

# MHLS Report to Member Library Directors | June 2024

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

## 1. Delivery Services

- a. **A new 18-month service contract is in place with our current delivery vendor, Valley Courier, and will go into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>.** Current service levels will remain through December 2025.
  - i. That being said, our annual evaluation of the three-year averages of stops by circulation indicated that about a third of libraries would see a decrease in delivery by one stop. We will not be following through with stop reductions this year due to the new contract.
  - ii. Our next steps:
    - Review and analyze three-year (2022, 2023, 2024) average data of stops by circulation in April of 2025 to help determine route structure for Request for Proposal (RFP).
    - Compile RFP in June/July
    - Send out RFP August 2025
    - Review RFP responses August/September 2025
    - Decide on delivery vendor by end of September 2025
    - Begin new contract January 2026
- b. **Forward Sorting reminder** with upcoming holidays: Juneteenth & Fourth of July
  - i. There will be no delivery on Wednesday, 6/19, as MHLS is closed in observance of Juneteenth and Thursday, 7/4, in observance of Independence Day. Please remember to adjust your forward sorting appropriately for your next scheduled delivery day after these two holidays. A forward sorting reminder will always be sent to the MHLS notice list prior to an upcoming MHLS holiday. MHLS and the delivery drivers appreciate and thank you for Forward Sorting. Delivery routes by day and library can be referenced if needed at <https://midhudson.org/topics/resource-sharing/delivery/>
- c. **MHLS resigned a one-year contract with Empire Delivery Service** for the period of July 1, 2024- June 30, 2025. Delivery and pickup of Empire materials to MHLS will continue to be Tuesday and Friday.
  - i. Empire Library Delivery (ELD) is a statewide delivery, making resource sharing connections among all types of libraries affordable and streamlined. ELD provides return on investment for libraries by providing a convenient, affordable, and tailored delivery service to institutions, thereby supporting increased statewide resource sharing among ELD participants. By bundling shipments of library materials, ELD assists libraries in quickly getting items into the hands of users.
  - ii. There are currently 134 libraries using ELD including all SUNY, CUNY, and ConnectNY libraries, 10 public library systems, 42 private institutions, the New York State Library, and New York Public Library.

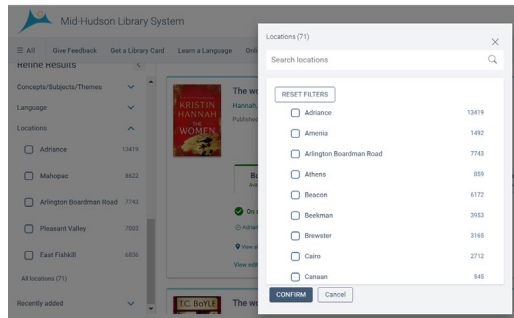
## 2. Integrated Library System & Cataloging Services

- a. **Ecommerce Payments** are still occasionally not recording the payment made in Sierra. If a patron reports that they have paid a fine that has not been removed from their record, please call Laurie Shedrick at extension 220 or open a ticket by emailing [techsupport@midhudson.org](mailto:techsupport@midhudson.org). We will verify the payment in PayPal and correct the record. Each month we are now painstakingly matching payments

made to Sierra records and making corrections to the patron record. We are also refunding any duplicate payments through PayPal. Innovative is actively working on a solution and testing continues almost daily. The failure rate is a couple per month, but the issue is impactful to patrons and staff when it occurs, so we are doing everything we can to mitigate the issue until it is fixed.

b. **Discover Catalog Update:** One more look at where we are with requested Discover enhancements. All but one (order location) is in motion and three are delivered, including our primary issue.

i. **The Location Facet:**  The location facet in the facet menu can now be expanded to include all libraries in alphabetic order. The menu before expansion displays the first 5 libraries in descending order of hit counts.



ii. **Patron Login errors.**  We had seen a decline in the reports of patron issues after it was reported that a fix was applied, but we still had a couple tickets indicating the issue was not resolved. After speaking with the product manager, we learned that the “fix” had not been applied to our site. It now has. Please report any login incidents that patrons share with you. We think this is now resolved.

iii. **Facet order** (Location promoted to the top of the list): No update posted, but mentioned as coming, in Q2.

iv. **Relevancy:** In progress now with a 25% completion level. Publication date will be added as factor as well as a top author index. Delivery expectation still cites Q2.

v. **Search bar:** The search bar is centered on the home page and cell padding has been improved to better use the space on the screen. ~Updated March 19th, delivery Q2

vi. **On order location:** No updates on this yet. Not part of the roadmap

vii. **Due date:**  The due date of each item is currently available in the edition display

viii. **Roll up fixes:**  Reindexing has been completed to apply the rollup logic changes we released this year. ~Applied March 14<sup>th</sup>. We will always have some titles that need attention as new records with imperfect cataloging. We see issues often with Hoopla and Kanopy. Graphic novels are also a challenge with their naming conventions. If you see something that should roll up and did not, or shouldn't roll up and did, please open a ticket and we will review.

ix. **White space** – New views of the reading history and checked out items were displayed recently for a vote among development partners. We advocated for filters for searching and also for a more condensed view and the ability to export.

c. **Coming Soon in Discover:** While we continue to track our priorities, there are some really good things on the way. Below are some items that are currently being coded (not just on their roadmap)

i. A real advanced search form with Boolean combinations

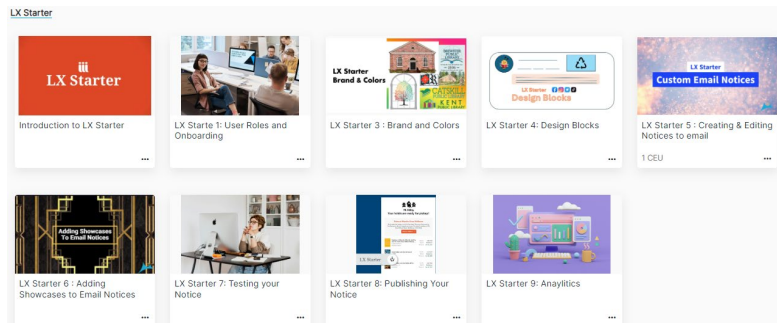
ii. Syndetics Unbound for Consortia – in your Kiosk & collection sites, suggest your own holdings

iii. OverDrive Magazines will display in the catalog and in patron circulation records

d. **LX Starter Launching Soon!:** In the last report to the DA, we promised you LX Starter in May. There have been delays in getting this implemented which were out of our control, but we are now beginning our work with Innovative and are working to prepare our Pilot Libraries. Once we have given the consortia version a fair review, we will be ready to implement it for any library wishing to transition to the new notice type.

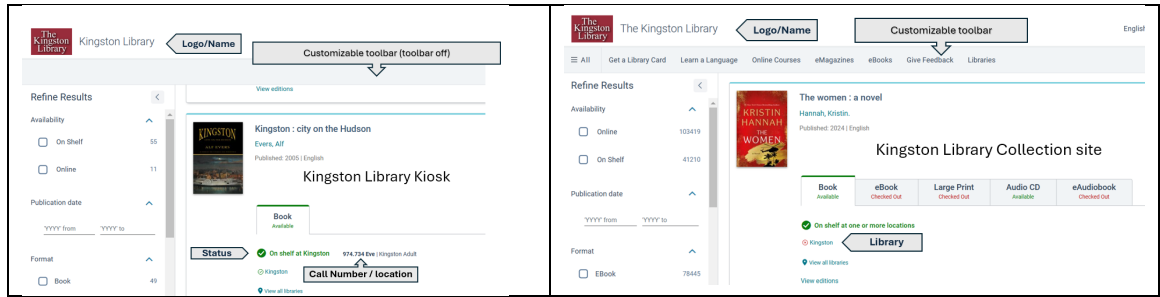
a **Launch Kit** in place on Knowledge base - <https://kb.midhudson.org/vega/vega-connect-lx-starter/>

- Description of LX Starter and an [intro video](#)
- Training videos for each step in the process
- Training on Demand series of tutorials that can be assigned to staff



e. **MHLS is Beta Testing Discover User Roles:** We have just signed on as beta testers to have first access to the “in development” version of expanded roles in Discover. This means we will be able to assign library staff access to manage their own branded catalogs featuring local content.

- How to:** Documentation and training will be available on Knowledge Base and in our Training on Demand in the Technology academy. We will announce a webinar session as soon as we know when we will have access to the feature.
- Where to:** Each library will have access to a Kiosk and a Collection Site. These sites each have a customizable homepage, space for library logos and a customizable toolbar. These sites are managed by the library and can vary by design.
  - Kiosk:** (in the library) A catalog where a single library is set as the preferred location. If you search for an item, Vega displays call numbers and availability for the kiosk library. Patrons can select “View All libraries” to see call numbers at other branches. Patrons who sign in, will also see their home library call numbers and availability displayed in the summary.
  - Collection Site** (web access)-A catalog where a library or group of libraries can be set as the primary location. In the summary the selected primary library locations appear.  
*Kiosk and Collection sites*



Email [ishedrick@midhudson.org](mailto:ishedrick@midhudson.org) if your library would like to be a pilot library for testing.

Pilot libraries will have early access edit local catalogs and access to build showcases.

- f. **Help us to expand our Authority Indexes:** As we reported over the last year, the MHLS Cataloging Team has been working to expand our authority records to be more inclusive and reflect the diversity of lived experiences. By expanding our index points to include the words and language that are respectful and accessible to the communities we serve, we increase collection access and expand our engagement opportunities. The Cataloging Team has been working from suggested lists and documentation, but we want to capture locally as well. You and your staff know your community better than anyone. In your conversations and interactions amongst your patrons and out in your community, please keep this work in mind. Are there sensitivities we might address, terms that we should include or evolve. All suggestions are welcome! We have focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion, but any instances that improve access are appreciated.
- g. **Updates for Bill Notices:** There are new options available for bill notices.
- i. **On Demand Reprint:** As long as it was sent in the last 60 days, not paid or waived, you can now locate a Bill in the patron record and reprint another copy.
  - ii. **Rerun Notice batch:** You may now send a second bill. You will find a new notice in the menu called "Repeated Bills". This notice is used to send a new notice for any item that had been billed more than 7 days ago and remains outstanding. The Bill must have been sent after 5/21/2024 when the feature was enabled. **Note:** This bill takes up to 15 minutes to prepare, but will eventually produce notices.
  - iii. **Create an on-the-fly Bill:** If an item is damaged beyond circulation or reported lost by a patron and they would like to have a bill for the item. You can complete the process of marking the item lost and then locate the bill and provide a print copy.
- For more information and detailed steps on all 3 process visit the Knowledge Base section on notices. <https://kb.midhudson.org/notices-printing/>
- h. **Delete Items by Barcode:** It has been so long since this was broken, that you may not even remember it used to exist! In our next release of Sierra, coming at the end of the year, the ability to delete item records by scanning in barcodes will return.
- i. **Innovative Mobile Application:** We will soon begin the installation process for the patron facing mobile app. There has been a bit of a red tape issue in getting the project processed through Innovative's legal and scheduling processes, which rely on project software to manage all stages of the project approval through the legal process down to the implementation and support processes.

At this time, we are still working through getting this and the various calendars that need to be included. We should be ready to roll this out later this summer. We have 3 pilot libraries lined up to work with us on testing (Mahopac, PPLD and Marlboro).

### 3. Coordinated IT Services

- a. **We now have a full roster on the MHLS Technology Operations Team!:** Amy Bataglia has joined as a part-time Tech Support Operations Specialist, working on calls and tickets between 10am and 2pm each weekday. Amy comes to us with Sierra experience and the perfect combination of enthusiasm for libraries and an interest in technology. We are very happy to welcome Amy to MHLS!
- b. **The FCC Restores Net Neutrality:** On April 25<sup>th</sup> the FCC voted to restore a national standard to ensure the internet is fast, open, and fair. Today's decision to reclassify broadband service as a Title II telecommunications service allows the FCC to protect consumers, defend national security, and advance public safety. This decision restores fundamental authority to provide effective oversight over broadband service providers, giving the Commission essential tools to:
  - Protect the Open Internet – Internet service providers will again be prohibited from blocking, throttling, or engaging in paid prioritization of lawful content, restoring the rules that were upheld by the D.C. Circuit in 2016.
  - Safeguard National Security – The Commission will have the ability to revoke the authorizations of foreign-owned entities who pose a threat to national security to operate broadband networks in the U.S. The Commission has previously exercised this authority under section 214 of the Communications Act to revoke the operating authorities of four Chinese state-owned carriers to provide voice services in the U.S. Any provider without section 214 authorization for voice services must now also cease any fixed or mobile broadband service operations in the United States.
  - Monitor Internet Service Outages – When workers cannot telework, students cannot study, or businesses cannot market their products because their internet service is out, the FCC can now play an active role.

Resources:

<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-402082A1.pdf>

<https://www.fcc.gov/net-neutrality>

### 4. Professional Development & Continuing Education

- a. **Niche Academy Updates affect MHLS Training on Demand:** Niche Academy is changing their platform to separate User Management tools from User Reports. In the process they have made it nearly impossible for you as directors to manage your own users. We have tickets open with them on this issue and will continue to advocate for a fix that can work for a consortium. Most of the issues are around filtering to your team and accessing a summary view where you can see CEU. Please don't hesitate to drop us a ticket if you need help facilitating a staff add/delete or if you need assistance providing reports.
- b. **MHLS Trustee Education Series** (*all count toward the trustee education requirement in NYS*)
  - i. **Trustee Essentials**

Particularly for new board members, but open to all. Library board members looking for

essential, basic information to increase their effectiveness in serving on a library board 4 will benefit from attending this session. Learning Objectives: Attendees will develop a working knowledge of library funding and organization in New York State; receive a clear overview of stakeholder roles and responsibilities and receive an introduction to Open Meetings Law and best practices for effective board meetings. This webinar provides a foundation of knowledge that other workshops in the MHLS Trustee Education Series will build on

1. ONLINE Wednesday, June 5 [REGISTER](#)
2. IN-PERSON at Kinderhook Memorial Library, August 22 [REGISTER](#)
3. ONLINE Thursday, September 5 [REGISTER](#)

A coupon code for a free print copy of the *2023 Edition of the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State* will be given to attendees of the **Trustee Essentials** workshop.

ii. **Finance & Fiduciary Responsibility** | ONLINE Thursday, June 10 [REGISTER](#)

This intermediate-level course is for trustees who have been on the board for at least a year. Library boards are trusted with public and private funds to provide quality library service to their community. Transparency and accountability must be at the forefront as a board makes decisions pertaining to the library's finances. This course will focus on the financial and fiduciary responsibility involved with:

- The library's budget
- Library funding
- Financial policies
- Reports to the board
- External audits

iii. **Sustainability: The Newest Core Value**

IN PERSON Wednesday, July 24<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:30pm at Claverack Free Library, [REGISTER](#)  
Join Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director & Co-Author of the Handbook for Library Trustees in New York State, for an introduction to sustainability and how library trustees can apply "sustainable thinking" in their role as a trustee. This trustee education workshop was organized in partnership with the Columbia County Library Association. *[PLEASE NOTE: this topic is also covered through an online Trustee Handbook Book Club event in June, see listing below.]*

iv. **Policies 101**

ONLINE Monday, September 23 [REGISTER](#)

The New York State Division of Library Development (DLD) has updated the list of policies every library in New York State MUST have. Join Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director & Co-Author of the Handbook for Library Trustees in New York State to review the trustee role in policymaking. This event will include a review of the Core Values of Librarianship, how those values translate to the work of the board, particularly in the area of policy making, and a specific look at the policies mandated by DLD.

v. **Financial Planning**

ONLINE Tuesday, October 28 [REGISTER](#)

Multiyear financial planning is a vital tool for library boards and directors, particularly those struggling with difficult financial conditions. It can aid decision-makers to set long-term priorities and work toward goals, rather than making choices based only on what funds are available today. This is important when resources are limited and can also be beneficial to avoiding future stress. Join Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, MHLS Executive Director & Co-Author of the Handbook for Library Trustees in New York State to review the Office of the State Comptroller’s multi-year financial planning process and helpful data sources to help strengthen your library’s financial position and ability to meet community needs.

c. **Trustee Handbook Book Club** (*all count toward the trustee education requirement in NYS*)

Join co-author of the Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State, and MHLS Executive Director, Rebekkah Smith Aldrich and friends for this fun and informative series! At each session, trustees will take a deeper dive on a topic relevant to their role and responsibilities as a library trustee.

- i. **Libraries for the Future: An Introduction to Sustainability as the Newest Core Value** | ONLINE  
Tuesday, June 18th, 5:00-6:30 PM [REGISTER](#)
- ii. **Governance Structure: The Role of Board Officers and Board Committees** | Tuesday, October 15th, 5:00-6:30PM [REGISTER](#)

## 5. Consulting & Development

- a. MHLS staff submitted challenges on behalf of over half of our member libraries through the State’s Broadband office to ensure all are eligible for future funding from the **ConnectALL program**.
- b. **Essential Documents Inventory**: Keep an eye out for the Essential Documents Inventory Action Memo (coming July or August). We are tweaking the reporting process and creating an easier way to upload your documents.
- c. **Open Meetings Law News**
  - i. The expiration of the current videoconferencing provisions of Open Meetings Law has been extended from July 1, 2024 to **July 1, 2026**.
  - ii. Legislation originally adopted in 2022 required that **video conferenced recordings** of all meetings subject to OML be posted and remain available online for a minimum of 5 years. The 2024 legislation extends this 5-year retention requirement until 2026 and effectively supersedes the 4-month retention period indicated in the LGS-1 retention schedule for **video conferenced meeting recordings**.
- d. **On April 29, 2024, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”) published [Enforcement Guidance on Harassment in the Workplace](#)** (the “Guidance”). The Guidance took effect immediately and supersedes the EEOC’s previously published guidance from the 1980s and 1990s. Since the EEOC has not published guidance regarding workplace harassment for almost 25 years, the Guidance addresses recent and developing areas such as workplace harassment related to sexual orientation and gender identity, pregnancy and related medical conditions, and remote work.  
In conjunction with the Guidance, the EEOC also issued a [Summary of the Guidance’s Key Provisions](#), [FAQs for Employees: Harassment at Work](#), and a [Fact Sheet for Small Businesses](#).  
(Read more at: [EEOC Publishes New Guidance on Workplace Harassment for the First Time in Twenty](#)

- e. **The Great Give Back will take place on October 19, 2024.** This is the fifth year of this statewide program. A webinar is being planned for this summer with our peers across the state, stay tuned for more information. The Great Give Back is a day for libraries to provide opportunities for their patrons to participate in meaningful, service-oriented experiences, and shine a light on the great work libraries are doing in their evolving roles as community hubs and connectors.
- f. **Evaluating Our Impact: Summer Reading Program Cohort 2024-2025:** Seven member libraries have signed on to participate in the cohort. The Summer Reading Program Cohort members will evaluate their library's current Summer Reading Program (SRP) by focusing on why they hold the SRP and evaluate current practices through dollars spent, organizational goals reached, and other specific aspects chosen by participants. This program spans April 2024 to September 2025.
- g. Our partnership with the Mid-Hudson Chapter of the Adirondack Mountain Club resulted in grants to 10 member libraries to support "learning about and appreciating nature and the environment."
  - Cairo Public Library:** Winged Wonders, Pollinator Friends
  - Hyde Park Library:** Native Seed Library
  - Esopus Library:** Save the Esopus Spitzenberg Apple Tree
  - LaGrange Association Library:** On the Farm
  - Mountain Top Library:** Bookworms Wild at Hunter Day Camp
  - Plattekill Public Library:** Geology: Rocks and Minerals
  - Red Hook Public Library:** Library Field Station
  - Roeliff Jansen Community Library:** Dark Sky Program
  - Sarah Hull Hallock Free Library:** Explorer Backpacks
  - Woodstock Public Library District:** Nature Detectives

## 6. Cooperative Collection Development & Digital Collection Access

- a. **NOVELny:** Funding for the the NOVELny (New York Online Virtual Electronic Library) statewide e-resources was included in the New York State Budget for 2024-2025. Pending required approvals the current collection of NOVELny statewide e-resources will continue **through June 30, 2025** and additional resources will be added. For a complete list databases see the [NOVELny News webpage](#).

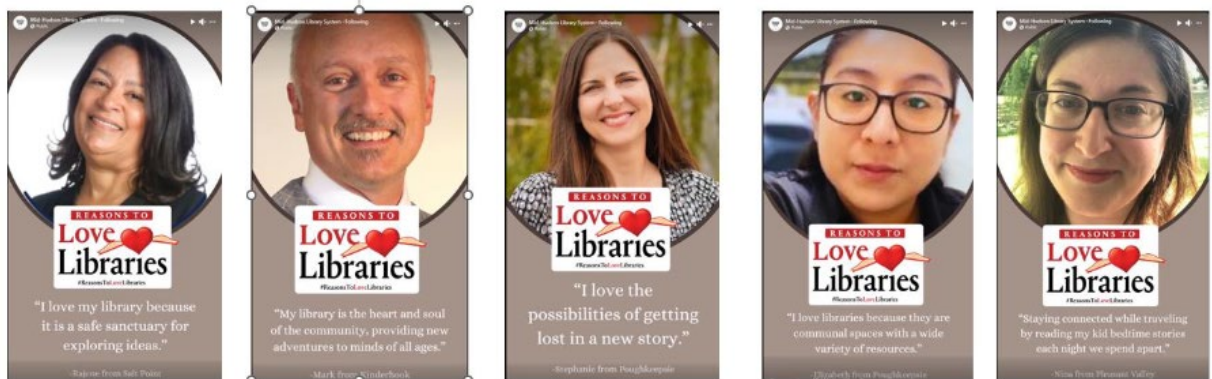
## 7. Awareness & Advocacy Services

- a. New York State:
  - i. State Budget Update: **The NYS Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 has been finalized. Thank you all for your efforts to advocate for these funds!** Despite our wishes for higher operating aid, this was still a successful advocacy year. Given that the Governor started higher than the previous year and both houses advocated for more than the Governor's proposal, we should be proud of the work we have done to make the case for library systems and our member libraries. We are also grateful to the New York Library Association for their leadership in Albany. Here is the final budget breakdown:
    - a. Library Operating Aid: \$103.852 million
    - b. Library Construction Aid: \$44 million
    - c. Library Materials Aid: \$6.25/pupil



- d. Inclusion of NOVELny: \$3 million
      1. There's also \$500,000 for 50% matching grants available to eligible entities participating in the [Dolly Parton's Imagination Library](#). As more information is made available, we will let you know.
      2. Please take a moment to say thank you to your [state legislators](#) for their support. NYLA has not issued a Thank You letter yet.
  - ii. **State Legislation Advocacy:** There are just a few days left in this year's session.
    1. A bill to increase the amount of State Aid for Library Construction funds in economically distressed communities has some life, it passed in the NYS Senate on April 3 but is moving slower through the Assembly.
    2. Intellectual Freedom Bill: [S7677A/A7843B](#) remains in committee. There has been push back on this bill from the Republican members of the Senate Libraries Committee despite support for this bill among them last year.
    3. A bill to strengthen libraries' position in negotiating with publishers to ensure equitable access to digital materials, specifically ebooks and downloadable audiobooks is back on the table, [S6868A](#). This bill is moving through the Senate quickly and has support in the Assembly despite some confusion over getting the same version of the bill that the Senate is using.
    4. Civil Service
      - a. [S8551](#) (Jackson)/[A9349](#) (Pheffer-Amato) - Provides that the state civil service department shall review and update the questions contained within the examination, as deemed appropriate by the department, no less than every five years.
        - i. On Senate Active List for 5/29
        - ii. Passed Assembly on 4/2
      - b. [S8557](#) (Jackson)/[A9386](#) (Pheffer-Amato) - Provides for crediting of time spent as a provisional appointee for promotional examinations and eligibility for appointment from the resulting eligible lists.
    5. Opioid Antagonist Bills: There are several bills that are live that would require public institutions and buildings to be equipped with opioid antagonists. [S3112A](#) (Mannion)/[A1588A](#) (Buttenschon) has the most traction and is on the Senate Floor Calendar and is in Committee in the Assembly.
    6. The bill to have Association libraries added to the State Retirement System did not move at all this year.
  - iii. **SAVE THE DATE:** New York Library Association (NYLA) Library Advocacy Day February 5, 2025.
- b. **The County Funding Advocacy Group** met on Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup>. Topics of conversation included more outreach to county legislators; alignment of talking points with county leadership's priorities; and seeking proclamations from the county legislatures for National Library Week or Library Card Sign-up Month.
- c. [The ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom released new data](#) documenting book challenges in the U.S., finding that challenges of unique titles rose by 65% in 2023 compared to 2022 numbers, reaching the highest level ever documented. Four key trends were identified:

- i. Pressure groups in 2023 focused on public libraries in addition to targeting school libraries. **The number of titles targeted for censorship at public libraries increased by 92% over the previous year, accounting for about 46% of all book challenges in 2023;** school libraries saw an 11% increase over 2022 numbers.
  - ii. Groups and individuals demanding the censorship of multiple titles, often dozens or hundreds at a time, drove this surge.
  - iii. Titles representing the voices and lived experiences of LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC individuals made up 47% of those targeted in censorship attempts.
  - iv. There were attempts to censor more than 100 titles in each of these 17 states: Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin.
- d. **National Voter Registration Day:** Please consider signing up as a [2024 partner for National Voter Registration Day](#) which is on September 17<sup>th</sup>.
- e. **MHLS has been participating in the Library Journal/School Library Journal’s “Reasons to Love Libraries” campaign** to build our advocacy pieces for the next state budget advocacy season. We would love to feature member library directors, staff, trustees, friends and patrons as well. It’s pretty easy! We’re looking for statements from folks who love libraries about **WHY they love their library**. We need 15 words or less so this hopefully won’t take you too long to do. If you are willing to help out, please send your statement and photo, or those from your stakeholders, to Stephanie Werskey, MHLS Library Sustainability Associate & Communications Specialist directly: [swerskey@midhudson.org](mailto:swerskey@midhudson.org)



## 8. Interlibrary Loan Services

- a. **Interlibrary Loan requests may now be placed on any material type or literary form.** Items will not be requestable if there is or will be a circulating copy in the MHLS shared catalog, or if an item exists in the Southeastern Access to Libraries (SEAL) catalog. If an item can be purchased for less than \$25, the request will be denied if a copy cannot be located at no cost to MHLS within the Empire Delivery network. MHLS retains the right to decline requests at any time and will use the library staff contact within the request to communicate reasons for declining.

## 9. Construction Program Services

- a. The Division of Library Development's Online Grant System portal is scheduled to open for State Aid for Library Construction applications on June 5th. If you are applying for this round of grants, please plan to attend the **Construction Grant Technical Assistance Workshop on Tuesday, June 20th at 10:00am.**

[Register for this event](#). Grant applications will be due on Friday, August 9th. There will be no extensions to this deadline.

- b. Grants submitted during the previous fiscal year (August 2023) have been reviewed by DLD and are currently being reviewed by DASNY.

## 10. Communications Among Member Libraries

- a. No report this month. For questions in this area please contact Laura Crisci, MHLS Library Sustainability Coordinator.

## 11. Special Populations

- a. **Outreach Mini-Grants: *Please note the number of grants and the amount of grant funds available is pending information from NYS about Outreach Categorical Aid amounts.*** Once this information is released the Mid-Hudson Library System will offer our member libraries the opportunity to apply for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Mini-Grants. The 2024 Outreach Mini-Grant will be in support of MHLS' commitment to populations most impacted by censorship attempts through book challenges and library program challenges. MHLS established themselves as a Book Haven System on [December 6, 2023](#) to uphold the public's right to free and equitable access to information.

The American Library Association reported an unparalleled number of reported book challenges in 2023, increasing in each of the past four years. The vast majority of challenges were to books written by or about a person of color or a member of the LGBTQIA+ community. – [ALA Book Ban Data](#).

Member libraries applying for the MHLS Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Mini-Grant will need to demonstrate how your proposed project will invest in and support the work of promoting and advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in your library and the impact on your community. Examples of potential projects could include but are not limited to:

- developing accessible and/or responsive library collections and programs for underrepresented/underserved populations\*
- promoting inclusivity in library collections through audits, weeding, and inclusive collection development
- programming and/or training for library workers or community members on topics related to cultural competence; bystander intervention and de-escalation; creating safe spaces for all or similar topics.
- staff training that strengthens diversity, equity, and inclusion practices

\* Underrepresented/underserved populations: People who are underrepresented and/or experience barriers to access/use of services due to geographic location, economic status, language barriers, disabilities, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity.

**As soon MHLS receives information from NYS about our Outreach Categorical Aid more specific information about this grant as well as the application will be released on the MHLS-Notice list.**

- b. In April, we partnered with the Poughkeepsie Public Library District and Revolucion Radio Online to bring the **“Consulate on Wheels” program from the Consulate General of Mexico** to the MHLS Auditorium. 734 individuals from around the region were served over five days and 382 documents were processed.



*Above: Area residents accessing services from the Consulate General of Mexico in the MHLS Auditorium*

- c. **Summer Reading Final Reports will be due from each member library by September 9, 2024.** Once the questions are released from the Division of Library Development the link to the report form will be sent via the MHLS-Notice List and posted on <https://midhudson.org/summer-reading-program/>.

## 12. Cooperative Efforts with Other Library Systems

- a. **The application for Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley Summer 2024 session, which will run from July 2024 to September 2024, is now open. Applications will be accepted until June 25th at 12:00 pm.** Digital Navigators are trusted guides who assist community members in accessing and using technology. The formal program will provide you with resources to provide client service in assistance with affordable internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and application support.

The program is open to anyone who works at a library or a community-based organization that would like to offer Digital Navigator services to their patrons. Applications are available to individuals who work at libraries and nonprofit organizations in the following counties: Columbia, Greene, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester. This cohort is open to individuals who have previously trained as a Digital Navigator and those new to the program. Visit the Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley [website](#) to view the program requirements. Navigators who meet the requirements by September 30, 2024 will receive a \$500 investment incentive payable to their organization.

Access the [application](#) and view the [program requirements and timeline of events](#).

To learn more about the program [register](#) for the **Digital Navigators Information Session on June 17 at 1:00 pm**. This one-hour online session is for anyone who is curious about Digital Navigators of the Hudson Valley. If you are considering applying to the upcoming cohort, have already applied, or want

this service at your library or organization, this meeting is for you!

- b. **Registration is now open for the 25th annual children's and teen literature conference Fall Into Books.** This year's conference will be held in-person on October 24th from 9:00 am – 2:30 pm at the Newburgh Armory. This collaborative event features book discussion sessions ranging from picture books to young adult, and a keynote presentation. This year's keynote speaker is author Brendan Kiely. Full details, including discussion groups and registration, can be found on the Fall Into Books website, <https://fallintobooks.org/> The cost to attend this event is \$100.

### 13. Administrative

- a. **Save the Date:** The 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting of the Mid-Hudson Library System will be held on Friday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at The Wallace Center at the FDR Presidential Library & Museum. Our keynote speaker will be [Lisa Varga, Library Journal's 2024 Librarian of the Year](#).
- b. **Suggested candidates for the open seats on the MHLS Board** are due to your county chairs this month.
- c. **The provisional charter application for the Town of Union Vale's Library** has been advanced to the Board of Regents for their consideration next month.
- d. **We have completed our rooftop solar project.** This project was/will be funded through grant funds and state/federal incentives. The system will provide up to 75% of MHLS' electrical needs from the sun with a corresponding decrease to electricity bills!