



CENTRAL LIBRARY NEWS

SUMMER 2009

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Come Visit the Central Library

Tours of the Patchogue-Medford Library will be offered again this spring. A library tour is a great way for staff to become familiar with Central Library resources. It is also an opportunity to meet our subject specialists and learn about their areas of expertise. All tours start at 9:30 a.m., and last until about noon. The available dates are September 29, October 22 and November 12. To register send an e-mail to June Cerveny at jcerveny@pmlib.org. Include your name, your library and your preferred date.

Can't get to us... Subject

Specialists will come to you!

Contact any of the Reference Specialists below to arrange for a visit to your library for assistance with collection development and weeding tips.

Reference Specialists on the Move

Mark Rothenberg, the Reference Specialist in local history, has been visiting many libraries this summer to have a look at local history collections and offer advice on collection and services development and management. So far he has visited 28 libraries. Was yours one of them? If not, call or e-mail Mark to arrange a visit. Phone 654-4700, ext 240, or e-mail mrothen@pmlib.org

Spring Out-of-District Survey Results

For a week each spring and fall, the Central Library surveys everyone who contacts or enters the library to ask a question or use a service. We include service directly provided to patrons, and also service mediated by their home library. In the survey period this April, out-of-district usage totaled 453, as compared to 199 last year. Forty-two member libraries used at least one of our services, compared to 33 last year. 200 out-of-district patrons used PML computers. The percentage of out-of-district use increased from 13.9% to 16.7%.



Check Out New Topic Guides

Have you checked out the new Topic Guides section on the SCLS homepage? Many of the reference specialists at Patchogue-Medford have been partnering with SCLS to create new, improved, exciting subject pages. The Genealogy page, created by Toni Raptis has much useful information for the beginning genealogist, and the Food and Drink page, by Jessica Nipper is simply yummy!

REFERENCE SPECIALISTS

BUSINESS & LANGUAGES

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LOCAL & MILITARY HISTORY

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LAW, REFERENCE RESOURCES & RELIGION

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Focus on Databases

The Central Library subscribes to many online databases that supplement the coverage offered in the Suffolk E-Resources package. One of the subject areas that we pay special attention to is law. In addition to our extensive print collection, we have several legal databases that are available for use by the public in our legal section.



Our subscription to Westlaw includes both Federal and New York State statutes, regulations, and cases. There is also access to some administrative materials such as the Opinions of the Attorney General of the State of New York, and New York Tax Administrative Decisions. New York Court Rules are included as well. On the Federal side, administrative materials include the Federal Register and the Opinions of the United States Attorney General. The database has both natural language searching to make it easier for patrons, and the option of terms and connectors searching for those with more experience. It also has some really convenient “find by citation” and “find using a template” options for those who know exactly what they are looking for.

Legal forms can be difficult to locate, and web sites that provide some forms for free often charge for others. (Usually the one your patron wants, naturally) Patchogue-Medford Library subscribes to the Thompson/Gale Legal Forms database, which provides a wide selection of New York and multi-state legal forms across the most popular topics. It includes forms for real estate contracts, wills, pre-nups, bankruptcy, landlord/tenant and many others. Most forms are offered in pdf or MS Word formats, making them very suitable for printing.

For patrons who are doing serious research in case law, our library offers Shepard's Citation Service. This database allows the researcher to check the history of a particular court decision over time. Has the decision been overruled, cited by other courts, and discussed in a law review article? This is where to find out. It is very important not to go into a courtroom and cite as precedent a case with a negative history, so this is a valuable resource for those engaged in self-represented litigation.

All of these databases are located in the Law Section of the library and are available to all Suffolk County residents. Naturally member libraries can contact us by telephone, fax, e-mail or written question on behalf of their patrons.

More City Directories for Genealogists

City directories are an important part of genealogical research. Although they are similar to telephone directories in providing the viewer with surnames and addresses, they often provide much more information. City directories list names and addresses of hospitals, asylums, cemeteries, churches, newspapers and schools. Females who are widowed are listed with a (W). They show whether a person owns or rents their home. City directories also list a person's occupation, expanding the researcher's social history of their family.

Because they are such treasure troves of information, and because many families in Suffolk County originally moved here from New York City, Patchogue-Medford Library has recently expanded its holdings of city directories, filling in many early years. The format is either microfilm or microfiche, and thus they are available for use in our Periodicals Room whenever the library is open. All family researchers are welcome! We presently own city directories for:

- Brooklyn, from 1822 through 1913, and 1933/34
- Manhattan, from 1665 through 1934
- Queens, from 1902-1912, and 1933/34

Central Library Funds E-Reference Book

Many Suffolk County libraries own one of the editions of the *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, published by Scribner. But did you know that the Central Library has purchased the 26 volume Complete Dictionary of Scientific Biography as an electronic reference book that is available to everyone in Suffolk County? It can be used from home or in the library; the patron merely enters their user name and password. Patrons then have total access to the most complete and most up-to-date version of this reference work. And don't forget about our other e-reference books - Encyclopaedia Judaica and the Encyclopedia of Prejudice in the Modern World.