

**Mid-Hudson Library System**  
**Executive Director Report to the Directors Association on April 5, 2011**

## **Phoenicia**

Disaster struck the Phoenicia Library early in the morning on March 19 with the loss of its collection and furnishings to fire. Fortunately there was no personal injury or loss. What strikes me most about this misfortune is the support the library immediately received: a place, donations, a plan, advice. The library still has the most important resource available to them, its people--staff, director, board of trustees, community members, library system staff. Our connections to our communities serve as one of the great strengths of the library community. Kudos to all those who stepped forward to assist the Phoenicia Library through this crisis.

## **2007-2011 Plan of Service Progress Report**

The library system has submitted its 2010 plan of service progress report to State Ed, Division of Library Development. The report is available online at Midhuson.org and attached to this report.

## **2012-2017 Plan of Service**

Our collection of member data in preparation for developing our new five-year plan of service is winding to a close. Merribeth and Rebekkah continues this daunting task for a another couple of weeks and have already held a few unplanned sessions for trustees. We are nearer to when we get our first peak at the collected data and I can't wait.

## **Direct Access Plan**

As part of the new system plan of service, we are required to include a direct access plan that ensures free direct access to member library resources for all residents of the library system.

This plan needs to be approved by the Directors Association before it can be adopted as part of the system's new plan of service by the Mid-Hudson Library System Board of Trustees. A draft of the plan is included in the DA packet for its April 5th meeting.

A review of the plan began with a quick re-write by the Resource Sharing Advisory Committee to sync the plan and resource sharing agreements. An ad hoc committee was formed to draft a plan for the DA's consideration. It has met twice and will meet again after the DA meeting of April 5th.

The principles of on-site and direct access flow from Commissioner Regulations 90.3 (d) (1) (i)

- No system resident should pay a fee for on-site use
- No system resident "shall be excluded from on-site use of the library resources of the system or any of its member libraries because of age, cultural, economic or civic status."

And Commissioner Regulations 90.3 (d) (1) (ii)

- "No [system] resident shall be excluded from direct access to the library resources of the system or any of its member libraries because of age, cultural, economic or civic status."

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Under direct access, residents of one town enjoy the same rights to any member library resource as residents of any other town. Direct access ignores the usual divisions by residency for the payment of local services, such as town, village, county, or school district.

But the plan also allows for libraries to place limits on use by non-residents when non-resident use becomes excessive.

Under Commissioner Regulation 90.3 d) (2) (ii) member libraries may

- Refuse to lend material less than a year old to non-residents if there is excessive use
- Refuse to lend non-print, e.g. video, music CDs, books on tape to non-residents if there is excessive use

Under Commissioner Regulation 90.3 d) (2) (iii) member libraries may

- Refuse non-residents attendance at programs, giving preference to residents, if there is excessive use

Under the current draft of the plan, claims of excessive use by non-residents are possible when

- Non-residents from a single area represent 20% of a member library's total circulation based on a three-year average
- Non-residents in the aggregate--from multiple areas--represent 51% of a member library's total circulation based on a three-year average
- Non-residents from underserved areas represent 15% of a member library's total circulation based on a three-year average
- Non-residents from unserved areas represent 5% of a member library's total circulation based on a three-year average

## **HarperCollins Boycott**

As much as I admire the gutsy position Upper Hudson and other groups have taken opposing Harper Collins decision to limit the first "sale" to an arbitrary 26 circulations, I am mindful of a much larger challenge, which is filling the growing demand for digital content. Increased access to publishers and authors and a better financial position would go a long way to meeting this demand and I think, over time, work to our advantage as well to the advantage of authors.

I don't know enough about the relationship of OverDrive to its publishers, but publishers have a much larger and competing relationship with major book sellers than with libraries. I'm assuming OverDrive's challenges in securing a place at the table for itself and libraries are not negligible.

Consider, for example, how many companies provide video streaming content to libraries. Consider how large a share DVD has in circulation across the library system.

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There are companies that support streaming video services to libraries, including OverDrive--the schools have PBS and WXXI content--but in the popular “channels” where most public libraries cruise, there are no iTunes, Netflix, or ComCasts lining up to nudge public libraries into a safe and prosperous little harbor in the emerging digital oceans. In fact, libraries seem pretty much excluded from the increasingly popular on-demand services for video that are offered by a few large commercial players.

I would be comfortable seeking ways in which to work with OverDrive that ensures the widest possible entry into the world of digital publishing for public libraries. But I not sure a boycott of one of the publishers willing to give OverDrive and libraries some place in their emerging digital market a first best step.

### **Google Book Settlement Rejected**

Thank you Steve Cook (I think!) for calling attention to the rejection of the Google Book Settlement. The proposed settlement follows six years of maneuvering between Google, the Authors Guild and The Association of American Publishers. The two had sued to stop Google’s infringement of copyrighted material that resulted from the creation of a 15-million title digital library by Google, which it achieved in partnership with major academic libraries.

U.S. Circuit Court Judge Denny Chin wrote that in the court’s rejection of the proposed settlement, the court found that Google would otherwise receive

- Significant advantage over competitors
- Reward for engaging in wholesale copying of copyrighted works without permission
- A release of claims well beyond those presented in the case

So where does this leave Google, the Authors Guild and The Association of American Publishers? The challenges in the digital marketplace, in the words of Judge Chin, are to better “balance the rights of authors with the desire to create greater access to their work.”

Interestingly, public libraries were slated to receive a free connection to the digital library, which would have been the largest library ever. The connections would have had limits on printing and simultaneous views, but the settlement did secure a place for education and libraries in this new digital landscape.

# 2010 Mid-Hudson Library System Plan of Service Progress

## Element 1 – Resource Sharing

### Cooperative Collection Development

- *Goal: The macro-collection will be comprehensive.*
- *Intended Result(s): A comprehensive system-wide plan for collection development that will provide guidelines for purchasing and weeding for efficient use of library funds and to insure responsibility of each member library to provide appropriate materials and contribute to cooperative collection development / consortia lending; Balance collection needs such as remote use vs. physical browsing; foreign languages; readers' advisory; new formats; coordination of unique collections.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Added a system-wide digital collection through OverDrive (downloadable audiobooks & eBooks), with all items included in the MHLS online catalog.
  - ❖ Analyzed system-wide ILL requests to determine underrepresented areas of the collective collection.
  - ❖ Strengthened system-wide collection with new materials purchased from Central Book Aid funds in targeted areas, including downloadable audio language materials.
  - ❖ Identified outdated health materials in member library collections as a system-wide problem. Began discussions to develop a coordinated method of examining materials to address the problem system-wide.

### Delivery

- *Goal: Provide delivery service to all members.*
- *Intended Result(s): Library materials will be distributed and collected by the most efficient and cost effective method, through continuous refinement of methods to expedite delivery.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Sorting all boxes - every item, every day (5,500+ items a day on average) to achieve next-day delivery to member libraries.
  - ❖ Increased number of delivery stops to 435/week.
  - ❖ Refined design / procedures in MHLS sorting / delivery bay to improve capacity and expedite delivery.
  - ❖ New efficiencies were incorporated into the Holds System for sharing materials to keep holds moving and increase the fill rate at member libraries without unnecessary shipping.
  - ❖ Began member library contribution to the System operating budget, through a fee structure decided on by the Directors Association, based on a 3-year average of the number of materials brought in from other libraries.

### Interlibrary Loan (ILL)

- *Goal: Provide access to material outside of system holdings.*
- *Intended Result(s): Member libraries will have access to nationwide collections as stated in the Central Reference Services Plan, in a timely and cost effective way. ILL efforts will be maximized based on exploration of regional ILL changes with members and other systems.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Processed nearly 13,000 requests in MHLS ILL Department.
  - ❖ Refined policies and procedures to increase member library access to materials in the continental US including more trained participants using Southeastern Access to Libraries (SEAL) for regional electronic interlibrary loan, and redistribution of SEAL request rotas to improve regional equity.
  - ❖ Reduced overall shipping costs for out-of-system OCLC materials.

## Element 2 – Technology Services

### Integrated Library System

- *Goal: A comprehensive ILS will be supported.*
- *Intended Result(s): The ILS will have patron-friendly features; Data entry will follow standardized procedures; Member library staff will be able to take advantage of the full functionality of the ILS.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Enhanced ‘patron-friendly’ aspects of the online catalog, increasing access to materials by: reordering material types to improve patron experience; adding information about initial establishment of a PIN to both OverDrive & Home**ACCESS** interfaces; initiating a mobile web presence for MHLS online catalog by implementing AirPAC; and enabling a holds queue management feature for patrons who can now ‘freeze’ items requested while they are on vacation, regulate the order they receive books in a series and customize the flow of items they are receiving.
  - ❖ Participated in a usability project with SUNY Albany to get patron feedback on MHLS Catalog. Designed the next iteration of the OPAC with many patron-friendly improvements. Provided member library staff access to it through an internal test site and collected feedback.
  - ❖ Surveyed member library staff about areas needing improvement in the MHLS Kids’ OPAC, and made suggested adjustments to improve patron usability. Promoted Kids’ OPAC as the ‘September MHLS Word of Mouth Marketing Experiment’ topic by distributing promotional materials for member libraries and their patrons, and designing an online training module that was used by 67 member library staff.
  - ❖ Made over 130,000 editorial changes to bibliographic and authority records, improving the accessibility and subject searching to provide a more user friendly catalog to staff and patrons.
  - ❖ Improved catalog information regarding last-system-copies, while reducing member library effort and increased efficiency by running regular reports at the system level to remove bibliographic records that have no attached items.
  - ❖ Improved operations of Cataloging Department by auditing and documenting regular to ensure continuity, and putting in place measures to track daily performance and long term goals.
  - ❖ Conducted 13 Millennium training sessions (presented by MHLS staff) ranging from base-line to advanced topics.
  - ❖ Began documenting corrections necessary by member library to help focus where training is needed. Measured and analyzed ILS errors related to data entry. MHLS staff conducted training sessions (attended by 98.5% of libraries = 151 attendances) which resulted in improved data-entry standardization and increased accuracy system-wide as shown by the error-free nature of the subsequent statistical collection report.
  - ❖ Conducted training (provided by MHLS staff) for 55 member library staff, designed to help demystify the computer equipment and wires in their library, boost staff confidence when talking to tech support people and save their library money.
  - ❖ Facilitated MHLS Cataloging Department customer service to member libraries by establishing a new group email to receive requests including loading vendor records as well as reporting bibliographic record inaccuracies, problems with Syndetics displays, and broken holds.
  - ❖ Improved technology continuity to respond to current member library needs by formalizing the communication process regarding shared technological resources. Through analysis of member calls to the MHLS Tech Support Line, we reorganized schedules to boost the staffing in the Tech Department during the most active times of the day without incurring additional costs.
  - ❖ Piloted adding remote technological support, with great feedback from member libraries. It has the additional benefit of cutting system staff travel costs as well as improving response time.

- ❖ Improved member library ability to deal with ILS downtime by creating & distributing information packets to help libraries maintain business continuity when electricity or connectivity goes down at their library or at the System.
- ❖ Redesigned MHLS Tech Support contracts to proactively cure problems in member library networks, create more problem-free public access computing and staff computing environments and to provide the resources libraries need to be able to overcome some typical problems quickly.
- ❖ Provided training for Directors and Administrators (provided by MHLS staff) on the ILS to assist them in day-to-day planning and setting future goals including the many ways to gather statistical information about collections and patrons; tracking income and transactions; and setting up modules and parameters to meet member library's needs.
- ❖ Developed a new System Technology Plan for 2010-2013.
- ❖ Reviewed and updated the MHLS Resource Sharing Standards, a system-wide document approved by the MHLS Directors Association.

### Virtual Reference

- *Goal: Staff and patrons will have access to relevant electronic resources in the library and remotely.*
- *Intended Result(s): Member libraries will have a balanced package of centralized electronic offerings that integrate with the OPAC, assist with reference requests including those for unique higher-demand information, and fulfill the objective of providing comprehensive reference support as stated in the Central Reference Services Plan.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Ensured remote access for all electronic materials offered by NYS and member libraries.
  - ❖ Conducted assessment of virtual reference offerings based on statistical use and contribution to comprehensive reference support to determine best use of funds. Renewal decisions based on this.
  - ❖ Designed and implemented specialized training for front-desk staff in each county on 'Helping Patrons Find Genealogical information' and 'Helping Patrons Find the Answer' using virtual reference resources, which resulted in increased use of these resources system-wide.

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## Element 3 – Special Client Groups

### Adult Literacy

- *Goal: Library staff will be able to respond to literacy related issues.*
- *Intended Result(s): Libraries will develop their collections for all literacy levels and be able to refer people to literacy support agencies in their community.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Assisted member libraries with making connections with the literacy support agencies in each county.
  - ❖ Promoted resources and programs for new adult readers through the Adult Summer Reading Program workshop.
  - ❖ Contributed to services supporting adult education through association with Hudson Valley / Catskill Partnership.
  - ❖ Promoted the Gale Testing & Education Reference Center (practice tests and resources for people who want to explore a new career, need help with their resume, want to go back to school or get into college), available through HOMEACCESS on every member library's web site, as the 'April MHLS Word of Mouth Marketing Experiment' topic by distributing promotional materials for use by member libraries and their patrons and designing an online training module that was used by 75 member library staff.
  - ❖ Purchased materials for new adult readers for correctional facility and jails.

### Coordinated Outreach

- *Goal: Insure library services for all area residents including those traditionally underserved by libraries.*
- *Intended Result(s): Member libraries will have training and resources to recognize, connect with, attract and provide services for outreach target groups at the local level, and to develop community contacts and relevant local partnerships.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Facilitated the ability for member libraries to provide "Homebound and Extension services" where no daily fines will accrue by adding a new Patron Type to the ILS.
  - ❖ Provided training and information to raise staff awareness that as more businesses and government agencies requiring applicants to apply on line, job-seeking resources are among the most critical and most in demand among the technology resources available in libraries.
  - ❖ Promoted the Mango Languages product (22 languages and 14 ELS courses), available through HOMEACCESS on every member library's web site, as the 'May MHLS Word of Mouth Marketing Experiment' topic by distributing promotional materials for use by member libraries and their patrons and designing an online training module that was used by 108 member library staff.
  - ❖ Awarded 'Diversity Awareness Programming Mini-Grants' to eight member libraries for youth programming geared toward expanding literacy and increasing diversity awareness within the community.
  - ❖ Recipient of a 2010 Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Medal. Local coverage in several publications included from the Poughkeepsie Journal: *"The Mid-Hudson Library System supports 66 libraries in five Hudson Valley counties. It works to keep member libraries' costs down and to improve the services each member library can offer its community. The system helps libraries offer roughly 685,000 people in the Hudson Valley opportunities to read, learn and become involved with their communities."* Mid-Hudson Library System's medalist profile: *Insurer of the public's right to free access | Provider of opportunities to everyone - young and old - to take action - to read, listen, discuss and learn | Facilitator of economical resource sharing between libraries | Promoter of professional library services | Devotes its resources to assisting public libraries in providing quality library service to the community.*
  - ❖ Provided member libraries with a professionally designed brochure, "Your Library Card: Always Valuable, Now Priceless," developed with input from the Marketing Advisory Committee.
  - ❖ Hosted Kathleen Marshall from the Anderson Center for Autism speaking on the topic of Children With Special Needs for a MHLS Children's Services Roundtable.
  - ❖ Attended council and coalition meetings throughout the service area on behalf of member libraries, connecting media specialists, social workers, school superintendents, youth bureaus, prevention specialists and mental health organizations with the value found in local libraries.
  - ❖ Distributed current copies of MHLS produced 'Hudson Valley Connections' - a 41 page bilingual (English/Spanish) resource guide for ex-offenders.
  - ❖ Purchased new materials and weeded large print collections and Spanish rotating collections.

### **Correctional Facilities**

- *Goal: Services will be provided to state and county correctional facility libraries.*
- *Intended Result(s): Correctional facility libraries will augment their collections, technology and reference services through system support services, as annually negotiated.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ County Facilities: 5 facilities serving 1,039 inmates. Provided self-help books, Spanish materials, job information and transitional support materials.
  - ❖ State Facilities: 7 facilities serving 8,275 inmates. Received 8,533 ILL requests; provided consultation for collection development and reference materials in English and Spanish, information about speakers/performers with programs of topical interest, technology consultation; participated in an inmate pre-release job fair; facilitated regional discussions of topics of current interest.

- ❖ Hosted the annual meeting and training for correctional facility librarians who work in the southeastern and east central regions of the state. A full day of training was arranged by Outreach Coordinators from MHLS and RCLS. In attendance: Deputy and Assistant Superintendents of Programs, Corrections Counselors, and Department of Correctional Services Librarians from MHLS, RCLS & WLS.
- ❖ Distributed updated copies of *Hudson Valley Connections*, the MHLS produced resource guide for ex-offenders returning to Columbia, Dutchess, Greene, Putnam or Ulster counties in New York State, to MHLS correctional facilities and jails and on-demand to fill individual requests from inmates.
- ❖ Facilitated NYLA Outreach meeting, and four programs sponsored by the Corrections & Outreach Resources Team Roundtable:
  - Building Library Support at Your Facility
  - Promoting the Library to Non-Readers
  - Free and Low-Cost Programs for Facilities
  - Boosting Facility Library Collections and Services

## Youth Services

- *Goal: Insure professional library services for the full age continuum of youth.*
- *Intended Result(s): Members will have strategic guidelines for local provision of youth services relevant to library size and community needs that support the integration of developmental literacy practices into library programs; Assist libraries with legal and behavioral issues specific to youth services; Provide training and resources for members to develop local school contacts and collaborations.*
- **2010 Progress**
  - ❖ Supported the integration of developmental literacy practices into library programs by providing training including ‘Summer Reading Programs’, ‘Children’s Services Roundtables’, ‘Teen Outreach Roundtables’, ‘Battle of the Books’.
  - ❖ Provided opportunity for over 200 teens from 23 member libraries representing all five counties to participate in 5th annual Battle of the Books.
  - ❖ Promotion of teen-focused 2010 National Health Observances to plan displays and programs as well as provide reference information for patrons throughout the year.
  - ❖ Designed Summer Reading Program Mini-Grants from MHLS to support diversity, teen services and bringing new community members into the library.
  - ❖ Distributed information about revised competency guidelines ‘*Young Adults Deserve the Best: Competencies for Serving Youth*’.
  - ❖ Promoted MHLS created online ‘Kids’ Port’ (to help kids and their parents find safe, fun and educational web sites, as well as access library resources), available through every member library’s web site, as the ‘August MHLS Word of Mouth Marketing Experiment’ topic by distributing promotional materials for member libraries and their patrons and designing an online training module that was used by 108 member library staff. Also, promoted Kids OPAC as the ‘September MHLS Word of Mouth Marketing Experiment’ topic.
  - ❖ Provided training and resources for members to develop local school contacts and collaborations by:
    - creating Health Information Project (HIP) Resource Guides promoting library materials – targeted at local high school and middle school health teachers, guidance counselors and PTA representatives.
    - collaborating with RCLS, Orange/Ulster and Dutchess BOCES on ‘Fall into Books’ to bring public and school librarians together to network and form partnerships to further literacy.

## Adult Programming

- *Goal: Build more diverse offering of Adult programming.*
- *Intended Result(s): Member libraries will have education and resources to target varying segments of adult groups for program needs. Sharing program ideas and successes among libraries will be facilitated.*



- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Provided workshops in 2 locations focusing on adult summer reading, attended by 25.
  - ❖ Promoted methods developed through MHLS 'Building Your Base' project for libraries to reach targeted segments of adult groups through programming.
  - ❖ Coordinated the cooperatively funded 'Book Club in a Bag' program, which has grown since 2006 to 127 program-in-a-bag kits.
  - ❖ Number of member library programs for adults increased nearly 50% from 2007 to 2009.

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## Element 4 – Continuing Education (CE) & Training

- ❖ *Goal: Library directors, staff, friends, and trustees have the skills and knowledge necessary to provide quality library service to their communities.*
- ❖ *Intended Result(s): Directors, staff, trustees, volunteers, and friends will have core knowledge, continuing education opportunities and resources in target areas including Resource Sharing, Technology, Leadership, Management & Supervision, Planning & Evaluation, Awareness & Advocacy, Trustee Training, Special Client Populations, Children's Services, Young Adult Services, Adult Services, Training Patrons, and Reference education as stated in the Central Reference Services Plan. Members will have targeted educational resources available on-demand through the system web site.*
- ❖ **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Conducted 80 programs with a total of 1,456 attendances. Collected feedback from all attendees - reviewed by MHLS Continuing Education/ Professional Development Advisory Committee; evaluations continue to show MHLS CE program is meeting members needs.
  - ❖ Advisory Committee reviewed input collected from members regarding "What do you struggle with on a daily basis" - discussion included the importance of prioritizing training topics to address needs. Additionally, the committee participated in a visioning/planning exercise to facilitate change and development of the MHLS continuing education program.
  - ❖ Added a widget to the homepage of midhudson.org that displays a constantly updating list of the upcoming continuing education opportunities offered to member libraries through MHLS.
  - ❖ Began online training in the form of '5-Question' or '30-Second' trainings for the monthly MHLS Word-of-Mouth Marketing Experiment. Reviewed participation and comments - many staff reporting good results. Also, began promoting free webinars from vendors and professional organizations.
  - ❖ Developed methods of defining a successful patron experience in the library and on the phone, to use as a basis for an on-demand evaluation service.
  - ❖ Administered 6-month post-workshop evaluations for several workshops, showing participants reporting that they made lasting changes as a result of the training.
    - MHLS 'Display & Exhibit Design @ Your Library' workshop (provided by MHLS staff) resulted in participants reporting de-cluttering their circ desk areas and entrances.
    - Comments from attendees regarding changes as a result of the MHLS 'Role of the Board President' workshop: "I applied some of the information to better facilitate a board meeting." "I now do more effective meeting planning – sending out info ahead of time to give board members a chance to digest it and to save meeting time for open issues."
    - Comments from attendees regarding changes as a result of the MHLS 'Play, Move and Sing in Storytime with Sukey Malloy' workshop: "My music and rhythm presentations are now more developmentally appropriate." "I added many more songs and movement activities to my story hours. I also now focus on having a rhythm to my story hours so I can better keep the childrens interest."
  - ❖ Developed incentive program to encourage libraries to have all their trustees attend MHLS 'Essential Trustee Duties & Responsibilities'. Distributed free NYS Trustee Handbook (new 2010 edition) to 63

attendees. Included MHLS 'Education for Library Directors, Staff & Trustees' document in the session to emphasize the importance of staff training and the need to adequately budget in the area of staff education. Comments from attendees:

- *"My attitude towards the job of trustee has been jolted to a higher level. You made me aware of the responsibility associated with this job. I need to study this information and try to contribute to our meetings to elevate the level and enhance the library. Thank you so much."*
- *"I wish all my trustees could have come to this program as new trustees. Hope NYS makes it mandatory."*
- ❖ Brought in nationally known speaker Lee Rainie, Director, Pew Internet & American Life Project, to speak about 'Libraries as Social Networks'.
- ❖ Brought in nationally known speaker Peggy Wadsworth, Certified Volunteer Administrator for 'Recruiting & Managing Volunteers Effectively' workshop, addressing the best practices for enhancing the delivery of library services by engaging volunteers. Attended by 42.
  - *"Fantastic workshop – learned so much that can be applied to both paid staff and volunteers."*
  - *"Outstanding! This workshop was exactly what I needed to handle the problem of volunteers. They are wanted as well as needed."*

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## Element 5 – Consulting & Technical Assistance Services

- ❖ *Goal: MHLS will employ informed professional staff who can provide services to members and make onsite visits to libraries.*
- ❖ *Intended Result(s): Members will be able to choose consulting and technical assistance services that best suit their needs from a menu of free and fee-based services.*
- ❖ **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ MHLS staff made 338 visits (totaling 869 hours) on-site at member libraries for consultation, information, program support, technology support and training.
  - ❖ Targeted consultations and customized training programs available to be conducted at the library on-demand include 19 topics for library directors and staff, 11 topics for boards, 8 topics for Friends.
  - ❖ MHLS staff conducted 5,778 consults with member libraries (does not include system-wide communications).
  - ❖ Developed MHLS data collection methods regarding service use to provide a factual basis for future decision making.
  - ❖ 36 member libraries contract with MHLS for web site development and maintenance. In 2010, as part of an improvement project, brought up half of them with new sites that have an updated look, increase staff functionality and more of what patrons are looking for.
  - ❖ 5 member libraries contract with MHLS for technical support.
  - ❖ Instituted an Essential Documents Inventory project to insure each member library has in-place the documents to meet NYS Minimum Standards for Public Libraries including a current long-range plan, report to the community and a full complement of both internal and external policies.
  - ❖ The 'Handbook for New Directors in New York State' by MHLS Coordinator for Library Growth & Sustainability, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, available through the MHLS web site, to assist new directors in understanding the basics and how to provide quality library service to the community. In the acknowledgements, she has dedicated the Handbook to MHLS' Member Library Directors: *"This Handbook for New Public Library Directors in New York State is dedicated to the member library directors of the Mid-Hudson Library System (MHLS). Their hard work, dedication and perseverance*

*have been the drive behind the creation of this handbook." She was also named one of Library Journal's 2010 Movers & Shakers.*

- ❖ Assisted 14 member libraries with the Gates Library Initiative's Opportunity Online Broadband Grant program.

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## Element 6 – Coordinated Services

- *Goal: MHLS will negotiate coordinated purchases as needed.*
- *Intended Result(s): Member libraries will have opportunities for cost effective group buys.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Increased member libraries opportunities for cost-effective purchasing by providing recommendations for technology / library material / supply purchasing.
  - ❖ Negotiated reduced prices for system-wide database subscriptions.

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## Element 7 – Awareness & Advocacy

- ❖ *Goal: There will be an overall cooperative marketing strategy.*
- ❖ *Intended Result(s): Member libraries will have the education and resources to educate public officials, understand and respond to demographic trends, know what concerns the community and develop community support. The profile / value / awareness of libraries will be raised.*
- ❖ **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Launched the 2010 'Word-of-Mouth-Marketing Experiment' from the MHLS Marketing & Program Advisory Committee, each month focusing on "selling" one product/service/idea to patrons System-wide to increase the impact of the message.
  - ❖ Coordinated appointments with all 13 area legislators that represent the MHLS service area for NYLA's Library Lobby Day in Albany. MHLS was well represented with more than 50 library supporters in attendance.
  - ❖ Promoted 'Library Use Value Calculator' to demonstrate to patrons how much they would pay out-of-pocket for services received at the library and incorporated the calculator into more than 50% of member library webpages.
  - ❖ Provided consultations on educating public officials, understanding and responding to demographic trends, knowing what concerns the community and developing community support.
  - ❖ Held a County Funding Advocacy 'think tank' meeting for members.
  - ❖ 53 out of 66 libraries have or have had their budget voted on. 85% passed in 2010. 2010 county funding: 2 counties maintained funding, 3 were decreased.
  - ❖ Provided 'Public Library Vote Toolbox Workshop - Know-how for your library's vote' workshop for library directors, trustees and Friends proposing a public vote on a budget increase.
  - ❖ Topic of Across the Board Trustee newsletter was "7 Steps to Savvy Advocacy".
  - ❖ Brought in Kathy Miller, 2010 New York Library Association (NYLA) President and Director of the Rochester Regional Library Council and Jennifer Morris, 2006 NYLA President and former Executive Director of the Pioneer Library System, Canandaigua to provide 'Advocacy 101: the Five Keys to Effective Advocacy' workshop.
  - ❖ Conducted *Parents As Supporters* focus groups with parents of story time kids in libraries throughout the System, asking: What they value most about the library; How they get local information; What motivates them to come out and vote on an issue. Findings include that many parents are users of library services but not supporters (in terms of coming out to vote for the library budget). They use the library to meet people, get acquainted with their community and find inexpensive programs for their families. They are unaware how libraries are funded and/or about recent or upcoming library votes. This is a crucial, core group to focus on for budget vote success.

Further work will be devoted to how libraries can do a better job communicating funding issues, needs and goals.

- ❖ Provided workshops, support and information regarding which online tools are effective and make the best use of staff time through the 'Building Your Base Online Grant Project', designed to identify best practices when communicating online to leverage online communications to build libraries' base of support. Brought in nationally known speaker Nancy Dowd, Marketing Director for the New Jersey State Library and author of *Bite-Sized Marketing: Realistic Solutions for the Overworked Librarian* for workshop. Brought in Pam McClusky, Cybrarian of the Desmond-Fish Library for discussion focused on libraries as an entertainment venue and her guidance for how to make supporters "come back for more" using online communication. Evaluated member library web presence in six areas: Basic information; Access to services/products; Access to programs; Interactivity; Design; Responsiveness.
- ❖ Thanksgiving Challenge was run, encouraging libraries Friends and patrons to write letters to the editor in local newspapers and to post on Facebook why they are thankful for their library. 25 points of contact were achieved.
- ❖ Conducted 5 community focus groups on behalf of member libraries.

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## Element 8 – Communications Among Member Libraries

- *Goal: Library services will be strengthened through sharing of ideas and successes.*
- *Intended Result(s): Member library staff will have meetings / listserv / opportunities to network with others who do the same things and share expertise, facilitated by the System.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Formed Ad Hoc System Services Committee of member library directors to provide input during this time of budget reassessment and development of a new plan of service.
  - ❖ MHLS communication vehicles (The Bulletin, Across The Board, MHLS website and 5 MHLS listservs) continue to get positive response from member libraries regarding sharing of ideas and successes. In addition to the print and online readers, 388 now subscribe to the weekly MHLS Bulletin via email (39% increase). MHLS transitioned in 2010 to Google Groups for listserv communications as a cost-savings measure, and for the enhancement of being able to send attachments.
  - ❖ 'Across the Board' newsletter for member library trustees covered '7-Steps to Savvy Advocacy' and 'e-Books, E-Readers and Libraries'.
  - ❖ Facilitated networking opportunities (including 'Small Libraries Roundtable', 'Millennium Users Group', 'SAM Users Group', 'Trustee Education', 'Friends Support Group', 'Small Libraries Roundtable' and 'Roundtable for New Directors') so member library staff can meet others who do the same things and share expertise.
    - *"I always feel revitalized by these meetings."*
    - *"The support group renews my enthusiasm."*
    - *"As usual these meetings are really inspirational. Getting together and networking is invaluable."*

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## Element 9 – Cooperative Services with Other Library Systems

- *Goal: MHLS will collaborate with other library systems on targeted projects.*
- *Intended Result(s): Libraries will benefit from collaborations that enhance the efforts of staff at the local level, maximize cost effectiveness and increase regional opportunities.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Participated in the *New York Alliance of Library Systems* discussions including how Systems save libraries money through economy of scale, how Systems help libraries build capacity to meet the

needs of ever more demanding tech savvy users, and how implementing cooperation among Systems can help to cut or hold the line on costs.

- ❖ Joined a pilot project with some other public library systems through NYLA to potentially further reduce databases charges.
- ❖ Hosted an intern from SUNY Albany School of Information who is assisted this summer with the MHLS LSTA Service Improvement Project.
- ❖ Prepared a report from discussion with SENYLRC and RCLS regarding merging. Neither of these seem to provide advantages.
- ❖ Coordinated Southeastern Regional Correctional Facility Librarians meeting.
- ❖ Provided training at New York State Library Association Conference (NYLA).
- ❖ System staff worked with Southeastern New York Library Resources Council members to coordinate regional training opportunities.
- ❖ Enhanced efforts of staff at the local level, maximize cost effectiveness and increase regional opportunities by collaborating with area school library systems and regional public library systems on the Annual Fall Into Books Children's and Teens Literature Conference.
- ❖ Hosted regional Construction Grant Application Assistance workshop.
- ❖ Coordinated advocacy efforts with RCLS, Westchester, Upper Hudson, Four County and MVLS.

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## Element 10 – Construction

- *Goal: Insure libraries will have adequate space to meet the needs of their communities.*
- *Intended Result(s): Members will have training, resources and consultation on library space needs and assessment, construction planning, construction funding and bonds, and support with the NYS construction grant process.*
- **2010 Progress:**
  - ❖ Provided training, resources and on-site consultations on library space needs and assessment, construction planning, energy efficiency projects, construction funding and bonds.
  - ❖ Held a 'Greening Your Library' workshop to help libraries identify and pursue energy efficient and sustainable facility operations choices. Comments from attendees:
    - "Workshop gave lots of ideas and resources."
    - "Very comprehensive."
  - ❖ Facilitated the New York State Aid for Public Library Construction grant application process. Fifteen member libraries were recommended awards under the State Aid for Public Library Construction Program.

*Merribeth Advocate*