

Bios of Current Nyack Library Trustees



Ellyse Berg and her husband Phil have been Nyack residents for over forty years.

Ellyse holds a Master of Science in Education, and is retired from a thirty-two year career in teaching children with special needs at the middle school level in The Bronx. While teaching, she served as Chapter Leader of the United Federation of Teachers as well as on the District Mentoring Committee.

For the past fifteen years, Ellyse has been an active volunteer with the Friends of the Nyack Library and has helped manage the semi-annual Book Sale fundraiser and the ongoing Nyack Library Book Nook.

Ellyse has been on the Board of Trustees since 2016. She is Vice President, Chair of the Personnel and Friends of the Nyack Library Liaison Committees and also serves on the Development and Nomination Committees.



Steven Cea has lived in Nyack since 1992 with his wife and two children. Steve retired in 2018, after 25 years as a School Business Administrator/Board Secretary for various New Jersey public school districts. Since retirement, he has focused on climate and sustainability issues as a member of the Nyack Tree and Sustainability Committees. He is an Energy Navigator volunteer trained by Cornell Cooperative Extension to assist residents in reducing their energy consumption and accessing state incentive programs. Steve has prior experience as a member of the Nyack Center and Edward Hopper Museum Boards. His education includes a Master of Business Administration from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Bachelor of Arts from Columbia University.



Peter Danish is a 30-year Nyack resident and has served on numerous not-for-profit boards. He was a founding member and former president of Reaching Out Around Rockland (a coalition of five human service charities: Rockland Family Shelter, Jewish Family Services, SHARE, Joseph's Home and United Hospice) as well as a founding member of ArtsRock. For two decades Peter was a media executive, serving as Director of Marketing for NBC TV, Vice President of Marketing for Telemundo, and Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Azteca TV Network. His writing has appeared in The New York Times, Ad Age, Ad Week, and Media Week. He is also the author of two novels (one of which has just been optioned to be made into a motion picture) and an Amazon #1 best-selling speech-coaching book. Peter is also an award-winning playwright (his play "The Rehearsal" will be premiering in Athens, Greece in November of 2022 and his play "Amitie Amoureuse" will open in Hamburg, Germany in Fall 2023). In addition, for a decade Peter has been the Classical Music Editor for BroadwayWorld.com the nation's leading Broadway website. Peter was a volunteer at the Nyack Library for 8

Bios of Current Nyack Library Trustees

years and founded and moderated the Nyack Library Opera Club and the classical music club for five years. Peter currently serves on the Development, Personnel, and Friends of the Nyack Library Committees.



Tracy Dressner I have been a big fan and prolific user of libraries since childhood. I grew up across the street from a library and it became my home away from home. I instilled in my children a love of reading which included weekly trips to the library. I have continued this tradition since moving to Nyack eight years ago. Given my love of libraries and my appreciation for the role they can play in shaping lives and communities, I was delighted when I read about an opening on the Nyack Library Board of Trustees. I believe my background would be an asset to the Board. For the past 26 years I have been a criminal defense appellate attorney with a solo practice substantially devoted to death penalty litigation in California. Although I feel reasonably certain the Board would never need my direct legal services, my work does involve a heavy dose of analytical reasoning, substantial and detailed writing, and persuasive oral advocacy, all skills that would serve me well on the Board. In addition, I served as the Financial Secretary and member of the Executive Board of my synagogue for many years. It would be an honor to provide a fresh perspective and to work with the Board to keep this library a vibrant, meaningful, and integral part of the wonderful Nyack community.



E. Michael Growney is a longtime resident of Upper Nyack. He and his wife Betsy Mettler, now deceased, raised five sons who attended Nyack Schools. A graduate of Dartmouth College and Harvard Law School, he was an Investment Banker serving as General Counsel and then Senior Executive for several financial firms. He has served on the Nyack Library Board since 1999. His areas of service include being on the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee, the Long Range Plan & Policy Development Committee, the Audit Committee and the Personnel Committee. He currently serves as the President of the Library Board of Trustees.



Wayne Henry is a resident of Nyack. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Rockland County YMCA and Chairman of its Audit Committee. In addition, Wayne also is part of the YMCA Task Force that evaluates the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the status of its operations and financial position. Wayne is a member of the Nyack Rotary where he serves as the Treasurer of the Nyack Rotary Club and Nyack Rotary Foundation. He is a Rockland County Election Official participating in our election process as Voting Center Manager and Election Inspector.

After a successful career as a Certified Public Accountant, Consultant, Chief Financial Officer and Company President, Wayne retired in April 2018. He began his career at Touche Ross & Co., CPAs. He went on to manage several organizations in the technology and food industries. From 1994 through 2018 he founded and operated Henry Financial, Inc., a business advisory and merger and acquisition

Bios of Current Nyack Library Trustees

consultancy based in Nyack. He is a member of the NJ Society of CPAs and the American Institute of CPAs where he follows new developments in accounting, finance and governmental compliance focusing on the not for profit sector.



Brian Murrell has a background in financial accounting, reporting, and risk management. He is a partner with a global consultancy firm, where he leads Digital Transformation services for the U.S. Energy, Resources, & Industrials risk advisory practice. Brian also advises companies transacting in global commodity markets.

Originally from the Houston, Texas area, Brian lived internationally for four years in the Netherlands and United Kingdom before moving to New York. He has been a resident of the Nyacks since 2006.

Brian is married and has three sons (two of whom are in the Nyack Public School system, and his eldest is a student at the University of Chicago).

He has a strong sense of duty and responsibility to family and service to the local community, including a passion for fair and equitable treatment of others. Brian is an active member of Grace Episcopal Church in Nyack. He also serves on the Board of Getting Out and Staying Out (GOSO; www.gosonyc.org), an organization dedicated to reducing recidivism in New York City. Brian additionally chairs GOSO's Audit & Finance committee.

He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Accounting from Texas A&M University, and is a Certified Public Accountant, licensed in New York, New Jersey, and Texas. Brian joined the Board of Trustees in 2017 and currently serves as Treasurer and on the Audit and Finance Committees.



Michael A. Penn – with the IBM Corporation for over 40 years- serving in various Management, Sales and Leadership positions.

Current Assignment – Contract & Negotiations Executive. Granted two IBM Patents.

EDUCATION Bachelor of Science – Accounting
 Fairleigh Dickenson University – two years – Madison NJ

University of the District of Columbia (UDC) – Washington DC;

COMMUNITY SERVICE

West Street Child Care Learning Center, Spring Valley, NY: Consulting Accounting Advisory Services
 Fairmount Baptist Church, Haverstraw, NY: Accounting Services
 Tax services to Senior Citizens throughout Rockland County

Bios of Current Nyack Library Trustees



Roger W. Seiler - resides with his wife Sally on Berachah Avenue in South Nyack. A graduate of the UCLA Film School, he made documentaries for IBM for several years before starting his own film company, Vantage Communications, Inc. Later he founded Leadership Software Corp., which develops and markets computer programs for employee performance management, training, and astrophysics. He joined the library board in January 1977, and served as board president for 16 years from 1997 through 2012. As president, he led the expansion project that doubled the size of library and that enabled increasing the range of library services in line with the library's changing role as a cultural and information hub of the community.



Dr. Bebb Stone is a retired Presbytery minister, having completed ministry with Nauraushaun Presbyterian Church, Pearl River, in November 2018. Her doctorate in Religious Studies/Social Ethics is from the University of Pittsburgh. Her dissertation was published by the University Press of America: Second Isaiah's Daughters, 2004. Dr. Stone is active with the Garden Club of Nyack, the John Green House Preservation Coalition, and Creative Aging in Nyack. She grew up in western New York, graduated from Oberlin College and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Favorite reading includes Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children, Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart, Thomas Mann's Magic Mountain, Dylan Thomas' A Child's Christmas in Wales, and any poem by W. H. Auden or A. A. Milne.



Dr. Valerie Williams-Sanchez holds a Ph.D. in literacy from St. John's University, Columbia grad and certified project manager working in communications at Columbia University Medical Center. A former journalist turned communications and marketing professional, she is a self-published author of children's books and budding reading researcher originally from Southern California. Valerie speaks Spanish, and looks to impact literacy for multicultural and children of color.