



# Executive Director's Report

Kim Bolan, Executive Director  
March 2026 Report

## Executive Director Highlights

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During the March 2026 reporting period, SALS advanced several major organizational initiatives, including a staff reorganization planning session, the transition of financial/accounting services to the Bonadio Group, and continued progress on filling the Joint Automation Project Manager position. Also, on the JA front, the soft launch of Vega Discover is forthcoming to meet the April 2026 WCAG 2.1 accessibility compliance deadlines.

Member support activities included closing the annual member survey with 193 respondents (27% response rate), the SALS' Annual Report Party, more in-person library visits, completion of a new trustee recruitment guide for all SALS' members, and assistance with the director search for Bolton Free Library.

The SALS Advocacy Committee is actively supporting member libraries in Governor Hochul's EXPRESS NY initiative and planning outreach to state representatives. Across SALS's thirty-four member libraries, this past month saw strong community programming, new partnerships, expanded services, and \$2,831 in special revenue funds from the NYS Love Your Library Fund in support of Summer Reading.

## Member Support

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The SALS' **SALS Strategic Assessment Survey** closed at the end of February. It opened on January 2. In addition to assessing SALS' services, the purpose of the survey was to gather information from member library staff and trustees about their challenges, needs, priorities, and where SALS should invest its resources in the future. The feedback from the survey will help guide SALS' strategic priorities and resource allocation as we develop our next Plan of Service for 2027-2031. **A brief summary of results can be found [here](#).**

SALS held its **Annual Report Party** for member library directors on February 13 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Twenty-eight people attended the hybrid program. Even though we lacked information from DLD on Counting Opinions (the new platform DLD has selected to replace Baker and Taylor), the SALS' team moved forward and worked together, along with our members, to tackle what they could and be proactive.

I conducted **in-person visits** with Schuylerville Public Library and Bancroft Public Library (February 12) as well as had phone and online meetings with several member libraries to support them on a variety of topics.

Over the past few months, I assisted the Board of Trustees of the Bolton Landing Public Library in their new director's search, including consultation on recruitment and interviewing. On February 19, I participated in onsite interviews with their final three candidates. I look forward to helping them move forward later this month.

I finished work on a new manual for our member libraries called, "Building Strong Library Boards: A Best Practices Guide for Trustee Recruitment."

I attended the February 19 meeting, facilitated by CDLC, to talk with Stony Brook Healthy Libraries Program about future collaboration with SALS and our member libraries regarding social work and health-related services in our libraries. This initiative has been a continued discussion point with me and our members.

To better support our members in the NYS construction program, I attended the "Construction Contacts" meeting with DLD on February 24 and also "Forming More Perfect Union: Library Construction Projects and NY State Funding" on March 3.

Jill, Jack, Michele and I attended the SALS' Directors Council meeting on March 3.

### **Collection Services**

Jill Ryder completed two major database cleanup projects in preparation for the Vega Discover implementation and upcoming changes to Libby user authentication.

In discussions with Libby support, we learned we can use the patron statistical class field in Polaris's patron registration to authenticate patrons using Libby rather than authenticating by registered branch. This will allow libraries with Libby Advantage accounts to better limit the use of their purchased eContent to resident borrowers. This is a beneficial change for all member libraries.

Jill continues to support libraries in establishing electronic ordering and invoicing with Ingram. The rollout has slowly progressed due to the high demand for Ingram's services since Baker & Taylor's 2025 closure.

### **Polaris & Vega**

We were informed by Clarivate that they cannot begin development on the JA Project's requested Vega Discover eContent modifications until June 2027. Because of the pending 4/26/2026 deadline for WCUG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) compliance, it was proposed to the JA Operations Committee that we move ahead with Vega Discover with all eContent hidden. The current plan is to soft launch Vega Discover in the next few weeks, immediately followed by a staff training webinar. Jason Thomson, Jill Ryder, Sharon O'Brien (MVLS) and Michele Largeteau are getting the sites ready and preparing information to share with library staff. If interested in more information on WCUG, visit ALA's [overview](#) covering the basics of the new rule. Michele Largeteau, Jason Thomson, and I attended the E-Accessibility, WCAG 2.1, Title II webinar with Cole Adams on February 10.

A change was made to the Polaris ILS "Unclaimed Holds" report, which lists items on the hold shelf that have gone to unclaimed status after two days instead of ten. This modification allows unclaimed hold items to be returned to the owning library or next patron in a timelier fashion.

Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library decided to include CPC (Cost Per Circ) titles to their Libby Advantage eContent. Because of how Polaris and eContent integration functions, this change created over 300,000 bibliographic records and items in the Polaris ILS. Because it does not make sense to include these items in the JA fee billing as most of them may never circulate to patrons, JA Council will determine a way to calculate a fee adjustment.

There was a brief Polaris ILS outage the morning of Sunday, February 8. The issue was on the Polaris hosting side and affected multiple customers. The issue was quickly resolved.

The SSL [Secure Sockets Layer, a standard security technology for establishing an encrypted link between a server (website) and a client (browser)] certificate for pac.sals.edu (the Classic PAC Server) was renewed for another year.

Adjustments were made to the Polaris ILS settings for the Richards Library due to their temporary closure.

### **Service to Special Client Groups**

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

SALS received \$2,831 in [Love Your Library](#) special revenue funding to support Summer Reading in 2026. The Love Your Library special funds of \$100,000 were appropriated in the FY 2025-2026 State Budget. The funding is allocated to New York's 23 public library systems (PLS) under the provisions of Education Law 273(9) State Aid for Summer Reading.

**Farm-2-Library:** Ballston Spa, Malta, and Saratoga all had their first produce delivery on March 3.

**Children's Virtual Summer Reading Workshop:** 316 people attended the February 5 workshop. Participant evaluations of the session were extremely positive. The favorite program of the day was Anne Nelson's (Crandall Public Library) "Owl Pellet Jewelry & Owl Pellet Shadowboxes." The Teen Summer Reading Programming Workshop is scheduled for March 11.

### **The Joint Automation Project**

I continued work on a plan for filling the Joint Automation Manager position and also continued reaching out to our attorney about her progress with the Joint Automation Agreement.

JA staff continued waiting for confirmation on the 2025 year-end group PC order with the vendor SHI International. The company agreed to honor the original pricing, and is in touch with them on a daily basis. Dave MacFarland is currently working on quotes for the next group order. We expect pricing to be higher due to RAM chip shortages.

Jason Thomson continued work on the Vega Discover project as well as transferring websites to the updated GoDaddy server. Chris Mundell upgraded the VPN software, used by JA staff, trainers, and member library IT staff, to the latest version and applied a patch to the Fortinet firewall.

Dave, Jason, and Michele worked on changes to the JA SysAid ticketing system to assist with the SALS/JA inventory process for insurance-related purposes. New fields were added and we are working on verifying all SALS and JA computer equipment and pricing information in the database. Our hope is to be able to run a report that will help SALS with reconciling this information for the insurance.

There was an error on the computer room AC unit. The HVAC vendor, Stark was called to assess and ensure that the unit was working properly. They reported it was likely due to the extreme cold. We were later invoiced for the call and found out we do not have emergency service coverage in the SALS HVAC contract, although we have had many similar calls in the past without being charged. If affordable, this should be investigated to be added in the future.

JA assisted when a SALS' credit card was compromised. There was also an email phishing incident which was quickly mitigated by Chris Mundell. The MVLS cyber insurance carrier and lawyers were consulted and no further action was needed in response. There was a recent Barracuda email spam appliance firmware upgrade which required some additional work for the JA team. Chris will continue to work on "re-training" the appliance to block spam. JA staff tested a feature of our virus protection software to block websites with phishing links. If testing goes well, consideration will be given to enabling this feature on all JA-configured staff computers.

Michele and Jason visited the Frothingham Free Library in Fonda for new director training.

Michele continued working on documentation for the next JA Project Manager to help aid in a smooth transition after her retirement.

## Engagement & Collaboration

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### State-wide

I attended the PLS monthly meeting on February 19.

I continued work as a member of the Malcolm Hill Lecture Committee to secure the 2026 NYLA speaker.

### Local

Discussions continued regarding future facilities and programming collaborations with the soon-to-be non-profit organization Saratoga Writers Center.

The SALS' member-lead Advocacy Committee met on Wednesday, March 4. The committee focused on drafting a letter and detailed submission guidance to support member libraries participating in Governor Hochul's [EXPRESS NY](#) initiative. The committee also discussed planning visits to the local offices of state representatives in September 2026. Other initiatives discussed included developing a webinar focused on advocacy for trustees.

## Operations

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The reorganization planning meeting for SALS' staff was held on February 18. Jill, Jack, Lisa, Pamela, and I were in attendance. Our agenda for the half-day session included discussion and hands-on exercises to understand where SALS currently is in terms of roles and functions, how we can move forward, figuring out bottlenecks and inefficiencies, and how to best redistribute duties and move forward. As part of the reorganization, JA and SALS staff collaborated on a video doorbell option to eliminate the need for a front desk staff person.

Planning and setup with the Bonadio Group continued as SALS transitions its financial and bookkeeping services to an outsourced firm.

# Member Library Spotlight

Celebrating the successes of our 34 member libraries.

## Ballston Spa Public Library

- Held our 12th Annual Blind Date with a Book throughout the month.
- Had a children's, teens and adult Winter Olympics Tic Tac Toe Reading Challenge throughout from February 6th-February 24<sup>th</sup>
- Started selling tickets for a Friends of the Ballston Spa Public Library raffle baskets [9 in total] fundraiser. This will run through April, with several pop-up ticket selling events at area restaurants and events.
- There will be an Open Mic/Community Mixer at the B. Spa Elks Clubs where tickets will be pulled

## Bancroft Public Library

Library has wonderful story time bags. Each canvas tote has a theme: Alphabet, Numbers, Car Rides, Farm, Butterflies, Animal Habitats, etc. Each bag has four children's picture books related to the subject, and associated games, or projects and crafts, that can be done related to the topic.

## Bolton Free Library

### Take A Book/Share A Book at the Bolton Health Center

The Bolton Free Library set up a Community Bookshelf at the Bolton Health Center, creating a new community relationship with the library. It's designed to be a mini-library, to increase accessibility to books for community members. These books are free to "borrow" – people can keep it, return it, or add a book of their own to the shelf. We'll restock as needed, and we hope this outreach to the community brings more people to the library.



### The Winter Challenge

The inaugural all-ages Bolton Free Library Winter Challenge will run from February 8, through Tuesday, March 31st. Patrons earn points for completing various activities, then redeem points for prizes. Activities include reading, visiting other libraries and museums, finding historical markers, and collecting stamps on a library passport. We hope this introduces other libraries to our patrons.

## Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library

### YouthAstroNet: Explore the Universe for grades 6-8

The CPH Library offered a four-day program series for students in grades 6-8. The Harvard-Smithsonian Youth Astronomy Network sponsors this opportunity to explore space through hands-on activities and robotic telescopes. Capture space images, then enhance them using technology. CPH Library was chosen among a select group of educational sites to host this [YouthAstroNet](#) program.

Students will turn in a capstone project by March 18 and the projects will be on display at the Library in April. The Library was required to submit an application to participate in this program. It is anticipated the program will be offered again in the summer.

## Crandall Public Library

1-3pm on Friday, February 20, Crandall Public Library hosted its first-ever Crow Party, an all-ages Community Room event celebrating crows and corvids. Over 150 jubilant attendees braved a winter snowstorm to attend.

Library staff noted that Crow Party attracted the expected school vacation week patrons—families with young children and tweens—but it also had high engagement with teens, young adults, retirees, and local artists. The event (as well as the pre-event marketing) elicited an unusually large and overwhelmingly positive amount of feedback from participants and interested community members.

Large flocks of roosting crows are a conspicuous and messy part of spring in downtown Glens Falls, and the Library is happy to take the lead in inviting the community to reframe this annual phenomenon as a cause for celebration. Prizes for this event were donated by Tidal Wave Car Wash.

## Easton Library

SALS Director Kim Bolan recently visited the library for a tour. During the visit, she met with several members of the Board of Trustees to discuss a variety of important library topics.

The Neighborhood Book Club met for a productive discussion of their latest selection, "Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom" by Ilyon Woo.

## Hudson Falls Free Library

We received an [Early Literacy Library Event Kit from WMHT Public Media](#), one of 20 given out on their first go for this new program. We used the 25 books (Elmo's Super Duper Birthday) and craft supplies during our Li'l Bookworms Storytime session on Feb. 17, which was on school break week and had 31 people in attendance.

We celebrated our building's [110th birthday](#) with an Open House on Saturday, Feb. 28. This was 110 years and two days after a similar open house inaugurated the building's service to our community in 1916.

We were chosen by Woodmen Life Chapter 461 (Glens Falls) as the recipient of approximately \$500 in goods selected from our ongoing Amazon Wishlist, plus \$100 to purchase children's books. This generous gift originated from a very active teen patron (Ally) whose family has been very involved in the WoodmenLife chapter.



## Rockwell Falls Public Library

We held a fairy tale tea party on Valentine's Day. Patrons were encouraged to dress up in their fanciest outfits. Attendees used a variety of cookie cutters to cut their sandwiches into fun shapes and there were delicious sweet treats as well. There were themed crafts as well. One of our local teens was a special guest reader to our princesses and princes. We had a total 50 guests. It has already been requested that we do it again next year.

## Round Lake Library

The Round Lake Library started a new Fantasy Book Club in February that was well received, and participants are looking forward to next month's selection. The library also held a self-guided/drop-in program for kids during the Winter Olympics. There were several activities to complete over the 14 days and once completed kids could make their own Gold Medal.



## Schuylerville Public Library

We hosted our monthly Cookbook Club January 21 and had 16 home chefs take part! The theme was Julia Child and many delicious treats were shared.

## The Town of Lake Pleasant

We paired Take Your Child to the Library Day (Feb 7), with a Library Olympics program, and it was a great turnout for us, and lots of fun! We did sports like book bobsledding, synchronized stamping, and story time biathlon. There were crafts, and snacks, and all the

parents seemed to get a good laugh at seeing their kids participate in all the sports. Library cart dancing was way more of a hit than we anticipated!



## Waterford Public Library

We decided to become a member of the Library Speakers' Consortium. Beginning in April, Waterford will have access to their two new series': Cooking, and Health and Wellness. In conjunction with the cooking series, we are also starting a monthly spice club.

We are launching our new seed library in March! Seeds and pamphlets/informational booklets have been provided by CCE. We have repurposed an old card catalog to house all the seeds.

We currently have two book clubs that have been insanely popular (a multi-genre book club that has been drawing upwards of 14 people) and a fantasy/romantasy book club (with attendance of about 8 monthly run by the owner of a local bookstore). So, we thought it was time to add a third book club: nonfiction! One of our staff members will be leading this monthly group on the 3rd Saturday of the month starting in May. We plan to offer coffee and pastries to go along with the conversation.

Beginning April 1st our library hours are expanding. We will now be open from 10:00 - 8:00 on Wednesdays. Wish us luck!

*Respectfully Submitted,*



*Kim Bolan, Executive Director*