

# I Love My Librarian!

## **Nomination for Madlyn S. Schneider**

Queens Library  
Queens, New York

## **NOMINATOR**

Bonnie Sue Pokorny

### **1. Please tell us in 2-3 sentences why your nominee should win this award. What sets him/her apart?**

Madlyn Schneider is a compassionate, caring person. She has a personal interest in each and every participant in this statewide program. Using the telephone conference system she installed in Mail a Book (MAB), she opened up a new world to me (and other participants). She even used the conference calling on holidays because she learned that homebound people are often lonely and depressed on holidays. She did this on her own time. When Hurricane Irene was coming, she recognized how apprehensive we were and she held a telephone conference call to get us through it.

### **2. Please list a few ways in which the nominee has helped you and made your experience of the library a positive one. For instance, did the nominee inspire in you a love for literature; assist you in a project or finding other information?**

As I previously mentioned, she helped me and the other participants get through the tough times. However, she opened up new avenues of reading and learning. She knows us so well, that she is constantly sending me books of authors that I am not familiar with. At the beginning, when she started this, she would put a note stating that she thought I would enjoy this. Now, when I get a book that is not my usual reading, I get very excited because I know she is introducing me to a new authors. She is usually right and I have a wonderful time with the book. She has expanded my reading so much that there are times I have a problem keeping up with them (not a complaint but a compliment). I love to read books and also enjoy listening to audio books. There has never been a time since Ms. Schneider took on the managerial role at MAB that I was ever without materials. This may not be impressive except that I normally read about fifteen to twenty books a month and listen to numerous audio books.

### **3. How has the librarian made a difference in the community? Please be specific.**

Ms. Schneider doesn't stop at only sending materials to the members of MAB. She expanded the program with telephone conferencing calls. She hold them three times a week and they are extremely important not only to me but to the homebound. In my case, I have made new friends (very difficult if you do not go out) through these calls and we often speak to each through private calls. I look to my new friends for friendship, advice and support. When one is virtually homebound with medical issues, the group becomes the foundation for each other. We are supportive and try to help even if is just a phone call or a note. In today's times, families are far flung geographically. No longer are there multi-generational households so we are quite isolated. Ms. Schneider is quite aware of this and she see to it that we function very much as a family. We are not alone.

The teleconference calls are not just social and fun but are also educational. Ms. Schneider gets speakers on all subjects. We have had health seminar, history seminars and art seminars. Ms. Schneider has made arrangements three times in the past couple of years for the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met) to do a series of programs. The Met makes up binders containing pictures of the art work and each week a different dozen lectures on the pieces and we have an interesting lecture. Each binder is about five to six weeks worth of lectures so that we have more than a month of our virtual art visit to the Met. In addition, Ms. Schneider has made arrangements with the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) for a five week lecture series starting in October 2012 and the Met is coming in the fall with a series on American artists and art. It is very exciting since I am unable to go to museums. The curator of the Holocaust Museum at Queensborough Community College also gave us a lecture. Queens is a fascinating county with its history going back to prior the revolution. We have had many seminars on different aspects of Queens and have had elected politicians speak to us on Queens including our Borough President. We have health seminars over the phone by health care providers (doctors, nurses, social workers, nutritionists, yoga, etc.) which are informative and educational.

The community has become more aware of us and we are no longer the "invisible" population. Now thanks to Ms. Schnieder, we are seen in three dimension.

In addition, Ms. Schneider has expanded the program to include homebound children. She has a Skype program for reading for the younger children and teleconference to the older children so that they can socialize. This is, of course, in additional to sending them materials.

### **4. How has the library, and the nominee, improved the quality of your life?**

I have had a dramatic turn in my life since Ms. Schneider became the mgr of MAB. Not only has she enhanced my reading, I have made new friends (very difficult if you are housebound), learned more and I feel as if I am connected to society again. Ms. Schneider also introduced the Skype program which enables me to see other people and they me during the program. For example, through Skype I am able to participate in a book discussion group held in an assisted living facility and another one in the Pomonok Branch (mainstream) of the library (I am not invisible). This is very exciting to me. On Mondays, through Skype, other members and myself do crossword puzzles for an hour. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, we have teleconference

for about two hours. In October, MOMA will giving an series of lectures for five weeks and followed by the Met giving lectures on American art and artists. There are three book discussions group I participate in (one is MAB teleconferencing). As you can see I am busy, busy, busy which is wonderful. Prior to Ms. Schneider's involvement, I was quite isolated and was always thinking of activities to keep myself occupied. Now, I do not notice my walls. There is so much to do and so little time....it is delightful!

#### **5. How does the nominee make the library a better place?**

All my life, I was a reader. The library was always a place I would spend time in getting my reading material and researching. The library is more than that now. Through the Skype program, Ms. Schneider often allows us to see the entertainment, lectures and activities in other branches. Prior to Ms. Schneider's involvement, I was existing the best I could. Now I am living. So all I can say is the congratulation to the Queens Library in their ability to recognizing the qualities that Ms. Schneider has and let her run with them and kudos for Ms. Schneider for using your compassion and creative ability and your hard work ethic to accomplish so much in such a short period time. Since I am the recipient of this, I am extremely grateful.