

# **Mohawk Valley Library System**

## **Director's Report**

**March 2021**

### **Administration & Governance**

Although nothing is certain yet, it looks like good news on the state budget for 2021. Library operating aid looks like it will be held at 2020 levels - \$94.1 million – and construction aid back to the 2019 allocation of \$34 million. While it is unusual for us to be happy with flat aid, in this year it really is a small victory. When we amend the 2021 MVLS budget, we will be increasing all of the state aid categories.

The MVLS 2020 state annual report is complete. We will review it and present it for the board's approval at the April meeting. While COVID-19 had a negative impact on library use and budgets, it caused an increase in some system activity, particularly consultations and meetings. MVLS continued and expanded on programs for members in 2020.

We continue to work on the state plan of service that is due in October. We will be doing a member's survey and some sort of member's forum to gather information on our library's needs. As a result of the plan of service process, we hope to develop a new emphasis on data, benchmarks, standards and vision. How can we help libraries recognize and pursue the opportunities for growing sustainable library service? How can we help libraries and communities develop mutually beneficial relationships that enhance everyone's lives?

Of course, a part of that plan will may come under the charge for our fourth staff consultant. We would like to have a job description approved by the June board meeting, so we can get a new person on staff by fall.

The MVLS Annual Meeting will again be virtual in 2021. At this point I am looking at the Wednesday or Thursday of the third week of May – the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> – at 5:30 p.m. We will hold the business meeting, announce the award winners, and have some discussions concerning the developing plan of service.

### **Automation and Resource Sharing**

The JA Council will next meet on May 12. Patron self-registration will continue to be a focus for the JA staff. This will allow the public to initiate getting a library card online – without visiting a library. People will continue to have to visit a library to complete their registration and take advantage of all cardholder privileges. A year ago, when the COVID shutdown began, we were able to open a way for e-resources borrowers to get a temporary library card and use Overdrive resources. Those temporary cards are now expiring. Our efforts at developing self-registration should help to make getting a permanent library card easier for people to accomplish. Sharon O'Brien is doing a lot of work to get this implemented.

We continue to have discussions on reducing and ending the delivery quarantine. Many libraries around the country no longer rely on library materials quarantines. Our directors are all on-board with ending the delivery quarantine in the next couple of months. If we can get SALS libraries to go along – and maybe even if we can't – and, of course depending on pandemic circumstances; we hope to end the delivery quarantine in June.

JA has announced that two generations of computers will go off warranty this year. G2 series HP desktops will go off-service June 30, and G3 series machines at the end of the year. It may be another big year for computer purchases at member libraries. This has an effect on the MVLS budget. MVLS will also need to replace a couple of computers. We are looking into putting out accounting software on the cloud at the same time. This will help with keeping data backed up.

### **Outreach & Adult Services**

Heather has been attending many continuing education and networking events including the NYLA Youth Services Section virtual conference, NYS Citizen Public Health Training Program (designed to educate community members about COVID-19 resources and prevention); Implicit Bias Training for Information Professionals; and the Penguin Random House Spring Book & Author Preview.

The Adult Literacy Grant for 2020-21 looks like it will be very similar to last year. Schoharie County libraries are busy having programs; but the rest of the system has elected to forego programs for now. Heather is looking for other approved uses for this funding. Last year, we put the extra funding into e-resources.

### **Youth Services**

We received \$850 from Stewart's Holiday Match Grant. This funding is used to purchase graphic novels for the rotating collections.

Bookapalooza is happening at member libraries. Bookapalooza is the annual event when MVLS distributes the remainder of that year's Preview Books for libraries to add to their collections or use for giveaways. This year 17 locations participated and we sent out 510 books. Heather is building partnerships with area service organizations to funnel more preview books to children and families. Safe Inc of Schenectady (serves at-risk youth) and City Mission's family housing services for families have agreed to receive books.

MVLS Member Libraries and all Schenectady branches are invited to apply for a non-competitive mini-grant to enhance their summer 2021 library programs. Each library location in the Mohawk Valley Library System is eligible for up to \$600. Program audiences may include children, teens, and adults. Programs must be scheduled during May, June, July, or August. Applications are due on Wednesday, 4/21 and funds will be distributed beginning May 1. This is made possible with the CARES Act funding. Member library grants to assist with summer reading activities were a tradition in MVLS before the state funding dried up in the mid-2000s.

### **Member Services**

Upcoming meetings and workshops include the following:

April 1 – Director's Meeting

April 30 – CDLC Annual Meeting

May 6 – Director's Meeting

I continue to work with member libraries on state annual reports. As of today, all libraries except Schenectady have completed the report. We continue to monitor Schenectady's situation with meeting Maintenance of Effort thresholds. Meeting minimum standards may also become an issue later this year. The state relaxed the hours open standards during the pandemic; but they are now looking to re-

impose those standards, possibly as soon as June. We have several libraries that will need to adjust hours when that happens.

Two trustee training sessions are on the calendar. I will be meeting with the Schoharie board on April 14; and with the Amsterdam board on May 26. Wade is busy working on the community meeting report for the Community Library in Cobleskill.

We have received two applications for the Library Recognition Award and one for the Wusterbarth Volunteer Service Award. The Awards committee is meeting on April 12 to discuss.

Wade has been working with the Schenectady Library to help promote their April ABC Hunt promotion.

### **Advocacy & Awareness**

Advocacy works! Thank you to all who participated in this year's statewide effort. Please be looking for and respond to the NYLA campaign to thank legislators for their support.

Wade is developing plans to continue having virtual sessions with member libraries and their representatives, and is also working with libraries to develop lists of library events to invite legislators to libraries for public "thank you for your support" acknowledgements.

Library Giving Day is now behind us. We had good social media exposure, and provided bookmarks and flyers to all libraries. I will give a final contribution report at the meeting. At this point, it was a small success. With luck and work, we should be able to build Library Giving Day into a regular and significant part of raising money for Foundation grants.

### **Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits**

3/1/2021	Valerie Acklin, Gloversville Public Library Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library
3/2/2021	MVLS Member Library Directors Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
3/3/2021	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Mary Beth Farr, Division of Library Development
3/4/2021	MVLS Member Library Directors Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie
3/5/2021	Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library
3/8/2021	Mal Martin Judi Steiger, Fort Hunter Free Library Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie
3/9/2021	Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council Mary Beth Farr, Division of Library Development JA Council Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library MVLS Member Library Directors Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library

	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
3/10/2021	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library JA Council
3/11/2021	Deborah Paden Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
3/12/2021	Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
3/15/2021	Dawn Lamphere, The Margaret Reaney Memorial Library Barbara Lilley, Division of Library Development Judi Steiger, Fort Hunter Free Library MVLS Board of Trustees MVLS Member Library Directors Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
3/16/2021	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library MVLS Staff Meeting Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
3/17/2021	Shannon Aldi-Hogan, Frothingham Free Library Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library Dawn Lamphere, The Margaret Reaney Memorial Library
3/18/2021	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Mary Beth Farr, Division of Library Development Valerie Acklin, Gloversville Public Library MVLS Board of Trustees Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library
3/19/2021	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Capital District Library Council Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Terry Pavoldi, Middleburgh Public Library MVLS Member Library Directors Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie
3/22/2021	John Naple Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council MVLS Member Library Directors Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library

3/23/2021 Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library  
Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library

3/24/2021 Valerie Acklin, Gloversville Public Library

3/25/2021 Mary Donohue  
Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery  
Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie

3/26/2021 Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery  
NYSCA  
Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library  
Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library  
Jennie Mosher, Schoharie Free Library  
Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library  
Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System

3/29/2021 Mary Donohue  
Mary Beth Farr, Division of Library Development  
NYSCA  
Don LaPlant, Schoharie Free Library  
Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library  
Kim Zimmer, The Community Library

3/30/2021 MVLS Member Library Directors  
MVLS Staff  
Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library  
Kerrie Burch, QUESTAR III BOCES SLS

3/31/2021 Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council