

**Mohawk Valley Library System
Director's Report
September, October, 2025**

Empowering Member Libraries with Sound Administration & Governance

The new MVLS trustee election process is complete for 2025, and it worked very well in both getting trustees recruited and elected, and in including the member libraries and the rest of the MVLS community in that process. The minutes of the trustee election meeting are on the website here: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Board-Election-Sept-2025-Minutes.pdf>. Please review these minutes. They will be included in the Consent Agenda items for the November board meeting. Additionally, the Director's Council held a hybrid meeting in Amsterdam on October 2. At that meeting, the Directors determined that Terry Pavoldi will continue to serve as the Director's Council representative on the MVLS board, with the new term to begin on 1/1/2026.

In preparation for next year's process, we have three trustees with terms that will expire on December 31, 2026: Jane Borrelli, Susan London, and Mary VanPatten. All three are eligible to serve for another term. The process to fill those three seats will begin in the spring.

The MVLS Annual Meeting was again a wonderful celebration of libraries. We had good attendance, and it was particularly gratifying to have so many of our libraries happy to have the opportunity to stand up and talk about how they are working toward more secure futures. Minutes for the Annual Meeting are on the website here: <https://www.mvls.info/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/2025-Annual-Meeting-Minutes.pdf>. Like with the Trustee Election meeting minutes, these will be included in the Consent Agenda bundle of items for acceptance at the November meeting.

T.M. Byxbee has completed the financial review for the 2024 financial year, producing reviewed financial statements for MVLS and for the JA project. They also completed and submitted the annual 990 form. Joe Sherry is currently going over the reports for accuracy. Tom Gessick from T.M. Byxbee will be at the November meeting to review these documents. The review documents will be included with the meeting materials on the website.

The 2026 budget will be reviewed and presented for approval at the November meeting. As we have discussed, the proposed budget will have a significant deficit, due primarily to the temporary increase in the amount MVLS (and SALS too) are paying into the JA budget. The proposed budget will be included in the meeting materials, along with a narrative explaining the changes in the budget, and a tie back to the long-term trends that we discussed at the September meeting.

The Personnel Committee is meeting on Tuesday, November 18 to discuss the salaries and benefits changes included in the proposed budget. These changes will be discussed in executive session at the November meeting. I will share documents with the trustees via email after that committee meeting.

Finally, the November board meeting serves as the reorganizational meeting, getting us set up to begin a new operational and fiscal year in good order. There are a few pro forma annual designations (official newspaper and financial institutions), approval of the meeting schedule

(<https://www.mvls.info/meeting-schedule/>), and election of officers for 2026. The Nominating Committee will present the current slate of officers to continue for another year:

Bill Bonner, President

Susan London, Vice President

Katherine Hawkins, Secretary

Jane Borrelli, Finance Officer

Sally Rappa, Treasurer

Empowering Member Libraries with Automation and Resource Sharing

The JA Council held a special meeting on October 8 and their regular meeting on November 12. This is a busy time for the JA consortium and the JA staff.

We have continued to gather input on and make edits to the proposed JA Agreement between MVLS and SALS. A draft version is still available on the website, with the materials for the September meeting. Once Kim Bolan and I are satisfied with the document, it will go back for another legal review before being brought back to the board for discussion and possible approval. Please review the draft document and bring any questions or concerns to me.

The job announcement has gone out to fill the JA Project Manager position, from which Michele Largeteau will retire in March 2026. A search committee has been formed. Bill and I represent MVLS on the committee. We will begin reviewing applications in December, with interviews taking place in January. The plan is to give many stakeholders input in the interview process. We are working to have a seamless transition when Michele retires.

JA staff and the system trainers are putting in long hours working to implement Vega Discover. The JA database is unusual in its scope, and that presents challenges to the vendors. Our vendor, III, has used our data in testing for years; and yet, even with that, the product doesn't always meet our specifications. III is working hard to resolve the issues; and the silver lining is that we are not paying until they get us a working solution. There is a deadline driving that schedule. According to revisions to the ADA, all library catalogs should be accessible by April, and Vega is the only option we have available to implement that requirement.

We are working with the Amsterdam Library to develop a Central Library spending plan for 2026. We hope to be able to add new services as we develop the budget. In lieu of holding separate Central Library Advisory Committee meetings, we will discuss the plan with the full Director's Council at their next meeting.

Libraries have voted for an incremental increase to the member funded part of the 2026 Overdrive budget. Libraries will be invoiced by the end of the month, and can pay in either fiscal year. We did share the information with Schenectady, in case they want to rejoin the shared resource. We are planning to introduce a patron request restriction for Schenectady residents in order to prioritize use by the residents of the remaining libraries who pay into the resource.

Empowering Member Libraries with Youth, Adult and Outreach Services

Beth has been teaching statewide Supercharged Storytimes classes for the Division of Library Development. So far, 128 people have attended these online classes.

Beth and Mary continue to offer Outreach programs at senior centers, schools, and other locations. Attendance was again over 100 in September and October sessions. We are coming to the end of the first year of the Senior Planet project. We are planning to continue that service. More information is on our website at: <https://www.mvls.info/senior-planet-classes/>.

Mary is setting up another Cabin Fever series of virtual Outreach programs for the winter months. A copy of the schedule is with the November meeting materials.

We are also working to develop more effective partnerships with Workforce Solutions locations in Amsterdam, Cobleskill and Gloversville.

I attended the Mohawk Valley Broadband Coalition Convening on October 22. Along with Mandy Travis from the Mid York Library System, I was able to emphasize the importance of libraries in helping provide internet access and digital literacy. It was good to see libraries get recognition with this group. We are still waiting to see if funding will be approved for the Coalition grant that Mary worked on with this group.

Empowering Member Libraries with Training, Consultation and Collaboration

Beth and Mary have been providing many training sessions for libraries, cooperating with several other systems. Here are the sessions that were held in September and October:

- 9/12- Welcoming Neurodiversity in Youth Services – joint YS meeting with UHLS (14 attendees)
- 9/16 - Coding & Robotics workshop
- 9/24 - Science of Reading w/ UHLS (44 attendees)
- 10/7 - Power of Play w/ Strong Museum of Play (27 day of; 26 views since) shared UHLS & 4CLS
- 10/22- GOAT 2025 – 24 attendees from MHLS, MVLS, SALS, UHLS, VT and MA
- 10/28- Adult Program Swap w/ CEFLS, SALS, UHLS & DLD (60+ attendees; statewide)

The final trustee training session for 2025 will be held on Thursday, December 11 at 9:30 here at MVLS and via Zoom. This will be a more open-ended session on Library Futures. We are tentatively planning to have sessions in February and April, similar to last year.

The Canajoharie Library/Arnell Museum has a new director. Mario Andres-Colon started at the end of September. I have met with him several times, and regularly exchange messages. He is interested in making changes to help the library and museum thrive. Mario will be visiting MVLS, along with Alisha Rivera-Holmes from Northville, on December 4.

The Sharon Springs and Fonda (Frothingham) Libraries are actively seeking new directors. We have worked with both to help post and publicize their searches.

MVLS staff has been very present in member libraries this fall. I attended the farewell gathering for Maria Cancro in Canajoharie on September 26, and participated in the grand opening of Sharon Springs' wonderful new outdoor program space on October 17. Kate volunteered at Middleburgh's famous Hogwarts transformation on October 24 and 25.

Empowering Member Libraries with Advocacy & Awareness

Mary Carrier, Beth Rienti, and I attended the annual NYLA Conference in early November. Several member library staff members also attended. MVLS offered conference registration grants as we have in past years. The conference theme was Actionable Advocacy. Resources and strategies were shared. The 2026 NYLA Advocacy priorities are now available on the NYLA website at:

<https://www.nyla.org/2026-legislative-session#BudgetRequests>. NYLA continues to develop ways to advocate in the Governor's Office, to improve our negotiating position once a budget proposal is released. Please be looking for and participate in opportunities to advocate for state funding for libraries, as well as for other issues affecting libraries.

One of those other issues is e-book pricing reform. There is information on that in the NYLA resources. We are working with the other system directors statewide to advocate with the industry on changing the damaging models for e-resource pricing for libraries.

Wade is continuing to work with Fonda and Cobleskill on community engagement and strategic planning.

Another edition of the MVLS newsletter, *Shelf Life*, has been distributed. You can review it on the website at: <https://www.mvls.info/newsletter/>.

The Foundation annual appeal is underway. Please donate if you can. Information is on the Foundation website at: <https://mvlslibraryfoundation.wordpress.com/fundraising/annualappeal/>. The annual appeal is the most productive fundraiser that the Foundation holds each year.

Twelve libraries applied for Dream & Do grants, requesting funding for materials, furniture, equipment and programs. Only a few libraries were interested in the NYCON membership grants.

MVLS is planning a Holiday Open House on Tuesday, December 9 from 12:00 – 4:00. All member library (and system!) staff and trustees are invited. There will be food, drink, crafts, demonstrations, and good conversations all around. Please plan on dropping in.

Empowering Member Libraries with Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits

9/2/2025	William Bonner Amy Heebner, Division of Library Development MVLS Board of Trustees Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
9/3/2025	Alisha Rivera-Holmes, Northville Public Library Tom Shaginaw, SALS
9/4/2025	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Amy Heebner, Division of Library Development Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library JA Council

	Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library
	Diane Empie, The Margaret Reaney Memorial Library
9/5/2025	Foundation Board
	JA Finance Committee
	MVLS Library Services Committee
9/8/2025	Dave and Pat Gosda
	Christine Witkowski
	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
	JA Finance Committee
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
9/9/2025	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery
	Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library
	MVLS Library Services Committee
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
	Diane Empie, The Margaret Reaney Memorial Library
9/10/2025	Mary Donohue
	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	Mackenzie Egeleston, Frothingham Free Library
	JA Council
9/11/2025	Christine Witkowski
	Beverly Osborne
	Amy Heebner, Division of Library Development
	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
9/12/2025	MVLS Board of Trustees
	Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
9/15/2025	MVLS Member Library Directors
9/16/2025	Dave and Pat Gosda
	MVLS Library Services Committee
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
9/17/2025	Christine Witkowski
	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
	MVLS Board of Trustees
	MVLS Member Library Directors
	Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
9/18/2025	MVLS Board of Trustees
	MVLS Staff
	Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
	Chris Sagaas, Upper Hudson Library System
9/22/2025	William Bonner
	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	Valerie Venturini, Gloversville Public Library
	MVLS Member Library Directors
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
9/23/2025	Haileab Samuel
	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library

	Natalie McDonough, Division of Library Development
	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
	Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library
	Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library
	Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
	Chris Sagaas, Upper Hudson Library System
9/24/2025	Natalie McDonough, Division of Library Development
	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library
	MVLS SCPL Discussions
	Alisha Rivera-Holmes, Northville Public Library
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
9/25/2025	Haileab Samuel
	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	MVLS Trustee Election Meeting
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
9/26/2025	MVLS Member Library Directors
9/29/2025	Mario Andres-Colon, Canajoharie Library/Arkell Museum
	Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council
	NYALS
9/30/2025	Natalie McDonough, Division of Library Development
	Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
10/1/2025	Mario Andres-Colon, Canajoharie Library/Arkell Museum
	Hannah Dillenbeck, Mohawk Valley Broadband Coalition
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
10/2/2025	Christine Witkowski
	MVLS Member Library Directors
10/3/2025	Dave and Pat Gosda
	Mario Andres-Colon, Canajoharie Library/Arkell Museum
	MVLS Member Library Directors
	Charity Thorne, Schenectady County Public Library
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
10/6/2025	MVLS SCPL Discussions
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
10/7/2025	Mario Andres-Colon, Canajoharie Library/Arkell Museum
	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
	Valerie Venturini, Gloversville Public Library
	Meghan Keaney, Sharon Springs Free Library
10/8/2025	William Bonner
	JA Council
	MVLS Board of Trustees
	Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
10/9/2025	William Bonner
	MVLS Board of Trustees
	MVLS Consultant Staff
	MVLS Member Library Directors

10/14/2025	William Bonner
10/15/2025	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library AnnaLee Dragon, NYLA
10/16/2025	Division of Library Development, NYSED Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
10/17/2025	Mario Andres-Colon, Canajoharie Library/Arkell Museum MVLS Member Library Directors Sharon Springs Free Library Event MVLS SCPL Discussions
10/20/2025	Christine Witkowski Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Barbara Madonna, Gloversville Public Library Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Alisha Rivera-Holmes, Northville Public Library Meghan Keaney, Sharon Springs Free Library Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
10/21/2025	Natalie McDonough, Division of Library Development MVLS Staff
10/22/2025	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Mario Andres-Colon, Canajoharie Library/Arkell Museum Hannah Dillenbeck, Mohawk Valley Broadband Coalition Kim Bolan, Southern Adirondack Library System
10/23/2025	Mario Andres-Colon, Canajoharie Library/Arkell Museum Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library HFM School Library System Council MVLS Member Library Directors MVLS Trustee Education Session Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
10/24/2025	Foundation Board MVLS Staff
10/27/2025	Dave and Pat Gosda Christine Witkowski Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
10/28/2025	Jeanne M. Irwin
10/29/2025	JA Committee
10/30/2025	Jeanne M. Irwin Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Amy Heebner, Division of Library Development
10/31/2025	Susan London Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library Thomas Gessick, CPA, T.M. Byxbee Company, CPAs, NY, PC