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# Judaica Library Network of Metropolitan Chicago



Fall 2007 / Tishri 5768

## Newsletter

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### *From the editor's desk*



This past summer I taught a course in library marketing and public relations. A recent thread on HaSafran about the Waldor Memorial Library in Whippany, New Jersey,

reminded me of the importance of planned library marketing and public relations. The HaSafran thread also talked about the closing of libraries in general. The article in the August 8, 2007 of New Jersey Jewish News by Johanna Ginsberg stated the library closed "temporarily" on August 13. The full article was posted on HaSafran without the picture of the librarian, Eva Pasternak. The article with the picture is found at:

<http://www.njewishnews.com/njin.com/080907/mwWaldorLibrary.html>. The library web page, <http://www.ujcni.org/page.html?ArticleID=26409> was still up on August 20, but there was no link for a catalog. The librarian's name is listed, but the article said, the librarian's last day was August 13. The library, founded in 1938, ironically has as an epithet, "create a life-long bond with books." Pasternak had worked at the library since 1998.

One of the major themes in my course is that public relations are any contact with the public. That contact includes the physical features of the library building and the written messages. Signs can be very important, but how you greet and treat people is also important. Even with the clearest and biggest signs possible, some people will always ask. What really annoys some library staff on difficult days is being asked where the copiers are for the 958th time, when the directional signs are in front of their noses. When this happens when I'm on duty I try to answer by pointing without words. Knowing how peeved I can be with directional questions, when I went to an unfamiliar public library, I did not want to ask directions for the place to return CDs. I looked and I looked, finally I had to ask. The return bin was hidden behind a plant. The sign was even harder to see. One day a reader

came in and asked, "What time is it?" There are big clocks on the wall; however, the time is next to impossible to read from the circulation or reference desk. On the next redesign of the library, I'll recommend clocks that are easier to read. When I point people in the right direction without words, rarely do they ask a second time.

Libraries have to constantly remind everyone of how important they are. I don't say this lightly, everyone has demands on their time. Advertising hits people everywhere. Libraries even in captive situations, like schools, have competition for funds, time, and attention. Stage publicity seeking events. In your mind they are publicity; in the public mind they show what the library can do other than circulate materials. Events such as talks, coffee in the library, and displays bring the library to the attention of the institution and show people that the library is more than a warehouse for books. Put your library on your school or institution's web site to show you are reaching out 24/7. If you offer data bases or other electronic resources, make sure your constituents know how to use them. Since word of mouth is important, repeat the message "The library is working even when no one is in the room."

In future newsletters issue I plan to write about marketing strategies, plans, and practical advice. Please let me know what would help you.

This newsletter is very short because I did not receive any ideas. Please send ideas, articles, or questions for future newsletters.

Shana tova umituka שנה טובה ומתוקה  
Have a happy and sweet 5768.

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<http://home.earthlink.net/~ddstuhlman/jln-home.htm>

## President's Column

Dear Colleagues:

As the new President of the JLNMC, I wanted to wish all of you and your families *L'Shana Tova* and tell you how much I am looking forward to working with you. We are planning some awesome programs for the year and hope that you will be able to attend them.

Rose Novil

## Convention Report from Debbie Feder

One of the great things about librarians is that not only are we life long learners, but we encourage all around us to learn. Networking and attending professional development opportunities are very important for librarians. Many times these personal contacts help us to grow and serve our readers. I was lucky to be able to attend this summer's AJL (Association of Jewish Libraries) convention in Phoenix thanks to the Avi Chai Foundation. The convention was a blast. I, being a high school librarian, chose sessions that I thought would help me. There was a helpful roundtable session where high school librarians shared good ideas, programs, and lessons. Heidi Estrin presented an educational and entertaining session connected to Web 2.0 on podcasting. I am thinking about using podcasting in some way at my library. Besides the sessions, the convention offered other great opportunities to meet vendors and authors. Of course, the food was top notch. Meals, sessions and in between is a great way to spend time with colleagues who are now friends. I am always jazzed, empowered and refreshed after a convention. Hope to see everyone in Cleveland next year.

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Debbie Feder is the director of the Library of the Ida Crown Jewish Academy in Chicago.

## JLNMC officers for 2007-08

President: Rose Novil  
Vice-President/President-elect: Debbie Feder  
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## Communicating with Library Users By Daniel D. Stuhlman

In the era of Library 2.0 communication between the library staff and the public goes both ways and is not limited to when the library doors are open or when the readers and staff are face-to-face. Preparing catalog records, posting library signs and publishing newsletters are all ways to increase your reach to the public. Look at the picture below as I discuss the aspects of communications.



The librarian, in the green shirt, is helping the readers. There is a large sign indicating this is the place to check out books. Below that is a sign directing patron to the copy/print center. Even though you can't read it, the piece of paper on the back of the monitor plugs the library newsletter. On the back wall is a poster promoting the idea of "quality."

Even with all the signs it is hard to get all the visitors to the library to read them. Many times people come to the circulation desk, not see the sign and ask where the library has copy machines.

When I do library tours I make it a point to not only to tell students about the areas and procedures of the library, but also to point out the signs that will remind them. I tell them most of the frequent questions patrons ask, their answers, and invite them to give the answers if they find another puzzled visitor. By "deputizing" them they help extend my reach and give me more time to answer reference questions or help faculty members.

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Daniel D. Stuhlman is a reference librarian at Wright College and the librarian of Anshe Emet in Chicago.