

Executive Director's Report March 2019

Migration to the New Online Catalog: Evergreen

A total of 36 of the 38 WLS member libraries went live on the new Evergreen catalog on the scheduled *Go Live* date of March 14th. To accommodate specific network configuration requirements, the White Plains Public Library went live on March 15th, and the Purchase Free Library went live on March 18th in coordination with their construction-related activities. Since January, WLS hosted 73 training sessions that were attended by 1,284 participants for a total of 3,304 hours of training to prepare for the migration. Each library had at least one TechXpert on staff who received additional training to provide enhanced onsite support and to serve as the primary contact with WLS during the migration.

The migration involved the transfer of over 4 million bibliographic records and over 400,000 patrons records from the SirsiDynix to the Evergreen hosting platform. An ongoing issue for some patrons is that their holds queue is not displaying. The ability to view one's holds queue is an important feature for many patrons, and the WLS staff is working to quickly address this concern. Other items to be adjusted going forward include online bill payment, getting library self-check machines online, data reporting, profile settings and templates for item records and receipts. There's still work to be done, but the migration got off to a great start thanks to the ongoing teamwork between the member libraries and WLS.

Network Security

The WLS network experienced a "malspam" virus attack that brought down the computer networks at several of the member libraries in January and February. It is suspected that the virus was introduced into the network through a malicious email accessed on a non-WLS supported staff computer. The infection did not spread to the Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) environment currently used on the WLS-supported staff computers. Additional staffing support, the use of contractual services from an outside network consultant and the installation of an enhanced anti-virus/malware software were put into play to resolve this "malspam" attack.

This incident highlights the need for ongoing investment to prevent future cyberthreats. Based on the IT Department's review of this latest "malspam" attack, recommendations and pricing for upgrading and enhancing the infrastructure and realigning staffing resources are being drafted.

Budget Update

WLS has received the 2019 contract from Westchester County for \$1 million, which is equal to the amount awarded for the last five years. We will continue to work with the County to improve the funding going forward.

A special thank you goes to the WLS representatives who traveled to Albany on February 27th for Library Advocacy Day to meet with our legislators and their staff to stress the importance of investing in public libraries. The good news is that in their budget proposals, the New York State Assembly has restored \$5 million to public library aid, bringing their total to \$96.6 million; and the Senate restored the \$5 million and added \$1 million to public library aid, bringing their total to \$97.6 million. In addition, both the Assembly and the Senate added \$20 million for public library construction aid, bringing their total to \$34 million, which would be the same as last year. Negotiations for the final budget are still underway, and there is still time to thank your Assembly and Senate representatives and encourage the inclusion of these additions in the final budget.

For a third year, President Donald J. Trump's FY 2020 budget request to Congress did not provide funding for the continuation of the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) activities. The budget request only proposed \$23 million in funding for the orderly closure of IMLS. Nationwide, IMLS funding enables museums and libraries to provide increased access and navigation to information so that more people can continue their education, learn critical research skills, and find employment. It is through IMLS that the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program is granted federal funds that help support local libraries throughout New York State. The program encourages the blending of local, state, and federal resources to build and enhance library services for all New Yorkers. The New York State Library receives approximately \$8 million in LSTA funding to support a wide range of statewide initiatives such as NOVELny to provide online access to information resources, Summer Reading at New York Libraries to prevent the "summer slide" in reading scores and Ready to Read at New York Libraries to support early/family literacy efforts.

Celebrating Westchester Libraries Breakfast

The *Celebrating Westchester Libraries Breakfast* will take place this year on Friday, April 5th, at the Doral Arrowwood in Rye Brook. The *Breakfast* will feature a Conversation with Michelle Young, new President of New York Library Association. Ms. Young is the Director of Libraries and Associate Professor at Clarkson University in Potsdam, NY. Her visionary leadership has transformed the University's programs, strategies and policies; and she will share her ideas on how libraries are poised to take a role in promoting a complete census count.

Additional details and information will be sent out soon. Please remember to add this event to your calendar and invite friends to join you.

2020 Census

At the February Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) Meeting, WLS kicked-off its establishment as a Complete Count Committee (CCC) with the 38 libraries as members. Mario D. Garcia, Partnership Specialist for the New York Regional Census Center, gave a brief overview of the timeline and potential role of libraries to provide Internet access and technology support. Another role will include publicizing key census mailings. The 2020 Census will invite everyone to respond and 95% of households will receive their census invitation in the mail. By notifying their communities to expect this mailing and helping them understand that it is not another piece of junk mail, libraries can contribute to a higher response rate.

Both the NYS Assembly and Senate have included \$40 million in their budgets for Census funding for community-based organizations. If this is included in the final budget, it is unknown whether a specific amount would be available for libraries. WLS has received \$18,000 from the Herman Goldman Foundation for census projects and has multiple proposals pending. The next Westchester County Appointment Committee Meeting is scheduled on March 25th for the Westchester County CCC.

WLS Trustee Update & Trustee Institute Schedule



Sue Neale at WLS
59th Annual Meeting

It was with great sadness that we learned of Sue Neale's death in February. Ms. Neale completed her 5th term as the WLS Trustee representing District VIII [Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Scarsdale] on December 31, 2018. She served as President, Vice-President and Secretary and was a strong advocate of and made many contributions to public libraries throughout Westchester County and New York State.

Dr. LaRuth Gray, also a former WLS Trustee who represented District IV [New Rochelle], will be awarded a Lifetime Service Award by the Rotary Club of New Rochelle in April. Dr. Gray also stepped down from the WLS Board in 2018 after her 5th term. She served as President and Vice President and her experience in education contributed to the growth of WLS.

Details for this year's WLS Trustee Institutes will be coming shortly; dates, place and speakers are noted below.



LaRuth Gray at WLS
Board Meeting

Future Events

- April 5 *Celebrating Westchester Libraries Breakfast* – Doral Arrowwood, Rye Brook, NY
Guest Speaker: Michelle L. Young, MLS, NYLA President 2018-2019, Director of Libraries, Associate Professor, Clarkson University
- May 20 WLS Trustee Institute – Briarcliff Manor Public Library
Guest Speaker: Alexander Cohen, MLS, Project Leader and Library Consultant at Aaron Cohen Associates (ACA)
- June 12 WLS Trustee Institute – Hendrick Hudson Free Library (Montrose)
Guest Speaker: Robert J. Freeman, Executive Director, New York State Committee on Open Government
- November 21 WLS 60th Annual Meeting – Place to be Determined
Guest Speaker: Rich Harwood, President & Founder of The Harwood Institute

Respectfully submitted,

Terry L. Kirchner
Executive Director