

Consultant Reports
MHLS Director's Association
Meeting of Friday, September 7, 2012

Merribeth Advocate, Outreach & Education Coordinator

1. Mango Languages:

- **MHLS 2012 Outreach \$100 MiniGrants Available to Learn Library Spanish!** Mango Languages has developed an online course **to help library staff better serve Spanish-speaking patrons**. It covers library-specific content like how to help a patron obtain a library card, navigate the reference desk, and much more. **MHLS will give an Outreach MiniGrant of \$100 for the library, to the first twenty staff members from MHLS member libraries submitting proof of completion, received by September 30, 2012.** There is a link on the midhudson.org homepage to access the course and the grant specifics.
- **More Languages now in Mango:** Mango has greatly increased the number of languages they offer, and we get all the new ones included in the same current subscription price!
 - Mango Basic - for the beginner in a new language. Teaches helpful everyday phrases. The self-paced courses, which require only two to five hours of time to complete, are available in **34 foreign languages** and **15 English as a Second Language (ESL)** courses.
 - Mango Complete - a 100-lesson course that is designed to provide a full understanding of an entire language and its culture. It is available in **31 foreign languages** and **13 ESL** courses.
- **MHLS mentioned nationally :** The staff at Mango Languages were so impressed with the effectiveness of the MHLS Word-of-Mouth Marketing Experiment and the recent "10 Things" self-directed online learning program that they featured us on their blog!: <http://bit.ly/RgNtV3>

2. Database Changes:

- **Historical New York Times** - With the renewal of the MHLS subscription to HeritageQuest, now every MHLS member library has access to 'Historical New York Times' (1851-2006) with 'Index' (1851-1993). It is being added to the county **HOMEACCESS** pages.
- **Business Insights: Essentials** – Gale's 'Business & Company Resource Center' has transformed into 'Business Insights: Essentials'. This new resource includes all the same functionality and information, as well as enhanced content and features that enable users to delve deeper into business data, with an improved user experience.
- **Job Now** – Time is running out on this online service that provides expert resume help, real-time interview coaching and career advice. Originally funded under AARA/BTOP, at this point it looks like the access will end in May 2013.

3. New Social Media Features:

- **In Mango:** While using Mango, your patrons can now earn virtual badges, share their language learning progress on Facebook and Twitter and most importantly, tell the world that it's all thanks to their library. Every social media post includes a link to <http://FindMango.com/> , which will help users find the closest local library that offers Mango Languages. This means increased traffic and patronage to your branch and increased awareness for your digital resources.
- **In OverDrive:** New versions of the OverDrive Media Console app for Android, iOS and Windows Phone 7 devices incorporate social media sharing features, enable users to share their enthusiasm for library eBooks and audiobooks via social media networks. On each of the platforms, users have the option to share from within the eBook or audiobook title they're enjoying.

4. Digital Literacy:

- **MHLS Training Update:** This summer there were a total of 47 attendances from MHLS representing 32 libraries to the state-wide train-the-trainer workshop to instruct library staff on how train

colleagues and the public, providing uniform and standardized digital literacy content throughout the state. Information about the initiative, including lots of training materials, available at <http://www.digitny.org/>

- **Connect 2 Compete:** This successful pilot program from California plans to go national in the coming months. Stay tuned at <http://www.connect2compete.org/> “Through a partnership with Best Buy’s Geek Squad and America’s public libraries” they will be offering:
 - Internet: \$9.95 per month high-speed Internet for free school lunch families
 - Computers: \$150 laptop or desktop computer for free school lunch families
 - Free Training: Free digital literacy training online
 - **Change Your Tomorrow:** Recent television ads inform viewers ways that the Internet can improve their lives – studies find that one of the reasons Americans are not connected to the Internet is they are unaware of the benefits. At <http://changeyourtomorrow.org> click “Find Technology Training In Your Area” and there is a “Make It Easy Toolbox – to Get Online at The Library” by zipcode search.
 - **What is digital literacy?** *Literacy represents a person’s ability to read, write, and solve problems using both spoken and written language. Digital literacy is the ability to apply those same skills using technology such as desktop computers, ebook readers and smartphones.*
 - **Why do people need to be digitally literate?** *Being digitally literate allows people to interact using the tools and technologies that are increasingly being used at home, in school and in business.*
5. **Banners to Borrow:** MHLS now has three 3’ x 6’ banners that member libraries can borrow for events, booths, parades, etc...
- “Reading is Fun! Explore Your Library”
 - “Library Book Sale”
 - “Library Program Here Today!”
6. **AWE Products:** Designed to provide safe digital learning experiences that attract kids to libraries. They will be running a NY Group Special Buy from November 15 – December 15. Details about the products, and a link they provide to possible funding sources at <http://www.awelearning.com/en/markets/libraries/in-the-library/>
7. **Rotary Literacy Initiative:** Consider partnering with Rotary in your community – one of their major goals is to promote literacy. With 34,000 community-based service clubs (and 1.2 million members) you are sure to find one close by in your community. At <http://www.rotary.org> they have a Club Locator.

Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Coordinator for Library Growth & Sustainability

1. Albany Update

- a. **Special District Legislation for two member libraries signed into law!** The Grinnell Library Association and the LaGrange Association Library are both pursuing initiating votes to become special district public libraries this fall. Their legislation was signed into law this summer by the Governor which allows for the public vote to create and fund the district as well as elect the first board of trustees for their districts. Congratulations to these two libraries for taking the plunge to obtain stable, sustainable funding for their libraries.
- b. **Recent “Bullet Aid”:** Two member libraries, **Mahopac and Pawling**, received “Bullet Aid” from their legislators. There was statewide press on this aid being given only to school districts and libraries. NYLA Executive Director, Jeremy Johannesen shared that *“The funding was determined largely at the will of the legislators – and only [by] those who are in the majority (Assembly – Democrats / Senate – Republicans)... and doled out with little fanfare as so not to draw negative attention... Even within the majority caucuses the funding available to each member is determined by ‘rank’ within the house. Some members opted to disburse their funds only to schools in their districts.”*

c. **Tax Cap**

- i. **I have developed a short survey for each library that you will be sent after your budget vote** to track percentage increases, voter approval rates and compliance with the tax cap regulation. All libraries that have had votes in 2012 have already completed the survey (thanks!).
- ii. **Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the Tax Cap is attached to this report.**
Thank you to the Marketing Advisory Committee for their suggestions on this document.
- iii. **Your “CFO” (Chief Financial Officer) should receive an email regarding the availability of the online form that needs to be filed.** (In early September for libraries with calendar fiscal years; mid-January for libraries with school fiscal years.) If you feel the Office of the State Comptroller has the wrong contact information for your library call their hotline to update it: **518.473.0006**
- iv. **Formula Change for next year: Carryover Allowance - “If the total property taxes levied was less than the tax levy limit in the prior year, a local government or school district is permitted to carryover up to 1.5 percent of the prior year levy limit. In accordance with guidelines issued by the Department of Taxation and Finance, there is no carryover permitted for unused exclusions associated with growth in pension costs or tort judgments.”**
- v. **Compliance Timing Issue still under discussion.** During the Office of the State Comptroller’s (OSC) webinar in August it was stated that **“A local government must submit its report prior to budget adoption even if an override is enacted.”** This is impossible for a number of libraries given their budget cycle or their vote dates. During the Q&A period of the webinar this statement was challenged, the presenters claimed that there was a ruling from the Department of Taxation & Finance that stated this, however, I followed up with the presenter after the webinar and they said there is not actually a ruling that covers all libraries. Therefore, **there is still lack of clarity on this issue.** The Division of Library Development and the New York Library Association are aware of the situation and still advocating on behalf of libraries with OSC and the Taxation & Finance.
 1. **My research indicates there are probably about 25 libraries that may need to address the budget cycle adjustment issue in order to comply with the OSC guidelines if a ruling should be issued.** The boards of the following types of libraries may choose to address this before being absolutely told to by the Department of Taxation & Finance:
 - a. **All Special District Public Libraries, with the exception of the Poughkeepsie Public Library District,** may need to consider a vote date change or a fiscal year change depending on their current budget cycle. To do this it would mean an amendment to your special district legislation that needs to be approved through the NYS Legislature. This would mean legislation would need to be sponsored and drafted by your State Senator and Assemblyperson.
 - b. **School District Public Libraries with calendar fiscal years (Jan-Dec) and votes occurring in the first half of the fiscal year.** I believe this would mean an adjustment to a school fiscal year (June-July).
 - c. **Association and municipal public libraries with a calendar fiscal year that seek a budget increase using the 259 school ballot option.** I believe this would mean an adjustment to a school fiscal year (June-July).
- d. **Legislation to ban sex offenders in public libraries:** Two bills caught some attention last year, but neither passed. One has been found unconstitutional, the one that tried to ban sex offenders

completely from public libraries. The other one will likely be reintroduced in 2013: S.7823 would ban sex offenders from children's rooms. Stay tuned...

2. **Leadership Development Series with Sandra Nelson:** Twenty-seven member library directors have registered for this customized leadership development opportunity! The first session will be held on September 12th, so there is still time to register!
3. **Construction Grants:** Ten member libraries have applied for construction aid grants for the coming year in addition to an application by the Mid-Hudson Library System. The MHLS Board will be voting on funding recommendations for applicants at their September 19th meeting.
4. **Roundtable for New Directors:** Eric and I have planned the next Roundtable for New Directors session, it will be a hands-on workshop on Millennium for Administrators. This event is designed for member library directors that have been in their positions for three years or less. It will be on Thursday, October 18th from 10am-12pm in the MHLS Auditorium.
5. **Going Dewey-Free:** At the *Marketing Your Collection (Books & Beyond)* workshop, the third in the MHLS **PR Essentials series**, Patti Haar, director of the Patterson Library, shared her approach for going Dewey-free at her library. I point this out because I'd like to recommend that other libraries going Dewey-free **work off of the Patterson BISAC subject headings**. Patti did a lot of work to create them and did a good job in our opinion. This seems like an opportunity for libraries pursuing this type of collection management system to work together as a cooperative to maximize findability of Dewey-free items in the shared online catalog. Just a suggestion... ;-)
6. **2012 Essential Documents Inventory:** I have completed the inventory for 2012 and notified all libraries still working on their list of essential documents as to which items are missing from their files. In the past year, many libraries made excellent progress, particularly in the areas of personnel policies and internal financial controls but there is still work to be done! Of note:
 - a. Operating without a current long-range plan that is based on community input can be detrimental to your organization and your future prospects. **56% of member libraries do not have a current long-range plan**. This is one of the top consultation topics I am asked to come talk to boards about so if your library falls into this category please do not hesitate to contact me, I'm happy to help you create a path to develop a new plan.
 - b. **39% of member libraries have not done an annual report to their community - ever**. Not only is this one of the Minimum Standards for Public Libraries in New York State, it is a vital public relations piece that helps voters and donors make decisions about your library. I am happy to help anyone who would like to tackle that!

Robert Drake, Information Technology Coordinator

1. **SAM Command PC:** A number of libraries have moved forward with SAM Command PC. We will be working with the remaining libraries to get those installed this month.
2. **State Telephone Fiber:** Heermance Memorial Library recently received fiber internet from State Telephone (statetel.com) making them one of our top libraries by bandwidth. According to State Telephone engineers, they have not currently expanded significantly beyond Coxsackie however other libraries in Greene County

should keep an eye on their growth. Fiber provides substantially more bandwidth than cable/DSL, however costs are frequently comparable to business level cable packages. This is also potentially an e-rateable expense (filtering is required).

- 3. E-Rate Grant:** MHLS has worked with the Division of Library Development and E-Rate Central to schedule a Director Training in preparation for the next E-Rate funding year. This training will take place on October 30th. I encourage all libraries, even those not currently considering E-Rate to come to this training to gain a better understanding of the benefits and process involved. If you're interested in attending, please register as soon as possible so we can get an idea of attendance.

Further, it would be advisable for libraries to peruse: <http://www.usac.org/sl/>

The Getting Started and Eligible Services List sections in particular will help determine whether E-Rate funds may be valuable to your member library. The 2013 deadlines are not currently posted but the Program Deadline page shows the past deadlines of previous funding years – these are expected to be similar for next year.

Eric McCarthy, Automation Coordinator

- 1. Patron Data Entry Workshops:** After 6 workshops, I'm happy to report that we had 100% library participation with 127 participants.
- 2. Webinar:** I hope at least one person per library was able to attend the Webinar that was hosted by Innovative on August 9th as a Sierra preview. If you were unable to attend the Webinar hosted that day, please get in touch and I can send out a link for a Sierra general interest webinar.
- 3. Passwords:** The workflows associated with logins will change with Sierra. We will no longer have that top-level login and each individual login initials will govern not only the permissions but the modules associated with those initials. As we move closer to migration date, it would be helpful if all directors create a password/username matrix to help us manage this transition. I will send along an example.
- 4. Ad-Hoc Committee for OPAC Changes:** It would be helpful to react to requests for changes in the catalog with input from Directors in a more streamlined way than going through Resource Sharing Committee and then onto the DA. Often this process can slow changes to months when minor requests might be better evaluated by an email communication system that can assess changes on our staging site and approve, disapprove or modify.
- 5. OPAC:** The in-demand column of the OPAC will be replaced with the patron login form. This change is required because the script that was written to generate this list will be lost when we move the server off-site. You can use the high-demand holds function in Millennium Circulation to generate this list for collection development. When we move our server off-site, it is important to remember that the permalinks will no longer work. So if you have used these, they will have to be updated.