

Consultant Reports
Directors Association Meeting – February 2012

Merribeth Advocate, Outreach & Education Coordinator

1. **Annual Report Update:** The 2011 Annual Report is due from each member library to MHLS on February 17. Several of you have shared great tips for answering specific questions and I am adding them all to the center of midhudson.org in **MHLS Tips for Answering Questions**. This section is being updated about 3 times a week so. Please let me know if I can be helpful in completing your report by February 17.
2. **Job Resource Center Page:** These new web pages bring together the great resources you have for people looking to find jobs or develop their careers. They are now live in each county at the following URLs:
 - **Columbia County:** <http://midhudson.org/ccjobs.htm>
 - **Dutchess County:** <http://midhudson.org/dcjobs.htm>
 - **Greene County:** <http://midhudson.org/gcjobs.htm>
 - **Putnam County:** <http://midhudson.org/pcjobs.htm>
 - **Ulster County:** <http://midhudson.org/ucjobs.htm>

In addition we have updated the 'Quick Answers – Get Help Finding a Job' webpage and have linked it to the Job Resource Center pages. There we have added a new section of resources for veterans. NYS Department of Labor has a program that gives military veterans any special employment assistance in return for having served their country. Eligible veterans must have been discharged or released from active duty with other than a dishonorable discharge. The Department of Labor's Veterans Program provides priority of service to eligible special disabled veterans, veterans of the Vietnam Era, disabled veterans other than special disabled veterans, Campaign veterans and all other veterans and eligible persons, by giving them preference over non-veterans in the provision of employment and training services available, such as, registration, counseling, referral to supportive services, and job development.

3. **NextReads:** In the process of implementing NextReads, we will be sending out information about the widgets they have to add to your library website that give book suggestions to patrons. Libraries who have their websites managed by MHLS will have the new widgets added to their sites when the widgets are set-up.
4. **OverDrive MHLS Digital Download Center Enhancements:** There were several new enhancements to the portal at <http://mhls.lib.overdrive.com>, based on your input:
 - **Help finding materials available now:** On the left-hand navigation bar you see 2 new links: 'Show me eBooks available now' and 'Show me audiobooks available now'. A quick one-stop shopping for patrons looking for something they can enjoy right away.
 - **More opportunity to browse "books":** 3 new browse sections (with covers) have been added to the front page, based on the popularity of the categories: 'Mystery & Suspense', 'Romance' and 'Self-Improvement'.
 - **More access to juvenile titles:** On the left-hand navigation bar there is a new link to 'Juvenile Fiction'
 - **More access to non-fiction titles:** On the left-hand navigation bar there are new links to 'Business & Finance', 'Careers & Employment', 'History' and 'Travel'.

At this point it looks like the OverDrive statistics for the month of January 2012 equal nearly 30% of the 2011 total activity!

Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Coordinator for Library Growth & Sustainability

1. **Albany Update:**
 - **Governor's Budget:**
 - i. Proposes flat funding for Library Aid at \$79 million; 4% increase for School Aid.
 - ii. Library Aid is currently 23% below 1994 levels.
 - **New Senate Committee formed to focus on Libraries.** Three local Senators have been named to the committee: Saland, Seward and Larkin. MHLS reps will be scheduling visits with all three prior to Library Advocacy Day.
 - **Library Advocacy Day:** Tuesday, March 6th in Albany
 - i. MHLS Member Library staff, trustees, Friends and patrons are encouraged to attend Library Advocacy Day sponsored by the New York Library Association (NYLA). The goal is to show legislators how much people care about libraries by packing the offices at every appointment. With ~~13~~ 11 legislators to meet with **we need lots of people** to come and show their support.
 - ii. Please register online at <http://calendar.midhudson.org/>

- iii. Taking the bus? Stops in New Paltz, Kingston & Catskill. \$15 To register for the bus visit <http://calendar.rcls.org/>
 - iv. MHLS will once again make all appointments for Advocacy Day.
 - **Redistricting:** A very hot issue in Albany right now are the proposed maps that were recently released to redistrict Senate and Assembly districts in New York. The Governor has said he will veto the maps proposed by the Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment on January 25th. Stay tuned...
 - **Legislator Updates:**
 - i. Molinaro and Kirwans' seats will be decided in a special election on March 20th.
 - ii. Joel Miller has announced he will retire at the end of the year.
 - iii. At the federal level: Maurice Hinchey has announced he will not seek re-election.
 - **Michael Borges**, Executive Director of the New York Library Association will be leaving his role in NYLA in mid-March. He has accepted a position with the New York State Association of School Business Officials.
2. **Advocacy Boot Camp sessions** start in February! This is a great way to help your frontline staff and trustees feel more comfortable in their role as advocates for the library and increases in library funding. I sent a list of who participated in 2011 to the Directors list to help you target new advocates amongst your staff and board! This is not just about state level advocacy, it provides basic information about how libraries and the system are funded, an overview of the difference between advocacy and lobbying and helps build skills to get the word out effectively.
3. **Tax Cap:**
- Be sure to fill out the survey Mike sent via the Directors listserv to indicate your fiscal year span and the date on which your board adopted your 2012 budget.
 - NYLA has made the slides from the webinar available on their web site (<http://www.nyla.org>)
4. **MTA Tax** (this is relevant to member libraries in Dutchess & Putnam Counties):
- The reform* goes into effect April 1, 2012.
 - A bill has been introduced to exempt libraries completely by the new chair of the Senate Committee on Libraries (Hugh Farley).
- *The MTA Payroll Tax reform bill exempts any employer (including libraries) with payrolls of \$1.25 million or less annually from the MTA Payroll Tax. There is also a graduated reduction in the MTA payroll tax for those employers with payrolls between \$1.25 and \$1.75 million per year.*
5. **Building Your Base Online Project: "10 Things":** Almost 80 participants are now live with learning journals and participating in this program. We've noticed a wide range of technological capabilities. Some participants think it is too easy some feel it is very confusing but I think we're still getting everyone up to speed and educating them as to what to expect. As they become more comfortable with their learning journal environment we expect things to start getting really interesting!
6. **Association/Municipal Public Libraries:** if you are planning to go for a 414 vote this year please let me know as soon as you can. Thanks!