

WLS Department Reports November 2017

CATALOGING SERVICES

Contact: Douglas Wray, Manager [231-3243]

Berit Nelson and Kathi Adams of Sirsi/Dynix met at WLS Headquarters with Executive Director Terry Kirchner, Director of Information Technology Rob Caluori, Senior Systems Administrator Wilson Arana, Sirsi/Dynix Technology Trainer Allison Midgley and Manager of Cataloging Services Douglas Wray. For his part, Mr. Wray inquired Ms. Nelson and Ms. Adams about the possible development of a more effective editing tool in the cataloging software, and about the need for cross references in the public catalog. Ms. Nelson answered that both might be realized, perhaps with the next system update.

On November 14, Mr. Wray attended the Fall 2017 Meeting of the New York Technical Services Librarians, which was held at the New York Public Library. The speaker was Amber Billey of Bard College. Ms. Billey discussed current developments in authority control, which is the process of establishing a recognized form for an entity name and using that form whenever the name is needed as an access point in a bibliographic record. Leaders in the field are working on a system which would use a universal number (similar to an ISBN), rather than the traditional text strings, to label an entity. Theoretically, this would reduce errors and improve information sharing between libraries and other institutions.

OUTREACH

Interview Panel ~ Round Two

At the invitation of Tom Geoffino, Director of the New Rochelle Public Library, Coordinator, Multi-Language Collections & Services Nancy Coradin participated in a panel to fill a Bilingual Library Assistant position. The second round of interviews screened the remaining four candidates. Part of the second round consisted of asking the candidates questions in Spanish to determine their ease and understanding of the language.

Engagement of Cultural Institutions

Ms. Coradin and Mariel Perez, Cultural Outreach Librarian at the White Plains Public Library, are currently seeking to engage cultural institutions in Westchester to use a new community room that will open at the library in January 2018. On November 13th, Ms. Coradin and Ms. Perez met with the Amita Ajmera, President of the India Center in Elmsford. The discussion yielded several bookings of cultural Indian programs at the White Plains Public Library and secured the Indian Center to participate as a community sponsor at the WLS Multi-language Book Fair on April 24, 2018. Ms. Coradin and Ms. Perez will meet with the Evergreen Club, a senior Chinese association from White Plains, in late November.

Holiday Bilingual Story Time

Ms. Coradin visited the Bilingual Publications Company on November 14th to select Spanish language books for the Central Library collection at the Mount Vernon Public Library and to build a more robust adult Spanish collection at the Bedford Hills Free Library.

DEVELOPMENT

Contact: Pat Brigham, Director [231-3241]

On November 14th, Director of Development Pat Brigham presided over the 6th Annual National Philanthropy Day presented by the Association of Fundraising Professionals NY Westchester Chapter. The all-day conference focused on strategies to grow a culture of philanthropy. Over 150 professionals in fundraising, nonprofit leaders, board members and volunteers heard from three nationally recognized professionals in the field—Dr. Adrian Sargeant, Tom Ahern, and Simone Joyaux. Topics covered included Storytelling for Fundraisers, Data Driven Evidence on Building Donor Loyalty and Donor Communications, and the results of major new research on relationship fundraising. In addition to Ms. Brigham, who serves as the Chapter's president, the library sector was represented by Terry Kirchner, WLS Executive Director; Karen LaRocca-Fels, Director of the Ossining Public Library; Donna Pesce, Librarian from Harrison Public Library; Dave Donelson, Harrison Public Library & Foundation and WLS Trustee, and Yonkers Public Library Foundation. Positive feedback included the following comments:

- *"Fundraising is an area that I really need to learn more about and to have the opportunity to learn from global experts was beyond what I ever expected."* [Ms. Pesce]
- *"I just wanted to share with you how refreshing and interesting I found the conference yesterday to be. I really got a lot out of the conference last year, which is why I attended this year's. This year's conference truly exceeded my expectations. While I'm not a fundraising professional, I felt that I walked away with information that I will be putting to use immediately."* [Ms. LaRocca-Fels]

The event also recognized Entergy with the Corporate Philanthropy Award which was accepted by Ken Theobald, Vice President, Regulatory and Government Affairs. Entergy is also a major supporter of WLS.

Tuesday, November 28th is #GivingTuesday! Please consider supporting WLS on the national day of giving. It's a great way to show your support of WLS's initiatives. Donations can be made quickly and efficiently via this link: <https://www.givegab.com/campaigns/2017WLSGivingTuesday>.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

Contact: Rob Caluori, Director [231-3207]

The IT team has been fully engaged in the budget process this past month. The process starts with the IT Director meeting with project leaders to review the needs of the libraries taken from the PLDA Technology Strategic Plan and WLS's project plans for the coming year. The IT Director also meets with the PLDA Technology Committee, who reviews the status of ongoing projects and recommends possible adjustments for improved implementation of new technologies in light of the PLDA Technology Strategic Plan and outlines how the proposed WLS budget aligns with the goals of the libraries.

Input also comes from the PLDA Circulation Committee that meets on a quarterly basis. Melanie Carnes and Allison Midgley use feedback from these meetings to learn how the WLS Integrated Library System (ILS) can best serve the front-line library staff, to assess what system modifications are necessary for enhanced workflow, and to design training sessions around areas of need.

Other steps in compiling the proposed budget include: putting together specifications and obtaining pricing for any new purchases; talking to service and hardware providers regarding possible price changes in operating costs; and assessing personnel costs from the WLS Chief Financial Officer. Opportunities for additional revenue-producing services are explored, and the technology services Finance Model is assembled. This Model includes an inventory of all assets currently in place, as well as all change orders for the coming year, and breaks out the budget expenses by program.

PUBLIC INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Contact: Elena Falcone, Director [231-3240]

Elena Falcone attended the New York Library Association conference. In addition to participation in meetings and educational sessions related to outreach audiences and services, Ms. Falcone offered a program, *Listen Like a Librarian*. The program emphasized strategies for cultivating this essential skill for effective public service.

ADULT SERVICES OUTREACH

Westchester Seniors Out Speaking (WSOS)

Target audience – seniors, low-income seniors

- **Volunteer Education:** The November monthly education meetings of our volunteer team took place at the WLS Headquarters. The education topic was *Troubleshooting Medicare*. Supplementing the delivery of this topic at December Medicare Minutes will be a review of IPRO's recent newsletter on "Healthy Feet" – volunteers will flag information on what services are (and are not) covered by Medicare. (IPRO is a health care assessment and education organization.) Also joining us at the November meeting was Medicare Rights Center's Jake McDonald; he provided an update on Medicare and health insurance policy challenges.
- **Outreach--Pop-Up and Saturday Senior Benefits Information Center (SBIC) Offerings:** Under the leadership of Program Coordinator Marna Shirmer, SBIC volunteers were available for two dates for Open Enrollment counseling at the Mount Kisco Fox Center, a location serving seniors who have limited mobility and are unable to go to the Mount Kisco Public Library SBIC. Additionally, Saturday hours have been offered at North Salem and Mount Kisco libraries. One more "SBIC Saturday" is planned (Shrub Oak) before the close of Open Enrollment. SBIC Saturdays are especially important in that they make it easier for working seniors and caregivers to access our service.

HSE Connect! (also known as TASC Connect!) / Target audience – low-literate adults

- **Training:** Program Coordinator Phyllis Fowlkes and Elena Falcone offered a Tutor Tool Kit session for HSE Connect! tutors that specifically addressed skills, strategies and resources for adult students working to improve their writing ability.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITY (CF) SUPPORT/RE-ENTRY SERVICES / Target audience – current and formerly incarcerated adults, as well as those navigating parole or probation

- **Outreach:** Elena Falcone provided a review of library services to participants (12) and mentors (12) in the re-entry focused Coming Home Program offered by the Rye Presbyterian Church. Key services reviewed included the Westchester Connections Guide, the Job Search Tool Kit, FirstFind.org, and ways to access learning tools via the WLS website.
- **Community Conversations: Criminal Justice – Yesterday and Today:** Our first *Community Conversations* series was completed. Attendance at the set of events was over 180. The program website – conversations.westchesterlibraries.org – provides highlights from each event as well as a complete roster of panelists and additional readings. Video clips will be posted soon.

YOUTH SERVICES (YS) SUPPORT / Target audience – youth county-wide

Supercharging Your Story Times (Moodle class): Nineteen of 26 children's librarians completed WLS's first online professional development class. The five-week session was led by early literacy consultant Saroj Ghoting. The series was specifically designed to support staff in applying insights from new research on what can work in libraries to engage parents in effective early literacy engagement of their children. Some

staff were unable to complete the program due to schedule and workload conflicts. Participants are being surveyed and WLS is evaluating topics for future use of this platform.

EARLY LITERACY PROGRAM / Target audience – families with pre-school children attending Early Childhood/Head Start centers (primarily low-income and non-library user families)

Led by Francine Vernon, Parent & Youth Outreach Coordinator, the PIE Department engaged this period in the early literacy outreach activities noted below.

Parent Presentations at Centers to Promote Early Literacy

A presentation was made at the Saturday Five Steps to 5 Center for parents with infants in the Center's parent/infant class; 8 parents with their infants attended.

Three presentations were also made at meetings for parents of 3- and 4-year-old children who attend the Mount Kisco, Peekskill, and Port Chester Head Start Centers; a combined total of 70 parents attended. The participating Centers were provided take home packets to distribute to all their parents, making information on child development, early literacy practices, and WLS and library tools available to 304 families.

Attendees at all four of the above presentations were Spanish speaking. With translation help and content tailored to the ages of the parents' children, Mrs. Vernon's remarks and demonstrations highlighted ways parents can support the development of their young children's early literacy and pre-reading skills. In addition, the value of a library card was introduced, and information was provided on selected, relevant programs, tools and services available at their local libraries not only for children but also for adults.

Library Trips to Promote Literacy and Youth Development

Trips were organized for three classes of pre-school children from the Yonkers Children's Place Head Start Center and those parents who were able to attend. The visits, hosted by the Yonkers Public Library-Riverfront Library, provided first-hand library experiences for a combined total of 33 parents and 47 children in programming prepared especially for them. All of the parents were Spanish speaking.

During the visits, the children participated in bilingual story times followed by a related craft. Parents had an opportunity not only to observe but also were encouraged to join in the activities with their children. When the children returned to their Center, the parents remained for an orientation to the library. They were informed about programs of interest and introduced to the library's website and available children and adult online resources.

Assistance with Taking a Step to Connect with Libraries

The presentations and library visits resulted in 35 parents signing up for library cards. Applications received will be submitted for processing by their respective libraries (Mount Kisco, Port Chester/Rye Brook and Yonkers).

WEBS

Contact: Elaine Sozzi, Director [231-3239]

The WEBS program is committed to bringing new tools and strategies to help people navigate a rapidly changing world of work. This year WEBS delivered 23 workshops on a variety of career-related topics; ten nine-week seminars which involved both group and individual counseling; a year-long individual counseling program at the Yonkers Public Library and the resumption of an individual counseling program at the Mount Vernon Public Library; and four professional development/training programs for the WEBS counselors. The seminar program was reinvigorated with a revised curriculum and new handouts that reflect current workplace trends and solutions for individuals who must retrain to meet the new demands of the workplace. In addition, the WEBS director conducted over 100 distance counseling sessions with clients by telephone.

Confidential client reports and session write-ups from the recent seminars are being reviewed by the WEBS director who will contact any individuals who need follow-up counseling. Again, there has been a

noticeable improvement in the number of seminar participants who have found new jobs or are getting interviews. One client, who had updated her LinkedIn profile with key words after a WEBS workshop on the topic, was contacted by a prospective employer seeking a coordinator with college test prep experience. Her profile came up during their search, and she was hired after two interviews. Some written evaluation comments from other clients follow:

- *This seminar got my brain firing with exciting new ideas. I got support from the counselor and the group. I am not alone....a good feeling.*
- *It is very difficult for the mature person to navigate the job search process today. Important resources and helpful materials were given out during this seminar.*
- *Great course! Well worth it. I have greater insight into who I am and what I am interested in doing. I plan to start using the library's career resources to do research. Make this counseling available in more libraries!*

WEBS director Elaine Sozzi attended a public forum entitled, *The Status of Women in Westchester: What Candidates Need to Know*, at Pace University Law School. Key issues impacting women and girls were presented and discussed by representatives of seven organizations. These areas included: housing, financial well-being, family caregiving, civil legal services, domestic violence, women's health, and immigrant services. After each presentation, candidates for County office had an opportunity to ask questions and suggest how the issue might be addressed by government. Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul offered remarks on the importance of women's leadership.

Information about resources available to women is vital to making appropriate referrals to individuals in the WEBS seminars. There have been a number of recent clients who have been referred for assistance with housing, mental health and legal issues.

Ms. Sozzi also attended an EBSCO product demonstration of the Learning Express Library, a site that offers a wide range of courses and practice tests for different skill levels. Areas of content include computer skills, high school equivalency, adult learning, and college test prep. There was also a demonstration of Job and Career Accelerator, a section of Learning Express which contains job and career resources, job postings, and information on building a resume and interviewing successfully. These comprehensive resources are extremely useful to WEBS clients who appreciate having information on one site.

The WEBS director and several counselors are now developing ideas and designing new programs for 2018 as they review seminar evaluations and six-month statistics from previous programs. Several library directors have already requested workshop topics that meet the needs of their communities.

This month Ms. Sozzi finished conducting a nine-week career development seminar at the Chappaqua Public Library and attended a workshop at the Briarcliff Manor Public Library and the Annual Meeting of WLS.