

Mohawk Valley Library System

Director's Report

November – December, 2021

Administration & Governance

Mary Carrier is beginning work as the MVLS Technology and Growth Specialist on January 10. We are looking forward to having Mary here to assist our libraries with technology and other issues. We will do an introduction at the January board meeting. This month we are also celebrating the one-year anniversaries of Heather Dickerson and Kate Clingan. MVLS is fully staffed with highly qualified, motivated individuals.

There is also progress to report on the Trustee front. Karen Bradley, with input from Cheryl Cufari, has recommended Mary VanPatten as a Schenectady County representative on the MVLS Board of Trustees. Mary, who lives in Scotia, is a retired school librarian, having retired last year from a long run at the Fort Plain school district. If you approve, Mary will serve the term vacated by Felicia Spivey, which expires on 12/31/2026.

We ended 2021 in good financial shape. The December 31 financial statements show a large surplus, but that is entirely due to one-time funding that happened to get reflected on the 2021 financial statements. This includes the state aid withheld from 2020 (\$253,250), the PPP loan/grant (\$95,506) and the CARES Act funding (\$37,500). The financial statements also reflect Bullet Aid for 2 libraries, Cobleskill and Schenectady (Scotia Branch), which arrived and was disbursed in December.

We will discuss the altered Awards calendar at the January meeting. I have 2 other suggestions concerning awards. First, I think it would be best to standardize the awards at \$500 to the winning library. Second, I propose adding a third award, to be awarded to a member library staff person who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in the award period.

The planning process continues. At the January board meeting we will be discussing the MVLS Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Goals and Actions. All are the result of the input we received from member library staff and trustees, mediated by Elissa Kane, with lots of discussion and analysis by MVLS staff. The various statements are also influenced by the planning work that we do for member libraries.

Automation and Resource Sharing

The JA Council meets on January 12. JA has hired a new staff member, and is back to a full staff. Getting new equipment continues to be a challenge. The E-card initiative is moving toward implementation.

In November we briefly discussed JA fees and library telecommunications costs. We are now ready to implement the changes that were discussed. JA Council has approved reducing JA library fees by 8% in 2022, and coupling that reduction in library costs with standardizing telecommunications billing so that all libraries pay their own telecommunications costs. Then, in line with longstanding standard practice, we need to set JA fees for the following year, 2023. That recommendation is to increase JA fees by 3% in 2023. Of course, that will still be a reduction compared to 2021.

The JA Council also approved several budget amendments for 2022. The specifics are covered in a separate JA budget attachment. These budget amendments are either tied to the 2022 changes in JA

fees and telecommunications costs, small updates to current and anticipated costs, and a year-end timing issue that is moving \$66,838 from the 2021 to the 2022 budget.

Finally we need to make an appointment for member library service on the JA Council. Erica Wing's term has expired. She is interested in serving for another 3-year term.

One of the state library bills that was approved last fall will change central library funding. Instead of having separate Central Book Aid and Central Library Development Aid, there will be just one aid category. This presents an opportunity to look at how central library money is spent, and to develop a plan that provides more benefits to member libraries.

Outreach, Adult and Youth Services

The Hale Creek Correctional facility still doesn't have a librarian, but Heather has been working with the supervisor in charge to get materials ordered to stock their library. It has been a couple of years since we were able to get them any materials. We haven't made any headway with the new Schoharie County Jail, but will keep trying.

Heather is working with youth services consultants from ten library systems across the state to create a virtual Summer Reading Program Workshop. Two free workshops will be offered; one each for children and teen programming. It's a member driven workshop, meant to feature the exemplary work of librarians from around the state. The Children's workshop is on February 16; Teen workshop on March 10. MVLS Youth Services Meetups following these events will be an opportunity for our members to continue to discuss and brainstorm.

Legos, Duplos, and science kits continue to be popular with members for small group programming. The die cutter is having a moment of resurgent popularity as members make appealing displays for their patrons!

We have had several discussions about the future of MVLS facilitated literature programming. We are moving away from the NYSCA funded programs that were a staple for many years. MVLS will continue to facilitate literature discussion and writing programs, and we are also looking into working on a system-wide big read.

Member Services

Regular virtual Director's meetings are continuing, with good participation. There have even been some in-person library visits! Libraries are still experiencing issues with COVID, but they are also reporting increasing use.

Trustee training is also getting more attention. In December I did a session for the Middleburgh trustees, and have meetings scheduled for Schenectady, Fonda and Northville.

In December, DLD reported that Schenectady had failed maintenance of effort, which could result in a central library funding reduction. I worked with the library and county to fix the issue.

Advocacy & Awareness

NYLA Library Advocacy Day for 2022 has been set for March 2. We have been notified that it will again be an all-virtual effort. Virtual does lead to better attendance. Wade will be at our January meeting to bring you up to speed on the 2022 state advocacy effort.

We continue to work with several libraries on advocacy efforts. Sharon Springs continues to look at funding options, and Fonda is exploring planning for a new facility. We worked with several libraries on advocacy grants. In this application cycle we have applications from 3 libraries. I am recommending funding as follows:

- Cobleskill: \$2,500 for a direct mail public information campaign
- Sharon Springs: \$2,500 for a multifaceted community campaign related to a budget vote
- Fort Plain: \$1,000 for a brochure and signage

The Foundation year-end fundraising campaign was a success, with a total of \$4,091 raised. This is lower than the 2020 total of \$4,833; but higher than the previous few years.

The Foundation has been seeking a Schoharie County board member to replace Christina Knee, who resigned from the Foundation the same time she resigned from MVLS. April Davies has agreed to serve on the Foundation board, filling the term that will expire 6/30/2023. It will be good to again have some overlap between the MVLS and Foundation boards.

Meetings, Contacts & Field Visits

11/1/2021	MVLS Member Library Directors Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library
11/3/2021	Foundation Board MVLS Board of Trustees Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
11/4/2021	Capital District Library Council MVLS Member Library Directors NYLA
11/5/2021	NYLA
11/9/2021	Capital District Library Council MVLS Member Library Directors PULISDO
11/10/2021	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library JA Council Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
11/12/2021	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library Foundation Board Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library MVLS Board of Trustees
11/15/2021	Mal Martin Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library MVLS Personnel Committee Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
11/16/2021	Capital District Library Council MVLS Board of Trustees Bonnie Keller, NBT Bank
11/17/2021	John Naple

11/18/2021	MVLS Member Library Directors Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library MVLS Board of Trustees
11/19/2021	MVLS Member Library Directors Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
11/22/2021	William Levering Erica Wing, Johnstown Public Library Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library
11/23/2021	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
11/24/2021	MVLS Member Library Directors
11/29/2021	Beverly Osborne JA Finance
11/30/2021	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library MVLS Member Library Directors
12/1/2021	William Levering Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library Kathleen Gundrum, Capital District Library Council MVLS Member Library Directors Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
12/2/2021	Devon Hedges, Schenectady County Public Library Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
12/7/2021	MVLS Staff
12/8/2021	HFM School Library System Council JA Finance MVLS Member Library Directors Jennie Mosher, Schoharie Free Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
12/9/2021	Katherine Hawkins Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery Bonnie Keller, NBT Bank Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
12/10/2021	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie
12/13/2021	Mal Martin MVLS Member Library Directors Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
12/14/2021	Katherine Hawkins William Levering Eric Laughlin, Council Services Plus Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library PULISDO Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
12/15/2021	Carol Ann Desch, Division of Library Development

	Whitney Hubbard, Fort Plain Free Library
	Lauren Moore, New York State Librarian
	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
12/16/2021	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System
12/17/2021	Capital District Library Council
	Eric Laughlin, Council Services Plus
	Yvonne Keller-Baker, Schoharie Free Library
12/18/2021	MVLS Trustee Education Session -Middleburgh
12/20/2021	William Levering
	Mal Martin
	Jeanne M. Irwin
	Barbara Lilley, Division of Library Development
	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
	Karen Bradley, Schenectady County Public Library
	Beth DeMidio, Schenectady County Public Library
12/21/2021	Maria Cancro, Canajoharie Library & Art Gallery
	Suzan Friedlander, The Arkell Museum at Canajoharie
12/22/2021	Barbara Lilley, Division of Library Development
	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
	Kim Zimmer, The Community Library
12/27/2021	William Levering
	Linda Bell, Frothingham Free Library
12/28/2021	Jeanne M. Irwin
	Mary Beth Farr, Division of Library Development
	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
	Helen Thomas, Sharon Springs Library
12/29/2021	Jeanne M. Irwin
	Nicole Hemsley, Amsterdam Free Library
	MVLS Board of Trustees
12/30/2021	Cheryl Cufari
	Nicole Hauser, Gloversville Public Library
	MVLS Member Library Directors
	Michael Burnett, Northville Public Library
	Sara Dallas, Southern Adirondack Library System