

**Mohawk Valley Library System
Director's Report
March 2019**

Administration & Governance

The state budget has been approved. It was a somewhat disappointing year for libraries. The final budget did restore the library operating aid to last year's numbers, with no increase. What this means is that our funding is still below 2008 levels, with no appreciable increase since 2016. Obviously, the statewide library advocacy process needs some work.

Public Library Construction funding was cut from \$34 million to \$14 million, which will probably reduce the MVLS share from last year's nearly \$900,000 to \$370,000. There is some talk that there may be additional money made available for library construction after the state gets better income projections, though it is unclear how any such funding would be allocated.

The budget was also disappointing in census funding for libraries. \$20 million was allocated for complete count activities, but at this point it seems unlikely that libraries will receive much – if any – of that funding. It is slated to be distributed through the regional economic development councils. There may be some opportunity to advocate for libraries to receive some of that funding, so stay tuned to your NYLA emails.

The MVLS State Annual Report was submitted in March. The report requires board approval to be official. The report is available on the MVLS website at: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/MVLS-2019-Annual-Report.pdf> This will be an action item at the April meeting.

The MVLS Annual Meeting is all set for Wednesday, May 8 at 6:00 at the Riverstone Manor. Please get your registrations in to Kathy Insero.

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for June 20 here at MVLS. The Building and Equipment committee will hold the annual walkabout meeting immediately following that board meeting.

Automation and Resource Sharing

The JA Council will meet at SALS on May 8. Several issues are keeping the JA Council busy. We continue to implement the e-card software, and while the address verification databases are not perfect, libraries are very pleased with the new, accurate data. JA, particularly on the MVLS side, is working to establish standards for libraries that want to go fine-free. The fine-free movement is expanding all over, and it is great to see MVLS libraries embracing this trend. Here is a link to a document produced by the Colorado State Library (if only New York provided funding for a state library like Colorado's!) on libraries going fine-free: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/removingbarrierstoaccess> Finally, Sharon O'Brien found a great resource from the St. Paul Public Library on how they have gone fine-free: <https://sppl.org/fine-free/>

I have been putting together information on the JA fee structure. Every few years there is a little agitation (never from an MVLS library) from a library or two about the appropriateness of the fee

structure. At the next JA meeting we will be reviewing a spreadsheet that provides information on the fees paid by each library and on the relative size of member libraries, based on various annual report statistics. As a data and numbers guy, I find it interesting and instructive. The bottom line is we have a very just fee structure, and the data bears that out.

We are also working to develop a better rubric for determining how library telecommunications service is provided and costs are paid. Historically, JA provided and paid for telecommunications, but as both library public access computer use, and later wireless access use, has skyrocketed, libraries have wanted better access and greater bandwidth; and they have been willing to pay for that. This has led to a wide variety of service parameters and costs, which leads to disparities in service and costs shared among the member libraries.

Each year in May – June the member libraries look at system-wide e-resources to make decisions for the next year. This year we will not only be discussing budget and cost sharing as usual, but will also be looking at ways to expand our e-resources offerings.

We continue to monitor delivery issues. There have been some staffing challenges and changes, and some computer equipment was damaged.

Outreach Services

The next 3-year cycle of state Adult Literacy grants has been submitted to the state. The project is tailored to the needs at the participating libraries: Schenectady, Johnstown, Middleburgh and Schoharie. The program remains focused on resources and programs to build job skills.

Adult Services

The 2019 NYSCA series is now set to go. This year the program was changed to encourage a greater variety of literary programs. Now called “Pen & Ink”, the series will feature book discussion and writing programs. A schedule will be shared soon.

The Library Moon Walk project finishes up at the end of April. It was been a very positive collaborative project between the Mohawk Valley, Southern Adirondack and Upper Hudson Library Systems. Many libraries have done innovative programs. Of special note was the Health Fair sponsored by the Middleburgh, Bern and Rensselaerville Libraries.

Lois’ contacts & visits: 3/6 Natalie Hurteau, UHLS; 3/11 Erica Freudenberger, SALS; 3/13 Leah LaFera
3/20 Schoharie Human Services Coordinating Council; 3/23 Health Fair in Rensselaerville

Youth Services

This year’s Read It Forward Project title is Jason Reynolds’ *Miles Morales: Spider-Man*. Four MVLS libraries (AMS; JOH; MID; SCP) are participating. Books will be purchased in April and distributed.

Early literacy consultant Joyce Laiosa continues to work on our May Early Literacy Storytime Training Workshop, titled: Baby Steps: STEM/STEAM for Babies and Toddlers to be held May 16

at the Middleburgh Library. She is also working on updating our Start with Science kits with current science and early literacy techniques, and developing additional kits

The annual Stewart's Grant for graphic novels was received in March for \$750.

Picture Book City labeling is continuing at SCPL branches, and will take place at Central later this year. Libraries are scheduling Science @ the Library programs for spring and summer.

Sue's meetings, contacts & field visits: Read It Forward Meeting, UHLS, 3/1; The Great Give Back, Conference Call, 3/4; Beanstack, Webinar, 3/13; NYS FLLS Planning Meeting, UHLS, 3/14
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Board of Trustee Meeting, MVLS, 3/21; Middle Grade Magic, Online Conference, MVLS, 3/27

Member Services

Upcoming workshops include the following:

April 10 – Talking About Oral Histories at CDLC

April 16 - Adult Program Swop

April 11 – GOAT Teen Meet-Up

May 8 – Adult Program-Palooza

May 8 – MVLS Annual Meeting

May 16 – Early Literacy Sorytimes

May 22 – Adult Program Swop

June 19 – Library Legal Issues

We continue to assist libraries with state annual reports. All but two have been completed. Libraries must complete annual reports to receive their state aid and to maintain their charters.

I have been assisting libraries with staffing issues, with a lively discussion happening on the role of the library director and board in selecting and appointing library staff.

We continue to assist Johnstown with their transition to a school district public library, and with setting up their new foundation. Middleburgh's charter amendment application is going forward, and we are exploring a charter issue with Canajoharie.

Advocacy & Awareness

I am writing this at the end of National Library Week. Wade produced a press release and has been working with libraries on social media and video projects to promote libraries this week.

Wade is beginning to work on a fall state advocacy effort that will be focused on getting MVLS and local library representatives to visit the regional offices of their state representatives. The idea is for MVLS to coordinate an effort to have more leisurely, detailed and informative discussions than we can manage on Advocacy Day. This has been on my to-do list for years, so it is great to see it finally happening.

Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits

3/1/2019 Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
3/4/2019 Dawn Lamphere, The Margaret Reaney Memorial Library
3/6/2019 PULISDO
Catherine Caiazzo, Schoharie Free Library
3/7/2019 MVLS Member Library Directors
Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
Tim Burke, Upper Hudson Library System
3/8/2019 Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
3/11/2019 Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
Catherine Caiazzo, Schoharie Free Library
3/12/2019 Division of Library Development, NYSED
Catherine Caiazzo, Schoharie Free Library
Devon Hedges, The Community Library
3/13/2019 JA Council
Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
3/15/2019 Capital District Library Council
Tim Burke, Upper Hudson Library System
3/19/2019 MVLS Trustee Education Session
3/20/2019 Cheryl Cufari
Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
3/21/2019 Judith Kelly
MVLS Board of Trustees
Tim Burke, Upper Hudson Library System
3/22/2019 Beverly Osborne
Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library
Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library
Catherine Caiazzo, Schoharie Free Library
3/26/2019 PULISDO
Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
Edward Asselin, SUNY Cobleskill