
MOHAWK VALLEY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Member Library Trustee Newsletter May 2017

Libraries in the News

Intriguing services offered in NYS public libraries

Our news article this month, from the *New York Times*, once again looks at the issue of library use and library fines. It unfortunately isn't uncommon for librarians and library trustees to lose sight of the purpose of fines & fees. The purpose certainly isn't to raise income; nor is it to penalize rule-breakers. The purpose of library fines is to improve customer service. But do they improve service? Are our policies encouraging residents to use the library, or are they a discouragement? This article: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/04/nyregion/library-fines-children-books.html? r=0> raises interesting points on library fines and library use.

What can your library do to make the library easier to use and less threatening for all members of your community?

Calendar of Events

Opportunities for continuing education and input

Thu May 4, 2017	9:30 – 11:30	Workshop: Libraries and Fake News Schenectady County Public Library, 99 Clinton St Ext, Schenectady, NY 12305, USA
Wed May 10, 2017	9:30 – 10:30	JA Council Meeting, SALS
Wed May 10, 2017	5:30 – 7:30	MVLS Annual Meeting Hales Mills Country Club, 146 Steele Rd., Johnstown (just off Rt. 29)
Tue May 16, 2017	6:00 – 8:00	Trustee Training, Johnstown Public Library
Thu June 1, 2017	9:30 – 10:30	Using CDLC Resource Sharing Services
Thu June 1, 2017	10:30 – 12:00	MVLS Director's Council
Wed June 14, 2017	6:00 – 7:00	Sustainable Funding for Public Libraries Rotterdam Branch Library, 1100 N. Westcott Rd., Schenectady, 12306
Thu June 15, 2017	9:30 - 11:00	MVLS Board Meeting
Wed July 12, 2017	9:30 – 10:30	JA Council Meeting, MVLS

You can always find the full MVLS Calendar at: https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=mvls%40mvls.info&ctz=America/New_York
Keep in mind that workshops may require pre-registration. See www.mvls.info for details.

What's My Job - Trustee Training

Information on how to be an outstanding library trustee

Those who have attended MVLS Trustee Training sessions know that the core of the training curriculum is a focus on the library mission. All trustee duties flow from the responsibility to insure that the library provides the mission-specified services that the community needs to thrive. But how do you as a trustee know that you are doing this critical job? There are two answers: planning and evaluation.

Planning includes finding out what the community expects from and hopes for from its library, and then developing a long-term strategy for meeting those community needs. Ideally, a library long-range plan identifies goals for library services and funding, and includes action steps for achieving those goals over time.

Evaluation can be seen as the flipside of planning. Evaluation helps both in choosing appropriate goals and in determining whether goals have been met. Comparative data from other libraries can help determine what goals are feasible and provide information on appropriate measures to use to gauge success. The MVLS Annual Report and data from the Division of Library Development can be used to help devise appropriate evaluation strategies.

MVLS offers trustee training several times a year, and we are happy to work with individual library boards on trustee training. There are a variety of 45 minute sessions on topics from a basic overview to finances, legal issues and planning. Contact Eric Trahan at 355-2010 x223 or etrahan@mvls.info for more information or to schedule a session at your library.

Policy Update

Help in keeping your policies current

All library policies should be reviewed regularly. In the Spring of 2017 we are revisiting Financial Policies. In this final segment dedicated to finance policies we will look at three policies that are closely associated with financial policies: Records Management, Risk Management, and Disaster Preparedness.

- Records Management refers to the responsibility that all organizations have to keep and provide access to important information concerning the finances, personnel and other vital information about the organization. The MVLS website includes guidelines for maintaining library records at: <http://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Simplified-Records-Retention.pdf>
- Risk Management is the essence of what finance policies are all about. But an often-overlooked aspect of risk management is insurance coverage. The library board, ideally through an approved policy, should determine what insurance, including coverage limits and deductibles, the library maintains. Insurance products you should consider include all risks building & contents, liability, umbrella liability, directors & officers' liability, flood insurance, workers compensation and NYS disability.
- Disaster Preparedness refers to a pre-determined, written plan for how your library will respond to various potential natural disasters and other threats. What will you do if your library is affected by fire, flood, roof damage, an active shooter, etc. One good resource to use as a model is available at: www.dplan.org.

MVLS is always available to assist libraries with policy development. Call or email Eric Trahan at 355-2010 x223 or etrahan@mvls.info for more information.

MVLS Serves Member Libraries

Highlighting services that can help your library

For library directors and staff, one of the most visible MVLS services is continuing education workshop that are traditionally held on the first Thursday of the month, as well as at other times. Here is a sampling of May and June 2017 workshops that may be of interest to library trustees. See the MVLS website for more information and to sign up to attend.

- “How to Spot Fake News” presented by Carol Ann Germain from SUNY Albany. Thursday, May 4, 9:30 AM at the Schenectady County Public Library
- Trustee Training Tuesday, May 16. 6:00 PM. Johnstown Public Library
- “Accessing Interlibrary Loan Materials Through CDLC” presented by Emily Wager from the Capital District Library Council. Thursday, June 1, 9:30 AM at MVLS
- “Sustainable Funding for Libraries” presented by Brian Hildreth, Southern Tier Library System. Wednesday, June 14, 6:00 PM, Rotterdam Branch Library

These highlights provide just a few examples of the services that MVLS provides to member libraries. For information on any MVLS service see the website at www.mvls.info, email Eric at etrahan@mvls.info or call 355-2010.

The Library of the Future

Interesting articles for library trustees to ponder

There is a library building boom in Australia, inspired in part by a need for facilities that serve as the “third space” for communities. There is also a conscious effort at serving millennials and for developing “spaces that foster learning, exploration and innovation ... a place where people ... naturally gravitate to in order to engage, learn, socialize and be inspired.” Read more in this article in *Next City*:

<https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/public-library-boom-australia-cities>

This newsletter is a service for the library trustees that serve the 14 member libraries of the Mohawk Valley Library System. All newsletter issues are archived at <http://www.mvls.info/insidemvls/newsletter/> MVLS educates, empowers and supports public libraries in Fulton, Montgomery, Schenectady and Schoharie Counties, helping libraries enrich their communities.



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