

Executive Director's Report to the MHLS Board | September 2019

1. At the Meeting:

- a. Advocacy Bingo: We are looking forward to hearing about your experiences with the "Advocacy Bingo" homework provided to you after the last board meeting. During the president's report section of the agenda we have added in some time to hear about your experiences getting to BINGO!
- b. Dani Glaser, Program Director for the Green Business Partnership [<https://www.greenbusinesspartnership.org/>], will be in attendance to present our Green Business Partnership Certificate! The first step in becoming certified under the New York Library Association's Sustainable Library Certification Program. An orientation to the remaining aspects of this program that we are working on will be part of our agenda as well.

2. Albany Update

- a. State Aid for Library Construction:
 - i. The Governor signed the bill passed by the legislature late in the season to restore \$20 million to the State Aid for Library Construction Program.
 - ii. The Governor also signed the bill which extends the 75/25 reduced match opportunity in the State Aid for Library Construction Program for three years.
 - iii. Bills to create a second reduced match opportunity at 90/10 match and a new bill to allow applications for coordinated grant applications among multiple libraries were all passed by the legislature but have not yet been signed by the Governor so have not been enacted for the current grant cycle.
- b. Over the summer I teamed up with the new executive director of the Ramapo Catskill Library System, Grace Riario, to meet with two of our new State Senators, James Skoufis and Jen Metzger.
 - i. Senator James Skoufis: Mr. Skoufis is the author of the bill passed by the legislature, still awaiting signature by the Governor, to mandate a study of areas of the state that pay multiple library taxes. We had a good conversation that helped to clarify the lack of options/incentives for this issue to be addressed once studied. He is very active and visible in his district and I encourage those of you in his district to make the time to introduce yourself to him if you haven't already.
 - ii. Senator Jen Metzger: Ms. Metzger has an impressive handle on the importance of libraries and how they contribute to creating sustainable communities. She is very active and visible in her district and I encourage those of you in her district to make the time to introduce yourself to her if you haven't already.
- c. New York Library Association Government Relations Position to be filled: In early August we were notified that Mike Neppl no longer works for NYLA and that they will be seeking to fill this

position. This is a key staff position for us as this person is our lead strategist for advocating for state aid for our system and for the construction aid program.

- d. Save the Date! NYLA Library Advocacy Day: Tuesday, February 25th, 2020

3. Integrated Library Service (ILS) Update:

- a. MHLS staff have completed training on SkyRiver, a full-service bibliographic utility for cataloging which increases efficiency for our cataloging staff. The majority of our cataloging (90%) is now done using this tool, which was a negotiated include to the Innovative standard success package (annual subscription valued at 24K).
- b. As noted in my last report, Ann Talley from Innovative was on-site for three days in June to provide a Workflow Consultation for MHLS Staff. This is the first time in more than a decade we have had a staff person from Innovative on-site to help us assess our implementation of their products.
 - i. The Technology Operations staff participating in the analysis included: Laurie Shedrick – Assistant Director/Technology Operations Manager; Thomas O’Connell – ILP Operations Supervisor; Nina Acosta – Assistant ILP Operations Supervisor; Gerry Formby – IT Operations Supervisor; Kerri Carpenter – Cataloging Specialist and Tara Stohr – Interlibrary Loan & Cataloging Specialist.
 - ii. Ms. Talley has now provided her final report which contains recommendations for workflow adjustments and tips for the implementation of some of the new features and products that come with our new contract, which starts this month. Ms. Talley’s report concluded that *“All in all, the system is in good shape and should continue to serve you well in the future...”* She also recommended that we create a training plan, to avoid ending up in the same situation as before this visit. To that end, Laurie has been lining up training as part of our training package negotiated in our new five-year contract, to ensure we regularly receive training for our staff that can be passed on to member library staff. Ms. Talley was impressed with the volume and level of cataloging and support that MHLS provides the member libraries. We will be implementing the one workflow improvement identified by Ann, and will review the value of adding Interlibrary loan and volume holds with the Resource Sharing Advisory Committee for inclusion in our ILS Roadmap.
 - iii. The report is included as an attachment to my report.

4. Personnel

- a. Sexual Harassment Prevention Training
 - i. MHLS Staff: All MHLS Staff have taken the required training as of September 9th, a month in advance of the deadline.
- b. We are currently advertising for a part-time Tech Support Specialist as Matt Reinhardt is moving on to a full-time position with the Westchester Library System. We wish him well! In light of this change we are evaluating our staffing patterns in this department to ensure we

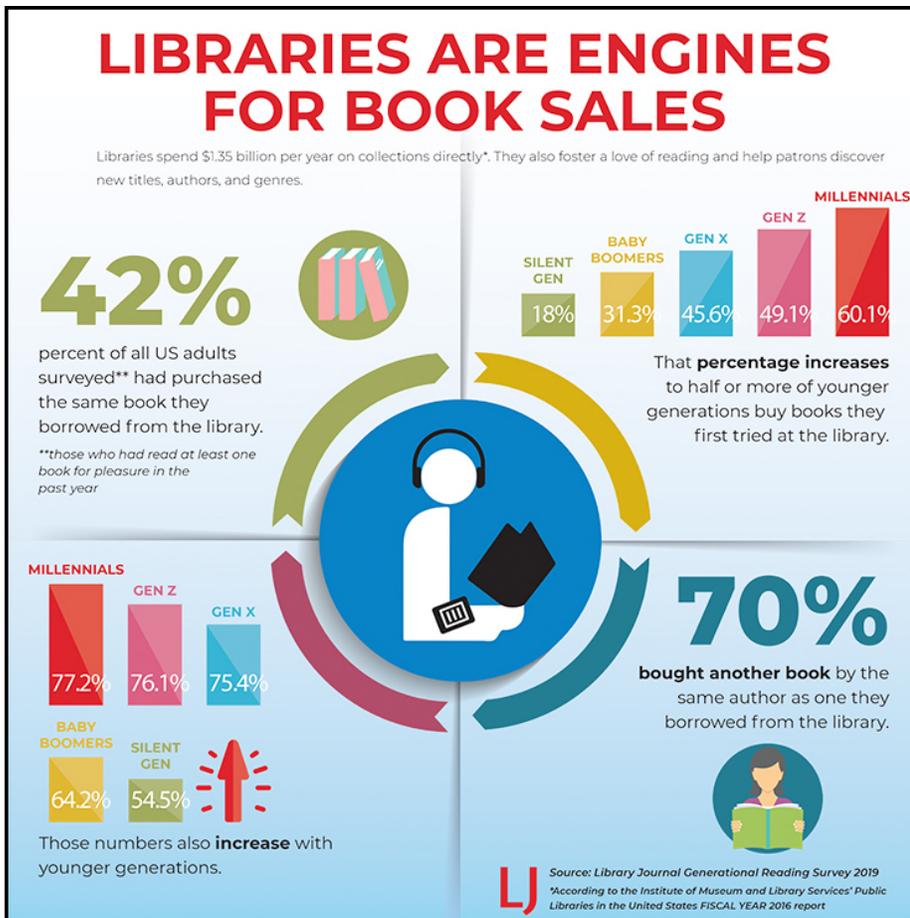
have coverage during the high demand times for tech support services from our members.

5. Town of Union Vale Contract

- a. We have made a final offer to the Town of Union Vale which respects the NYS Property Tax Cap and provides for an exit clause due to their expressed interest to start their own library. We have not heard back from them in several weeks since this offer has been made. Residents of Union Vale who are library cardholders have been updated on the status of the contract talks and encouraged to speak with their representatives on the town board about their needs. The most up-to-date information on this situation will be provided at the board meeting.

6. Ebook Advocacy

- a. Macmillan Publishers have changed its policy for library ebook lending. They have embargoed titles for eight weeks after the acquisition of a sole copy by a library system – that means one copy for all of MHLS, not one per library.



- b. There is a very active advocacy effort at the national level to combat the fallacy that libraries are bad for the publishing business. There have been excellent articles in defense of libraries and outreach efforts to ensure the public, and publishers, know that libraries are integral to the ecosystem of readers, writers and publishing:

- i. <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/libraries/article/80689-libraries-must-draw-the-line-on-e-books.html>
- ii. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/02/opinions/libraries-fight-publishers-over-e-books-west/index.html>
- iii. <https://kcls.org/blogs/post/publishers-decision-to-limit-ebook-access-is-bad-news-for-library-patrons/>
- iv. <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=Embargoes-Arent-the-Answer-Editorial>
- v. <https://overdrivesteve.com/macmillan-publishes-a-work-of-fiction/>

7. **Board-to-Board Visits & Talking Points**

- a. Thank you to all MHLS trustees who have let me know you are visiting member library boards, this is helpful so we can brief you on any local issues before you get there and to ask for your help with getting the word out about initiatives and opportunities at MHLS. We are now formally tracking board-to-board visits so appreciate the head's up and completion reports.
- b. For the next few months we are asking for your help to promote two things
 - i. MHLS Annual Membership Meeting: Friday, October 25th at the FDR Presidential Library & Museum in Hyde Park, NY. Keynote Speaker: Miguel Figueroa, Director, Center for the Future of Libraries, American Library Association. His talk is entitled "Trends, Signals, and Changes": In a fast-changing world, the advantage is given to those who understand the larger context in which they operate. Libraries have a strong tradition of looking broadly at the changes and trends in their communities and adapting their work to meet new and emerging needs. What changes in society, technology, education, and other areas are shaping new library innovations? And how do libraries affirm (and expand) their professional values and aspirations while still adapting to changing contexts?
 - ii. **New: Please ask boards to plan to attend NYLA Library Advocacy Day 2020 on Tuesday, February 25th in Albany**
 - iii. Awareness of the role libraries can play in the 2020 Census, both to promote that it is happening and preparation to assist residents to fill out the Census online. For more information check out the American Library Association's [Libraries' Guide to the 2020 Census](#)

8. **Executive Director's Event Participation: July-August**

- a. NYS Senator James Skoufis
- b. Bill Levy, Hudson Valley Renegades
- c. MHLS Incentives Committee
- d. NYS Senator Jen Metzger
- e. Donna Lynk, board president, Livingston Free Library
- f. DA Workshop, Managing Employee Performance
- g. Columbia County Library Association @Chatham Public Library
- h. Ulster County Library Association @Ellenville Public Library
- i. MHLS Planning & Personnel Committee
- j. Great Give Back Planning Meeting (statewide)
- k. Putnam County Library Directors @Carmel
- l. Columbia County Library Association @Livingston Free Library
- m. New York State Library Briefing for System Directors (monthly)
- n. Kristen Salierno, director, Howland Public Library (Beacon)

- o.** MHLS Finance Committee
- p.** Ulster County Library Association @West Hurley Public Library
- q.** Board of Trustees, Pine Plains Free Library
- r.** Central Library/Collection Development Advisory Committee
- s.** Climate Education/Engagement Meeting, Omega Center for Sustainability Living
- t.** International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Conference @Athens, Greece