

## HOW DO WE WORK TOGETHER?

County Discussions  
Dormann Library, Bath  
August 12, 2009  
Brief Notes

Attending: Mike Fay, trustee, Addison; Eleata Mitchell, trustee, Bath; Pauline Emery, director, Corning; Marsha Watson, director, Hammondsport; David Hardy, trustee and Alice Taychert, director, Hornell; Ginny Illi, trustee and Barb Radigan director, Pulteney; Sherry Collins, Board President, Martin Green and Bonnie Weber, STLS trustees, Ristiina Wigg, director, STLS.

PowerPoint – STLS Services

Bonnie Weber asked, “What are the key things you look to the System to provide? “

- Technology support, e.g. recent router replacement
- Interlibrary loan from libraries outside STLS, e.g. books in German from Harvard and Yale for genealogy research. Amazing outreach for materials
- Big use of rotating collections, receive all five (large print, audio books, popular reading, video/DVD, youth). Residents come in looking for the new collection. It is a bad day when the collection is moving. Rotating collections –
  - Offer authors we don't have
  - Allow us to fill requests that otherwise we would have to request from other libraries
  - Provide audio books for truck drivers and commuters
- Downloadable audios, especially good for our small library in that they don't take up space, don't break
- More broadband access. How will we sustain it?
  - Needed for patron use of MySpace, educational activities. Patrons download e-mail, digital photos. Have to be able to do things rapidly
- Will need technology for people who can't afford it
- Users need speed: Sherry Collins reported that Horseheads patrons are retooling, taking online college classes, learning skills
- In Hammondsport – lake visitors, seniors, rural kids, and tourists come in to use computers  
The library is being asked to proctor tests
- Libraries have to have a variety of resources; databases are really important. People can use Google, but don't always know what to ask
- Are databases used? Martin Green suggested posting a series of large panels in each library explaining the various databases – make it easy for people to use them
- Patrons definitely need one-on-one education; need an educated staff. Volunteers may not be comfortable with computers

- Pulteney Library needs more space for teen and pre-teens; kids are always hanging out there. Most teens come for computers. In Hammondsport a lot of homeschoolers use the library
- Geek the library – a multi-state, multimedia marketing campaign  
We have to invest in publicity and marketing. The System has to support this
- Marketing is needed to attract the kids coming up. We have to be cool. This generation can't see the worth in libraries. The summer reading program makes a big difference. Circulation has gone up as a result of young adult/juvenile books in rotating collection
- Kim Lindsay, Canisteo, who was not able to attend, provided a list including Delivery, Technical support, ILL within the System, and cataloging and processing

#### **What should libraries keep doing?**

- Summer reading program
- Advocate through school librarians, tell students, "they own the library; the library is there for them."
- Martin Green said "You guys (member libraries) own STLS. You need to tell us what you want."

#### **Funding for centralized services**

- Value of State aid for these services has dropped 20 – 30% since 1998
- STLS has reduced staff and expenses; gotten grants for major purchases
- Members in other NYS library systems contribute in various ways
- We're planning not just for today, but for the next 5 – 10 years

#### **Next Steps**

- Join STLS Member Contributions Committee – Mike Fay, Addison may be able to participate
- Committee, to be composed of Directors Advisory Council, additional member directors, member trustees, STLS trustees and STLS staff, will meet four times this fall to discuss increased member contributions
- How much? 10% increase in member cost-share in 2010 resulting in total estimated member contributions (cost-share, processing) of \$186,000 by the end of 2010  
Estimated \$300,000 needed by the end of 2013
- Contribution possibilities
  - across the board % increase
  - Fees for individual services should affect all libraries equally, e.g. if fees for rotating collections, then fees for delivery. Needs to be a leveling
  - Are bigger libraries more self-sufficient? Or do they have bigger needs?
  - Kim Lindsay, Canisteo had suggested, "A lot of people use STARCat and pick up materials at the library, changing for delivery is a possibility."
- Thoughts
  - Not sure what best approach would be. Excited about increasing use of library. Hard to keep up with technology
  - What would member trustees need to know? Why are increases needed?

- Everything goes up
- This is an ongoing process, an ongoing pattern
- Short-term problem; long-term challenge; there are a lot of good things for libraries to be doing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Barb Radigan attends STLS meetings; keeps up. The library is extremely small, and a treasure, a diamond. Summer people are amazed. To absorb costs might have to think of eliminating some services. Would be devastating

How can STLS be held accountable?"

- Annual meeting report
- Separate meeting each year. Alice Taychert said "You are battling distances." Select a library in an area and hold a reception there
- STLS Board President Sherry Collins said that STLS trustees are there to be your connection.
- How well do STLS trustees know what is going on in libraries?

**Comments by Mike Fay, Addison trustee, who attended the discussion:**

See if any juniors and seniors would be willing to volunteer time to assist those patrons less knowledgeable in computers. Be **sure** they are trustworthy, as they might have to be privy to passwords. Make it a point to educate patrons in the need for strong passwords – those with at least 8 characters consisting of upper and lower case, a number or two, and a special character. Have them come up with a phrase that is meaningful to them. By all means, avoid words that can be found in the dictionary.

Contact – contact – contact our county/state representatives. Make them aware that people depend upon the libraries for connections to the outside world; especially those who can't afford computers and those outside broadband areas. Give them dollar amounts showing the rate of inflation (or rate of broadband cost increases) versus what libraries are expected to do with the limited money they are given. Don't make them think we can do more & more with less & less, or they may believe we can do it all with nothing! Come up with an analysis showing the number of patrons per month, versus the number of hours per month the library is open.