



Executive Director's Report

Kim Bolan, Executive Director
For the February 17, 2026 Board Meeting

Executive Summary

January marked significant progress across SALS' strategic priorities. In advocacy, SALS successfully coordinated Legislative Day with member libraries, meeting with seven state representatives who confirmed their support for libraries. Operationally, the Joint Automation Project advanced with final interviews completed for the JA Program Manager position, and SALS continued development of outsourced accounting/financial services and a comprehensive staff reorganization plan. Member support remained robust with continued member library visits (nearing completion of the first full cycle), creation of a second best practices informational packet on trustee recruitment, and preparation for the Annual Report Party. The month also brought exciting member library developments, including Argyle Free Library's property purchase initiation for their new facility and expanded community partnerships across the system.

Member Support

Member Library Visits

I continued meeting member library directors and board members visiting the Argyle Free Library, Hudson Falls Free Library, and Richards Library (Warrensburg) on January 5. On January 29, I visited Ballston Spa Public Library, on January 30 I travelled to Cambridge Public Library, Pember Library and Museum, Caldwell-Lake George, Stony Creek Free Library, and Rockwell Falls Public Library, and on February 9 I met with several Easton Library board members. Only a few left to go and then it will be time to start all over again.

I attended and presented at Hudson Falls Free Library's Annual Meeting on January 28. The topic was on trustee recruitment. In addition, I created a new informational packet on this topic for all our member libraries. This is the second informational packet I've created for our member directors and boards. The first packet, created at the end of 2025, pertains to insurance procurement.

I have also been providing one-on-one support to member directors and trustee on a variety of topics, including budgeting, hiring and interviewing, trustee engagement, human resources, to name a few.

Jack Scott, Lisa Christopher, Jill Ryder and I continued work planning the new SALS website, which is scheduled to launch in Q2 2026 with continued enhancements and content additions throughout the year.

The SALS' staff has been hard at work preparing for the upcoming Annual Report Party, which we host for our member libraries to help them with the annual report process. The party is a bit later this year due to the overall delay in the process due to the closure of Baker & Taylor, which provided CollectConnect, the web-based tool DLD used for annual report data collection. DLD announced a few weeks ago they are moving to a platform provided by [Counting Opinions](#) to gather the information. They also extended the annual report deadline to April 1.

Access to Collections – Polaris & Vega

Jill Ryder, Sharon O'Brien (MVLS), Jason Thomson, and Michele Largeteau continue to look for a resolution to the eContent issues which are holding up the roll out of Vega Discover. Jason Thomson is reaching out to other Vega customers via the IUG (Innovative Users Group) Discord channel to ask about other sites looking for the same development for eContent. Michele also reached out to our ILL Customer Success Manager. Jill,

Sharon, Jason, and Michele continue to learn more about user permissions and the Showcase feature of Vega Discover in preparation for implementation.

The Polaris ILS annual reports were produced and posted to the JA Intranet for member libraries to use to complete their NYS Annual Report.

Hoopla access was configured for Greenwich Free Library.

A bug was fixed in the staff eCard application which had been there since the eCard server upgrade in 2025. It was in a feature that is not frequently used.

Michele, Jason, and Sharon worked with Jill to investigate changes to Libby authentication so Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library can provide the correct access to Advantage titles. This change will improve authentication for other Advantage libraries as well.

Dave MacFarland updated the Tunnelier software (encryption software used for communication with the Polaris ILS) to the latest version on all the Cassie managers.

Collections

Jill Ryder, Michele Largeteau, Jason Thomson, and Sharon O'Brien (MVLS) met with OverDrive/Libby support representatives to investigate options to better control access to Libby content purchased by libraries with OverDrive Advantage accounts. OverDrive Advantage is a program offered by OverDrive that enables libraries to purchase content for use exclusively by their registered borrowers. We learned that authenticating users by the patron statistical class field in Polaris rather than by registered branch will allow libraries to better limit the use of Advantage titles to resident borrowers as it more accurately identifies users based on where they live. For this systemwide change to be made, some database cleanup work is necessary; Jill Ryder is working on this cleanup.

Service to Special Client Groups

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

Farm-2-Library: We are welcoming three new libraries to the program. Beginning in late February, the Ballston Spa Public Library, the Malta Branch, and Saratoga Springs Public Library will receive weekly deliveries of fresh, locally grown produce through Comfort Food Community

Professional Development

Adult Program Swap: We had 79 attendees at Library Programs for People with Dementia.

The Joint Automation Project

On January 13, Carol Kuhr, Tom Shaginaw, and I met with our attorney Ellen Bach from Whiteman Osterman and Hanna to discuss the new JA Agreement. I had an additional follow-up meeting with Ellen on January 16.

The Joint Automation Council met on January 14, 2026 at Mohawk Valley Library System headquarters. The next meeting will be on March 11, 2026 at SALS at 9:30 a.m. 2027 JA fee charts have been created, in preparation for the approval of the 2027 JA fees by both system boards before posting to the JA Council website.

Interviews with the three final candidates for the Joint Automation Program Manager position were held at SALS on January 21 and 22. Candidates had in-person interviews with the JA Project Manager Hiring Committee as well as Jill Ryder, Sharon O'Brien (MVLS), Chris Mundell, Jason Thomson, Dave MacFarland, and Jim Baker. Each candidate also had a 30-minute virtual meet and greet with member directors and staff.

There has been a delay in the delivery of the computers from the 2025 end of year group PC order. We were informed by the vendor, SHI, in early January that the order had been cancelled and our sales representative had not been aware of the change. Dave has been reaching out daily for updates and has escalated the issue.

Jason Thomson continues to work on transferring websites to the updated GoDaddy server.

Chris Mundell provided information to the Easton Library and the Community Library in Cobleskill regarding cyber liability insurance. Chris has also been working with Fort Plain Free Library to evaluate their phone and internet connections and billing. He is also working with the company Hudson Falls Free Library is using for a fire alarm update to answer questions about the networking possibilities.

The SALS training wireless equipment has been moved from the small FirstLight internet connection to the Spectrum internet connection to improve performance.

Our system-wide phishing test results had the lowest "phish prone" score of 0.9% since we first implemented the KnowBe4 security training. The results are usually between 2% and 3%. Our first test before the training was 17.2%. The annual "big" phishing training campaign is currently underway.

Advocacy & Engagement

State-wide Engagement

On February 3, SALS attended Advocacy Day at the Legislative Building in Albany. We met with Assemblyman Simpson, Assemblywoman Walsh, Assemblywoman Woerner, Assemblyman Smullen, Senator Tedisco, Senator Ashby, and Senator Walczyk. All our representatives are well aware of the issues facing local libraries and are prepared to support them through the upcoming budget process. In attendance were the Crandall Public Library, the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, the Schuylerville Public Library, the Saratoga Springs Public Library, and the Waterford Public Library. Attendees included directors, staff, trustees, and Friends groups. We were also joined by representatives from other library systems, including the Northern New York Library Network, the Mohawk Valley Library System, and a representative from WSWHE BOCES. Thank you to Lisa Christopher for handling all the scheduling and to Jack Scott for leading the group and creating the following documents.

[Link to the One Pager we shared with the Representatives](#)

[Link to our Advocacy Guide for 2026](#)

I attended the NYS Public Library System (PLS) meeting on January 15.

I attended the Capital District Library Council (CDLC) Board of Trustees meeting on January 16 and also attended a CDLC System Directors meeting on January 22 to discuss advocacy and future collaboration opportunities.

I have been invited to work with the Executive Directors of Mid York Library System and the Upper Hudson Library System to plan the Malcolm Hill Lecture for the 2026 New York Library Association Conference hosted by the Public Library System Director's Organization (PULISDO).

National News & Engagement

I was informed by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) that I will be presenting, "Examining Early Literacy Spaces: Are we on the right track?" at the 2026 ALSC National Institute October 1-3, 2026, in Buffalo, New York. I am co-presenting with Erin Jennings, a Principal with [Luminaut](#), an architecture and design firm specializing in commercial, hospitality, and sustainable projects with a growing national presence in library planning and design.

IMLS opened the [FY26 grant funding cycle](#). Libraries and museums are encouraged to apply to the agency's programs by **March 13, 2026**. Library grant programs include:

- **Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program** - Supports the training and professional development of library and archives professionals to meet the information needs of their communities.
- **National Leadership Grants for Libraries** - Supports projects that develop, enhance, or disseminate replicable practices, programs, models, or tools to strengthen library and archival services for the American public.
- **Native American Library Services: Basic Grants** - Assists eligible Native Communities in establishing, sustaining, and improving library services and operations with their communities.

Community & Other Engagement

The Board of Trustees of the Saratoga Children's Literacy League (SCLL) met at SALS on January 23 and February 4..

Operations

Throughout January, I continued discussions with potential firms to provide outsourced accounting and CFO services to SALS.

Pamela DeSignore and I met with our insurance agent on January 29 to review our existing coverage and explore adding Directors and Officers insurance.

I met with Capital CFO+ on February 4 to review the compensation study findings and continued work on the SALS' reorganization plan. Related to the reorganization, SALS' staff and I are having a half day planning meeting on February 18. I am also working with CFO+ to provide HR services to SALS.

Member Library Spotlight

Celebrating the successes of our 34 member libraries.

Jennifer Hurd, Director of the **Round Lake and Malta Library**, reported that January is a quiet month for them, and they are using the opportunity to plan many family programs for the upcoming months.

Sarah Jordan, Director of **Bolton Free Library**, shared the many programs their library has hosted in January, including two Storytimes for Toddlers-Pre-K, Make Your Own Vision Boards, and Tech Help with Teens. Additionally, they have weekly and monthly events, such as Trivia Tuesday, Fiber Arts Group, Paint with Practice, and a very popular Coffee Chat!

Crandall Public Library had their first ever patron-suggested *12th Night* Read-Aloud with homeschoolers facilitated by Frieda Toth, Community Engagement Coordinator. The event was collaborative, with The Hudson River Shakespeare Company, SUNY Adirondack, and the library participating. The program explored theater and acting history, and many homeschoolers became aware of available library resources.



Director of the **Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library** Alex Gutelius shared that staff members were all required to attend an Introduction to AI training session, and plan to do additional AI training in the coming year.

The **Rockwell Falls Public Library** hosted their monthly Teen Game Night, where teens play library-provided board games, and have pizza and ice cream. Ten teens attended the most recent event!

Galway Public Library had seven visits from pre-schools in January, with three more scheduled for February. They also hosted a successful book sale, with proceeds going to purchase new books.

Jennifer DeCarlo, Director of **Easton Library**, reported that The Cookbook Club met and shared food using cookbooks with a Harvest theme. The Neighborhood Book Club also met to discuss *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls.

Town of Lake Pleasant Public Library Director Katrena Cohea shared that their library has been hosting a Cr'After School Program, working with the local school to get students bussed from the school to the library. The craft for January was skiing penguins!



The Corinth Free Library kicked off a new Creative Writing Group facilitated by Mary Ann Morreale. For their first project, they are using *Fuzz: When Nature Breaks the Law* by Mary Roach as inspiration. Part of The Big Read celebration, they are hopeful this group becomes a regular occurrence!

The **Ballston Spa Public Library** is collaborating with the Saratoga County Cornell Cooperative Extension to create a Seed Library. The Co-op will provide seed packs, educational packets, and programming. At their Winter Gardening Program on March 7, they hope to have a ribbon cutting for the Seed Library.

Long Lake Library has received a grant from Pearsall Foundation to purchase a book for each student at Long Lake Central School, with extra funds provided by The Friends of the Library. This is the fourth year the library has done this. After Scholastic book fairs stopped going to the school, they saw an opportunity to help bridge the gap between students with and without flexible spending money.

Vicki Plude, Director **of Fort Edward Free Library**, shared that she approached the Town Board of Trustees to ask if the library could be approved to sell Town and Village Trash stickers from the library. Their sell date begins on 2/1/2026. This will allow more foot traffic into the library, with the library serving as an inviting environment for residents who may never have been there before. The library will also begin selling Forever stamps with the same payment agreement as the stickers. Both initiatives have received positive community feedback.

Faith St. John, Director of the **Argyle Free Library**, shared that their lawyer has initiated the process of purchasing the property where they hope to build the new library!

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KBolan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kim Bolan, Executive Director