Charles F. Cummings, 1937-2005

Charles F. Cummings, Assistant Director for Special Collections and Statewide Outreach, passed away on December 21 after a brief illness. A valued employee since joining the Library on July 15, 1963, he served as Newark City Historian since 1988.

“A few months ago it was my privilege to present Charles Cummings with the Key to the City of Newark,” said Mayor Sharpe James. “He wore Newark on his sleeve and in his heart.” The “key” was only one of numerous awards he received.

Last October, Cummings also garnered the 2005 Public Humanities Award from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities for exemplary work in the public humanities, while making a “significant and lasting difference in the lives of New Jerseyans.” He shared this award with author and historian John T. Cunningham.

In addition to being the expert source for “everything Newark” as head of the Library’s New Jersey Information Center, Mr. Cummings curated/co-curated many exhibitions and authored/coauthored several books. Additionally, he provided valuable assistance to countless other authors’ published works. His “Knowing Newark” feature articles appeared regularly in the Star-Ledger’s Newark This Week section.

Trish Morris-Yamba, President of the Library’s Board of Trustees, said, “This is a great loss, not just to the Newark Public Library, but to the City of Newark and the entire state as well. Charles was a tremendous resource and to work with him has truly been a learning experience.”

Director Wilma J. Grey said, “We deeply mourn the loss of our colleague, mentor, and friend.”

Mr. Cummings gave many tours of the neighborhoods of Newark and was a frequent speaker on these topics. A founding member of the Newark History Society and a charter member of the Newark Preservation and Landmarks Committee, he dedicated his efforts to saving Newark’s historic buildings.

Charles F. Cummings receives the Key to the City from Mayor Sharpe James.

Those wishing to make memorial donations in Charles’ name to the endowment that funds our New Jersey Information Center collections may make checks payable to The Newark Public Library - Robert Treat Endowment. Please mail them to The Robert Treat Endowment, c/o The Development Department, The Newark Public Library, PO Box 630, Newark, NJ 07101-0630.
The death of a friend puts many things into perspective. My initial intention for this column was to reflect on 2005—a year of transition, numerous challenges, and major accomplishments for the Newark Public Library. However, the untimely passing of Charles F. Cummings has changed my mind.

Charles was an original—a warm, kind individual who loved people as much as he loved his work. To many he was known as “Mr. Newark.” Anyone—from scholars to schoolchildren; from dignitaries to “everyday” residents—who wanted information on Newark knew the source was Charles Cummings. And, in the words of John T. Cunningham, noted New Jersey historian and author, “Charles never failed me, nor did he fail anyone else.” Never.

For the first time in 42 years, the Newark Public Library will be without its beloved Assistant Director for Special Collections and Statewide Outreach and it will not be the same without him. We will miss his vast knowledge of Newark, his wonderful stories about New Jersey and its people, his infectious enthusiasm for current and future plans, his excitement at acquiring new materials for the New Jersey Information Center, and his limitless energy. The memory of Charles Cummings will live on in the hearts and minds of his Library colleagues and of all who called him “friend”—and that list is very, very long indeed.

Wilma J. Grey

Catherine McFarland: An Extraordinary Leader

In recognition of a long history of generosity to the NPL, the 2005 Booked for the Evening gala honored Catherine M. McFarland and the Victoria Foundation. Ms. McFarland joined the Foundation in 1971 and has served as its Executive Officer and Secretary for the past 17 years.

Ms. McFarland’s civic contributions, honors and awards validate her extraordinary leadership skills.

She is involved in countless organizations, including the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, Frost Valley YMCA, New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Essex County College/Training Inc., and Newark Advocates for Children.

Among others, she is the recipient of the Commitment to Excellence Award from the Council of Community Colleges, the Equal Justice Award from New Jersey Legal Services, the Caring Award from the Boys’ and Girls’ Clubs of Newark, the Salute to the Policymakers Award from the Executive Women of New Jersey, and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Newark College of Arts and Sciences-Rutgers University.

During her remarks at the gala, Ms. McFarland said: “I remember visiting the Newark Public Library when doing vital research for my college courses. I know first-hand the depth of its resources. I am pleased that the Victoria Foundation can provide ongoing support for the Library’s mission of enriching lives and expanding horizons.”

The NPL salutes Catherine McFarland and the Victoria Foundation.
On the Branches

Many exciting programs are taking place systemwide, including Saturday Programs @ the Branches and Club Success Homework-Assistance. Grants from the Newark Public Schools fund both of these endeavors. In addition to special Black History Month programs, following are a few Branch-specific events.

The Van Buren Branch, 140 Van Buren Street, has a regular schedule of computer classes and story times. For details, call them at (973) 733-7750.

Each Wednesday evening, from 6:00 to 8:00, is “Chess Night” at the Madison Branch, 790 Clinton Avenue. Patrons—third-graders to adults—are invited to play it, learn it, teach it. For information on this popular weekly program—and your “next move”—call (973) 733-8090.

The Vailsburg Branch, 75 Alexander Street, held a reception in celebration of receiving Newark Neighborhood: A Ceramic City, a sculpture that maps the streets around the Branch Library and the school. Students from the Alexander Street School created the 100-piece sculpture that was a “Newark Museum Artist in Residence Program.” Anker West is the artist.

The Springfield Branch, 50 Hayes Street, has had terrific interest in its “SAT Prep Program” (held on most Wednesdays from 5:00pm to 7:00pm and Saturdays 11:00am to 1:00pm). Student praises note that the program “helps sharpen our skills” and “prepares us not just for the SAT’s, but for the future.” Each free session comprises Preparation for SAT Tests, Financial Aid Workshops, College Essay Writing, and Scholarship Searches. Assistance is given in completing SAT, college, and scholarship applications.

The Community Foundation of New Jersey funds this program. For more information, please call the Springfield Branch at (973) 733-7736, or Lyndon Brown, the instructor, at (973) 623-8699.

The North End Branch celebrated “Summer Reading Challenge” with this dragon-theme display.

Many students attending Springfield’s “SAT Prep Program” have had higher test scores—some as much as 300-500 points.

Several busloads of teenagers departed from the Springfield Branch to attend the National College Fair at the Nassau Coliseum in Hempstead, N.Y.
More than 225 persons attended the Newark Public Library’s 2005 Booked for the Evening annual gala dinner that honored the Victoria Foundation and Catherine M. McFarland, Executive Officer, for their continued, generous support. The event, which was held at Nanina’s In The Park, Belleville, N.J., raised in excess of $100,000 for the Annual Fund campaign.

The Victoria Foundation is committed to strengthening community within Newark, and protecting the environment throughout the state of New Jersey. In recent years, the Foundation has bestowed nearly $500,000 toward various projects at the Library. Catherine M. McFarland has been with the Victoria Foundation for nearly 35 years. She guides the Foundation in its annual distribution of ten-plus million dollars.

In addition to celebrating the appointment of Wilma Grey as the Newark Public Library’s tenth Director, Booked for the Evening recognized two long-standing Board of Trustee members with the President’s Award for their distinguished service: Clement Alexander Price, Director Wilma Grey, Trish Morris-Yamba, Alberto Coutinho, Gayle Griffin, Timothy Crist.

NPL Board members display great pride: Joseph Yeadon, Dwayne Ashley, Debbie Salas-Lopez, Clement Alexander Price, Director Wilma Grey, Trish Morris-Yamba, Alberto Coutinho, Gayle Griffin, Timothy Crist.

Event Committee Co-Chairs Ellen Marshall, Independence Community Bank, and Tom Giblin, IUOE-Local 68, helped make the evening a great success.

Assemblyman William Payne and Provost Steven Diner, Rutgers University-Newark, share a moment with Wilma Grey.

Samuel Delgado and Olga Jimenez Wagenheim, committee members of the NPL’s New Jersey Hispanic Research and Information Center, supported this signature fundraising event.
A HEARTFELT Thank You

The Newark Public Library sends a special thank you to those who helped make the 2005 Booked for the Evening gala a great success.

DINNER CHAIRMAN
James A. Courter

EVENT COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS
Thomas P. Giblin
Ellen Marshall

EVENT COMMITTEE
Frank E. Ferruggia, Esq.
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Jane and Victor Parsonnet extend congratulations to award recipient Catherine McFarland (center).

Several Library staff members joined the celebration: Paul Pattwell, Jane Catanzaro, Gerald FitzHugh, Leslie Colson, Belvin Walker, William Stockton, (seated) Willie and Lola Caldwell.

Carol Jenkins-Cooper, Board member of the Friends of the NPL, and Patricia Bender, Friends President, offer warm wishes to Wilma Grey, the Library’s recently appointed 10th Director.
A fine start for learning about the African-American experience is the African American History and Culture database. Biographies, charts, essays, maps, pictures, primary sources, and timelines elucidate the scientific, social, and artistic advances contributed by African Americans.

Among the multitude of topics examined are court decisions that impeded or liberated African-American aspirations, and genres of music and other artistic contributions of African Americans. For example, to read Martin Luther King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” visit/select the “Primary Sources” category.

African American History and Culture is one of several databases comprising the Facts on File suite available at www.npl.org/Pages/InternetResources. (Scroll down left-hand column.)

For remote access—when not in an NPL facility—simply click on the “from home or work” link for Facts on File and then, at the prompt, type your NPL card number.

Portions of many respected reference books, such as The Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance, Encyclopedia of African-American Heritage, and Black Women in America, are included.

To locate high-quality Internet sites about African-American civilization and contributions, please browse www.npl.org/Pages/InternetResources/SubjectGuides/africanamerican.html. Assembled by the Newark Public Library staff, this vast compilation is arranged by subject.

For more information/assistance call Central Reference at (973) 733-7779 or 7820, or the James Brown African-American Room at (973) 733-5411.

The NPL celebrated “Martin Luther King Day 2006” with a number of programs at the Branches and the Main Library. The Branch events included storytelling and arts & crafts. The Main Library remembrance featured the Mayhem Poets, an amazing troupe of four wordsmiths, who introduced a large audience of students to the art of “slam” poetry with And Let Our Voices Sing.
January

Wednesday
Viola Sanders holds a discussion on “African-American Firsts.”
W Eq uah ic Branch Library
355 Osborne Terrace; 3:30pm

Thursday
Viola Sanders presents a discussion, on the African-American Tea Ceremony and Experiencing The World of Tea.
Centennial Hall; 10:00am

February

Tuesday
Opening Reception for programming features keynote speaker Hugh Price.
Centennial Hall; 6:00pm

Wednesday
Centennial Hall; 6:00pm

Saturday
African-American hair styles and hair care are the topic of a program presented by Mr. Shamboosie.
Clinton Branch Library
739 Bergen St.; 11:00am

Roderick Shade, a prolific designer of furniture and fabric—both traditional and contemporary—holds a discussion and book signing of Harlem Style.
North End Branch Library
722 Summer Ave.; 3:30pm

The Blues Duo (Jasper McGruder on harmonica and Henry Afro Bradley on guitar) will perform music that ranges from field hollers to contemporary rural and urban blues.
Van Buren Branch Library
140 Van Buren St.; 11:00am

In case of inclement weather, please call (973) 733-7784 to determine whether the NPL is open.

All programs are free and open to the public. For more information, please call (973) 424-1831 or (973) 733-5411, or visit www.npl.org.
The Frances E.W. Harper Literary Society is dedicated to discussing books on the African Diaspora. Seven programs remain in this year’s season. All programs are held on Wednesday, begin at 6:30pm, and are free and open to the public.

- **February 1**—Celebrate Black History Month with this “Black Theater” program.

- **March 1**—Celebrate Women’s History Month with a discussion of *Lucy* by Jamaica Kincaid.

- **March 8**—A viewing and discussion of Hafiz Farid’s film, *A Pillar of Salt: The Angry Woman Syndrome*.

- **March 22**—An evening with author Barbara Kukla.

- **April 5**—The Society celebrates National Poetry Month with the Gatekeepers.

- **May 3**—A discussion of *They Call Me Big House*, by Clarence E. Gaines.

- **June 7**—Celebrate the Black Diaspora with a book signing and lecture: Dr. Lesego Malepe’s *Matters of Life & Death*.

For more information on the Society and its programs, call the James Brown African-American Room at (973) 733-5411, or visit www.npl.org and select Programs & Exhibits.

The NPL saluted José Rodriguez, Sr. (seated), who was named the “2005 Honorary Senior Library Director.” Born in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, he has been a Newarker for 48 years. A retiree of the New Jersey Office Supply Company, he spends most of his time helping out in the community and coaching baseball.

The NPL celebrated “Humanities Festival Week” with a special program that was funded by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities and featured storyteller Julie Pasqual. She presented folktales from Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe that reflected the diverse communities of Newark and New Jersey.
Annual Fund Continues to Grow

Larger contributions and an increased number of donors have resulted in a steady growth of the Library’s Annual Fund Campaign. Last year, the Library raised more than $200,000 through the generosity of many individuals, corporations and organizations. Annual Fund dollars enable the Library to continue enriching lives and expanding horizons through countless free educational, cultural and informational programs.

We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to those who supported the 2005 Annual Fund Campaign through our traditional mail solicitations and our two signature fundraising events: the Book Classic golf tournament and the Booked for the Evening gala. Both events met with unprecedented success by raising much-needed unrestricted funds while elevating visibility for the Newark Public Library.

Robert and Rosemary Steinbaum, along with Jerome and Paula Gottesman, supported the Annual Fund with their attendance at our Booked for the Evening gala.

The NPL is looking to continue this tradition of financial growth. We encourage you to assist us by making your gift to the 2006 Annual Fund Campaign. You may use the attached reply envelope and/or join us at one of our exciting events. All support is greatly appreciated!

Patrons preview new hockey arena

The model of the new arena for the three-time Stanley Cup Champion New Jersey Devils made six stops at various Branch Libraries from October 26 through December 6. Each of Newark’s five wards was represented on the tour. In addition to demonstrating the New Jersey Devils’ support of the Newark community and its children through education, sport and the arts, the tour offered information for children by having a hockey seminar that introduced them to hockey in an easy, fun and hands-on way.

At the Main Library preview, Devils owner Jeff Vanderbeek and popular defenseman Ken Daneyko fielded questions, while dozens of Newark’s youngsters admired Daneyko’s Stanley Cup Championship ring. During the festivities, Mayor Sharpe James spoke of the new opportunities and jobs that will result from the new arena in downtown Newark.

Children took time during tour at Main Library to pose with mascots from New Jersey Devils (NJ) and the NPL (Corky).

The Devils have made a generous donation to the Library’s collection development fund that resulted in the purchase of two dozen new hockey books for each of the Children’s Rooms systemwide.

In addition to promoting “hockey readiness” in Newark’s youngsters, the Library invited children to create their own hockey story and the Devils awarded prizes to the top winners.
SAVE THE DATE
for the
Library’s Annual Golf Outing
at the
Plainfield Country Club
July 11, 2006
for more information call 973-424-1832
Free Computer Classes

Free computer classes—in English and Spanish—are being held in the newly expanded Technology Training Center, which is located on the third floor of the Main Library. Some classes are designed for first-time computer users (Mouse Clinic, Typing), while others are for those with more computer literacy (Word Processing, Publisher, Email, Internet, PowerPoint, Creating a Résumé). For more information on the calendar of classes, please call (973) 733-3603, or visit www.npl.org/Pages/Computers/.

Curt Idrogo presents “Internet I,” a class designed for first-time users of the World Wide Web. Participants discover how to use the Explorer browser, learn about menus and toolbars, and become familiar with various ways of navigating the Internet. Experience using a mouse and typing skills are required before taking this class.

Free Wireless Access @ Main Library

The NPL’s high-speed Internet network now affords patrons the freedom to use their Wi-Fi™-enabled laptop or wireless device almost anywhere in the Main Library.

For more information, including the answers to the most-asked questions, access this URL: http://www.npl.org/Pages/Computers/wireless.html.

Search the NPL’s Catalog with Clavis

Whether you are interested in a book, video, DVD or CD, you can now search the Library’s catalog with Clavis. Simply visit catalog.npl.org.

This new tool gives you more robust search options—such as limiting your results “by location.” For example, a branch patron may wish to limit results to only that branch’s holdings, thereby accessing items that are available at the most convenient location. Patrons may also place “holds” to request materials from other locations be sent for pick up at their local branch.

Another option is the “keyword search” that enables users some advanced features—including limiting by material type—thus making it easier to locate media such video recordings or printed music (scores.) Searchers may also limit by language and date of publication.

Library cardholders may now register for a Personal Account (My Millennium Login) for such features as viewing the books checked out or requesting to receive overdue notices by email. And the Library now offers more-generous loan periods for select materials. For example, bestsellers and new adult fiction may now be checked out for 14 days; videos for 7 days. For more information about library cards and loan periods visit www.npl.org/Pages/AboutLibrary/library_cards.html.
Great news for fans of the Friends' Book Sale: The 15th annual event will have double the number of sale days—6 instead of 3. So mark your calendars for these important dates: April 22, 24, 25, 27, 28 and 29.

The sale features a wide selection of books for children and adults, plus reference works, records, videotapes, cassette tapes, CDs and posters.

Those individuals and organizations wishing to help sort the book sale items before and/or during the sale should leave a message for Jerry Caprio by emailing friends@npl.org, or by calling the Library at (973) 733-7793.

Our popular Hooray for Children program series, which presents live performances by puppeteers, storytellers, magicians and theater groups, is intended as enjoyment suitable for the entire family. That's why parents and caregivers enjoy the series as much as their children.

Four programs remain till the conclusion of this year's season. Each is on a Saturday at the Main Library and begins promptly at 2:00pm.

- **February 25**—Rosa's Ride, featuring Flying Ship Productions, is a play that humanizes the important developments in race relations that touched and were influenced by events in Rosa Park's life.

- **March 25**—Native American Kenneth Little Hawk teaches responsibility, respect, and how to live in a good way, overcoming life's challenges, through stories, music, dance and cultural experiences.

- **April 22**—Enjoy a truly unique performance by madcap balloon artist Allynn Gooen, who will fill the stage with extraordinary balloon creations as he leads the story of *The Wizard of Oz*, in which children from the audience will star.

- **May 13**—Master magician Bob Conrad presents *Dragons, Dreams and Magic*. Take a magical journey to a time long ago of Knights and Dragons, Wizards and Magic.

For a calendar of the Library's children's programs visit [kidsplace.npl.org/calendar.html](http://kidsplace.npl.org/calendar.html).