

**Mohawk Valley Library System
Director's Report
May and June, 2023**

Empowering Member Libraries with Sound Administration & Governance

The State Aid charts have been released for 2023. While the state budget held library aid flat, we will have a very small increase – less than ¼ of 1%. We do not yet have a firm value for the Love Your Library funding; but it is expected to be at about \$6,000. The good news is that with the small increase, our healthy fund balance, and the unexpected ARPA funding we will be fine for 2023. We are, however, left with the uncomfortable fact that MVLS state aid has increased by a total of 4.2% over the last 7 years. Unless we can be more effective in our statewide advocacy, this will clearly hamper our ability to provide services to our libraries.

The MVLS Annual report has been accepted by the state, as have our member library state reports. This is good news as, along with our completing the annual state aid assurances – which has been done – it sets the stage for us to receive the state aid when it is released. There is reason to believe that aid will come in a timely manner this year; which, I guess, is the best silver lining we're going to get in 2023.

We are moving ahead with having T.M. Byxbee do our financial reviews for the 2022 fiscal year. They will begin that process within a few weeks. We were not able to find another firm to take on our work this late in the year. I propose that we do a formal RFP in October, and send it on to several firms that work with other library systems. That should put us in good shape for making a decision on how to proceed with the 2023 review and IRS 990 form.

We have been investigating options for increasing our interest investment earnings. We have looked into several so far, without much success. Right now, the most promising is the New York Liquid Asset Fund. If we are able to work with them, we will be able to earn interest in the range of 5%, rather than the 0.1% that we are earning now.

The MVLS Annual Meeting is set for Wednesday, October 4 at the Canajoharie Library/Arnell Museum from 5:30 – 7:30. The format will be similar to last year. We will be discussing ways to encourage participation and collaboration among the member library staff and trustees.

Since the new minimum standards require library policies to be reviewed at least every 5 years, I want to institute a plan to review two series of MVLS Policies each year. Earlier this year we reviewed and Bylaws and other governance policies. Now I want to begin a review of the MVLS Collections policies, which can be found near the bottom of our website's policy page at: <https://www.mvls.info/policies-and-guidelines/>. In addition to accomplishing our policy update goals, this will also serve as a reminder for our libraries to have their collections policies up-to-date; and important consideration in the current library environment.

Empowering Member Libraries with Automation and Resource Sharing

The JA Council meets on July 12. Routine budget amendments are on the agenda. These amendments will be part of the MVLS board agenda at the July meeting.

JA is in the process of filling a position for a programmer to assist with the Polaris database and other JA activities, like library websites. Filling this position will complete a long process of making the JA staff complete after the retirement of Diane Robinson.

Michele Largeteau, administrator of the MVLS/SALS Joint Automation Project, will provide the staff update at the July board meeting.

The effort to develop new Central Library services continues. We have a general agreement that the services will include additional Overdrive e-resources, additional platforms available through Overdrive, including video and instruction, additional CE opportunities for libraries, and the development of a floating popular materials collections. Sharon O'Brien is working on developing the first new service, the floating collection of popular fiction and nonfiction books to fill library's need for multiple copies and resources beyond individual library budgets. We are developing surveys and other ways for libraries to weigh in on selecting the new Central Library services.

The new out-of-area ILL service provided through Glens Falls' Crandall Library is in effect and MVLS procedures have been updated. Member libraries and users will see little actual change in how the service operates.

Empowering Member Libraries with Youth, Adult and Outreach Services

Beth Rienti started work on May 22. She has been visiting libraries and attending and facilitating meetings to become familiar with MVLS and the services that our libraries use and value. Both Beth and Kate are scheduled to be out in libraries assisting with summer reading activities. They are also working together on the MVLS summer reading passport project. Mary is also scheduled to help libraries with some technology-centered SRP activities.

For Youth Services, Beth is continuing to update, improve and promote the science and STEM kits, as well as the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten project. She is also developing MVLS resources to help libraries with the upcoming solar eclipse events and this fall's Great Giveback program.

For Outreach, Beth is concentrating on developing contacts with community organizations in order to reinvigorate our Outreach Advisory Council. In other Outreach news, we have a new agreement with the Hale Creek Correctional Facility, and continue to add resources to the Schoharie County Jail.

Mary has been successful with two new grant applications through the Public Library Association. The first is a phase 2 of the Digital Literacy effort that MVLS provided to member libraries last year. The second is an Affordable Connectivity Program grant that can provide subsidies to qualifying individuals to get access to the internet through internet service providers and/or devices. Mary is working with social service agencies to develop contacts.

Empowering Member Libraries with Training, Consultation and Collaboration

Mary also continues to assist libraries with websites and wireless printing. Johnstown is the latest happy customer using the Princh wireless printing service. Gloversville is the latest library to unveil a new accessible website.

Trustee training took place at Schenectady on June 22. We are developing a list of resources to share with member libraries to help with the new trustee education requirements. We also continue to work with Northville and St. Johnsville on their new director searches.

Library Construction Grant season has begun. This year, we have seven libraries interested in submitting proposals, with an initial total potential request of \$2.2 million. Since MVLS is allocated \$885,000, and grants are generally capped at 75%, it will be necessary to reduce that amount considerably. We are working with libraries to develop a phased approach so we can do better at providing more funding for all applicants.

We are cooperating with our other regional public library systems in providing a webinar workshop titled "Defending the Freedom to Read: Policies, Procedures, and Civic Engagement" to help libraries with situations where individuals want to restrict access to materials, displays or programs. The workshop will be provided by Jamie LaRue, the past head of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Office. I attended a similar webinar given by Mr. LaRue a month ago, and was particularly pleased to see his emphasis on community engagement and customer service. Placing the emphasis there is even more important when people are feeling upset or threatened. We will be promoting this as another opportunity for trustee education; but it is maybe even more important for library staff.

Empowering Member Libraries with Advocacy & Awareness

In early August I will be attending the Public Library Systems Director's Organization conference in Buffalo. Two advocacy issues will be on the agenda: the NOVEL databases, and the need for more effective statewide advocacy for library system funding. It will be important for us to fully participate in the statewide advocacy efforts that develop for these two issues.

We had two applications for the summer Library Advocacy Grants. Amsterdam applied for \$2,500 to assist them in forming a library foundation. Cobleskill applied for \$525 for help in developing branded library cards. I will be recommending that you fund both projects.

April Davies has been serving an incomplete term as a Foundation trustee since January 2022. In order for her to continue to serve, you need to appoint her to a full 3-year term. That will be an agenda item at the July meeting.

Two golf tournaments are planned: July 24 in Canajoharie, and September 25 in Cobleskill. Please support these Foundation fundraisers in any way you can. They provide our libraries with valuable opportunities for community engagement, advocacy, and library programming.

Empowering Member Libraries with Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits

5/1/2023	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Natalie McDonough, Division of Library Development
5/2/2023	Kathy Naftaly, Crandall Library Valerie Acklin, Gloversville Public Library Elissa Kane, Kane & Lekakis
5/3/2023	Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council

	Kathy Naftaly, Crandall Library MVLS Board of Trustees MVLS Member Library Directors MVLS Trustee Education Session
5/5/2023	Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery Valerie Acklin, Gloversville Public Library Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library Beth DeMidio, Schenectady County Public Library Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
5/9/2023	MVLS Member Library Directors Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library PULISDO
5/10/2023	Dan Arnoff, Arnoff Global Logistics Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery Mary Beth Farr, Division of Library Development JA Council
5/11/2023	Kathy Naftaly, Crandall Library Sarah Gold, Gold Law Firm
5/12/2023	Mary Donohue Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library Erica Freudenberger, Southern Adirondack Library System
5/15/2023	Sarah Gold, Gold Law Firm Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
5/16/2023	MVLS Staff Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
5/17/2023	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
5/22/2023	Dale Folmsbee Kristi Beedon, HFM BOCES SLS MVLS Member Library Directors Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
5/23/2023	Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council Kathy Naftaly, Crandall Library MVLS Member Library Directors Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
5/24/2023	Edward Asselin Mary VanPatten HFM School Library System Council Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
5/25/2023	MVLS Staff

5/30/2023	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library Capital District Library Council Kathy Naftaly, Crandall Library Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
5/31/2023	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council MVLS Central Library Advisory Committee MVLS Member Library Directors
6/2/2023	Sean Spooner, Hale Creek Correctional Facility
6/5/2023	Regina Gilbert Foundation Board Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library
6/7/2023	Nancy Stowell Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Julia Maxwell, DLD Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library MVLS Member Library Directors MVLS Staff
6/8/2023	MVLS Central Library Advisory Committee MVLS Member Library Directors
6/9/2023	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Foundation Board
6/12/2023	Jennifer Deweerth, Mohawk Valley Community College Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Jennifer Deweerth, Mohawk Valley Community College
6/13/2023	Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery MVLS Member Library Directors Lauren Hoyt, New York Library Association PULISDO
6/14/2023	Dawn Lamphere, The Margaret Reaney Memorial Library Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council
6/15/2023	April Davies Susan London James Cusack, Cusack & Company CPAs, LLC
6/16/2023	Capital District Library Council Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
6/21/2023	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library MVLS Member Library Directors MVLS Staff MVLS Trustee Education Session - Johnstown Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library

6/22/2023 Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
Dawn Lamphere, The Margaret Reaney Memorial Library
James Cusack, Cusack & Company CPAs, LLC
MVLS Trustee Education Session - SCPL

6/23/2023 Christine Witkowski
Cheryl Cufari
MVLS Member Library Directors
Kim Zimmer, The Community Library

6/26/2023 Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library
Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library