

1. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE!** Two weeks without adequate phone service has been a lesson on managing frustration and helplessness. Someone at Mid-Hudson--Chris Herron, Gerry Formby, me, other staff--was focused everyday on getting the phones back up and running. Apparently, a trunk line was damaged that affected about 30 Verizon customers. We explained that our outage also meant that some 30 public libraries were also inconvenienced because we couldn't run our Teleforms service, which needed at least 6 phone lines. There wasn't much more we could do except call everyday and complain!
2. **REVISED 2013 BUDGET** The Mid-Hudson Board of Trustees adopted the revised 2013 budget as recommended by the MHLS Finance Committee. The revisions reflected a general consensus, by MHLS staff and board members, and member library directors, on how to budget for the \$131,169 increase in general state aid now expected for 2013. This is 9% higher than what we originally budgeted for this aid. The revised budget includes:
 - Subsuming the annual \$30,000 Sierra cloud-fee in the members assessment of \$600,000 instead of increasing the members assessment to \$630,000. Inclusion of this cost is expected to continue indefinitely.
 - Reducing the members assessment with central library development aid by \$47,755, which continues in 2014.
 - Reducing the members assessment by providing members a credit of \$19,920 in 2013 and \$20,000 in 2014.
 - Transferring \$30,000 at year's end to the member libraries capital fund, which was also proposed in April; this is in addition to the \$39,600 set aside by our member libraries.
 - Increase our help-desk coverage on Monday through Friday until 6 p.m. instead of 4:30 p.m., and Sunday afternoon.

Reinstatement of Mid-Hudson Board Member mileage reimbursement, however, was referred to the MHLS Personnel & Planning Committee to draft a recommendation for the Board to consider in September.

Plans for equalizing the cost of travel for member library staff to Mid-Hudson when attending DA and DA committee meetings, and continuing education opportunities, were referred to Committee as well. The Board will consider written policy and procedures for the for the grant in September.

The MHLS Board also reserved, as a separate issue from the reimbursement of member library staff, reimbursement of member library board members for their attendance at MHLS events, which would otherwise meet the requirements of the equalization grant.

The Board also adopted the initial [2013 budget for the central library program](#). This will also need to be revisited by the MHLS Board in September because of changes in this year's database subscriptions.

The Central Library/Collection Development Committee decided to support workforce development services provided by member libraries instead of continuing the System's subscription to HeritageQuest. Use of HeritageQuest has seen a steady decline over the last

couple of years. Besides this decline, The Committee felt that genealogy resources were relatively easy to access. They are inexpensive (Genealogy.com) for individual libraries. There's a number of excellent, and free, resources in the Mid-Hudson service area, and PPLD, the central library, lists free genealogy resources on its website.

The decision to drop HeritageQuest, which expires at the end of August, helps fund three new workforce development databases beginning in September 2013, and potentially drops member library costs for System databases. It also add a \$16,000 contingency in the Central Library Budget, which is why the central library budget will need to be reviewed again by the MHLS Board in September.

- 3. MEMBERS ASSESSMENT & 2013 MHLS BILLINGS:** These change again (sorry!) but they continue to decline slightly from what we projected in January 2013; the billing for databases will also likely be adjusted downward with HeritageQuest being dropped, and even with the new database subscriptions.

BACKGROUND: When state aid fell to 70% of full funding in 2009 and 2010, member library directors agreed to increase support for cooperative services in 2012 to \$600,000. In 2011, support for these services totaled \$426,957. This agreement was contingent on the System balancing its budget, which it did by taking a number of actions, including eliminating six full-time positions in January 2011.

Although the System has received some restoration of state aid since 2011, System funding is still only at 84% of full-funding, and some members have expressed a desire to reduce the \$600,000 assessment.

With the increases we received last year in state aid, we were able to cap the 2012 members assessment at \$485,701 by using central library development aid and extending the members a credit. By using the same approach, we have agreed to hold the assessment to \$533,677 in 2013 and \$553,811 in 2014.

- 4. EBOOKS & MOBILE APPS:** Is it time to consider additional purchases of ebooks and audiobooks? Merribeth shared some interesting statistics recently that projected our digital loans--ebooks and downloadable audio--heading towards 100,000 for 2013; and, in a recent month, 42% of these loans were to mobile devices. Isn't it time to consider moving forward with Boopsie?
- 5. AFFORDABLE CARE ACT:** Get ready for a wave of inquiries on where to go to learn more about options for the uninsured under the Affordable Care Act. As you probably know, New York State has set up an exchange under the Affordable Care Act and has a site about this at <http://healthbenefitexchange.ny.gov>

There is also the federal site for individuals and families at <https://www.healthcare.gov>, which leads people through a series of questions to determine eligibility and possible coverage.

At <http://marketplace.cms.gov>, there's general information of interest to institutions that may become involved in getting the word out on options available to the uninsured.

But keep in mind that the law is complicated and there is a certification program for individuals interested in becoming certified advisors. So, unless you and your staff are experts, you're likely to focus on provide referrals to expert resources and look to partner with others that can assist you.

I would suggest that you call your county health or county planning departments to learn more about how county resources are being organized to implement the Affordable Care Act, and discuss share what you learn at your county library association meetings.

- 6. PERSONAL VIEW OF ABU GHRAIB:** I may be straying from the straight and narrow on this, but I have a bit of a blind spot for veterans and their stories. So I'll just pass along the shout-out I received from Salvatore Anthony Esposito, an Iraq War veteran, and author of [*Abu Ghraib After the Scandal: A Firsthand Account of the 344th Combat Support Hospital, 2005-2006*](#), McFarland: 2012 (ISBN 1476600112, 9781476600116)

Salvatore Esposito volunteers for the Wounded Warrior Project, works for Suffolk County and lives in Medford, NY, so he's not exactly local, but he's written an account of his service, and the service of his unit at Abu Ghraib. He served with the 344th Combat Support Hospital, which based out of Fort Totten, Queens.

7. SEPTEMBER MHLS BOARD MEETING

- Preliminary 2014 Budget - First Reading. The MHLS Board Finance Committee meets September 11th to review the preliminary budget.
- 2012 Audit Report. The Audit committee will meet when the draft report is available, which is expected in July.
- Executive Director search updates based on the Executive Director [search schedule](#)
- 2013-2014 Mid-Hudson & Member Library Construction Grant Applications. The MHLS Board Incentive Committee meets August 29 at 10:00 a.m. to review applications.
- Draft of a Non-Solicitation Policy - First Reading. The Planning & Personnel Committee meets in July to finalize the draft.
- Initial Report by staff on the implementation of the System's [Plan of Service](#).