Director's Report
September-October 2024

Administration

The 2024 draft SALS (Southern Adirondack Library System) budget was sent to all member library directors. As of this writing, I have not heard any comments from the membership.

All the SALS board-approved NYS (New York State) Construction program applications have been submitted, and the paperwork has been mailed to the Division of Library Development. I want to acknowledge all the work done by Pamela DelSignore.

All libraries have been notified that the construction applications submitted a year ago have been funded.

Eric Trahan, Jill Ryder, members of the Joint Automation staff, and I have been working to ensure that the Schenectady County Public Library (SCPL) migration away from the Joint Automation Project goes as smoothly as possible.

The SCPL administration knew that the member library directors from MVLS and SALS libraries recommended stopping reciprocal holds at the end of August 2024. As a result, Schenectady County Public Library staff began using interlibrary loan forms available through the Capital District Library Council (CDLC). This process is both cumbersome and slow. SALS directors met with CDLC staff, asking for clarification of the service, what can be requested, and what can be denied. As a result of those meetings, the following was shared by CDLC:

> Anyone working at a CDLC library may sign up for an account. CDLC updated its LiNX Libguide, clarifying the website's guidelines and best practices (see below). Should the CDLC Board of Trustees determine that a more official policy is necessary, it will update our membership.

> CDLC members need to review their Library Profile in LiNX and update it as necessary, not only with the correct contact information but also to ensure their lending categories are set to whatever their individual library ILL policy allows.

GUIDELINES

- LiNX is intended for CDLC libraries when access to OCLC or ILLiad is not an option for either the borrower or the lender. It is for library staff and not for patron use.
- Interlibrary loan is not intended to be used when items are available within a library's own system.

- LiNX should not be used to request new and popular items (less than 6 months old) or to avoid long wait lists for titles that are available at the borrowing library/system.
- LiNX is free; libraries should not fine one another for overdue items. However, charging for a replacement copy if the book is lost or damaged is allowed. The lending library is responsible for collecting money from the borrowing library.
- Digital materials through third-party vendors such as Overdrive, Libby, Kanopy, and Hoopla are unavailable.
- LiNX search parameters are intentionally wide to accommodate multiple cataloging systems through diverse institutions.
- LiNX requests are received through email and are only valid for 5 days. Please respond to requests promptly.

BEST PRACTICES

- Update your Library's Profile in the ILL Directory regularly.
- Send ILL items with a copy of the paperwork with a precise due date and any special instructions (in-library use only, no renewals, etc.)
- Keep clear records of ILL items loaned and borrowed.
- A/V materials may be requested through LiNX, although some libraries may choose not to send A/V materials. Please remember to protect plastic cases when shipping items.
- A request is just a request. Libraries may decline without stating why. However, it is always preferred that a library answer the request and respond No rather than not answer the request.
- Mistakes will happen in ILL. If you are concerned about a lost item, communicate with other libraries and CDLC.

SALS has planned a staff appreciation day on Friday, October 4, 2024. The day includes a fire drill, CPR training, lunch, and make-your-own-sundaes. Any sundae leftovers will be available for the SALS Board at the October meeting.

I continue to work with the American Library Association on various projects. The most recent was serving on the Steering Committee of the third Intellectual Freedom Summit in its nearly 150-year history. The summit, held at the Library of Congress, aims to forge strong partnerships and shape strategies to battle the rising tides of censorship. It brings together national organizations, publishing allies, educational institutions, foundations, authors, and other champions of intellectual freedom.

The Fall ALA Executive Board Meeting will be held virtually rather than in Chicago.

I was asked to serve as a member of the ALA Public Library Association's nomination committee.

The New York Library Association's Annual Conference will be held in Syracuse in November.

Colleen Smith reports that during the month, she migrated SALS purchase order management from a manual, Excel-based system to QuickBooks for improved efficiency and tracking.

She also met with ADP payroll services and attended a NYCON MAC (Member Advisory Council) meeting.

Colleen set up an account with Barnes & Noble to allow the purchase of videos for the Washington County correctional facility.

She will cross-train Pamela DelSignore on preparing the payroll.

AUTOMATION and JA

JA will announce the end-of-year group order very soon. Dave MacFarland has been testing a Chrome box as a possible lower-cost solution for a staff device. JA purchased a unit and will ask library staff if they would like to test it to provide feedback. This group order will not include these as we want to get feedback first.

A second reminder about PC models ending JA support was sent as of 12/31/2024.

Microsoft announced that it will end support for Windows 10 on October 14, 2025. All Windows 10 PCs should be upgraded or removed from service before this date. JA-supported PCs can be updated to Windows 11 for free.

Sharing more information about the Schenectady County Public Library's (SCPL) withdrawal from JA and the shared catalog:

- Reciprocal borrowing was disabled on 8/31/2024 per the recommendation of the JA Ad Hoc committee.
- Since this change, SALS library directors have met to discuss the impact of SCPL requesting materials via Linx. CDLC investigated a report that MVLS/SALS holdings status was not being displayed correctly in the CDLC catalog and was able to correct this.

- Planning has begun for the Materials Return Committee. This committee will address how items will be returned to owning libraries after SCPL's withdrawal from the shared Polaris catalog.
- JA staff and system trainers met to plan for eCard and patron self-registration changes needed for SCPL's withdrawal.
- JA staff contacted III to inquire about the status of the initial data pull for SCPL. JA learned of updated dates for SCPL's last day on our Polaris ILS and their go-live date on their new system. These dates are several weeks earlier than previously informed. JA provided the proper criteria for the data to be given to SCPL, and the initial data pull was done on 9/25/2024.
- A draft agenda was created for discussion and planning for the next transition team meeting. JA expects this meeting to focus on network and PC planning in light of the updated timeframes. A doodle poll has been sent, and JA requested information from County IT before the meeting regarding their plans for the network cutover.
- JA staff and trainers continue to work on the plan for network cutover, Polaris ILS changes, testing of changes, and scripts.

Both system boards approved the 2025 JA budget. As we did not have a quorum for the September meeting, it will be voted on at the November JA Council meeting.

Michele Largeteau is working with III to negotiate a new multi-year contract for the Polaris-hosted ILS and associated products.

JA staff and trainers attended a demo of the Polaris SMS product and available telephony solution. Polaris SMS would allow text notices to be sent in SMS rather than email-to-text as they are being sent now. Due to changes in federal regulations and anti-spam laws, phone carriers have slowly dropped support for email-to-text. Recently, JA staff have been seeing the effects of these changes as more text messages are being delayed or not delivered. Unfortunately, both the SMS product and telephony solution are new and unable to support the features required for a consortium. III has been asked to keep JA informed of updates and has offered to provide feedback on the need for a consortium implementation.

The Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library's fine-free changes were made, and fines were waived by III.

A technician from Cummins painted the generator door as a sample of what it would look like if they completed the quoted paintwork. Since the result was not very good, JA has decided to move forward with the other generator maintenance items and look into other painting options.

Chris Mundell has tested a new USB key fob option for MFA for staff who do not have or want to use a personal phone for authentication. Saratoga Springs Public Library staff is testing.

Jason Thomson, Jill Ryder, Sharon Obrien, and Michele met with Quipu staff about upcoming changes to their servers that will affect our eCard functionality. We are still investigating and will work with Quipu to minimize the impact. The changes are not expected to take place until after the first of the year.

On September 18, 2024, FirstLight (our internet provider for the servers at SALS) experienced a widespread outage, making connections to Polaris unavailable for several hours during the day.

JA staff continue to work with member library staff to enhance security by sharing information about cyber security insurance and details regarding MFA. They have also made site visits for network issues and setting up PCs, among other issues.

Since August 27, 2024, there have been 402 SysAid calls. The top counts were email, user accounts, and Polaris. The most prolonged calls were from email, PCs, and user accounts.

Cataloging and Adult 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 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 all Polaris questions that arise.

SALS catalogers (Jill Ryder and Johanna Hall) modified 2,847 bibliographic records in the catalog in September of 2024. Three thousand one hundred three new bibliographic records and 15,594 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; 146 titles were purchased in September 2024. Popular titles purchased include Alison Espach's The Wedding People, Jodi Picoult's new historical fiction novel By Any Other Name, and Marcus Kliewer's thriller We Used to Live Here.

Outreach

Erica Freudenberger reports that she has worked with numerous member library staff and boards, including Rockwell Falls Public Library, Caldwell Lake George Library, Pember, and Lake Pleasant. She reports that the Pember Library had a successful 259 Budget Referendum, with voters approving $100,000 to support the library. Erica was

instrumental in assisting board president Mary King in launching a successful effort. In addition to this, she spoke with Carol Kuhr about Friends Groups.

Erica presented with Caitlin Johnson about the SALS' Farm-2-Library program at the ARSL conference. She also presented a program on The Path to Belonging at ARSL. It was very well received, and Erica shared some of the evaluation comments:

- Framework has a lot of potential. I like the way it reframes diversity in a way that feels holistic;
- A space was created for open and honest communication which isn't easy in a group of complete strangers;
- It would be great to be a longer class (maybe 4 hours) and have the chance to do all four pathways.

She will present at NYLA about the Path to Belonging project. They are building out the website and plan to launch a cohort in 2025.
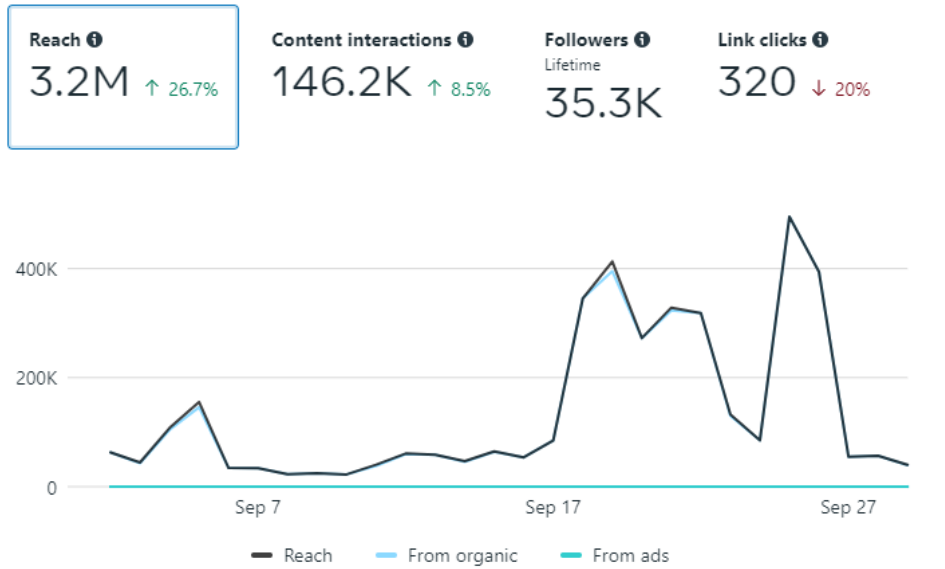
SALS will be hosting a Friends of the Library page. Erica and Jack are working with NYLA FLS to design the page.

She also works with NY Matters to bring Harm Reduction vending machines to Hamilton and Warren County.

Facebook continues to reach over 3 million people.

Technology & Youth Services

Jack Scott reports:

In September, the SALS website received 1k visitors. The most visited pages were the JA page, Job Postings, About Us, and Cataloging. He is working on the NYLA's Friends of Libraries Section website.
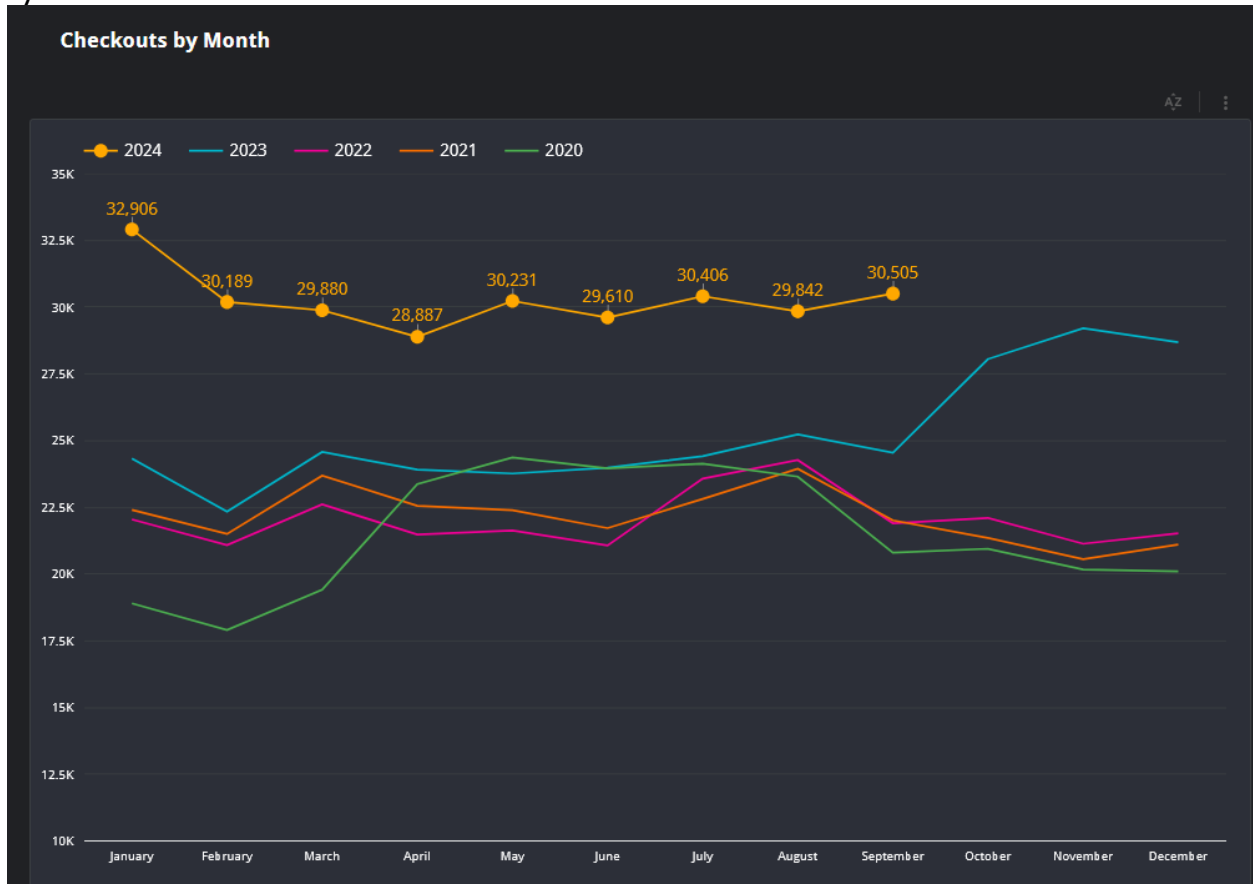
Jack is working with several systems across the state to ensure libraries' digital content meets the new Title II ADA Regulations. Our first meeting is on Oct. 2nd. I'm also visiting member libraries' websites, conducting accessibility audits, and updating sites to meet the WCAG's AA standard.

OATS: SALS has renewed its partnership with Senior Planet and its OATS program for another year. This means member libraries will continue to have access to the full OATS curriculum. This past quarter, four more trainers were added at member libraries; now, 12 member libraries are offering OATS programming. In the past year, member libraries have delivered over 300 sessions and have had over 1,000 people attend classes.

Additionally, we have applied to be a sub-grantee for the Digital Equity Act through OATS. If Senior Planet receives funding through this act, SALS will receive $50,000 per year for the next four years to support library OATS programs.

OverDrive: In September, an estimated 30k items were downloaded by 7k users, with 11k holds placed. For August, we borrowed 1,329 items from other systems and shared 473 items with other

systems.

Checkouts by Month

Legend: 2024, 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020

Data points for 2024:
- January: 32,906
- February: 30,189
- March: 29,880
- April: 28,887
- May: 30,231
- June: 29,610
- July: 30,406
- August: 29,842
- September: 30,505

GALE: For August, Gale was used 1,008 times.

Ancestry: Between June and August, there were 180 searches.

Youth Services:

SALS held our quarterly YS meeting with member libraries on Sept. 12th. We discussed Summer Reading, the Lending Library, StoryWalks, and future continuing education requests.

Jack will be reporting Summer Reading statistics to NYS in early October.

Over the past year, Jack has been a member of CDLC's AI Committee, where they developed an AI challenge for regional libraries. They are also organizing the SAIL Symposium on AI in Libraries, which will take place on October 28th.

He is collaborating with several systems in New York State to establish a committee similar to the CDLC AI Committee but focused on AI in Youth Services. They met several times in September and are developing ongoing educational programs for youth services libraries centered around AI.

Meetings

September 19, 2024	ALA Executive Board Meeting
September 20, 2024	CDLC Board Meeting
September 23, 2024	ALA IF Summit debriefing
September 26, 2024	PLA Nomination Committee
September 30, 2024	ALA Finance and Audit Committee
October 1, 2024	Lake Pleasant Board Meeting
October 2, 2024	Johnsburg Board Meeting
October 3, 2024	SALS Trustee Training
October 4, 2024	SALS Staff Appreciation
October 8, 2024	PLA Nominating Committee
October 15, 2024	ALA Finance and Audit Committee
October 16, 2024	Chestertown Board Meeting
October 17, 2024	PLA Nominating Committee
October 18-19, 2024	ALA Executive Board Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Dallas

October 2, 2024