

WLS Department Reports June 2018

CATALOGING SERVICES

Contact: Douglas Wray, Manager [231-3243]

One of WLS's strategic priorities is to support professional development for member library staff. To this end, Manager of Cataloging Services Douglas Wray and Coordinator, Multi-Language Collections and Services, Nancy Coradin presented the workshop, *Cataloging @ WLS 2018*, at WLS Headquarters on June 11th. As the name of the workshop implies, it is updated and offered annually.

Mr. Wray described the four WLS catalogers' responsibilities and illustrated a typical week's work, in terms of its variety and its volume. He devoted more time than in previous years to clarifying the technical services staff members' own role in preparing materials for circulation. Mr. Wray also offered tips on best practices regarding how the libraries submit cataloging requests and how they generally interact with WLS Cataloging Services. Finally, he covered some current topics, such as the return of electronic materials to the catalog, the status of certain features of the public catalog (e.g. cross references and searches by format type); the use of subject headings to highlight local authors; and the explosion of non-traditional materials being circulated (e.g. knitting needles, ukuleles, outdoor games, educational toys, etc.).

Ms. Coradin contributed a segment in which she demonstrated many ways of searching the catalog on the staff (non-public) side. Her teaching is valuable because many staff members are not fully trained on how to maximize the searching capabilities of the system.

As always, the workshop gave the attendees an opportunity to meet Mr. Wray and Ms. Coradin face-to-face—as opposed to the usual online-only relationship—and to ask questions, discuss problems and give feedback. A total of 14 people from 11 libraries attended, and several expressed satisfaction at the conclusion, saying that they learned a great deal.

OUTREACH

Cinco de Mayo, a bilingual story time, was conducted at the Tuckahoe Public Library by Elaine Provenzano, who recruited a local mother (both pictured at right) to co-facilitate the bilingual story times that Ms. Coradin conducted late last year. Tailored after Ms. Coradin's bilingual sessions and method of reading the chosen book side-by-side, a page at a time, alternating between languages, the program attracted more than 60 attendees, who also participated in singing festive songs to celebrate the Mexican holiday.

Music and singing to children plays a powerful role in helping to support early brain and language development. Music introduces children to new words and sound patterns, which help develop listening and comprehensive skills and build the foundation for learning how to read.



conversations has been to explore how CompuFit's consulting expertise could be leveraged by WLS to grow and improve the level of service provided to the libraries. A better understanding is being gained of the benefits and cost efficiencies of outsourcing specific services versus maintaining the existing IT infrastructure internally.

In April, PLDA voted to approve a recommendation by the eContent/Central Library Committee to turn on a feature of OverDrive called Advantage Plus. Advantage Plus allows downloadable e-Books and e-Audiobooks owned by the member libraries via their OverDrive Advantage accounts to be accessible to all WLS patrons for use. Previously such content could only be used by the patrons of the owning library. This new model more closely resembles how physical content is shared within WLS. Patrons from the owning library have first priority to access materials; remaining materials may be shared by everyone. This feature was activated in the beginning of May and has been a great success. The month of May showed a 48% increase in circulation countywide, and individual libraries with large Advantage collections showed even larger increases. This trend will continue when White Plains Public Library, whose e-Book collection had been maintained separately, migrates into the shared collection in the coming weeks.

WLS continues to provide a wide range of training programs. The month of June features training opportunities for library staff that includes STEM activities (making your own natural cleaning products and use of the vinyl cutter); ILS usage (running reports for day-to-day operations); and digital literacy (creation and management of strong passwords). Feedback to the training provided continues to be positive; the most often request is for more sessions at WLS and at the member libraries.

PUBLIC INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT (PIE)

Contact: Elena Falcone, Director [231-3240]

FOCUS ON EARLY LITERACY

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING – SUPERCHARGING!

WLS offered an interactive 5-week online course – *Supercharging Your Storytimes Spring 2018: Using Interactivity, Intentionality, and Community of Practice to Help Children Learn with Joy*. The course was led by Saroj Ghoting, a noted early literacy consultant and author, whose experience as a librarian and educator make her especially effective in this field. The course was offered on Moodle, an online learning platform that WLS is assessing for providing future instructional opportunities. A key benefit of Moodle is the ability to offer asynchronous learning opportunities that can meet the needs of time-constrained full and part-time staff.

The goals of the course were to engage professional staff in new evidence-based instructional and programming approaches that are recognized as increasing the effectiveness of libraries in fostering early literacy. Specifically, the aim was to increase the level of intentionality in developing early literacy programming and encouraging self-reflection as well as peer observation. An additional goal for WLS was to assess satisfaction with this mode of instruction. A total of 55 library staff registered from 30 member libraries; and 47 completed the five-week course.

The course structure required reading, assignments/application of learning, and reflection. A number of new and creative approaches were brought to current programming. Participants were able to post/comment to the instructor as well as to each other. Below are illustrative comments gleaned from a close review of the course forums. Overall, there was a favorable assessment of the impact of the program and the mode of instruction. The most gratifying comments, repeated by many of the participants, were "I never thought of that before" and "I'm going to try that"!

- "[These assignments] helped me to think outside the box and explore new concepts."
- "[I did not consider before] the feeling of person-hood that a child may experience through such an intimate activity."
- "I now see these [story telling] programs as creating a sense of community with caregivers/parents."

- “This course had a massive effect on how I plan and deliver programs. I now feel more accountable.”
- “I have learned to solicit more feedback than ever before.”
- “I wish this course was a requirement for all library staff who do story times.”

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

Francine Vernon leads WLS’s outreach to youth. Her focus in the current period, in part driven by a NYS 2016-2019 grant cycle for early literacy, has been targeted outreach to Head Start Centers to: 1) make the case for early literacy to parents and 2) foster a connection with neighborhood libraries.

To these ends, the program led by Mrs. Vernon has been wildly successful. The program has increased awareness of early literacy practices and library services, especially among the largely Hispanic populations served by the County’s Head Start Centers. (With thanks to private consultant Tamaris Princi and WLS staff member Ms. Coradin for translation efforts and program partnership.) Scores of parents and children have been engaged in a “site visit” to the local library where they participate in programs that model early literacy engagement practices and—for parents—provide a review of services for all family members. Many library cards have been registered as a result of these efforts.

An examination of selected activities just in the last two months gives a sense of what is taking place:

- Organized class trips for four classes of children from the Early Childhood Centers of Mount Kisco Head Start and Yonkers Children’s Place to their respective libraries [Bedford Hills substituting for Mount Kisco, due to scheduling conflicts, and Yonkers Riverfront; a combined total of 39 parents and 53 children participated].

The class trips provided engaging library experiences for the children; parents who attended joined in the children’s programs. Ms. Coradin, continuing her support to the Bedford Hills Free Library, helped the library provide a bilingual story time for the Mount Kisco Head Start visit. The parents who attended the Yonkers Children’s Place Center visits were also given an orientation to the library and online resources.

- Held a special evening, bilingual story time program in May at The Field Library for parents and their children from the Peekskill Head Start Center. The program served as a workshop for the parents. It not only demonstrated how to share stories with young children interactively but also shared reading literacy tips with the parents [25 parents and 22 children participated].
- Held a special “Welcome to the Library” night program in June for families from the Port Chester Head Start Center. Jointly sponsored by the Port Chester-Rye Brook Public Library and the PIE Department’s early literacy initiative, the program included a bilingual story time, crafts to do, a library orientation and tour for the parents, and concluded with dinner [112 parents and children participated].
- Gave book gifts to 116 pre-school children moving up to Kindergarten from four Westchester Head Start Centers (Mount Kisco, Yonkers Children’s Place, Yorktown Heights and Port Chester Children’s Place). Book gifts were also given to 18 children from the Peekskill Head Start Center for their participation in The Field Library’s “Parents Take Your Children to the Library” Saturday event. All the gifts were made possible by a grant from Con Edison.

These efforts have been supported by the NYS Family Literacy Grant. Additionally, thanks to outreach by WLS Director of Development Patricia Brigham, funds were obtained from Con Edison and Child Find. These funds have allowed us to not only provide age-appropriate books for children to take home but also to offer a light meal during the evening programs.

It is an understatement to say that the orchestration of these events is a challenge. Mrs. Vernon worked to recruit volunteers to help her design materials, schedule events, confirm registrations, and make handout packets for all participants. She personally worked to establish an effective dialog with the libraries serving

the Head Starts. Her aim throughout has been to foster a relationship between the two organizations that will last after our outreach has ended.

WEBS

Contact: Elaine Sozzi, Director [231-3239]

The WEBS director has been reviewing the confidential write-ups and client evaluations of recent participants in the seminars. There is news about successful job searches and reemployment with some notable companies. One client landed a technical position with Honeywell, and another was hired as a “staging professional” who prepares and re-designs homes to be put on the market. Other successes include a woman who achieved her dream of getting a publishing contract for a book she’s writing, and a man who started a project management course. For clients who were in difficult personal situations, there were referrals for assistance with housing, mental health issues and further education. The WEBS program is flexible in its ability to meet the needs of patrons from diverse backgrounds and offer them the tools to get their lives and careers back on track. As one client wrote, “This is a fantastic program and I am grateful to have participated. It helped me create a roadmap for my career and develop a plan of action with confidence.”



The spring workshop series concluded with a very successful program on *Latest Trends in Resumes*, which attracted over 40 people to the Greenburgh Public Library. The program covered various types of resume formats and demonstrated how to transform a resume into a marketing document to improve one’s chances of getting an interview. There were many questions and group interactions, and the attendees appreciated the opportunity to stay on trend and gather new job search tools.

An additional workshop was offered on *Careers in Healthcare* at the New Rochelle Public Library this month.

Scheduling is underway for the fall seminars with registration beginning in mid-August. Participating sites to be confirmed include the libraries in New Rochelle, Shrub Oak, Yonkers, White Plains and Chappaqua. Clients on waiting lists will be contacted to ensure they are guaranteed a place in a future program. WEBS will continue its individual counseling program at the Yonkers Public Library throughout the summer for clients who need assistance. Since programming is more limited during this period, WEBS director Elaine Sozzi will provide additional telephone counseling and referral for individuals who need assistance.

Ms. Sozzi will meet with the WEBS counselors over the summer to review all programming activities up to this point and collaborate on the development of new seminar material that will empower the workforce by addressing the challenges that job seekers face. Through the efforts of Development, a grant from M&T Bank will enable WEBS to develop and present additional career-related workshops in the fall schedule.

Ms. Sozzi met with some staff at the One Stop to review programming ideas for the fall. Since there is a great deal of cross-referral between WEBS and the One Stop, it helps to be cognizant of their needs when planning. She will also meet with Evania Thompson of the Mount Vernon Public Library to discuss the individual counseling services that WEBS has been providing this year. Ms. Sozzi also plans to attend the PLDA Brunch on June 21st.