

SHELF LIFE

MOHAWK VALLEY LIBRARY SYSTEM



Amsterdam Free Library

MVLS-GO! TRADING CARDS

Shuffle off to the library!

This summer, patrons are picking up unique library cards: collectible trading cards celebrating each library within MVLS.

As part of a collaborative effort, and in conjunction with their summer reading programs, library-specific trading cards are available at each of the system's libraries as well as at the MVLS office. Trading cards are free to all library visitors.

The program, called "MVLS-GO!" was envisioned by Sam Zimmerman, a staff member at Fort Plain Free Library. Working closely with Kate Clingan at MVLS, and all of the other libraries in the system, Sam brought each of the cards to life. Each trading card features a sleek detailed design incorporating input from its corresponding library. Similar in format to popular games such as "Pokémon" and "Magic: The Gathering," each library's trading card features an image and a description that spotlights the unique personality of each library, as well as a QR code that links to a map of participating locations. The trading cards combine artistry with individual library history, making each card a collector's item.

"As you collect the cards, not only do you get to hold the cards in your hands and learn about the MVLS libraries, but you also gain the personal experience of visiting the various libraries and an appreciation of what makes each library unique," said Sam.

"We are so excited about these stunning trading cards created by Sam. Each one showcases the special nature of a library. Together, they paint a picture of the whole system. Ideally, this will be a program that we can repeat, with new cards introduced every summer, or even created for special occasions or programs. That way, everyone can collect their library's trading cards over time," said Kate.

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TRUSTEE CORNER

Open Meetings Law

Library boards are required to hold public meetings, and details about running such meetings can be found on the website for [New York's Committee on Open Government](#).

Most questions can be answered by searching for existing advisory opinions from the committee, and the website also provides information on how to contact the committee to request an advisory opinion. Contact Wade Abbott with any additional questions.

POLICY FUNDAMENTALS

Make sure they are in writing and accessible to the public

Public libraries strive to be welcoming and inclusive. Clear, concise policies play an important role in establishing access for the public. Policies furnish a foundation for the organization and provide guidance for staff and community members. Written policies are useful as communication tools indicating a responsibility to provide equitable services, and they demonstrate the expectation of the public to adhere to policies for the benefit of all.

It is a best practice to have up-to-date written policies posted on the library's website and in print in a policy manual accessible to staff. This is the best way to communicate expectations and enforce library rules.

If the work to create and post policies becomes overwhelming, a library could start with a smaller checklist and select their top priorities based on their community's needs. An ad hoc committee can be designated by the library director, including themselves and a few staff members. The board is responsible for reviewing and approving policies, with an expectation that policies are reviewed and amended every five years or as needed if circumstances change.

LOOKING FOR POLICY BEST PRACTICES?

Check out the [policies](#) on The Community Library's website for an outstanding example of policy structure.

Additionally, Canajoharie Library & Arkell Museum recently approved their [Photography and Video Policy](#), an excellent example for other libraries.

The State Library requires the [following policies](#) of all new association and public libraries at the time of registration:

- Open Meeting Policy
- Confidentiality of Library Records
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Whistle Blower Policy (if applicable, see link above)
- Disaster Response Policy
- Collection Development Policy
- Meeting Space Policy (if applicable)
- Internet Use Policy
- Code of Ethics
- Personnel Policy
- Purchasing/Procurement Policy (and Petty Cash Policy)

The Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State (2023 Edition) provides an [extensive policy checklist](#). Here are a few examples:

External Policies

- **Circulation** – Lending rules, Patron confidentiality
- **Collection** – Collection development, [Freedom to Read Statement](#) (ALA)*, [Library Bill of Rights](#) (ALA)*
- **Public Space** – Accessibility/ADA statement, Code of conduct, Unattended children
- **Technology** – Library equipment use, Privacy (data protection)

Internal Policies

- **Board** – Meeting procedures, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion statement
- **Administrative** – Inclement weather, Records retention, Public access to records (FOIL)
- **Financial Controls** – Audit/review schedule, Fundraising/gifts
- **Personnel** – Attendance/leave, Sexual Harassment prevention, Evaluation procedure
- **Safety** – Pandemic Response plan, Workplace safety, Incident action plan

*The American Library Association (ALA) has created written statements that can be linked to or copied as PDFs.

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO SMARTPHONE USERS

From the Tech Tutor

When helping others with their smartphone, it can be especially challenging to keep up with the different models of phones in the iPhone and Android families. Here are a few tips to get started:

Many concepts are universal on all smartphones, such as locating a Wi-Fi connection, changing the volume up or down, and moving or deleting apps. This allows an instructor to transfer that general knowledge without having to worry about a specific smartphone model. For example, an instructor could show the user how to move an app by holding a finger on an app and dragging it to relocate it.



Other how-to topics are specific to each type of phone. In this case, a great starting point is the **About** feature in the phone settings.

For an iPhone, this can be found by going to **Settings**, **General**, **About**, and looking for the Model Name, (such as iPhone 13 or 14). On an Android phone, this is accomplished by going to **Settings**, swiping to the bottom of the screen, locating **About Phone or System**, and looking for the Model Name, (for example, Samsung Galaxy A03s or S22). With that information, a quick Google search using the model name and the desired action can provide the specific guidance the user needs for their phone.

Ideally, this becomes a teachable moment. The individual struggling or frustrated with their phone may just want someone to do the task for them, and the instructor should make sure this is their intention before touching their phone. Ideally, though, this could become a guided experience where the instructor and the user work side-by-side to provide the user with the tips they need to feel more confident and comfortable with their phone.

Visual learners may also find YouTube helpful. Another great resource for free online classes is seniorplanet.org by AARP. Classes can be found by searching the site using the keyword **smartphone** or by browsing their online offerings.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATES!

Youth Services Meetup - MVLS Office
Tuesday, September 17th, 2:00-3:00 pm

Storytime Bootcamp - Upper Hudson Library System
Friday, September 27th, 8:00 am-12:30 pm

MVLS Annual Meeting - Fort Hunter Free Library
Wednesday, October 2nd, 5:30-7:30 pm

Grants Meetup - The Community Library
Thursday, October 3rd, 2:00-3:30 pm

The Great Give Back
Saturday, October 19th

Outreach Workshop - Johnstown Public Library
Wednesday, October 23rd, 11:00 am-1:00 pm

Read for the Record
Thursday, October 24th

EXCITING TIMES AT FROTHINGHAM FREE LIBRARY!



Four-Day Family Game Tournament
in early July

GRANTS ARE GREAT

Ideas for keeping your library well funded and valued

MVLS offers many grant opportunities to member libraries looking for funding for special projects. The system also regularly posts about grant opportunities available to libraries. Grants are excellent options for developing new services, filling temporary gaps, and capital expenses.

While grants alone are not a viable approach for funding long-term library operating costs, certain grants help pave the path to sustainable funding. For example, Foundation for Mohawk Valley Libraries/MVLS Advocacy Grants can be used for any community engagement activities that are geared toward building sustainable operating funding for member libraries.

MVLS can help member libraries find positive ways forward as they establish and strengthen plans for sustainable funding. Part of the solution could be submitting a [MVLS Library Advocacy Grant](#).

Please contact Eric Trahan or Wade Abbott with any questions about library advocacy and community engagement.

Article adapted from a recent report by Eric Trahan, MVLS Executive Director.



**An excited group of trading card collectors
at Fort Plain Free Library.**

Can YOU collect them all?

MVLS GO!

15 Unique trading cards celebrating our libraries!

Collect them by visiting libraries throughout the Mohawk Valley Library System!

Go to:
www.mvls.info/2024-trading-cards/
or scan the QR code to see the map of all libraries participating in MVLS-GO!

-Trading Cards - continued from page 1-

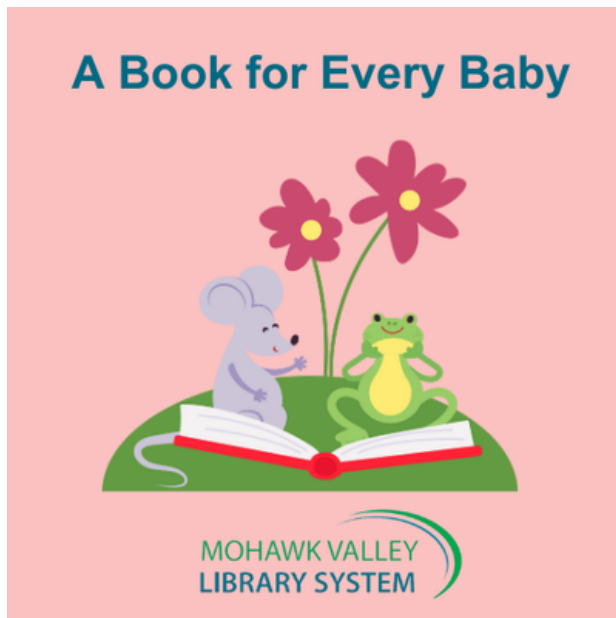
Collaborative programming is a hallmark of MVLS libraries. For example, Jennie Mosher, Program Director at Schoharie Free Library, led a program during the height of the pandemic, encouraging people to create and share “Fairies and Gnome Homes.” This project spread beyond the geographic boundaries of the four counties of the system. Two years ago, several MVLS libraries created a collaborative treasure map as part of their summer activities, and last year that initiative expanded into the Library Passport program, which encouraged patrons to visit multiple MVLS libraries. Those two initiatives were facilitated by Sarah Carbone, a staff member at Amsterdam Free Library with ongoing administrative support from MVLS.

“Shared resources and collaborative programs are at the heart of our mission as a library system. Doing so allows us to provide far more materials and services for library patrons than any one library could do alone. MVLS-GO! is just the latest example of this, and it demonstrates the shared creativity among our libraries. I encourage everyone to visit all of our libraries and collect as many cards as possible,” said Eric Trahan, Executive Director of MVLS.

Patrons are invited to visit each participating library, as well as the MVLS office, to collect the full set of trading cards. Cards will be available while supplies last.

A BOOK FOR EVERY BABY

Library staff members quickly learn that reading to babies is one of the most important things caregivers can do to help prepare children for success in school and life. With that in mind, MVLS is partnering with Nathan Littauer Hospital's Labor & Delivery Department to encourage family literacy!



As part of the new “A Book for Every Baby” program, parents of new babies born at the hospital will receive a gift bag from MVLS containing a new baby book, information on sharing books with babies, details about visiting their local library to find more books and services for their families, and a bookmark encouraging them to join the “1000 Books before Kindergarten” program. Spanish language bags are also available for families who need them.

Nathan Littauer Hospital, located in Gloversville, was chosen because it serves many communities in the system's service area, including some designated as “underserved” by New York State. Depending on the success of the program and availability in funding, MVLS hopes to extend the program to Montgomery and Schoharie Counties in the future. Schenectady County Public Library already has a very successful program with Bellevue Women's Center through their STARS Program.

Here are some great resources for libraries interested in sharing literacy information with their library users:

- Babies Need Words Everyday: Talk, Read, Sing Play: <https://www.ala.org/alsc/babiesneedwords>. This resource includes printable posters, book lists of recommended titles to share with families, and other helpful resources.
- Early literacy research: <https://www.earlylit.net/early-literacy-research#language-development-and-early-literacy-skills>.
- Twelve Tips to Boost Early Literacy: <https://www.startearly.org/post/12-tips-to-boost-early-literacy/>.



BOARD BOOKS NOW HAVE THEIR OWN BOOK AWARD

The Margaret Wise Brown Board Book Award was given for the first time in 2023.

Founded by the Children's Book Committee of Bank Street College, “the award was created to highlight the impact of high-quality board books on the learning and development of babies and toddlers. Engagement with board books provides stimulation in support of brain development, enhances visual and memorization skills, imparts an understanding of how the world works, bonds infants and toddlers with adults, and is a cornerstone for developing early literacy skills. Board book construction, which enables toddlers to turn the pages themselves, creates independence in a young child as a reader.”

Learn more about this exciting new award here: <https://www.bankstreet.edu/library/center-for-childrens-literature/the-margaret-wise-brown-board-book-award/>

CELEBRATIONS



Northville Public Library

Congratulations to Northville on the new logo! It looks amazing!

Kudos to Jackie at The Community Library for her creative spark to transform the library into a jungle adventure, including this selfie backdrop!



KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!

MVLS-GO!



Check Them Out!

CONTACT US

Do you have questions we can answer? Helpful comments? Want to tell us about something going on at your library? Email us or call us at 518-355-2010.

- **Eric Trahan:** Executive Director, ext. 223, etrahan@mvls.info
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Not sure who to contact?
Check out [MVLS Staff At a Glance](#)