

# Mohawk Valley Library System

## Director's Report

June - July, 2015

### Administration & Governance

We are well into August, and there is still no sign of 2015 state aid. We expect a more than 5% increase in aid, but we won't have a clear idea of the amounts in each of the aid categories until either the state aid charts are released, or we begin receiving payments.

We have received notice from Senator Farley's office that MVLS – as well as many of our member libraries – will receive bullet aid in 2015. In the last two years MVLS and SALS have both received bullet aid through Senator Farley's office for the purpose of helping the JA project remain a cutting-edge service for our member libraries. This year the JA-targeted MVLS and SALS bullet aid will be used to contract with an experimental company called Zepheira which is working to help libraries have their content and resources show up in Google and other web searches. The goal is to introduce library resources to internet searchers who don't use or don't think of the library as an information resource.

We have made some progress on our various building maintenance projects; but I must say that having to deal with contractors has renewed my appreciation for what libraries go through with construction projects. For MVLS it now looks like things are lining up for all to end well. As indicated in the June minutes, we have authorization to spend up to \$12,000 on the three identified projects. It now looks like we will be able to do the fourth project – masonry repairs - as well for under that amount. Briefly, here is where we are with the 4 issues:

1. Garage floor. We were looking at epoxy, but it proved too expensive and potentially slippery. We looked at floor tiles but they could trap water since the floors sometimes get wet. It was decided that it is best to just do the necessary minor repairs and leave it at that.
2. The handicapped ramp/sidewalk. We were also looking at epoxy for this deteriorating concrete, but again, it isn't feasible. Repair of this concrete has been incorporated into the masonry project.
3. Painting the back exterior wall. This is in process at a cost of under \$2,500.
4. Replacing damaged bricks, re-pointing loose mortar and resurfacing the damaged sidewalk at the bottom of the ramp. Bids are under \$6,000.

So all of the needed work can be done for under the \$12,000 approved amount.

The current policy group in our three-year schedule for policy review is board governance policies. We did a workshop on this for the members earlier in the year. As a follow-up to that we are looking at the MVLS policies that fall in this category, including the by-laws. I will bring a proposed Board Governance Policy overview and draft By-Laws amendments for discussion at our August meeting. We can then be prepared to approve those at the September meeting of the board.

Conflict of Interest policies are a part of this policy group. I still need 2015 forms from a few trustees.

## **Automation and Resource Sharing**

The JA Council will next meet on September 9. A new Polaris software upgrade is scheduled for late in 2015. This second upgrade will be necessary to fully implement the LEAP and integrated e-resources products that we had hoped to implement after the last upgrade. JA continues to study whether the web server and email server should be replaced or whether those services should go to the cloud.

Nine libraries/branches will participate in the Meraki wireless router grants, and there is still a possibility that a few more may jump in at the last minute. When combined with other ongoing projects, MVLS will soon have 9 member libraries and 5 Schenectady sites with high quality wireless routers.

The Central Library Advisory Committee continues to meet to inform the development of the 2016 CLDA grant proposal from Schenectady. We have developed a Central Library Plan of Service that will be incorporated into the new MVLS Plan of Service that we will complete next year. I will have copies of the draft plan available at the August meeting.

Libraries are using the new CDLC ILL service. With just a few hiccups and questions, the transition has gone well.

## **Outreach Services**

The Outreach Advisory Committee met on June 11 to discuss the Adult Literacy grants. The Schenectady County Public Library will receive the 2015 grant for their project: *Phyllis Bornt Branch Library and Literacy Center Workforce Development Project*. This project will provide residents of Hamilton Hill and Central State Street and Vale neighborhood with digital literacy classes, resume and job searching workshops, the opportunity for one-on-one assistance by volunteer tutors, and resources beginning in late winter 2016. They will be working with Literacy New York of the Greater Capital Region and the City Mission to provide these services.

The first session of the writing program at Hale Creek Correctional facility is complete and the evaluations have been very positive. The second session is now underway.

The New York State Mental Health Association will be providing a full day workshop on Youth Mental Health First Aid at the Schenectady central library on Thursday, September 17, 2015. It will focus on the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, ages 12—18.

## **Adult Services**

The NYSCA book discussion programs for 2015 are ongoing, and so far attendance has been good. Please consider participating! The schedule is on the web at: [www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2015poster.pdf](http://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2015poster.pdf) . Four member libraries will be participating in the 2015 Authors Among Us program. The schedule for those workshops is on the website at: [www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/poster2015.pdf](http://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/poster2015.pdf) .

Lois is working with Audrey Kupferberg, a long-time NYSCA facilitator, to develop a program series that will bring films by regional filmmakers to member libraries. The proposed programs will include film screenings combined with discussion led by a facilitator connected with the making of each film.

Lois' Meeting & Field Visits 6/1 – Assistive living technologies conference via live stream; 6/2 – Public Library Construction webinar; 6/4 – Director's Council; 6/8 – Union Meeting; 6/11 – Outreach Advisory Committee Meeting; 6/17 – Webinar with DLD about Construction; 6/25 – Ground breaking of the Phyllis Bornt Family Literacy Branch; met with Jan Martin; 6/29 – Met with Suzanne Mazoff, Kinship Care Program in Schoharie County; 6/30 – Marisa Boomhower, M/WBE Coordinator for NYSED  
6/30 – MID for NYSCA book discussion; 7/7 - CA\$H Coalition; 7/10 – STJ; 7/14 GLV / AMS; 7/17- CDLC- NY Heritage; 7/20 – MID; 7/22- Audrey Kupferberg; 7/28 – CAN; FTP

## **Youth Services**

The 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program continues to progress. The concept is to encourage reading for preschool age children by making it easy for parents and caregivers to borrow 10 books at a time and to track the books that are read to children. Libraries will receive bags of 10 books that will be circulated as a kit in bags with the 1,000 Books graphic. Most member libraries will be participating. There will also be a special element for baby books. Books are being processed, bags are in development and we should have everything out to the members before the end of the year.

The Summer Reading Program is in full swing at member libraries. Sue and Kathy set up the online registration system, and five libraries applied for and received mini-grants for STEM programming to close out the 2014-2015 state grant year. MVLS offers libraries many other opportunities to enhance summer reading including free advance reader copies of books to use as giveaways, a book raffle, and resources ;like the Lego/Duplo resources and new STEM kits with squishy circuits and makey-makey kits. In addition, miSci collaborates with all interested libraries. Libraries received 50 free children's admission tickets to distribute to summer readers. Libraries can also participate in the miSci IMLS project, which provides programs and exhibits.

The Picture Book City initiative continues to be implemented at member libraries. Fonda has completed the reorganization, and planning is underway to implement it in the new Bornt Literacy Center in Schenectady. Libraries have found this project very helpful in building library use for young readers and families.

Science @ the Library programs have been held at Fonda, Fort Plain and Canajoharie; programs are scheduled for fall at QUA; ROT; DUA; MTP; and SCO. Kathy created posters and fliers. The three completed programs had 112 children and caregivers in attendance. Science books have been purchased and distributed to all participating libraries through this grant.

Sue's Workshops, Meetings & Field Visits: Ronald McDonald Children's Charities Meeting, 6/2; Tests are Changing Webinar, 6/3; Director's Council, MID, 6/4; Field Visit, FON, 6/8; Field Visit, CAN, 6/8; New Director Training; ILL Meeting, CDLC, 6/10; Bornt Branch Ground Breaking, 6/25; Ill Meeting, SCP, 6/25 ALA Conference, San Francisco, 6/26-6/30; Science @ the Library, CAN, 7/8; Youth Services Consultant Meeting, Oneonta, 7/9; Picture Book City, SCO, 7/10; Storyskills Planning Meeting, UHLS, 7/15; Media Mentorship Webinar, 7/21; Science @ the Library, Ft. Plain, 7/23; Science @ the Library, Fonda, 7/29

## **Member Services**

Upcoming workshops include the following:

September 3: Directors' Council  
September 17: Youth Mental Health Workshop  
October 1: Storyskills workshop  
October 21 - 24: NYLA Conference  
November 5: Marketing workshop  
December 3: Youth Services workshop

Lois is working with five member libraries as they develop public library construction proposals for the August 24 grant deadline. As we discussed at the June meeting, there is a new requirement libraries must meet this year; Minority & Women Owned Business Enterprise regulations.

### **Advocacy & Awareness**

At the June meeting, we discussed a basic strategy for developing the Plan of Service that we need to submit to the state next year. We need to develop a new plan for the state, but our discussion revolved around finding a way to make that process accomplish two goals that go beyond simply developing the state-required plan. Those additional goals are:

1. To identify new services that will accomplish the MVLS mission of helping member libraries serve their communities
2. To model effective community engagement, planning, marketing and advocacy for the member libraries

We have discussed a four-part basic strategy to begin that process:

- A. Eric meets with library boards to review MVLS services, explain the process and explore the future
- B. Facilitated focus group sessions of member library staff & trustees gather information on perceptions & needs
- C. Surveys & other strategies are used to gather input from the general public on public perceptions of libraries and unmet needs that libraries could fill
- D. Use the results from B and C to develop new services and to develop a communications strategy to build awareness of library services within MVLS

We discussed several potential new services at the June meeting.

After a year and a half of planning and effort, the Foundation has begun to bear fruit! We are developing two grant projects for member libraries to be funded by the Foundation. The first is a Library Services grant that will provide \$250 to each library that applies, to be used to in some way enhance the service that the library provides to its public. The second grant will be an ongoing project to provide competitive grants to libraries that are engaging in local advocacy or community engagement projects. This goes back to the initial idea that started our thinking about a Foundation; finding a way to turn the Carol Clingan Library Advocacy fund into a more permanent source of funding to help libraries with local advocacy.

A second Foundation initiative is to further develop the idea of serving as a community foundation for interested member libraries. A group of us met with a team of lawyers, including Bob Schofield, from Whiteman Osterman & Hanna in Albany to begin the process of establishing the legal framework to allow that to happen. While this is a Foundation project, I am expecting that the costs involved in setting it up will be beyond the Foundation's current means, so if this appears to be a viable option for the Foundation, I expect to request that MVLS contribute to the legal fees to set up this potential new service for member libraries. We are awaiting information on what those costs might be.

A quick follow-up on the library district legislation that was discussed in June and that I sent out an Advocacy Alert on a few weeks ago: forming Special District Libraries has been a Regents priority for several years, but last year the Governor vetoed special district library enabling legislation. Two bills are now awaiting the Governor's action. Please visit <http://cqrcengage.com/alany/app/write-a-letter?1&engagementId=122893> to ask the Governor to support this legislation.

The PULISDO Conference was July 28 – 30. The themes were planning, advocacy and sustainability. I'll share some additional information at the August meeting.

### Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits

6/1/2015	Esther Swanker William P. Leitch Hanna Ahrens, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery
6/2/2015	Cheryl Cufari Foundation Event Committee Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
6/3/2015	Esther Swanker MVLS Staff Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
6/4/2015	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Mid-Hudson Library System MVLS Member Library Directors
6/5/2015	Foundation Event Committee MVLS Member Library Directors Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
6/9/2015	Esther Swanker William P. Leitch Division of Library Development, NYSED JA Innovation Committee Bill Bishop, Price Chopper Distribution Center Jon Finlan, Price Chopper Supermarkets
6/10/2015	Foundation Board – Annual Meeting Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Mid-Hudson Library System
6/12/2015	Capital District Library Council
6/15/2015	Foundation Golf Tournament
6/17/2015	William P. Leitch Division of Library Development, NYSED Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
6/18/2015	MVLS Board of Trustees Devon Hedges, The Community Library
6/19/2015	William P. Leitch Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
6/22/2015	Esther Swanker Madelyn Thorne

	William P. Leitch
	Cheryl Cufari
	Bonnie Kerr
	Rebecca Sokol
	MVLS Member Library Directors
	Ginny Wilday, Sharon Springs Free Library
6/23/2015	Esther Swanker
	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
6/24/2015	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
6/25/2015	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
6/29/2015	Esther Swanker
	Wanda Bruchis, Mid York Library System
	Robert Schofield, Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna, LLP
6/30/2015	Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Mid-Hudson Library System
	Bonnie Keller, NBT Bank
	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
	Robert Schofield, Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna, LLP
7/1/2015	Cheryl Cufari
	Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library
	Polly Farrington, Polly Alida Farrington Associates
	Robert Schofield, Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna, LLP
7/2/2015	Devon Hedges, The Community Library
7/7/2015	Esther Swanker
	Foundation Board
7/8/2015	William P. Leitch
	JA Council
	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
	Robert Schofield, Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna, LLP
7/10/2015	Sarah Beekman
	Foundation Board
	Terry Pavoldi, Middleburgh Public Library
	Catherine Caiazzo, Schoharie Free Library
	Ginny Wilday, Sharon Springs Free Library
	Devon Hedges, The Community Library
7/13/2015	Mary France
	Patricia Franco
	Janet Sand
7/14/2015	Esther Swanker
	Division of Library Development, NYSED
	PULISDO
	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
7/15/2015	John Naple
	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Terry Pavoldi, Middleburgh Public Library
	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
7/16/2015	Foundation Board
	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library

7/21/2015 Catherine Caiazzo, Schoharie Free Library  
Sarah Beekman  
7/22/2015 Jane Borrelli  
Beverly Osborne, Fort Hunter Free Library  
MVLS Member Library Directors  
Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library  
Pam Luby, Sharon Springs Free Library  
Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System  
7/23/2015 Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library  
Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System  
7/24/2015 Hanna Ahrens, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery  
Diane Forsberg, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie  
7/27/2015 John Naple  
Capital District Library Council  
Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library  
7/28/2015 Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library  
PULISDO  
7/29/2015 Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library  
7/31/2015 MVLS Building & Equipment Committee  
MVLS Staff  
Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library