

WLS Department Reports March 2018

CATALOGING SERVICES

Contact: Douglas Wray, Manager [231-3243]

WLS Cataloging Services is continuing to fill requests for the cataloging of non-traditional items. For example, Mount Pleasant Public Library has a collection of storytelling kits that consist of board books and "cloth manipulatives" that attach to a board with Velcro; Mamaroneck Public Library has a collection of toys and games (puzzles, playing cards, Yahtzee, etc.); and New Rochelle Public Library is making laptop computers available to children and young adults.

Mount Vernon Public Library has received a gift of former WLS Director Maurice Freedman's music CD collection, numbering over 2,000 titles. Manager of Cataloging Services Douglas Wray is working on this long-term project.

Mr. Wray met at the Yonkers Public Library Crestwood Branch with Melissa Glazer, Librarian I, on March 8. They discussed irregularities encountered by Yonkers librarians when searching the catalog that caused problems with retrieval of data. Mr. Wray is working with SirsiDynix to diagnose the problem.

All of the WLS catalogers perform original cataloging when member libraries submit requests for titles which cannot be found in OCLC's WorldCat database, or which are not supplied by vendors. Three examples of original cataloging done by Mr. Wray recently include:

Loud Zoo / written and illustrated by Verderico Manganiello

This is a children's story written in verse, which serves as an introduction to Taoism. The author is a special education and social studies teacher at Eastchester High School, and an adjunct professor at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry; cataloged for Mount Pleasant Public Library.

Directory of Graduates and Former Students of Peekskill Military Academy, Peekskill, New York, 1958 Directory of Graduates and Former Students of Peekskill Mil[i]tary Academy, Peekskill, New York, December 1, 1926

These directories contain information which could be valuable to historians and genealogists; cataloged for The Field Library (Peekskill).

Soul Sister Sonnets and Images / by William Stephen Bowden

This is a collection of poems and drawings which celebrate African American women. The author is a Mount Vernon resident; cataloged for Mount Vernon Public Library.

Outreach

Bilingual Story Time

Coordinator, Multi-language Collections and Services Nancy Coradin partnered with Parent & Youth Outreach Coordinator Francine Vernon, as part of a WLS early literacy initiative to help Head Start families in Mount Kisco better understand what the member libraries can offer. The ladies conducted a bilingual story time on January 18th with readings, songs and a puppet show that models the behavior for parents and guardians to read, sing and play with their children. The exposure to words, both spoken and sung, encourages the children to play. It promotes communication, while the program serves as a model to mimic for parents. Ms. Coradin selected bilingual books at Bilingual Publications Company for children from infant to 5 years of age to create current and relevant bilingual collections as part of the early literacy initiative on two projects—one is a partnership with the Mount Kisco Head Start program, and the other is with four member libraries.

Bilingual Programs

Mary Esbjornson, Director of the Bedford Hills Free Library, asked WLS Executive Director Terry Kirchner to "lend" Ms. Coradin to conduct bilingual story times with the library's storyteller, Rachel Izes, at Neighbor's Link in Mount Kisco. The bilingual programs are part of an outreach effort to highlight the resources and programs available in libraries. Going into the community to offer the programs extends the libraries reach outside of its walls. The first of the three programs took place on February 18th. After the program, one 4-year-old child asked his mom in Spanish to take him to the library.

Multi-language Book Fair ~ April 24, 2018



Ms. Coradin is planning the 8th annual WLS Multi-language Book Fair that will be hosted by the White Plains Public Library on Tuesday, April 24, 2018. Book vendors showcasing over a dozen languages will participate. In addition, there will be community organizations that will speak about the myriad of services they offer Westchester residents, often in multiple languages.

Guest authors will speak about the importance of creating stories and retelling events that represent diverse peoples and cultures. Ms. Coradin met with her co-facilitator, Mariel Perez, Librarian I at the White Plains Public Library, to recruit community organizations' participation and to encourage local ethnic restaurants to provide food tastings at the fair.

Ms. Coradin met with Bobby Chou, a Chinese distributor at World Journal in Queens, NY. She visited the bookstore in Flushing as well as the warehouse in College Point. In addition to print material, World Journal also offers Chinese and Korean e-books and magazines for libraries. World Journal will be participating at our book fair.

Conferences and Workshops

Mini Conference at Bank Street: A celebration of bilingual books and Latinx Communities was attended by Ms. Coradin on March 3rd. The conference explored the importance of having literature that reflects the diverse voices, accents and ethnicities in Latinx literature. It included authors, illustrators, librarians, teachers and students. Eric Vasquez, illustrator of *Schomburg: the Man Who Built a Library*, said the word "diversity" should be replaced by "normal." The picture of the people we see around us is not diverse, it is the norm. His motivation to write springs from representing his Afro-Puerto Rican roots. Ms. Coradin was able to secure two authors to speak at the WLS Multi-language Book Fair in April.

Pictured from left-right: Dr. Sonia Rodriguez, Moderator, LaGuardia Community College; Raúl Colón, Illustrator; Eric Velasquez, Illustrator; Meg Medina, Author; Teresa Mlawer, Translator



Westchester Librarians Serving Latinos (WLSL) meeting

Nine librarians, library staff and volunteers for senior programs attended Ms. Coradin's WLSL meeting on March 5th. The purpose of the group is to pool the skills and experience of librarians and other professionals to better serve our Latino communities in a combined effort. The issues discussed benefit not only Latinos, but all immigrant or underserved groups. The topic of discussion was how do we as information miners help or refer our immigrant patrons in the face of the changes in immigration policy.

Some of the referrals given include:

- Infante Immigation Connection can assist with citizenship, divorce, employment and tax form filing. Yolanda Infante
 65 Court Street, Suite #2 White Plains, NY 10601 yolanda@infanteimmigconn.com; 914-948-3476
- Pace Women's Justice Center is a non-profit organization in White Plains that offers free legal services to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and elder abuse. Free legal helpline for information and services: 914 287-0739 (Multi-language services available)
- Community Resource Center is an organization that promotes cultural, economic, educational and professional integration of immigrants to the already established larger community. Jirandy Martinez, Executive Director
 134 Center Avenue
 Mamaroneck, NY 10543
 jmartinez@crcny.org; 914-835-1512
- <u>New York Immigration Coalition</u> helps foster immigrant community leadership and civic engagement. They build the power of immigrants and the organizations that serve them to ensure their sustainability—to improve people's lives and to strengthen our state. They distribute a bilingual, wallet card that states the rights of immigrants (documented or undocumented).

Our guest speaker, **Marcia Guevara**, **Attorney at Law**, concentrates her practice in immigration and bankruptcy law. The Guevara Law Group is located in White Plains, NY. She founded the group in 2014 with a legal team that provides services to clients in Westchester, Putnam, and New York City in Spanish, French, Russian, Serbian and Bulgarian. Ms. Guevara can offer free 90-minute to two-hour workshops at our member libraries. All of the workshops have a Q&A session for the attendees to voice individual concerns.

DEVELOPMENT

Contact: Pat Brigham, Director [231-3241]

In February, Impact 100 announced WLS as one of 25 Westchester nonprofits invited to submit a full proposal. Impact 100 Westchester will make three grants of \$90,000, three grants of \$11,667 and one \$25,000 special anniversary grant. The WLS proposal seeks funding to support equal access to high-quality tutoring through the purchase and promotion of Tutor.com Learning Suite (TLS). Grants will be awarded at their Annual Meeting in mid-May.

Final planning details are underway for the Annual *Celebrating Westchester Libraries* Breakfast on April 6th at Doral Arrowwood. Sponsored by TD Bank, the event features Nancy Silberkleit, Co-CEO of Archie Comic Productions, as our guest speaker. We are actively looking for stories from member libraries related to this year's theme—Libraries Lead! Share your story and it will be included in the event program—but the deadline is March 25th! The Hon. George Latimer, Westchester County Executive, has RSVP'd. If you haven't, there is still time to <u>RSVP online</u>.

We are about to close out the funds for the Mini-Grant Initiative. With over \$100,000 raised for this program, the Mini-Grants have had wide impact throughout the county and have assisted libraries in their

efforts to reach new audiences and engage the community in new ways. In many of the over 90 projects that were funded so far, the outcomes far exceeded the project's original expectations – and included working with not only new patrons, but also local agencies, local government and new community partners.

The Field Library's (Peekskill) project illustrates how many of these projects reach beyond the initial goals and objectives. Their project, *Tiles of the Wild*, focused on creative problem solving and using art to explore Science, Technology, Mathematics and Engineering (STEM) with children. The teaching artist Jessica Dubin worked with the children in groups to ultimately create a clay mosaic that would be hung at the entrance to the Neighborhood Center. Throughout the multi-week process, the participants learned much more than just art making. Participants learned the process and vocabulary of clay making, mosaics, and installation; they also learned local history, how to negotiate and collaborate on a final goal.

All the mini-grant funded programs include a culminating event to showcase the work created, new skills and lessons learned. At the *Tiles of the Wild* Celebration, the pride the children felt was obvious. Several of the young participants agreed to be on a panel to discuss their experience in the workshop. Most of them talked about how much they had learned – about design, clay making and the wildlife of the Hudson Valley with confidence and ease that surprised many parents. The children expressed their own surprise at discovering that they needed to master so many different techniques to create their tiles. Like many of the other mini-grant programs, participants began the workshop with some trepidation – mostly about their artistic ability. For the most part, after the program, participants now identified themselves as being artistic, creative or, as one participant put it, "I didn't know I was good with my hands."

Here is a comment from Jody Sitts, Head Children's Librarian at The Field Library (Peekskill) who spearheaded this project:

"Engaging children in creating community-based public art is incredibly empowering. Being a part of a group art project is particularly satisfying when that art opens up a dialogue with a community. The children who participated in this workshop have a slightly different relationship with the library now that they have created something that is a focal point in the Neighborhood Center's entryway. Since the mural was installed, it has become a community focal point. People have stopped to look and admire, they have tried to match up animal names and tiles, discussed animal habitats, and debated whether a particular animal is native to The Hudson Valley (I invite everyone into the library to do research!). One young child who was visiting the Children's Room stopped in front of the mural, pointed to one of the tiles and said to his mother, 'That's a hexagon. It has six sides!'"

This project also involved working with City agencies. While at first this appeared to be a challenge, Ms. Sitts worked with the City Common Council and sought the advice of the Building Department; they were extremely supportive. The Building Department appreciated being consulted, they helped find the right location and created a base for the installation, and a Department of Public Works (DPW) staff member even came to the Ribbon Cutting.

This is just one wonderful example of how experienced-based library programs can have broad and lasting impact on a community. Mini-grant proposals are still being accepted and will continue until the funds are fully depleted.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) Contact: Rob Caluori, Director [231-3207]

Wilson Arana, Chris Hernandez and Rob Caluori attended an idea-sharing session with colleagues from the Lower Hudson RIC (Regional Information Center) as well as Yonkers and White Plains Schools. The session was hosted by Dell and featured discussions about how VDI (Virtual Desktop Infrastructure) can be leveraged in libraries and schools to support STEAM and STEM learning. This meeting also gave the opportunity for networking with our colleagues.

A secondary outcome from the networking at the Dell meeting was the opportunity to reconnect with the Lower Hudson RIC. The RIC provides school districts in Westchester, Putnam and Rockland with costeffective, high-quality technology solutions through their respective BOCES—very similar to the way the IT Department at WLS does for our member libraries. Mr. Caluori will be meeting with representatives from the RIC to explore possible collaborations, partnerships, collective purchases and other opportunities for mutual benefit.

Michael Jones has completed the conversion of WLS websites and wikis to HTTPS, the secure protocol for websites. All the communication between users and the server on these sites is now encrypted. This is helpful in that web browsers now give strong warnings to users when entering an unsecured site. Our users will now see a green lock and/or the word "Secure" (depending on which browser they use) letting them know they are on a secure site. Libraries have also begun to convert their own sites, and Mr. Jones is working on this with the libraries whose website is hosted by WLS.

After suffering back-to-back storms, many libraries suffered outages of power and Internet connectivity. Joe Maurantonio sent daily, and sometimes twice daily, updates including on weekends updating library directors and department heads on the status of the recovery effort. While it took more than a week for every site to be fully restored, many were brought back quickly. The member library directors shared their appreciation for the efforts that were made during this time at the March Public Library Directors Association (PLDA) meeting.

Just as IT was about to rollout laptops for library staff, we were forced to pull back on the rollout. The laptops are Google Chromebooks which are used to connect to the virtual desktop environment. Soon after the laptops were deployed, Google pushed an update to the operating system that stopped receipt printers and flash drives from working with the units. Inquiries have made us aware that Google is working on restoring this functionality. While we wait for Google to resolve the issue, IT staff is exploring alternatives to Chromebooks.

Allison Midgley continues to provide library staff with a wide variety of high quality training sessions on a variety of topics. In January alone, there were a total of 16 sessions serving 103 attendees. Topics ranged from how to use new and existing electronic resources like Mergent and OverDrive, preparing statistical analysis in Blue Cloud Analytics, privacy and digital literacy and STEM learning.

IT is exploring alternatives for notifying library staff about technology issues. Currently, email is the primary means used. However, it has been noted that this is not helpful for libraries where staff may not have cell service or a smartphone and the systems that are used to access email are not available. Technologies like robo-calls and robo-texts are being explored as possible solutions. Robo-calls make use of cell phone technologies but are also compatible with traditional phone lines and have proven to be effective communications tools by local school districts and municipalities.

PUBLIC INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Contact: Elena Falcone, Director [231-3240]

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS - ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EVENTS (ACEs)

Target audience – Both Service providers and youth, families, adults countywide

A group has formed of social service organizations working to support children, families, and those in re-entry to foster discussion and use of research and insights related to Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs). This "Resilience Coalition" planned a series of screenings of the documentary film *Resilience* as a launch point for community dialog on this topic to improve community services. WLS's support of this effort will follow the Community Conversation model piloted in 2017. Events confirmed so far are:

- > Yonkers Public Library (Riverfront), April 18, 6:30 pm
- > New Rochelle Public Library, April 27, 4:00 pm
- Ossining Public Library, May 8, 6:30 pm

WLS has created a supporting web page for the project at <u>conversations.westchesterlibraries.org</u>. The first screening of *Resilience* for service professionals took place among member library staff on February 27. In addition to the above-mentioned public screenings, a number of service provider screenings are being scheduled with diverse groups including grassroots community organizations, service agencies and correctional facility staff.

ADULT SERVICES OUTREACH & SUPPORT

Guiding Patrons to Legal Resources was offered to library staff (3/9). Presenters were Diane Kronstadt, Executive Director of The Fund for Modern Courts, and Quesquilla Addison, Program Director of LawHelpNY.org. In addition to a robust exploration of the difference between legal information and advice, the team presented information on the Fund for Modern Courts' substantial resources <u>collected specifically</u> for public libraries.

WESTCHESTER SENIORS OUT SPEAKING (WSOS)

Target audience - seniors, low-income seniors

Volunteer Education: The education meetings of our volunteer team took place in January through March at the WLS Headquarters. The education topics were Medicare coverage of preventive services with information on vaccines for adults; how Medicare works with Federal or military benefits and *Understanding Medicare Documents: MSNs* [Medicare Summary Notices], *EOBs* [Explanation of Benefits], *and the New Medicare Card*. Additionally, Dan Griffin of Veterans Affairs provided a review of Veterans health benefits and Dianne Poonai of the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services provided a comprehensive review of County services for seniors.

2017 Activity: It was another strong service year for WSOS. The team of 72 volunteers provided year-round counseling services at 8 libraries, monthly presentations at 36 community centers, and an additional 44 presentations at a diversity of venues. Counseling services were received by more than 1,300 individuals, including more than 100 via our SBIC Helpline. Medicare Minute presentation attendance was 12,057; attendance at other presentations, such as Demystifying Medicare, was 704.

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 the following services:

- The first in a quarterly series of programs on folk literature in a program at the Taconic Correctional Facility General Library.
- Reviewed library services and re-entry supports with Westhab's Youth Outreach Team and the White Plains counseling team for ACCESS-VR. Both groups shared that they had been unaware of what the System and their local libraries had to offer; each committed to sharing information about these resources with their clients. Future presentations for more in-depth service reviews are being planned.
- In partnership with staff from Legal Aid Society of Westchester, presented a review of the new sealing laws and re-entry information and services at the Mount Vernon Public Library. An outcome of this work

• Presented to the Coming Home Program of United Methodist Church in White Plains; attendees included mentors, mentees (those in re-entry), and staff from the LOFT and the Greenburgh Human Rights Coalition.

Collaboration: Public Innovation & Engagement hosted a meeting of agencies seeking to discuss service needs and opportunities for coordinated re-entry services. Recommendations from this discussion will be shared with the Office of the County Executive.

Children's Book Donation for Sing Sing CF Family Program: Member libraries donated gently used (discarded) children's books to a program at Sing Sing CF designed to allow fathers to give books to their children during visits. The General Librarian noted that this was the strongest response in the program's history.

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

Winding down the existing program: While HSE Connect! continues to provide valuable information and support to adults seeking a high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, sustainable funding has not been identified. As a result, the program will be ending as of June 30. Until that date, Information Sessions and tutoring are continuing as we work to assist current adult students to advance toward their learning goals. In lieu of this service:

- The website, <u>FirstFind.org</u>, will continue to offer the latest information on HSE options, classes, and study resources. An email and telephone helpline will remain available from the site.
- Elena Falcone will continue quarterly information sessions for library staff to understand HSE options and how to guide patrons in the use of learning resources such as those identified on First Find, particularly Learning Express.
- Yonkers Public Library has agreed to take-over direction of the Yonkers Resource Center, providing walk-in service several days each week.

2017 Activity: A total of **72** volunteer tutors and **3** part-time coordinators supported service that included:

50 monthly Information Sessions offered at 5 libraries, reaching 136 patrons. [Among this group, 70% had some high school education; 70% were over the age of 25; 17% had less than an 8th grade education; and 18% had no Internet access at home.]
57 adults received one-to-one tutoring at local libraries over more than 600 sessions.
91 patrons used the walk-in services of the Yonkers Resource Center, receiving over 260 sessions of a blend of tutoring and online learning tools support.
115 volunteer inquiries and 65 adult student inquiries were fielded on the Helpline.

YOUTH SERVICES OUTREACH & SUPPORT

- Elena Falcone reviewed educational resources (FirstFind.org, Learning Express, Job & Career Accelerator) and library services with the Guidance Centers' College and Careers group serving high school students and at-risk youth in Mount Vernon and New Rochelle (3/13, 3/22).
- An additional outcome of the 2017 Great Potentials Youth Workforce Readiness effort is youth-directed content on the Jobs page of FirstFind.org. The "<u>Youth Job Readiness Toolkit</u>" based on content developed by consultant Roseanne Amoils and Francine Vernon was posted in early March and has already been identified as a valuable tool by Guidance Center staff during the March outreach.

- YS Advisory Group member Austin Olney (White Plains Public Library) led a professional skills workshop on 2D Design from photo editing to digital art creation in March.
- Yonkers Public Library Riverfront Branch Manager, Christian Zabriskie, shared his library's successful experience in offering Summer Meals concurrent with the 2017 Summer Reading program. Eight librarians joined the video conference call in January. The audio for the event is posted to the Youth Services wiki under the summer meals page. Bottom-line: If you can find a school district/agency partner in your community, there is significant return for modest investment.

FAMILY 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 Public Innovation & Engagement Department conducted or facilitated the engagement and literacy-related outreach activities noted below.

- Outreach through Presentations to Promote Literacy & Engagement with Libraries: Programs were provided in January at the Mount Kisco Neighbors Link Center for two groups: parents with their 3-year-old children and parents with their 4-year-old children. Co-led by Mrs. Vernon and Ms. Coradin, both programs included bilingual Spanish/English stories, songs, and puppet shows. In addition, each child was given a book to take home as a gift from WLS. The programs gave a taste of children's programs offered by libraries and served as an introduction to and encouragement for the families to participate in a library visit which is being planned for the spring. [A combined total of 17 parents and 17 children attended the two sessions.]
- Promotion of Early Literacy Practices through Workshops: A workshop on singing was provided in February at the Peekskill Head Start Center for parents with their 3- and 4-year-old children. The workshop not only included a presentation on the value of singing in developing early literacy skills but also was interactive with both the parents and the children joining in singing and acting out songs' activities. The songs introduced were ones with which the children were familiar. At the end of the workshop, a booklet of familiar children's songs, prepared by Mrs. Vernon especially for the workshop, was given to each parent to take home and use as a reference to continue to sing and act out songs with their children. [A total of 18 parents and 14 children attended the workshop.]



• Library Trips to Promote Literacy, Youth Development, and Library Engagement: Seven library trips were organized during the period for classes of pre-school children and those parents who were able to attend, as follows: Four trips for Yonkers Children's Place Head Start Center to Yonkers Riverfront Library and three trips for Yorktown Head Start Center to John C. Hart Library (Shrub Oak).

Programming at both libraries included storytimes and songs with parent participation. The Yonkers Riverfront Library, in addition, included a separate expanded orientation to the library for its parents. [The visits provided especially prepared library experiences for a combined total of 45 parents and 100 children.]

One Saturday library trip was organized for parents and their children from the Peekskill Head Start Center to participate in The Field Library's (Peekskill) *Parent Take Your Child to the Library* event. [A total of 19 parents with 19 children attended the program.]

Assistance to Families in Connecting with Libraries. As a result of the sponsored library visits and both presentations and direct outreach at the Child Care Centers, 24 applications for library cards were processed this period: The Field Library (Peekskill) – 11 children; Yonkers Public Library – 1 child, 1 adult; Mount Kisco Library – 5 adults; Bedford Hills Free Library – 2 adults; North Castle Public Library – 1 adult; Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library – 3 adults.

WEBS

Contact: Elaine Sozzi, Director [231-3239]

The WEBS seminars, which run for two cycles each year, are now in session at five libraries. Before each cycle, the seminar content is updated with new information and the latest strategies for managing one's career and conducting a job search. Clients are shown how to create their resumes as marketing documents targeted to meet employer needs, and build their brand image through a strong digital presence, particularly on LinkedIn. Rather than posting resumes to huge online job boards, they need to consider smaller niche sites that reflect their fields. In order to gain interviews, they have to be sure that their online identity is unique and can be found easily. Networking with LinkedIn contacts can sometimes result in an employee referral which is known to be one of the most successful methods for getting a job. Seminar clients often need an "about-face" in their thinking in order to be successful in a workplace that is changing with lightning speed.

The counselors are also introducing clients to the concept of the *Gig Economy* in all of the WEBS programs. Today's worker is likely to experience a number of different jobs with multiple employers and possibly complete career changes. But now, we are in the era of the *Gig Economy* where temporary contracts, selfemployment and freelance work are becoming more mainstream. Some workers will thrive on the independence and flexibility this can afford, while others may struggle to market themselves and earn a decent income. People need to be prepared to lose certain protections offered in traditional jobs, and it has not yet been determined if this new way of working offers more risk than benefit.

Career-related workshops are being offered at libraries across the county this spring. Recent workshops included *Latest Trends in Resumes* at the libraries in Purchase and Tuckahoe; *Create a LinkedIn Profile with Impact* at the Lewisboro Library; and *Write a Dynamite Resume* at the Mount Vernon Public Library. New workshops are being developed including *Creative Approaches to Networking* which will explore different networking strategies based on personality style. Individual career counseling by appointment continues at the libraries in Yonkers and Mount Vernon.

WEBS counselor Marie Riffel will present a professional development program on *Managing Your Library Career: Networking with LinkedIn* at WLS headquarters for member library staff this month. It will introduce LinkedIn's benefits and provide information on building a profile, creating an online brand image and expanding one's professional network. The program is being co-sponsored by the Westchester Library Association and Westchester Library System, and it is generating considerable interest.

WEBS director Elaine Sozzi had a meeting with Tom Kleiner, the new director of the Westchester Putnam One-Stop Center and OJ Yizer, the One-Stop Manager. WLS hopes to continue our collaboration with the Center. Ms. Sozzi also conducted three sessions of a career seminar at the Chappaqua Library.