



## Executive Director's Report

October 2025

Kim Bolan, Executive Director

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### Executive Director Onboarding

Over the past four weeks, I've had numerous phone calls and in-person meetings with state officials and other NYS system directors. These meetings have been helpful in getting reacclimated to NYS libraries, the many processes, upcoming priorities and deadlines. I have also started holding a weekly SALS and JA staff meeting as well as one-on-one meetings with my direct reports. Both have been priceless in learning about SALS operations and practices.

Another huge goal for me is getting to know our member library directors, board members, and staff. In addition to having lunch with the directors of Saratoga Springs Public Library, Crandall Public Library, and Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library in September, I've visited thirteen libraries over the past several weeks.

9/24	<i>Greenwich Public Library</i>
9/25	<i>Mechanicville District Public Library</i>
9/25	<i>Stillwater Public Library</i>
10/9	<i>Town of Lake Pleasant Public Library</i>
	<i>Town of Inlet Public Library</i>
	<i>Raquette Lake Free Library</i>
10/10	<i>Long Lake Public Library</i>
	<i>Town of Indian Lake Public Library</i>
	<i>Town of Johnsburg Library</i>
	<i>Town of Chester Public Library</i>
	<i>Horicon Free Public Library (Brant Lake)</i>
	<i>Bolton Free Library</i>
10/16	<i>Galway Public Library</i>

I was happy to meet the directors, staff members, and several board members. I greatly appreciated everyone's warm welcome, not to mention the beautiful fall scenery in the Adirondacks. I look forward to visiting more libraries over the next several months. My plan is to make it to all thirty-four by the end of the year. Fingers crossed.

### SALS Operations

*Personnel, Buildings & Grounds, Policies*

We passed our fire inspection with flying colors thanks to Bill Rougier. Perfect score! Thank you, Bill.

Pamela DeSignore and I are in discussion with Priority One Payroll, located in Malta, to explore options for updating our payroll process.

## Member Support

### Collections

Baker & Taylor (B&T), a nationwide library book distributor founded in 1828, announced in early October that it is in the process of closing following financial difficulties experienced over the last two years. This closure has affected thirteen SALS libraries. Existing orders with the company will likely be cancelled. Jill Ryder is working with our members on alternative solutions.

Jill Ryder attended the webinar “Prepared to Help: Library of Things and Emergency Response,” hosted by the State Library, which focused on libraries that have developed a "Library of Things" of emergency tools and kits (e.g., shovels, moving trailers, tools, automotive repair kits) to assist with relief efforts and support disaster preparedness and recovery in their communities.

### ***Access to Collections - Polaris & Vega***

Michele Largeteau, Jason Thomson, Jill Ryder, and Sharon O’Brien (MVLS) continued their work with Clarivate/Innovative to configure and test Vega Discover. Vega Discover is a patron-facing discovery tool designed to provide a comprehensive online catalog allowing users to search, discover, and manage their library resources. Key features include a unified search experience, personalized bookshelves, custom reading lists, and curated showcases that help patrons explore library materials.

This group meets weekly with the Clarivate project manager to work through questions and configuration decisions. Currently, we are experiencing issues getting the eContent to display properly due to having two Overdrive subscriptions (SALS and MVLS) as well as member libraries having various subscriptions to different eContent products. Due to the issues, I attended the October 7 meeting to better understand the challenges and potential solutions.

### Service to Special Client Groups

*Adult Literacy, Youth Services & Early Literacy, Coordinated Outreach, Correctional Facilities*

#### **Read It Forward (RIF)**

Fourteen UHLS libraries, nine SALS libraries, and one MVLS library participated in RIF from June through August, passing out 392 books to teens. Titles this year were *The Dire Days of Willowweep Manor* (graphic novel) by Shaenon K. Garrity (Author), Christopher Baldwin (Illustrator) and *Pet* by Akwaeke Emezi. The ad hoc committee determines the titles by considering the following criteria: age range, breadth of appeal, cover, price, and availability in paperback.

#### **Farm-2-Library**

On September 24, I met with Comfort Food Community’s Executive Director Laura Marx and Development Manager Jo Wenner. They toured me through their facility as we discussed our continued collaboration. I learned we distributed 19,488 lbs. of fresh food to 6,987 households over the summer. One patron commented, “Thank you for Rice, for my family not hungry for one months at least. [sic]”

## **Big Read**

We distributed 396 books and distributed 500 America's 250th patches to participating Big Read libraries and libraries participating in the Knox Trail Library Challenge. Seventeen libraries are participating in the Big Read: Argyle, Ballston Community, Corinth, Clifton Park-Halfmoon, Crandall, Galway, Greenwich, Hudson Falls, Indian Lake, Mechanicville, Warrensburg, Round Lake & Malta, Schuylerville, Stillwater, Lake George, and Lake Pleasant. In addition to the Big Read participants, Bolton, Fort Edward, and Waterford participated in the Knox Trail Library Challenge.

## **Professional Development**

### ***Adult Programs Swap***

Our statewide Adult Program swap webinar will be held on October 28.

### **GOAT 2025**

The Greatest Of All Time Teen Meetup (GOAT) 2025 will be an all-day event, hosted at East Greenbush on October 22nd. Topics will include AI, mental health, finding joy, accessible programs, and much more.

### **Path 2 Belonging**

On September 17, we hosted a statewide Path-2-Belonging webinar. There were twenty-nine attendees. The second webinar will be held on October 21.

### **Voter Registration**

On September 9, the League of Women Voters held a train-the-trainer session. During the week of September 14, two member libraries (Saratoga and Stillwater) held voter registration tables.

## **The Joint Automation Project**

The draft 2026 JA budget and a budget amendment for 2025 were approved at the September 10 JA Council meeting.

A special JA Council meeting was held on October 8 to discuss next steps for the draft JA Agreement as well as the job description, timeline, and next steps for the JA Project Manager search.

The exterior of the JA generator at SALS was painted.

The KnowBe4 phishing training 3-year contract was renewed.

JA is working on the end-of-the-year group PC order was announced and the deadline for orders is 10/23/2025.

Windows 10 went out of service on October 14, which means it will no longer receive security and feature updates from Microsoft Support. JA staff worked with our members to make sure they have upgraded their computers to Windows 11 or taken any Windows 10 computers out of service.

Michele Largeteau, Chris Mundell, and Jim Baker made site visits to Amsterdam Free Library, Gloversville Public Library, Mechanicville Public Library, Caldwell-Lake George Library, Pember Library, Johnstown Public Library, Middleburgh Library, and Schoharie Free Library.

Jason Thomson, Chris Mundell, and Dave MacFarland have been tackling some special projects for including working on a possible solution for Waterford Public Library to use an iPad as a kiosk for the online catalog, setting up authentication for Springshare's LibApps platform for museum passes for Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, doing research for Lake Pleasant Public Library on dyslexia plug-ins for browsers, working with Gloversville Public Library to create a Wi-Fi presence at a location in the community, and discussing adding security cameras to Fort Plain Free Library's network.

### Operational Support

I submitted the construction grant information for our seven projects on October 7. A special thanks to Lisa Christopher and Pamela DeSignore for their hard work and assistance throughout the process.

### Advocacy

#### Legislative Update

I attended the NYALS 2025 Advocacy Launch in Latham on September 29. SALS is a member of NYALS, which is the New York Alliance of Library Systems, a coalition of New York State's public, school, and regional library systems that works to advocate for libraries and improve services across the state. The day's agenda included updates from the NYS Library, NYLA, ESLN, School Library Systems, Public Library Systems, a NYALS Business Meeting, and the review of the [NYALS Advocacy Plan](#) and next steps.

NYLA is doing a postcard campaign and an advocacy booth at the annual conference this fall. 2026 legislative priorities include the Freedom to Read Act (S.1099/A.7777), the Open Shelves Act (S.1100-A/A.3119-B), and eBook Reform (A.3589).

### Save the Dates

February 3, 2026 – Advocacy Day  
May 19, 2026 - Spring on the Hill in Albany

### Community Engagement

I was invited to the Saratoga GOP 2025 Fall Rally on October 1. I met numerous candidates and community members and ran into Mechanicville District Public Library's Director Michelle Duell and Deb Flint, the Director of Galway Public Library.

On October 2, I attended Rebuilding Together Saratoga County's 22nd Annual Dinner and on October 16 I attended the Mechanicville-Stillwater Chamber of Commerce Economic Summit.

Jack Scott and I attended the SALS Advocacy Committee meeting on September 18.

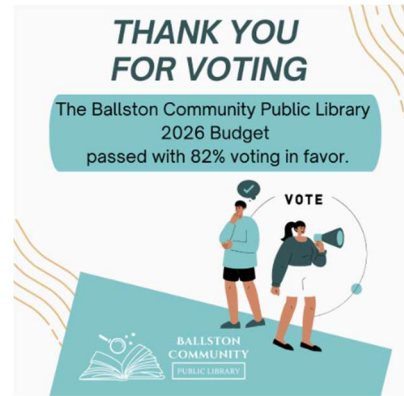
## Member Library Spotlight

*Celebrating the successes of our 34 member libraries.*

Ballston Community Public Library 2026 Budget Vote & Trustee Election – Passed with 82% in favor on October 8.

Susan Rollings, the Director of Indian Lake Public Library, was recently recognized as one of New York State Assemblyman Robert Smullen’s Women of Distinction. Each year, Assemblyman Smullen recognizes women who make an impactful difference in their community.

As we wrap up the 2025 Summer Reading Program and continue to collect statistics in preparation for filing our report with New York State, here are a few stories members shared with us:



*We had one family (grandparents and grandkids) visit the library multiple times this summer, and the kids participated in many different activities. Together, the family had been collecting bottles and cans, and turning them in for change. The grandkids had been asking their grandparents about how the library gets money for books, and programs and things, so the grandparents told them, after which, the kids decided they wanted to donate their bottle and can money to the library!*

-Lake Pleasant Public Library

*One of our favorite moments involved a little boy who attended with our youth commission campers. He told staff that he didn't have any money to take out a book like his friends. The staff member told him that the library bought all the books so that people can borrow them. He could take one home and read it and bring it back and get another. His smile was so big and he was so excited to borrow his first library book! Even bigger smiles the next week. He made fast friends with library staff.*

- Caldwell-Lake George Library

*We partnered with Little Troy Park again this summer and offered Free Swimming Story Times and it was a huge success. Our biggest Swimming story time had 88 kids and 70 adults in attendance!*

-Ballston Community Library

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Bolan, Executive Director