

**Director report
October - November 2024**

Administration

The best part of my job is visiting member libraries and participating in their board meetings. We are fortunate to be in a region with robust libraries that provide outstanding services to their communities.

Janet Lindner, Chair of the Nominating Committee, has started recruiting potential trustees to be elected at the SALS Annual Meeting in May. The term would begin June 1, 2025.

Unfortunately, both Christine McConnell (Saratoga County) and Linda Borden (Washington County) will be completing their second terms. Margaret Shapiro has agreed to serve a second term.

Hopefully, the two variances will be approved during the November SALS Board meeting. Paperwork will be sent before the board meeting, which is necessary to receive the final state aid.

The NYS Assembly has been generous to four SALS member libraries. Galway Public Library, the Town of Horicon Public Library, the Town of Chester Library, and the Town of Johnsbury will receive Grant-in-Aid.

Colleen once again attended Camp Finance in October. She found the sessions extremely useful and applicable to her daily responsibilities.

Colleen will share the revised draft of the employee handbook with the SALS Personnel Committee very soon.

Pamela DelSignore reports that all paperwork required for the 2024-2025 State Aid for Library Construction applications has been submitted.

The parking lot project has begun and is hoped to be completed by the week of November 3, 2024.

Messages From Survivors was at Cambridge in October and is going to Round Lake and Lake Pleasant in November.

SWANK (movie license provider) is adding a movie streaming service in 2025 and will present it to the libraries via Zoom on November 4th.

I will attend NYLA's Annual Conference in Syracuse, NY, where Erica Freudenberger will present a pre-conference program.

I have been named Chair of the ALA Medal of Excellence award jury. All of the work is done virtually.

Adult Services/ Outreach

Erica Freudenberger has been working with member library staff and trustees to improve library services in our service area. She has consulted on various topics, including insurance, purchasing property, developing sustainable funding streams, and developing Spanish language collections at SALS. She continuously shares information about ALA PPO Accessibility grants and workforce development training.

Erica reports that the award-winning Farm-2-Library program shared 52,000 pounds of food with 15,000 people to date.

Erica shared information about the Path to Belonging at the last SALS Board meeting. She will present this as a Continuing Education workshop at the 2024 NYLA Conference.

The website's content is increasing, and a cohort is planned to launch in July 2025. She is also working on a grant from the Network of National Libraries of Medicine.

Erica met with Jennifer Peterson from OCLC's WebJunction to discuss working together on the Path to Belonging. OCLC is excited and wants to help promote the framework & cohort program.

SALS hosted an information session about the NY Matters harm reduction vending machines in our member libraries.

Facebook continues to be active. So far, in 2024, SALS has earned \$1,934 through the Meta bonus program.

Automation/JA

The last group PC order for 2024 was announced; the deadline is November 8, 2024. The minimum and recommended PC requirements document was updated. JA staff are updating many PCs to Windows 11 in preparation for Microsoft's end-of-support date for Windows 10.

Much work has been done to facilitate the Schenectady County Public Library's withdrawal from the JA project.

Email discussions are ongoing about the date of the final data pull and the last day for SCPL staff to access the Polaris ILS.

The third transition team meeting occurred at MVLS on October 16, 2024. The focus was primarily on network and PC planning. Some dates could not be finalized because not everyone was present, so a summary of the proposed dates was sent with the draft minutes. It is hoped that consensus is achieved.

County IT requested JA staff export mailboxes and OneDrive for SCPL users. Chris Mundell researched, tested, and determined that the Microsoft recommended method for exporting these items was for users to do them individually and shared this information with County IT.

The trainers updated the FAQ document, which will be sent to library staff along with a date for a Zoom meeting for member library staff to ask questions.

JA staff and trainers continue to work to plan for network cutovers, Polaris ILS changes, testing of changes, and scripts.

MVLS and SALS have a proposal from Ill for a new multi-year contract for our Polaris-hosted ILS and associated products. The proposal includes an option to include Vega Discover (an enhanced PAC platform) and the Innovative Mobile app. Staff requested a demo of Vega and the mobile app and will discuss options at the next JA Council meeting.

Pamela DelSignore is getting quotes to paint the exterior of the generator.

The Polaris staff client has an ongoing problem with printers loading slowly. Polaris made a server change, which has significantly improved the situation.

The JA staff continue to provide information to libraries regarding MFA and make site visits to libraries.

There have been 324 SysAid calls since October 1, 2024. The top counts are calls about email, PCs, and Polaris. The most time-consuming calls are PCs, email, and Polaris.

Cataloging and Technical Services

Jill Ryder has been working as part of the internal SCPL withdrawal transition team, drafting messages and creating a plan for SCPL to leave the Polaris ILS. The team meets frequently to address concerns and share information with the membership.

As part of the broader SCPL Transition Team comprised of JA, MVLS, SALS, SCPL, and Schenectady County IT staff, Jill facilitated the October 16th meeting to discuss updates to the process.

Jill met with the new director of the Pember Library, John Hess, for Polaris training in October.

As part of her day-to-day work, Jill assists library staff with running reports, changing Polaris system administration settings, bulk changing library items in the catalog, database cleanup, and answering any Polaris questions that arise.

SALS catalogers (Jill Ryder and Johanna Hall) modified 2,292 bibliographic records in the catalog in October of 2024. A total of 3,674 new bibliographic records and 14,398 new item records were added to the database during the same month. This work is done by cataloging and technical processing staff at the System offices and the 48-member libraries. Bib records represent the individual works (a book or a DVD, etc.), and item records represent each library's copy of that work.

Jill oversees the purchase of eBooks and eAudiobooks for the shared OverDrive collection; 199 titles were purchased in October 2024. Popular titles purchased include Liane Moriarty's latest thriller, *Here One Moment*; Chris Whitaker's mystery novel *All the Colors of the Dark*; and Sally Rooney's new bestseller, *Intermezzo*.

Technology & Youth Services

In October, the SALS website received 1k visitors. The most visited pages were the Job Postings, Trustee Training, JA Page, and About Us.

Jack is working with several systems across the state on making libraries' digital content meet the new Title II ADA Regulations. The first meeting was on Oct. 2, 2024. It was decided to break up into working groups and focus on meeting the regulations. Jack will focus on social media and WordPress.

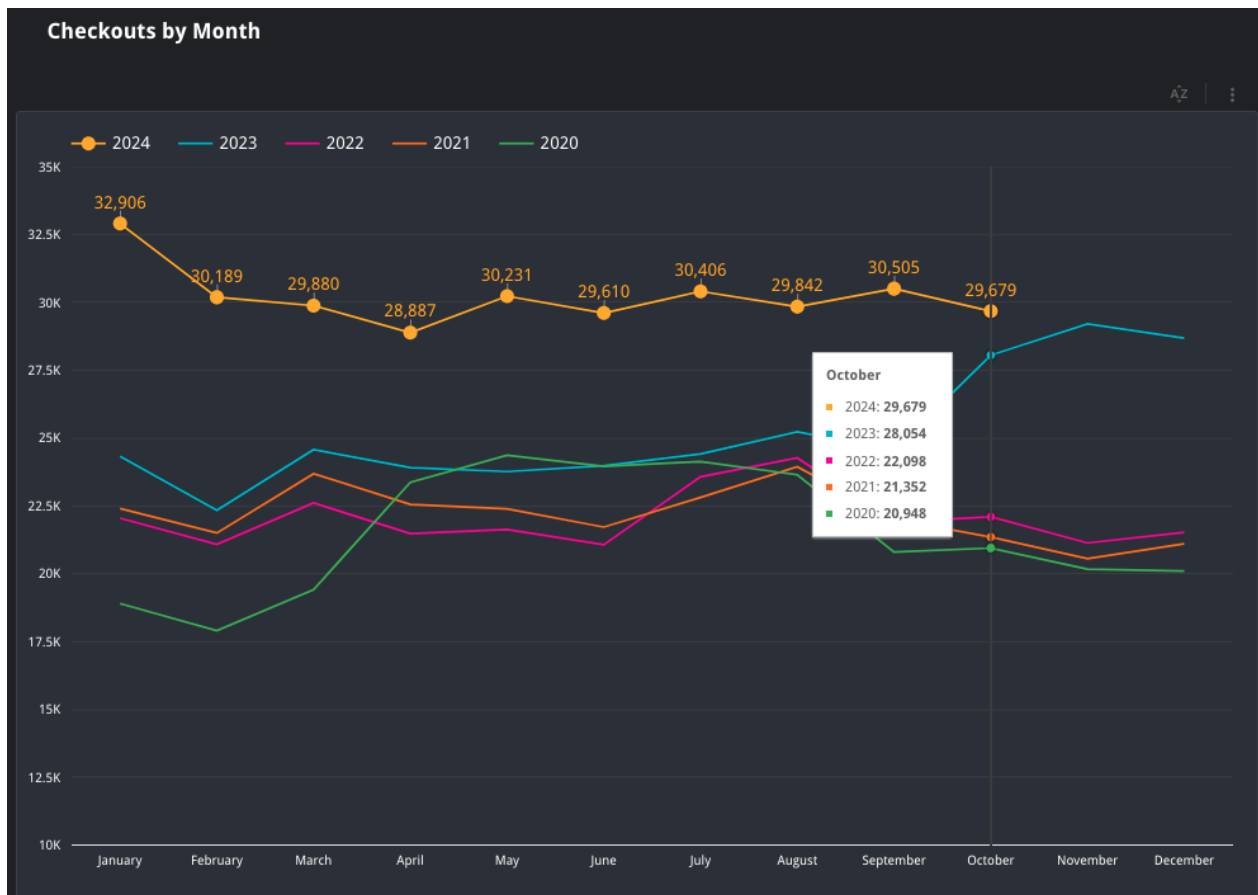
Jack contacted Unity Web Agency, the group that designed the SALS-accessible WordPress theme, to ask about providing access to the theme for libraries outside of MVLS, SALS, and UHLS. Alyssa, the founder and CEO, mentioned that she plans to close the company at the end of the year due to recent life events. She graciously offered to gift the theme to all New York State libraries.

He is visiting member websites by request, running accessibility audits on their sites, and installing an accessibility plugin. The most common errors are contrast errors for text and a lack of alt-text when an image isn't decorative. He is fixing these issues as they arise.

The monthly OATS cohorts meeting was held. Libraries are planning OATS classes for the autumn. Most libraries didn't have classes over the summer because of the busy season. Today, there is no word on whether Senior Planet will be awarded the Digital Equity Grant.

Jack attended CDLC's AI symposium on October 28 at their new building. While the focus was mainly on academic and school libraries, the key takeaway for him was recognizing how deeply integrated AI is in young people's educational and everyday lives. This has Jack thinking about how member libraries can begin incorporating AI tools into their programs and workflows.

In October, an estimated 29k items were downloaded by 7k users, with 10k holds placed. For September, SALS users borrowed 1,255 items from other systems and shared 519 items with other systems.



For September, Gales was used 858 times.

For September, in Ancestry there were 180 searches.

Youth Services:

Jack attended a day-long workshop on the Science of Reading hosted by the School Library Systems Association. The Science of Reading is gaining renewed attention as many school systems return to phonics-based teaching methods. Member libraries have asked how we support pre-k students so they are ready when they reach Kindergarten and how we continue to support students as they develop and grow. The good news is that we are currently doing an excellent job of this at library Storytimes and through Summer Reading.

There are 6 Big Competencies in the Science of Reading:

- Oral Language
- Vocabulary
- Fluency
- Comprehension
- Phonics
- Phonological Awareness

Member library storytimes already incorporate many high-impact practices discussed during the workshop. These include fostering an understanding of print conventions, emphasizing language sounds, engaging children with various high-interest and diverse texts, and introducing new vocabulary.

The other key takeaway from the workshop is how we support children as they develop into young adults. One key concept not included in the 6 Competencies is fostering a joy for reading. Summer Reading is crucial in this development. It is an entire season devoted to promoting that joy, and it is a time when children can self-select materials and explore new books.

Jack submitted the SALS Summer Reading Report to NYS in early October. Here are some of the highlights:

<https://indd.adobe.com/view/b6146a62-f561-43eb-837e-885a3669ea8a>

We had 6 member libraries participate in the Great Giveback this year.

Saratoga Springs Public Library, Halloween Costume Drive; Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library, The Great Give Back: Bat House Kits & The Great Give Back: New York State Bats; Stony Creek Free Library, Stony Creek Free Library's Book Lovin' Cold Weather Care Packs; Rockwell Falls Public Library, Clothing Drive; Galway Public Library, Cards for Seniors & Animal Shelter Food and Treat Drive; Schuylerville Public Library, Cat Adoption and Supply Drive.

Meetings:

10-16-2024	Town of Chester board meeting MVLS Transition Team meeting
10-17-2024	PLA Nominating Committee meeting IF Alliance call
10-18-2024	ALA Fall Executive Board meeting CDLC Finance committee CDLC Board meeting
10-19-2024	ALA Fall Executive Board meeting
10-23-2024	ALA Executive Board Effectiveness debrief
11-6-9-2024	NYLA Annual Conference, Syracuse
11-12-2024	ALA PPA Search Committee Schuylerville Board meeting ALA Finance and Audit Committee
11-13-2024	JA Council meeting (SALS) United for Libraries Board meeting
11-18-2024	Mechanicville Board meeting
11-19-2024	SALS Board meeting CVW Long Lake Board meeting

11-20-2024	Galway Board meeting
11-21-2024	ALA Executive Board meeting
11-25-12-09-2024	Vacation

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Dallas
November 5, 2024