

**Mohawk Valley Library System
Director's Report
January February, 2025**

Empowering Member Libraries with Sound Administration & Governance

It is state annual report time. The report will be presented for your review and acceptance at the March board meeting. Look for it in the documents for the board meeting on the website.

The Governance Structure Review Committee was formed, and held its first meeting on March 5. The draft minutes from that meeting, and the list of committee members, will be included with the board documents. We are working closely with Cole Adams on the committee's recommendations. The committee is slated to meet again on March 19. It is likely that the committee will have recommendations for a further bylaws amendment and policy development to report out on at the March MVLS board meeting.

The committee is committed to a 2x per month meeting schedule, and an ambitious schedule to complete its work by summer.

Empowering Member Libraries with Automation and Resource Sharing

We continue to work through the issues resulting from the SCPL withdrawal from the JA consortium. While for most users the effects of the withdrawal are minimal, for users who were accustomed to using both SCPL and other libraries, or using resources from both SCPL and other libraries, there is still confusion about using libraries on both sides of the divide. The confusion seems to be everywhere: among library users, SCPL staff and staff, and MVLS and SALS libraries. MVLS and JA staff are working on resources that will provide accurate information. Here are some of the basics:

- Every Schenectady County resident who had a library card on November 24, 2024 now has a library card record in Schenectady and a separate card record in the JA consortium. There is no need for anyone with a valid card to replace that card or to re-register. There is, of course, a need to update changed addresses, validate expired cards, etc.
- There is no connection between the two patron databases. Any change made on one side must be separately made by the library user on the other side in order to maintain valid cards in both databases.
- Schenectady has a separate Overdrive platform. A valid Schenectady library card is needed to access the SCPL Overdrive, and a valid JA Library card in a MVLS library is necessary to access the MVLS Overdrive.

There are multiple issues that we need to work out concerning Overdrive. The simplest is just to continue to reiterate that there are 2 different platforms which authenticate through 2 different databases; library speak for saying that users need to be aware of what card gives them access to the Overdrive platform that they are using. We have many instances of Schenectady users of the MVLS Overdrive platform, who go to Schenectady to update their library card, are told their card is fine (meaning their SCPL card, which is all the SCPL staff can see), but can't understand why they are blocked

from using the MVLS Overdrive resources. It is because they did not update the MVLS library card that is necessary to access the MVLS Overdrive.

A second Overdrive issue is related. SCPL developed their own Overdrive platform so they could build their own collection and not pay into the MVLS Overdrive platform. They still have access to the MVLS platform, but that is meant to be a secondary resource similar to being able to use the UHLS, SALS, etc. collections. The expectation is that borrowers will usually use their local database, and use others on an as-needed or extra basis. At this point, the majority of SCPL users are still using the MVLS Overdrive platform as their primary resource. We need to work toward the intent that SCPL users use the SCPL Overdrive as their primary resource, and supplement that with the MVLS Overdrive, not the other way around.

The March JA Council meeting was cancelled, but there is still plenty of activity to report. The Multifactor Authentication (MFA) project is moving forward. Every user of the OneDrive or Polaris products must implement MFA on their accounts by April 15. JA staff is working with libraries to get this done by the deadline.

We spoke at the January meeting about developing a Foundation incentive grant to help libraries with MFA or other security or technology related projects. We have refined that idea, and are now ready to offer that incentive grant. We are proposing an open-ended grant of up to \$350 per library to help libraries implement security or technology improvements in their libraries. That could be MFA, or it could be any other technology upgrade the library wants to make. The applications will be similar to the Dream & Do grant process, but targeted at technology.

A second active JA issue is the licensing of Microsoft products. Microsoft changed the classification that they give to libraries in a way that drastically increased the costs for the licenses that every library computer uses. We developed a temporary fix that involved doing purchasing through Tech Soup. Now JA is working directly with Microsoft, and is making good progress on reaching a long-term solution.

We submitted our new Central Library Plan to the state DLD in September, and it was moving through the approval process. Unfortunately, the person we were working with retired, and the new person in that position has different requirements, primarily related to the plan format. We have updated the plan accordingly. A copy is with the board materials. The plan has been submitted to DLD. Since it took them 5 months to give us real feedback the first time, who knows when we will hear back. In the meantime, there is no problem; Amsterdam is the central library and we are spending the central library aid.

One new resource is a product called Educate Station, that is designed to provide curriculum resources for homeschooled students. Other new resources are in the pipeline.

Empowering Member Libraries with Youth, Adult and Outreach Services

Summer reading is now in full swing. Eight MVLS libraries sent staff to the in-person MVLS/SALS/UHLS summer reading planning workshop in Colonie. Library staff also participated in the statewide virtual summer reading workshop in February.

Beth and Kate assisted five MVLS libraries with participation in Take Your Child to the Library Day on February 1.

MVLS is developing a Children's literature Challenge project to help our libraries provide and promote quality children's literature for young families. Four libraries are piloting this project, which will include continuing education, resources, and incentive funding to help libraries build quality collections of children's library materials.

Beth continues to work with partners in getting books and library information in the hands of new parents. New partnerships are being forged with organizations in all MVLS counties.

The Cabin Fever Club programs have been very well received this winter. Partnerships were developed with several organizations who provided programs. The most well attended session so far was provided by our own Canajoharie Library and Arkell Museum on "American Impressionism and The Eight".

Senior Planet technology programs are underway in Schenectady and Schoharie Counties. Eighty-two participants attended the four programs held in January and February. These are in addition to the ongoing Digital Learn programs held both in-person and via Zoom in and for various outreach locations in the region. Attendance was over 100 in these two months.

Empowering Member Libraries with Training, Consultation and Collaboration

The 2025 Spring Symposium is coming into focus. We are tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 1 from 3:00 – 5:30 at the Sharon Springs Free Library. Our topic is "Building a Secure Future through Succession Planning." Please mark your calendar!

Our Trustee Training Session on February 20 was a success. We had 5 participants onsite and 8 via Zoom. A second session is planned for April 24. Suggestions on a topic are welcome!

Mary continues to work with libraries on websites. Four libraries were assisted with certificate updates, and all were analyzed for minimum standards compliance. Resources are being developed to help libraries with website accessibility.

Mary is working with the Mohawk Valley Broadband Coalition on a grant that will provide technology and other resources that will help libraries provide services to improve digital equity.

The new My Turn product, for facilitating the loan of MVLS kit resources to member libraries, is working well. Twenty-four items were borrowed in January, and 25 in February.

We continue to shepherd the library construction grants through the tortuous state approval process. All of our libraries' proposed projects are now approved by the Education Department, and are ready for their DASNY review.

Member libraries are making good progress with their 2024 state annual reports. These reports give us data on library use in the MVLS service area. 2024 marks the first year since 2021 that we aren't seeing a post-COVID bump, which means that in 2024, library use was back to normal. Use of e-resources continues to see double-digit increases each year, with a 12% increase in use over 2023. Circulation of e-resources now accounts for more than 25% of total library borrowing.

Empowering Member Libraries with Advocacy & Awareness

We had a great team of advocates on library advocacy day. Fifteen advocates from the MVLS area met with representatives from three Senate districts and five assembly seats on February 5. Thanks to all participants. The state budget process continues, with the release of the one-house budgets. Both houses addressed the library priorities of library operating aid, construction aid, and school library materials aid. One house budgets are often optimistic, but it is good to see legislators supporting libraries. After Advocacy Day, I was able to visit with Senator Pat Fahy and her staff at an open house in their new Amsterdam Office.

We continue to work with MVLS libraries on community engagement and budget votes. Wade has active planning sessions in place in Canajoharie, Cobleskill, and Fonda.

The Foundation fundraising season is about to begin. Library Giving Day is April 1, 2025. Information on the Foundation appeal is at: <https://mvslibraryfoundation.wordpress.com/library-giving-day-april/>. We are also planning for the year's first golf tournament, June 30 in Canajoharie. Please support these Foundation efforts.

Empowering Member Libraries with Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits

1/2/2025	Lauren Cardinal, Division of Library Development Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library MVLS Executive Committee
1/3/2025	William Bonner Susan London Lauren Cardinal, Division of Library Development MVLS Member Library Directors MVLS Staff
1/6/2025	Stephanie (Cole) Adams, Law Office of Stephanie Cole Adams Alisha Rivera-Holmes, Northville Public Library Thomas Gessick, CPA, T.M. Byxbee Company, CPAs, NY, PC
1/7/2025	William Bonner JA Council Stephanie (Cole) Adams, Law Office of Stephanie Cole Adams MVLS Member Library Directors
1/8/2025	Lauren Cardinal, Division of Library Development JA Council MVLS Executive Committee
1/9/2025	John Sullivan Terry Pavoldi, Middleburgh Public Library Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
1/13/2025	Carol Stuff Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library MVLS Member Library Directors

1/14/2025	Julia Maxwell, DLD Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Alisha Rivera-Holmes, Northville Public Library
1/15/2025	Lauren Cardinal, Division of Library Development Stephanie (Cole) Adams, Law Office of Stephanie Cole Adams Mandy Travis, Mid York Library System Hannah Dillenbeck, Mohawk Valley Broadband Coalition Heather Devitt, Mohawk Valley Digital Inclusion Coalition MVLS Member Library Directors Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
1/16/2025	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Stephanie (Cole) Adams, Law Office of Stephanie Cole Adams MVLS Board of Trustees
1/17/2025	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
1/21/2025	Madelyn Thorne Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library MVLS SCPL system meeting Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
1/22/2025	Madelyn Thorne Beverly Osborne Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
1/23/2025	William Bonner Susan London Kathy Naftaly, Crandall Library Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library MVLS Member Library Directors Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
1/24/2025	Kathy Naftaly, Crandall Library HFM School Library System Council
1/29/2025	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
1/30/2025	Susan London Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Terry Pavoldi, Middleburgh Public Library Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
1/31/2025	Stella Williams Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
2/3/2025	William Bonner Amy Heebner, Division of Library Development Natalie McDonough, Division of Library Development
2/4/2025	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library

	PULISDO
2/5/2025	NYLA Advocacy Day!
2/6/2025	PULISDO
2/7/2025	Carol Stuff
	William Bonner
	Elissa Kane, Kane & Lekakis
2/10/2025	April Davies
	Foundation Board
	MVLS Board of Trustees
	MVLS Member Library Directors
2/11/2025	Judi Steiger, Fort Hunter Free Library
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
2/12/2025	Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery
	Judi Steiger, Fort Hunter Free Library
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
2/14/2025	Stephanie Cuomo
	Foundation Board
2/18/2025	MVLS SCPL Discussions
	Pat Fahy, New York State Senate
2/19/2025	Becky Leggieri
	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	Alisha Rivera-Holmes, Northville Public Library
2/20/2025	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Division of Library Development, NYSED
	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	MVLS Trustee Education Session
2/21/2025	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
2/24/2025	John Sullivan
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
2/25/2025	Becky Leggieri
	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Judi Steiger, Fort Hunter Free Library
	Alisha Rivera-Holmes, Northville Public Library
	Diane Empie, The Margaret Reaney Memorial Library
2/26/2025	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
	JA Training Session MFA
	Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library
	Meghan Keaney, Sharon Springs Free Library
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
2/27/2025	Amy Heebner, Division of Library Development
	MVLS Staff
2/28/2025	Jacqueline Haddam
	Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery
	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
	Meghan Keaney, Sharon Springs Free Library