

**Libraries of the Future  
Model: Denmark, Scandinavia**

**LWVNCC Hot Topic Evening**

**April 27, 2015**

**Kirkwood Library Conference Room**

Marlene Esposito and Sophia Hanson, two women with distinguished credentials, are heading up a new Library facility in the Route 9 corridor in Delaware. They have been challenged with innovating a state-of-the-art Library facility to serve the people of the Rose Hill area of New Castle County. Marlene and Sophia initiated a global quest, in search of an advanced Library system to be their model.

The research led them to Denmark, a country with global models for Library systems. During eight days of sun up/sun down travel, tours through MANY libraries, and the countryside in Denmark, Marlene and Sophia developed a list of “must haves”, along with many items for a wish list. Reading, communication and the Arts are fundamental to all cultures and the expression of their people. Denmark, particularly, supports this axiom by supporting an immense library system. \$800,000.00 is allotted each year, to support the operations of its more than 500 libraries, for a population of 5.5 million people.

*Culture Yard Library Located in Elsinore Shipyard Denmark*

Marlene Esposito and Sophia Hanson brought back ideas and dreams for the Delaware Route 9 Library Project. They’re in the planning stages with the architect, working with the reality of State and county funding. Friends of the Library are stepping up and listening to these dreams, assisting to the best of their ability, turning dreams into a facility that will be a model library here in Delaware: reading rooms, a small auditorium, art work throughout, a bookshop and perhaps a café. They’ve seen the best and now Marlene Esposito and Sophia Hanson are dreaming big.



Marlene Esposito is an Administrative Librarian for the New Castle County Department of Community Services. Prior to coming to Wilmington, she served 27 years as an Elementary School Principal. Under her leadership, the libraries created and published, *Love Your Library*, a cookbook. Sister Marlene has just celebrated her Golden Jubilee as a Sister of Saint Joseph. She is a graduate of Villanova University, where she received a Master’s Degree in Library Service (MLS).



Sophia Hanson is the General Manager of the New Castle Department of Community Services. As General Manager, Sophia oversees a wide variety of services, including Housing and Community Development, Libraries, Senior Services and the County’s Park and Recreational programs. Prior to this position, Sophia worked for the City of Wilmington (DE) in Community Development and Historic Preservation.



Sophia Hanson is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with a Master’s Degree in City Planning.

During Sophia Hanson’s work with Historic Preservation, she became involved in the restoration of the former home of Dr. William Goens, in the historic East Side of Wilmington. A major discovery was made in the form of a mural painted on the wall in the home. The artist, Aaron Douglas, a major figure in the Harlem Renaissance. In that era, canvas was applied to the wall, and the artist painted on the canvas. Marlene Esposito and Sophia Hanson are exploring the logistics of incorporating this historic mural in the new Library. Good luck to you both and to the remarkable Library of the Future. We all look forward to updates as your work progresses.

Power Point by Sophia Hanson, Summary by Emily M. White, LWVNCC President