

# MHLS Report to Member Library Directors | September 2023

The format of this report is based on the MHLS service priorities as determined by MHLS stakeholders.

## 1. Delivery Services

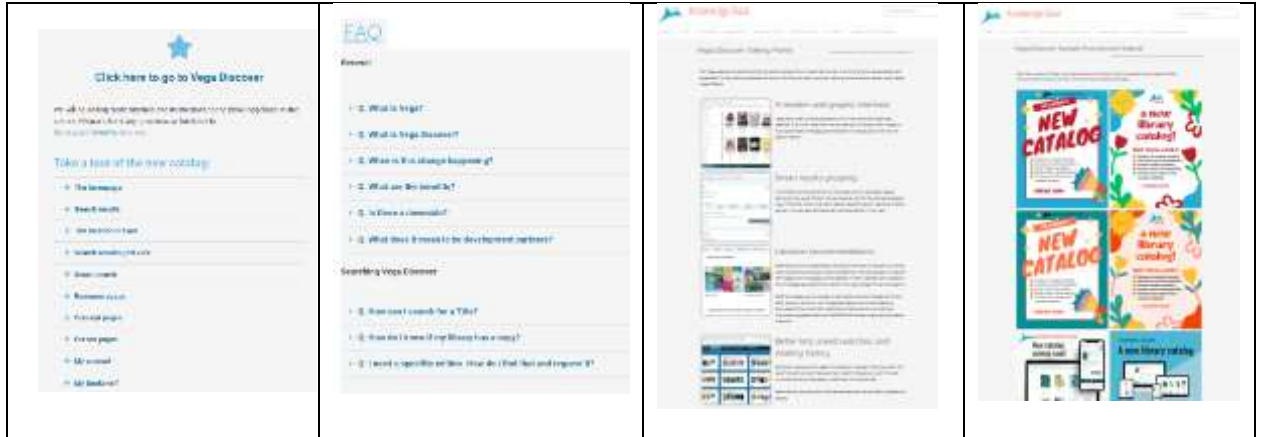
- a. Please send any extra delivery bins back to MHLS that have accumulated in your library during the summer and after the Labor Day holiday. If needed, attach a note and place put them next to your regular outgoing bins for the drivers to pick up.
- b. Winter is Coming...
  - i. Just a reminder that if walks leading from the street to your library are not shoveled, delivery drivers may not be able to make a delivery to your library.
  - ii. If weather is predicted to be severe, the drivers may deploy the night before to ensure delivery keeps running smoothly. In these cases, a message will be sent to the MHLS-ALERTS list to let you know.
- c. As seen through delivery postings to the MHLS Notices list, from time-to-time routes are being completed off schedule during the evenings as well as delayed during the day. This is due to our vendor, Valley Courier, having a lack of substitute drivers. MHLS's goal, as stated in contractual language that calls for substitutes to be available, is to always have routes completed on schedule for the benefit of all parties involved. Please let us know if this is impacting your library operations in any way.
- d. Please help delivery run as smoothly and efficiently as possible by providing a clear path to your library's incoming and outgoing bin location, notify us of any lock and key changes in advance, and provide any feedback on the service and drivers.

## 2. Integrated Library System & Cataloging Services

- a. **Vega URL Change to its permanent home: [discover.midhudsonlibraries.org](https://discover.midhudsonlibraries.org)** will be taking place in the overnight hours between 10/1 and 10/2
- b. **New Catalog processes for Paperbacks in place at Go-Live**– The DA approved the recommendation to create a separate record for paperback copies, in order to establish the ability for patrons to select paperback editions or not, if they have a preference. The action was approved to be in place at the time we go live in Vega. Nina is creating documentation and training available for this ahead of the go live date to prepare staff for this minor workflow change. This will also be included in the full staff training sessions.
- c. **Vega Discover Launch-**
  - i. Training -You have options!
    1. Introductory webinar – one hour, to be recorded – **September 20, 2023**, 1pm-2pm – register
    2. Onsite training at Claverack Free Library – **October 3, 2023**, 10am-12pm – register
    3. Onsite training at Mid-Hudson Auditorium – **October 4, 2023**, 10am-12pm – register
    4. Onsite training at East Fishkill Community Library – **October 5, 2023**, 10am-12pm – register
    5. Sierra Users Group at Mid-Hudson Auditorium (including discussion of future Vega releases) – **October 25, 2023**, 10am-12pm – register
    6. Monthly lunchtime webinars for staff – in conjunction with launch, provisionally November-March
    7. Comprehensive on-demand training with certification

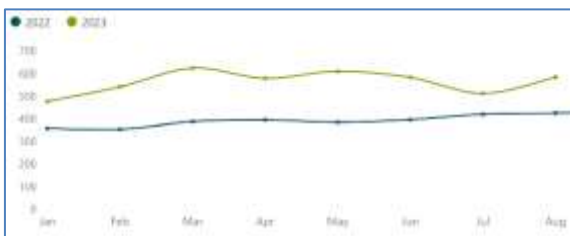
- ii. **Vega Discover Launch Kit**- We've Got you covered! The Vega Discover area of the Knowledgebase is brimming with opportunities for you to get ready for the Vega Discover Catalog. Our Launch Kit includes
  1. User Guide – The user guide includes documentation and video training on the commonly used features. It will provide staff with a guided tour of the catalogs features and functions.
  2. FAQs
  3. Talking Points
  4. Promo Material

**Vega Discover Launch kit - <https://kb.midhudson.org/vega/>**



- d. Supporting member libraries is what we do, and it is working! For years we have been pressing you to open tickets, and we can see that you are. While we still get some direct email requests, the bulk of what we do is reflected in our tickets. This means the Technology Operations team has the opportunity to understand the trends and create internal processes that improve our efficiency and clarity for response.

During the pandemic, our support ticket rate just about doubled. The volume of tickets continues to grow at just under 25% in years since. Below you can see the year-to-date tickets compared to last year. Along with some information about our performance.



**By the Numbers Q1-Q2 2023**

- 87.2% 1 resolved with one touch
- 82% resolved under 1 hour & 96% same day.
- 3442 tickets solved, 3429 created, 2 unresolved related to equipment.

The tickets are overwhelmingly related to Sierra and the bulk of those are answered by our catalogers. Our tickets range from quick expertise taps to full on projects. We also manage equipment purchases and all other forms through our ticketing platform and support Sierra installation and access issues as well as printing.

In 2020 we upgraded our ticketing platform from an introductory trial, where all staff shared licenses, to a real ticketing system where we can sort tickets, store intel, and gather data. Today we have a very good understanding of the work we complete and can make use of what we learn in the process and

even reuse answers and information in future tickets. The MHLS Technology Operations team is an incredible assembly of individual expertise and experience. Our ticketing system helps us to not only divide the work for efficiency, but we each have full view of all tickets and often cross lines to complete tickets in each other's areas when we can. When someone is away or overwhelmed, we work on the volume as a team. This is exactly why you will hear us again and again remind you and your staff to use the ticketing system as your first line of contact. Tickets may not be the most interesting thing in the world to talk about, but managing the support we provide to our members in this way, has really impacted how we can move forward. It creates not only an understanding of where we are today but helps to provide the organizational space to accomplish development as well. If you would like to know more about our tickets and even the data for your library, please open a ticket by emailing [techsupport@midhudson.org](mailto:techsupport@midhudson.org) 😊.

- e. Sierra 6.0 is scheduled for Installation on the evening of 9/14. The release includes system updates and the following items within the Sierra desktop Application:

**View item status change date:**

Starting in Sierra 6.0, Sierra will display the last date an item status was updated when a user hovers over the status field in an item record. The *last-status-update* field is also included in the SierraDNA Views as part of the item record status view. Note: the *last\_status\_update* field will be empty until the item's status changes after the library as upgraded to Sierra 6.0 or higher.

**View patron record from Holds screen:**

This enhancement allows an authorized staff member to see the patron information when viewing an item, volume or bib-level hold in order to easily identify the correct patron in the holds queue. If the staff user is not authorized to use permission 161 (View patron records), 162 (Create patron records) or 164 (Update patron records), the override permissions pop-up is presented.

**Display due date and status in Holds/Bookings view**

Sierra will display both the status and the due date of checked-out items when searching the catalog so that staff can easily differentiate between normal checked-out items and those that have additional status information.

**Display statistical group name in item record**

Sierra will display the descriptive name of the statistical group in the checkout location (OUT LOC) and checkin location (IN LOC) in the item record so that staff can easily interpret the location information without memorizing the Statistical Group Maintenance table.

Alas.....the fix for **Delete Items** was not included.

### 3. Coordinated IT Services

- a. **MHLS IT ordering is suspended after 10/31** – Each year the business office prepares for closing the books at the end of the year by suspending the outgoing orders. The MHLS IT department will not take orders for equipment or software that we must order on a libraries behalf. The deadline ensures that all orders are filled and invoiced by the end of the year. If you have a need to order equipment through MHLS IT you can review the [Tech Purchase form](#).
- b. The EU's Digital Services Act (DSA) will take effect 1/1/2024. The DSA is aimed at creating a safer digital space in which the fundamental rights of all users of digital services are protected. While this won't directly impact the US, it could have ripple effect, like we saw with the GDPR and common charger. We could see changes in major Tech Companies (Google, Microsoft, Meta, etc) within the coming months as they move to compliance.
- c. AI continues to expand into more markets with more major player getting involved. Facebook parent company Meta recent release plans to develop and launch it's own large language model AI. The EU

and US are working on regulation and frameworks for AI, however no such legislation is in place. As such it is important to be aware of what is be put online and how it may be used to train these AI models.

#### 4. Professional Development & Continuing Education

- a. The MHLS Library Horizons Series continues on September 21<sup>st</sup> with “[Understanding Artificial Intelligence: What librarians need to know](#),” with Alison Macrina, director of the [award-winning](#) Library Freedom Project.

- b. **Libraries as Community Resilience Hubs | October 19<sup>th</sup>, 10:00am-11:30 | [Register](#)**

The American Library Association declared climate change as the “grandest challenge of our generation.” As libraries grapple with the changing needs of communities in the face of climate change there is work to be done to ensure we are contributing to community resilience in new ways.

Join us online on Thursday October 19th, as we explore how libraries can focus on not only facility issues to ensure libraries are energy-secure and comfortable in extreme weather but to also think through how libraries serve as a community hub for education and action projects that bring neighbors together to problem-solve in the face of the impacts of climate change.

##### **Learning Outcomes:**

Participants will:

- gain an understanding of what climate resilience is, and how it relates to the role libraries can play in their communities
- learn how to develop a network potential community partners to jointly identify community-based climate resilience projects to implement
- begin to plan for the implementation of at least one climate resilience project at their library or in their community.

##### **About the presenter:**

**Cynthia Nikitin** has led numerous large-scale multi-sectoral place-based community-led projects during her twenty eight years with Project for Public Spaces (pps.org) and since. She has facilitated over one hundred placemaking training workshops and seminars around the world. Cynthia’s technical expertise stretches from the development of downtown master plans to the creation of corridor-wide transportation and land use strategies, and development of creative placemaking initiatives to create safer and healthier cities and upgrade informal settlements in the developing world.

This program is presented through a partnership with the [Mid-Hudson Library System](#), [Ramapo Catskill Library System](#), and [Sustainable Hudson Valley](#). The session will be recorded. [Click here to view the RCLS code of conduct](#).

- c. **MHLS EDI in Libraries Series**

- i. **Conflict De-Escalation in the Workplace: Bystander Intervention 2.0**, October 12th, 10:00 – 11:30am | Online [Learn more & register](#)
- ii. **Resilience: This Moment and Beyond**, Nov 13th, 2:00 – 3:30 pm | Online [Learn more & register](#)

- d. **Sustainability Resources & Climate Action Planning**

- i. **Climate Action Planning (Part 2): Disaster Preparedness and Community Resilience**, Sept 26th, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm | Online [Learn more & register](#)
  - ii. **Climate Justice**, Oct 3rd, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm | Online [Learn more & register](#)
  - iii. **Living Our Values Out Loud: Programs that Walk the Talk**, Nov 28th, 2:00 – 3:00 pm | [Learn more & register](#)
  - iv. **Stronger Together: Collective Impact and Climate Action Programming**, December 13th, 2:00 – 3:00 pm | [Learn more & register](#)
- e. **MHLS Member Library Friends Group Online Meetup**, Oct 18th, 3:00 – 4:30 pm | [Learn more & register](#)
- f. **Action Requested - Reframing Library Organizations: Implementing Strategic Foresight Tools to Create Future Ready Library Operating Systems**: We have the opportunity to partner with the Connecticut State Library to bring this training to MHLS in 2024 or 2025. We would need to guarantee that at least 30 people in our system would attend the training. Below is a description of this 3-day online professional development opportunity. Please let Rebekkah know if you and/or members of your staff would be interested to attend:
- i. “Building on four years of the IMLS-supported Transformation for Libraries: The Futures School, the CT State Library and partner TFSX (formerly Kedge: The Futures School) are training organizational cohorts, including library systems, associations, and partner networks. The initial phase empowered individuals with strategic foresight, successfully training over 400 library workforce members. In this next iteration, the initiative takes a systems perspective, integrating strategic foresight into operations and infusing futures thinking into institutional capacity, cultural shifts, technological innovation, model processes, and succession planning. Each cohort trains a team of staff members with foresight tools to lead their library to the future. Success in the 21st century landscape of rapid change means we must embrace new pathways to the future. We need to foster mindsets and skills that help us to seize untapped possibilities and opportunities. Strategic foresight is a framework that creates multiple future scenarios, envisioning outcomes and evaluating current and pending strategies to support decision making and action in the present against a suite of possible futures.”

## 5. Consulting & Development

- a. **FY2024 Inflation and Allowable Levy Growth**  
 Property tax levy growth for libraries with fiscal years that close on December 31 will be capped at 2 percent for the 2024 fiscal year, according to State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli. All libraries that have their own board and their own budget vote – even if you did hold a vote/don’t plan to hold a vote in 2023 for FY 2024 - are required to file the online “[tax cap form](#)” the NYS Office of the State Comptroller by the end of the year. A reminder that any override of the cap must be accompanied by a cap override resolution passed by a super majority of the library’s board of trustees prior to the adoption of the 2024 budget. [A primer on the Tax Cap for libraries](#) is available for permanent viewing in the Library Sustainability Academy on MHLS' Training on Demand platform. If your library is not enrolled in Training on Demand, you can access the recording at: <http://bit.ly/2ceMNIQ>.
- b. The **Pay Transparency Law** goes into effect this month. All postings for jobs to be performed in the State of New York must include a salary or salary range. The range should show the minimum and maximum

annual salary or hourly rates that the employer believes in good faith to be accurate at the time of posting.

- c. **414 Vote Libraries Meetup, October 6th, 2:00 – 3:30 pm | Online [Register](#)**  
Library teams going for a 414 vote this year meet to share best practices and learn from their peers.

d. **Trustee Education**

- i. [Statement on Trustee Education Certificates](#)

ii. **Upcoming Events:**

1. **Online - Trustee Handbook Book Club: Equity, Diversity, Access & Justice** October 17th, 5:00-6:30PM (1.5 credit hours) | [Learn more & register](#)
2. **In Person - MHLS Annual Meeting** October 27th, 10:00am -12pm (0.5 credit hours) | Keynote speaker: Deborah Caldwell-Stone, Director of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) and Executive Director of the Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF)  
Location: Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Educational Center of the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site
3. **Online - Trustee Handbook Book Club: Financing & Managing Construction Projects** December 19th, 5:00-6:30PM (1.5 credit hours) | [Learn more & register](#)

- iii. These courses are accessible 24/7 in the [Trustee Academy](#) on MHLS's Training on Demand platform:

1. Trustee Essentials
2. Core Values & Ethics
3. Financial & Fiduciary Responsibilities
4. Legal Issues: NYS Minimum Standards
5. Pathways to Sustainable Funding
6. Seven Habits of Highly Effective Boards
7. Trustee Handbook Book Club
  - a. Board-Director Relationship
  - b. Duties & Responsibilities
  - c. Parliamentary Procedures
  - d. Intellectual Freedom, Ethics & Conflicts of Interest
  - e. Facilities
  - f. Financial Planning & Budgeting
  - g. Library Board Meetings
  - h. Open Meeting Law
  - i. Personnel
  - j. Planning & Evaluation
  - k. Policies & Risk Management
  - l. PR & Advocacy
  - m. Strategic Planning

- iv. Coming Soon – a new edition of the Trustee Handbook is at the printers; we hope to have hard copies in hand by November.
  
- e. **The Library of Local Project & Citizen Preparedness Corps:** With severe weather events becoming more frequent and more extreme, it is more important than ever that New Yorkers are prepared for disasters. We have partnered with First Lieutenant Kyle Kilner of the New York National Guard to bring the NYS Citizen Preparedness Corps training program to six of [The Library of Local](#) locations throughout the Mid-Hudson Library System. The NY Citizen Preparedness Training Program teaches residents to have the tools and resources to prepare for any type of disaster, respond accordingly and recover as quickly as possible to pre-disaster conditions. The training course will provide an introduction to responding to a natural or man-made disaster. Participants will be advised on how to properly prepare for any disaster, including developing a family emergency plan and stocking up on emergency supplies. Training session dates, times and locations are as follows:
  - 1. Wednesday, October 3 at 3:00pm  
Where: Millbrook Library, 3 Friendly Lane, Millbrook, NY 12545
  - 2. Wednesday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 3:00pm  
Where: Mountain Top Library, 6093 Main St, Tannersville, NY 12485
  - 3. Wednesday, October 25th at 5:00pm  
Where: Roeliff Jansen Community Library (Ancram, Copake, Hillsdale), 9091 State Route 22, Hillsdale, NY 12529
  - 4. Friday, November 10th at 5:00pm  
Where: Claverack Library, 629 NY-23B, Claverack, NY 12513
  - 5. Tuesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm  
Where: NorthEast Millerton Library, 75 Main St, Millerton, NY 12546
  - 6. Thursday, November 16th at 6:30pm  
Where: Morton Memorial Library & Community House (Rhinecliff), 82 Kelly Street, Rhinecliff, NY
  
- f. **The Great Give Back:** If your library is holding a program for The Great Give Back (10/21/2024) this year, please complete [this form](#) with your library's program plans so we can populate the statewide site and help promote this event. If your library is featuring more than one program, fill out the form multiple times -- just follow the link that appears after you submit the survey.

Updated Social Media graphics that can be used by all participating libraries can be found at [bit.ly/ggbresources](https://bit.ly/ggbresources) in the Social Media Posts & Marketing folder. Don't forget to tag the Instagram account (@greatgiveback) and use the hashtags #librariesgiveback and #greatgiveback.

## 6. Cooperative Collection Development & Digital Collection Access

- a. **Transparent Language** is now in its second month and currently exists as our primary language option for patrons. Did you know that this is a great learning opportunity on the go? To learn more or to grab

information to market this feature visit their website. Mobile app links are available or simply post the QR for quick access! One web based visit is needed to establish an account, and then the user can log into the app with the user name and password created.

<https://library.transparent.com/midhudsonlibraries/game/ng/#/resources/mobilecredentials>



- b. **OverDrive plans to sunset some marketplace reports.** The following reports OverDrive Marketplace reports do not include data from Libby and will be removed from Marketplace in November of 2023: **Recommended titles, Most viewed titles, Most viewed pages, Top referrer URLs, and User visits & page views.** To capture this information before it is removed from Marketplace, you can select **Create worksheet** to export the data from any of these reports for your records.

## 7. Awareness & Advocacy Services

- a. We are still waiting for the 414 Municipal Ballot Petition Signature Reduction bill to be sent to the Governor for signature. The library community is on record with the Governor's staff in support of this. Rebekkah was interviewed by the Capitol Press Room to help inspire the Governor to sign this bill soon.
- b. Tom Lawrence, the Director of the Poughkeepsie Public Library District, the Central Reference Library of MHLS has been named to a statewide task force looking into the impact of the State Library's plan to sunset the [NOVELny program](#) on June 30, 2024.
- c. Rebekkah has provided input on four bills that have been introduced by NYS legislators (none of which are in our service area: Senator Mays, Assemblymember Lavine, Assemblymember Kelles, and Assemblymember Cunningham) to help defend the right to read in New York State. Unfortunately, some of the bills, due to a lack of understanding of how state funds flow to libraries, could compromise MHLS access to state aid if just one of our libraries decides to ban one or more books. We are on record opposing this approach and urging local consequences for library boards that do not defend the right to read.
- d. New York Library Association Advocacy Day will take place in Albany on February 7, 2024.
- e. **Advocating for Equitable Access to Digital Books with Alan S. Inouye, Ph.D, Senior Director, ALA Public Policy & Government Relations, Oct 10th, 10:00 – 11:00 am |Online [Register](#)**  
Dr. Alan S. Inouye, Senior Director of Public Policy & Government Relations for the American Library Association to brief the MHLS Community on:
- Recent developments in libraries, publishing industry, legislatures, and the courts. Where are we today?
  - The bigger picture: Intersections with book banning/censorship and other library and policy interests



- What are the likely directions and prospects for the near-term?
- Thoughts on the long-term. What strategic options are available to us?

## 8. Interlibrary Loan Services

- Ivy Gocker will join the Regional ILL Committee, joining Brian James from Kingston Area Library and Laurie Shedrick, who serves as SENYLRC's board liaison to the committee.

## 9. Construction Program Services

### a. FY2022-2023 Grant Awards Announced:

- Beekman Library \$167,215  
A renovation in our existing basement that will include a meeting room, equipment for presentations, storage, restrooms, and a staff break room.
- Lagrange Association Library: \$177,108  
Renovation of the Children's Room to add a youth program room, toddler play area, staff office, more collection space and relocate the staff breakroom.
- Pawling Free Library: \$151,377 Children's addition to library building
- Mahopac Library: \$168,987  
Building Safety and Emergency Preparedness Upgrades
- Elting Memorial Library: \$46,188  
Increase accessibility and energy efficiencies in the 2006 library addition to the Elting Memorial Library.
- Highland Public Library: \$8,525  
The project is to replace 2 outdoor sun damaged digital signs in order to increase public awareness and improve communication with our community.
- Marlboro Free Library: \$297,575  
Efficiency and accessibility improvements to the public service desk area (circulation desk) and staff work areas of the existing Library.
- Town Of Esopus Port Ewen Library: \$270,801  
Strengthening disaster responsiveness, climate resiliency, and accessibility with generator installation, lighting upgrades, and photovoltaic upgrades

### b. Program Timelines: Construction projects funded under the State Aid for Library Construction Aid program have a **six year** window to be completed (Chapter 333 of the Laws of NY 2022):

- 0386-19-\*\*\*\* July 1, 2018-June 30, 2024
- 0386-20-\*\*\*\* July 1, 2019-June 30, 2025
- 0386-21-\*\*\*\* July 1, 2020-June 30, 2026
- 0386-22-\*\*\*\* July 1, 2021-June 30, 2027
- 0386-23-\*\*\*\* July 1, 2022-June 30, 2028
- 0386-24-\*\*\*\* July 1, 2023-June 30, 2029

## 10. Communications Among Member Libraries

- The deadline to submit job openings to be included in the MHLS Bulletin is Wednesday, 4:00 pm of the week prior to publication. The MHLS Bulletin is published every Tuesday. Please send job ads to [bulletin@midhudson.org](mailto:bulletin@midhudson.org).
- MHLS is always looking for member spotlights to share in the Bulletin. If you have a program, partnership, grant, collection, etc. that you would like to share with your peers, please let us know, [bulletin@midhudson.org](mailto:bulletin@midhudson.org).

## 11. Special Populations

- a. **Incarcerated Individual Reference Request Procedure:** A reminder to all MHLS member libraries that should you receive - by mail - a reference request directly from an incarcerated individual in a correctional facility you should not respond to them.

Please send the letter including the envelope to MHLS, ATTN: Kerstin Cruger, to forward to the senior librarian at their correctional facility. This will legitimize and facilitate their access to information as the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision has a mechanism and procedure for information sent to the incarcerated, and it must involve the facility library. Keep in mind that there is seemingly innocent information that certain incarcerated individuals are not allowed to have, due to their history of criminal actions, and when the requests come to you unmediated by a facility librarian it is not possible to determine what those specific parameters are.

**The best way to serve this patron, if they contact your library directly, is to send the request to Kerstin Cruger, Outreach & EDI Specialist at MHLS through the delivery.**

- b. **Outreach Mini-grants:** Libraries who received approval for 2023 Outreach Mini-grant programs **must expend the allotted funds by November 1, 2023**. Grant Closing Reports are due by November 6th:
  - i. [MHLS Assistive Equipment Mini-Grant Closing Report](#)
  - ii. [MHLS Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Mini-Grant Closing Report](#)
  - iii. If your library qualifies for a Project Check-in Report in lieu of a Grant Closing Report please contact [kcruger@midhudson.org](mailto:kcruger@midhudson.org) to receive the link to the report form.

Visit the [MHLS Outreach Mini-grant page](#) for more info, or contact MHLS Outreach & EDI Specialist, Kerstin Cruger with questions

## 12. Cooperative Efforts with Other Library Systems

- a. **Fall into Books Conference**, Oct 26<sup>th</sup> | 9:00 – 2:30 pm | Online | [Learn more & register](#)  
The annual children's and teen literature conference is in partnership with Dutchess BOCES, Orange-Ulster BOCES, Rockland BOCES, Sullivan BOCES, Ulster BOCES, Mid-Hudson Library System, Ramapo Catskill Library System and Southeastern New York Library Resources Council.
- b. **2024 Banned Books Symposium:** This half-day conference will feature presentations in all capacities of banned and challenged books and programs on Saturday, May 4, 2024 on the campus of Dutchess BOCES in Poughkeepsie, NY. [Call for proposals](#) are open through November 15, 2023.

This Symposium is in partnership with Southeastern New York Library Resources Council, Ramapo Catskill Library System, Mid-Hudson Library System, SUNY New Paltz and BOCES School Library Systems of Dutchess, Orange-Ulster, Rockland, Sullivan, and Ulster.

## 13. Administrative

- a. **64<sup>th</sup> Mid-Hudson Library System Annual Membership Meeting**  
[Registration is now open.](#)
  - i. **Details:**

1. **When & Where:** Friday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at The Henry A. Wallace Center at the FDR Presidential Library and Home in Hyde Park, NY
2. **Outline for the Event:**
  - 8:30 am: Registration & Breakfast Buffet
  - 9:00 am: Business Meeting & Awards
    - a. **Outstanding Accomplishment Awards:**
      - i. **Amenia Free Library** – Grand Opening
      - ii. **Putnam Valley Library** – Sustainable Funding
    - b. Staff Service Awards:
      - i. Nina Acosta: 10 years
      - ii. Laurie Shedrick: 15 years
      - iii. Rebekkah Smith Aldrich: 25 years
  - 10:45 am: Keynote Speaker: **Deborah Caldwell Stone**, Director of the American Library Association’s Office of Intellectual Freedom and Executive Director of the Freedom to Read Foundation. Topic: Books Under Fire: Defending the Right to Read in Libraries.

**b. Website Redesign Project:**

- i. Our new tagline, decided upon after our experience with Impact PR & Communications, but drafted by our very own Kerstin Cruger, Outreach & EDI Specialist, will be front in center in our new home page design: **“66 Libraries, 1 Great Community.”**
  - ii. The research phase of the website redesign is wrapping up, moving into preliminary design phase. Key design goals include a completely redesigned home page to be PR-focused to appeal to all segments of stakeholders, not just members. This is based on advice from the PR firm, Impact PR & Communications, the firm we hired with a grant from the Dyson Foundation. The Members Resources area of the web site will be fine-tuned based on feedback received from member library directors, staff, trustees and MHLS Staff.
- c. An update on the proposed **“Banned Book Club”** with the Eleanor Roosevelt Val-Kill Partnership will be provided at the meeting.