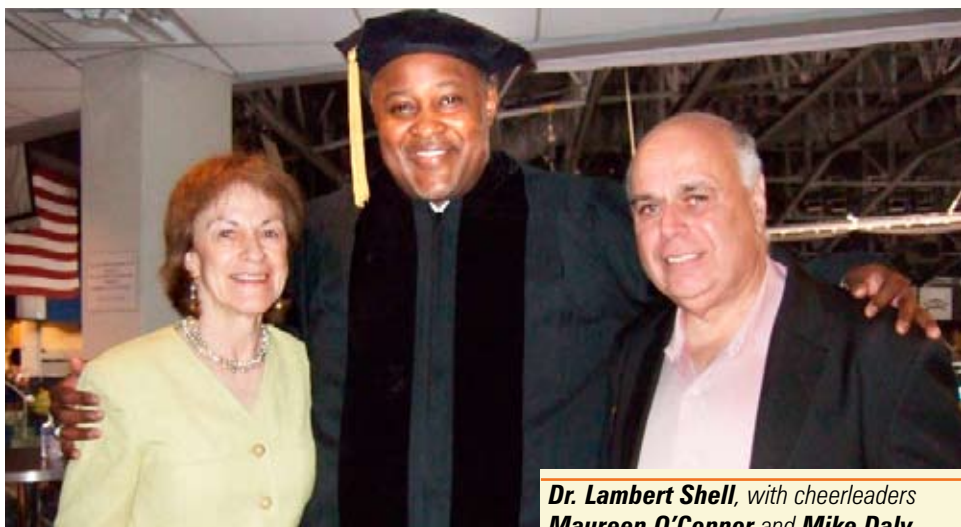
**Michael Flash**, IT, on his marriage to Sasha Edward on May 15, 2009.

**Loida Garcia-Febo**. She has been elected Vice Chair/Chair Elect of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Round Table.

**Fred Gitner**, (NAP/SPS/International Relations) has been elected to a four year term (2009-13) on the Standing Committee of IFLA's Section on Services to Multicultural Populations.

**Diane Janoff**, Poppenhusen. She has been elected chair of the Program Coordinating Committee for for ALA's Association for Library Service to Children.

**Karen Lowenstein**, Queens Village. Her son Michael graduated this May from New York College of Osteopathic Medicine.



**Dr. Lambert Shell**, with cheerleaders **Maureen O'Connor** and **Mike Daly**

**Lambert Shell**, PCM. He received an honorary doctorate from the University of Bridgeport.

**Runita Toomer**, East Flushing and **Bob Toomer**, Flushing. Their daughter Angeliqe graduated seventh grade with "Honors and Distinctions."



The QLS

What a talented group of people work at Queens Library! Even Simon Cowell would have been smiling if he been lucky enough to attend our Staff Talent Show. It was the best yet, showcasing fine arts and crafts, performing arts, original poetry, custom choreography, and wrapped up with excellent videography of the event.

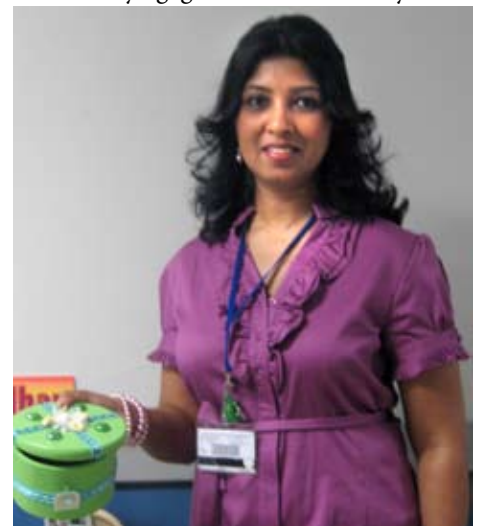
Fine arts on display were: **Yvonne Burks** – history-themed dolls; **David Grimes** – paintings; **Kacper Jarecki** – drawings; **Joyce Marshall** – decorative photo albums; **Shardha Ramdhan** – beaded jewelry; **Nancy Weiss** – beaded jewelry.

The performers were **Todd Culver**, singing and rapping his original work spiced with a provocative tale of lost love; **Joyce Marshall** ("Rejoyce") reading her original poetry; **Edwin Laureano** ("Mindkilla") doing a hip-hop single from his upcoming album; **Rosemary Reilly**, who sang and interpreted a Neil Diamond classic; **Lawana Dean-Davis**, in a too-rare vocal performance; **Mark Donnelly**, reading several of his poignant original poems; **Vinny Sgaglione** and **Debbi Olley** rocking the house with a medley of hits; **Christopher Jornales**, performing a modern dance with his usual high-energy style; The QLS (**Kathy Alexander**, **Shevawn Anderson**, **Danette Brown**, **Debbie Hanna**, **Calvin Hudson**, **Rhode Jacquet**, **Beverly Johnson**, **Ketra Johnson**, **LaKenya McKoy**, **Rakia Purvis**, and **Wanda Wright**), whose production number, once again, outshone Beyoncé, with special effects by **Edith Capellan**. The morning ended with **Kimmy Szeto** on the piano, accompanying everyone to "America the Beautiful."

True professionals make everything look easy, but it took a lot of work to make the event such a success. Special bows to the planning committee: **Sandra Anthony**, **Eileen Gellman**, **Karen Vermut**, **Gillian Weisen** and **Mike Wong**. Special thanks to Central Library's **Custodial staff**, the **Maintenance staff**, **LSM/Security** and the **Film & Video Crew**.



Vinny Sgaglione & Debbi Olley



Shardha Ramdhan



Kimmy Szeto

## LETTERS, WE GET LETTERS

"The Queens Library at Queens Village is a very notable branch, noted for the people that work there. The recognition they deserve is a compliment to your standard to enrich your life. People such as Mrs. Barnaby, Mrs. Lowenstein, Mrs. Alfeia Reid, Mrs. Sanichar, Ms. Eunie Chang, Mr. Simmons, Mrs. Halloway, Mrs. McKay, Ms. Laverne Gordon-Paris and the many young people they work with and support them. At times like this when someone is trying to further their education through the library system, their assistance is a great help. Their kind courteous manner and knowledge are an asset to the community. They have been helpful to me and many others. I just needed to take the time out to let you know of these good people in your midst.

This is from a loyal patron of the library. Thank you.  
Sincerely Suzanne Quasbie-Guingnard

## MYTHBUSTERS

Is it really the policy or an urban legend? Let's take a closer look at a customer service issue:

**FACT:** Old books without ISBN numbers *should* go to the book sale. Some of the highest prices come from older, out-of-print titles. When in doubt: send them. *Send your library lore to [fyi@queenslibrary.org](mailto:fyi@queenslibrary.org)*, and we'll help separate myth from fact.

**ERRATUM:** Last month's Cyber Center update was submitted by **Charles Curtopelle**, Information Services.

## IN SYMPATHY

To **Esther Honen**, MCD. Her mother-in-law, Jean Honen, passed away recently.

We mourn the passing of retiree **Renee Solomon**.

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