



Local 1321 News

Queens Library Guild, Local 1321, DC 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO, 125 Barclay Street New York, NY 10007

Queens Library Guild Local 1321

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*Vice President Professional & Technical
(Non-Librarian)*
Raul Martinez

Secretary-Treasurer
Conrad Stogel

Chief Steward
Deborah Wynn

Blue Collar Representative
Danny Messina

Clerical Representative
Pamela Sadler

Librarian Representative
Anne Marie Josephs

DC 37 Delegates
Margaret Gibson
Linda Stacer-Chaffmann
Dorrett Hextall, Steve Nobel

Trustees
Roslyn Lesser, Kerline Piedra
Linda Bannerman-Martin

Meet Local 1321's 14 Executive Board Members

For the Term July 2007 to June 2010

MARGALIT SUSSER, President, represents all members of Local 1321. She advocates for members to both Library Management and DC 37. She is a grievance representative and will file grievances on members' behalf. She is the local's delegate to DC 37 and attends monthly meetings to obtain updated Union information and vote on Union issues presented by DC 37 and AFSCME.

John Hyslop, Executive Vice-President, represents all members of Local 1321. He advocates for members to Library Management. He is a grievance representative and will file grievances on members' behalf. He suggests actions to be taken on Union issues. He is Acting President when the President is out for an extended period of time.

Deborah (Debbie) Wynn, Blue Collar Vice President and Chief Steward, represents all Local 1321 blue collar titles. She files grievances on members' behalf. She informs the President, Executive Vice President and other stewards of management problems and issues.

Danny Messina, Blue Collar Representative, represents all Local 1321 blue collar titles. He assists the Blue Collar Vice President, President, and Executive Vice President of management problems and issues.

Annie (Jeannie) Douglas, Clerical Vice President, represents all clerical members. She advocates for members to Library Management. She informs the President and Executive Vice President of management problems and issues.

Pamela (Pam) Sadler, Clerical Rep-

resentative, represents all clerical members. She assists the Clerical Vice President. She informs her, President, and Executive Vice President of management problems and issues.

Raul Martinez, Non-Librarian Professional and Technical Personnel Vice President, represents ITS employees, Library Information Assistants, Adult Learning Center employees, and Community Associates. He informs the President and Executive Vice President of management problems and issues.

Frances (Fran) Tobin, Librarian Vice President, represents all librarians. She informs President and Executive Vice President of management problems and issues.

Anne Marie Josephs, Librarian Representative, represents all librarian members. She assists the Librarian Vice President. She informs her, the President, and Vice President of management problems and issues.

Conrad Stogel, Secretary-Treasurer, takes the minutes of Union meetings and is in charge of the local's finances. He informs the President and Executive Vice President of management problems and issues.

The four delegates attend monthly DC 37 meetings to obtain updated Union information and vote on Union issues presented by DC 37 and AFSCME. The four delegates are:

Steve Nobel keeps the Board informed of Union matters obtained from the news media and other sources.

Linda Stacer-Chaffman arranges Union meeting locations and food.

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New Employee/Labor Relations Manager

Mr. Andrew Wedmore, aka Andy, the Library's new Employee/Labor Relations Manager, pleasantly surprised us by requesting a meeting with our Local 1321 Executive Board members. Mr. Wedmore met with our Board members on July 17. This was a cordial introductory meeting where everyone became acquainted and pleasantries were exchanged. We all agreed to work together for the benefit of all QBPL members. We welcome Mr. Wedmore's appointment to the position, and we look forward to working with him in the future!

Bargaining to Start on DC 37 Economic Agreement

The current DC 37 Economic Agreement will expire on March 2, 2008. DC 37 Executive Director Lillian Roberts plans to start negotiations between DC 37 and the City no later than October 2007.

Labor-Management Meeting on CEL Heating and Air Conditioning Breakdown

ON JULY 23, 2007, the Union participated in a labor-management meeting to discuss a number of issues including the procedures to follow when the temperature goes above 85° or below 62° at the Central Library. The Union explained that whenever the temperature gets too hot or too cold there is confusion. The Union also noted that the building does not have enough thermometers; no one knows who to report problems to; and there is no procedure for what management is supposed to do when there is a problem.

Management's first response was to deny that CEL has a problem with this issue. The Union reiterated the problem. They then asked us to write down the procedure. The Union representatives explained that they were uncomfortable writing library procedure. Management then suggested the Union write down questions that arise during mechanical breakdown and submit them to Human Resources. The Union agreed to do that.

In complying with Article XIV, Section 2 of our Working Conditions contract, both parties agreed that Union, Human Resources and CEL management representatives will meet to discuss the questions and

create a procedure.

The questions and issues raised regarding these problems are as follows:

- Thermometers need to be placed in all work areas that contain staff covered by the contract including all of the CEL division's work areas – Cyber Center, Telephone Reference, Young Adults, all the reference cores on C1, C2 and 1st floor, etc.; TSD – Preparations, Cataloging, CDD; MCD, ITS, etc.
- What thermometers adjudicate the correct temperature?
- What are the reporting procedures? Who reports to whom? What responses do staff receive from management about the reported problems?
- With such a large amount of staff, what is the library going to do when the temperature violates the contract provisions?

If CEL staff has other questions about this issue that need discussion, please submit them to your Union representative.

Executive Board Members *(Continued from page 1)*

Margaret Gibson is newly elected.

Dorett Hextall is newly elected.

Jane Jacobs, Publicity Chair, is not on the Board but maintains the Local's website and puts together the Local's newsletter.

Other Board member duties:

1. If called upon, will be with member in a discipline session.

2. Advocates for all members.

3. Where appropriate, sits in on Labor-Management meetings.

4. Attends monthly Executive Board meetings.

5. Where appropriate, sits in on promotion boards.

6. Takes part in various committees formed by the Local.

7. Attends training sessions provided by DC 37.

Staffing Levels Survey: Results and Conclusions

Results

Ten of the 19 respondents stated their community library has the new Customer Service Model. In all 10, management replaced one Office Aide with one Library Information Assistant (LIA).

Eight of the 10 respondents that have the **new Customer Service Model** responded to the question “How much time (to your knowledge) in a day do staff spend assisting customers with RFID check out?” The responses were:

- 50
- “more than one can count”
- “considerably – number is meaningless”
- “all day”
- “constantly”
- “almost the whole time.”

In response to **missing lunches and breaks**, 18 of the 19 respondents answered this question:

- 1 respondent 0 times.
- 5 respondents 2-5 times.
- 2 respondents 6-10 times.
- 6 respondents 11-15 times.
- 3 respondents 16 times or more.
- 1 respondent said they have not had breaks for years.

In response to staff having their **schedule changed without 48 hours notice**, 13 of the 19 respondents answered this question:

- 1 respondent 0 times
- 6 respondents 2-5 times
- 1 respondent 6-10 times
- 3 respondents 11 or more times
- 2 respondents responded that this happens constantly

In response to staff **working more than 35 hours and getting compensated**, not every respondent answered this question.

In regards to **earning overtime**, 8 of the 19 respondents answered this question:

- 7 respondents 0 times
- 1 respondent 1 time

In regards to **earning compensatory time**, 8 of the 19 respondents answered this question:

- 7 respondents 0 times
- 1 respondent 1 time

In regards to **flexing their time**, 12 of the 19 respondents answered this question:

- 1 respondent 0 times
- 7 respondents 1-5 times
- 4 respondents 11-15 times

In regards to staff **covering community libraries inside their cluster**, 15 of the 19 respondents answered this question:

- 10 respondents 1-5 times
- 2 respondents 6-10 times
- 2 respondents 11-15 times
- 1 respondent 16-20 times

In regards to staff **covering community libraries outside their cluster**, 17 of the 19 respondents answered this question:

- 4 respondents 0 times
- 8 respondents 1-5 times
- 2 respondents 6-10 times
- 2 respondents 11-15 times
- 1 respondents 16-20 times

In regards to staff **working more than two Saturdays in a row**, 14 of the 19 respondents answered this question:

- 6 respondents 0 times
- 4 respondents 1-2 times
- 4 respondents 3-4 times

In regards to **supervisors changing staffs' schedules to work Saturday**, 10 of the 19 respondents answered this question.

- 8 respondents 0 times
- 2 respondents 1-2 times

In regards to the **number of times staff cover both the reference and circulation desk**, 11 of the 19 respondents answered this question.

- 5 respondents 1-10 times
- 6 respondents 10 or more times

Comments:

- “We received coverage 10 times in April due to staff shortage. We worked with two librarians three times... The information assistant does quite a bit of reference work and has no time to help at circulation desk. The clerical staff is short on long days... A volunteer is needed to check in returned books... The clerical staff [can] ask for coverage only when they are down to one [as] told by CLS.”
- “With only 2 clerks... very strenuous and difficult to cover both areas. RFID not user friendly and have to offer assistance to customers... CLS will not allow us to ask for clerical help when we are down to only one clerk, except on Saturdays... This puts us behind the eight ball and behind in the work.”

Conclusions

Staffing Changes and the New Customer Service Model

As we all know, when the library implements their Customer Service Model they take away an Office Aide position and replace it with a Library Information Assistant (LIA). The Union has been told this by management, and the survey results bear this out. The responses to the amount of time spent still helping customers check out books tells us that the library still needs employees at the circulation desk. The customers will always need assistance with the RFID machines. Management must ensure those RFID machines are staffed by employees to ensure customers are not stymied by the machines and to ensure that customers check out all of their material.

The library replaced an Office Aide and a cash register, with an LIA. Unfortunately this was a mistake. They need to replace the Office Aide with a cash register, with an Office Aide and an RFID machine.

Staffing Levels: breaks, lunches, schedule changes, working more than 35 hours a week, and coverage

The Union receives numerous complaints from staff that they consistently miss their breaks; have their lunches shortened; get their schedules changed without 48 hours notice; work more than 35 hours a week; and work more than two Saturdays in a row. The results of this survey justify these complaints. The vast majority have:

- missed their lunch and breaks
- had their schedule changed without 48 hours notice
- had their schedule flexed to cover the community library
- worked more than two Saturdays in a row.

Flexing a staff member's schedule is permissible. However, changing someone's schedule without 48 hours notice can be a violation of our contract. Making a staff member miss their lunch and breaks is a violation of it. Making staff members work more than two Saturdays in a row is also a violation of it. Obviously the library is violating the contract it signed with the Union. If any of this is happening to you, please contact us.

Now that the library has begun offering Saturday service for all community libraries, these issues are going to be a lot worse.

Community Library Coverage: Inside and Outside the Cluster

Another major complaint that the Union receives from staff is coverage of community libraries inside and outside the clusters. Coverage inside the cluster happens often and is understandable. However, the results show that coverage outside the cluster happens all too often and is a huge burden on staff. This matches many of the complaints the Union receives. Staff has complained to us that they must cover community libraries that are sometimes on the other side of the borough. This is a huge burden, especially if the person must take public transportation. Employees become very discouraged if they have to travel two hours to get to work.

In both of the comments listed above, the employees state that the Community Library Services Department (CLS) will not provide clerical coverage for the community library unless they are down to one clerk. Employees have been told to not even contact CLS with this problem. If the library is open from 10-8, who is covering the circulation desk?

The CLS used to ensure that all community libraries in a cluster would share the responsibility of staff shortages in their cluster. This system seems to have fallen apart. The Union would like to see this system fixed and staff coverage made fairer.

Again, now that the library has begun offering Saturday service for all community libraries this is going to become more of a problem.

Final Conclusion

The results of the survey document a system that is severely understaffed; continues to violate its contract with the Union; and continues to discourage its employees. The library is undergoing vast changes with their new Customer Service Model and with the expansion of hours. The Union has been told that the library is hiring more people, and we believe them. However, the library must understand how many people they need to hire and how best to deploy them.

The library must ensure that people are able to take their full breaks and lunch. They must ensure that people are not working more than two Saturdays in a row. They must ensure that community library coverage is shared equally by every library in the cluster. They must ensure that customers have a pleasant, easy experience, in which all of the customers' material is checked out by the RFID machines, by hiring staff to cover those machines.

RFID Units

OUR LOCAL HAS received the following comments regarding the RFID System. The consensus is that when the RFID Units work, this new Customer Service Model is great. However, there are numerous glitches with the System that need to be resolved. Members have reported a number of problems to our office. They include, but are not limited to:

1. The implementation of the RFID System has not reduced the need for staffing levels despite the fact that in most agencies an Office Aide position was eliminated from staffing levels when the RFID system was implemented
2. Scattering of coins on the floor due to spillage from the RFID units
3. Inadequate access to rolls of coins which results in staff going to different banks to obtain the required amount of one dollar rolls of coins
4. Staff continually having to open the RFID Units to give customers the correct change or to restart the transaction when customers are timed out
5. The RFID Units giving incorrect due dates and payment receipts
6. The inability to return customers' items immediately or upon customers' requests
7. Reconciliation difficulties between the Monies Report of DRA and the RFID Report
8. No clear instructions for customers detailing how to use the self-checkout machines or end their checkout sessions
9. Waiving monies as a result of incorrect customer self-checkouts
10. RFID Units do not always accurately issue returns properly thereby resulting in the need to up the count of claims returns for customers
11. The ringing of the security gate even though items were properly checked out

These problems have been brought to the attention of the HR Director. Management acknowledges these and other RFID issues, but does not know the extent or the number of times these problems occur. Therefore, it is extremely important that you notify the ISD techs regarding any problem you encounter with the RFID Units, even if it's a one-time occurrence. This will give Management a more accurate log of the number of times and types of problems associated with the RFID system.



DC 37 at your service

Health and Security Benefits

Information on coverage and how to apply for all Health and Security benefits, including **drug, optical, disability** and **dental** benefits, may be obtained by calling the Benefit Information Section at 212-815-1234 or by visiting Room 300.

Be sure to have the member's Social Security number handy when you call.

Forms and optical vouchers only: Call 212-815-1531.

Death benefits: Call 212-815-1373 or 212-815-1374.

Hearing-impaired: If you have a teletypewriter, call 212-815-1266 for info or forms

Health Insurance, Pension, Med-Team, HIP, GHI

For information about health insurance coverage (DC 37 Med-Team, GHI, etc.), aid in resolving claims problems and general information on pension issues, call 212-815-1200 or come to the DC 37 Health and Pension Services Unit in Room 314.

For computation of individual pension benefits, call 212-815-1200 and schedule an appointment six months before your date of retirement.

DC 37 Med-Team

DC 37 Med-Team offers members and retirees a wide range of hospital and medical benefits, with a wide choice of primary care physicians and specialists throughout the five boroughs, Nassau and Suffolk counties and elsewhere in New York State, call 212-815-1313.

Podiatry Service

The DC 37 Podiatry benefit (foot care), operated by the Health Options Medical, P.C. is offered at 115 Chambers St., NYC 10007 (212-766-4455) and at 186 Joralemon St., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11201 (718-625-2544). For members only.

Audiology Service

The DC 37 Audiology benefit (for hearing problems), operated by Hear & See Right, Inc., is offered at the DC 37 Health Center, 115 Chambers Street in Manhattan. Members only. Included are audiologic evaluations by an audiologist and, if necessary, a hearing aid.

For an appointment call 212-791-2126 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Family Dental Centers

The DC 37 Dental Centers, operated by Joralemon Dental Services, P.C., are at two locations: 186 Joralemon St. in downtown

Brooklyn, 11201, and 115 Chambers St. in Manhattan, 10007. Both offer comprehensive dental care to members and eligible dependents and are open Monday through Saturday.

For appointments, call: Manhattan at 212-766-4440, or Brooklyn at 718-852-1400.

Vision Center

The DC 37 Vision benefit, operated by Hear & See Right, Inc., is located at 115 Chambers St. in Manhattan, 10007. The center can be used by members and their eligible dependents.

The standard optical benefit provides an eye exam, lenses and frames, if necessary, every two years. Available at DC 37 Vision Center and at participating optical centers.

Only at the DC 37 Vision Center are you also entitled to an eye examination — and new lenses, if necessary — 12 months after receiving your standard benefit.

Appointments at the DC 37 Vision Center can be made by calling 212-766-4452, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., beginning the last Monday of each month and each subsequent day until all appointments are booked for the next six-to-eight-week period. Appointments cannot be made before your eligibility date.

If you decide to choose from the list of participating vision providers other than Chambers Street, call 212-815-1531 to request a voucher.