

Library Director's Report November 2022

NYS Construction Aid

Bids for replacing the two remaining 30-year-old rooftop HVAC units were due to the Library on Monday, November 7th. Our clerk-of-the-works for the project, Curt Wallace, did not show up for the scheduled time of 4 pm. I called to inquire, and someone at his office said he had left early in the day due to an emergency and had not heard back from him since. As of the writing of this report, I still have not heard back from him. Bids are to be opened in an official session of the board, which will occur tonight. However, we may not make a decision due to the number received. We were awarded NYS Construction Aid for this project in the amount of \$253,469, which will cover 75 percent of the cost of the replacements.

Lanna and I discussed the poor lighting outside of the Library, after she attended an evening programming event that took place outside in the front of the Library in October. The lighting is poor not only in the front of the Library, but also in the Bluebird parking lot where we rent spaces for patron parking, and on the Laurens Street sidewalk. This is not only a problem for being able to see at evening outdoor programs, but more importantly, for overall security. Therefore, I reached out to Jan Dekoff at CCLS and asked if there was any way our most recent NYS Construction Aid application to upgrade our security camera system could be amended to also include upgraded security lighting. Because the System did not spend all of its Construction Aid allotment, I thought it was worth asking. As it turns out, there is still time to amend the application to request more money! I have received two quotes for the exterior lighting this past week and will submit the amended application to Jan on Monday, Nov. 14th.

Frances Bean O'Connell Endowment Update

On November 11th, I received an email from Kevin O'Connell that he and his wife Susan increased the endowment for the Art Fund by \$50,000 (bringing the endowment to \$150,000). They did this out of concern that the Library continue to receive at least \$5,000 annually for all of the programs sponsored by the endowment. If the stock market improves, the annual amount should increase substantially. We are so fortunate for the O'Connell's support, which has allowed us to offer programs for the community far beyond what we could normally provide!

News from the Library

Alijah Fox and I attended the annual New York Library Association conference from 11/02-11/05 in Saratoga Springs. We both received \$500 scholarships from CCLS to help offset the cost.

It was a very busy conference for me this year. On the 2nd, I ran the annual business meeting of the Rural Libraries Round Table. It was the first time we met in person in 3 years. It went really well with strong attendance and a lot of enthusiasm to reinvigorate the Round Table since 2 years of disruption caused by the pandemic. I turned over the presidency to Keturah Cappadonia from the Southern Tier Library System. After 3 years as president, I was definitely ready to turn over the reins!

I also curated the Author! Author! Luncheon for the Public Libraries Section. We invited Xochitl Gonzalez, whose debut novel *Olga Dies Dreaming* became a NYT bestseller after it was published in January 2022. The talk was very well received; she's a dynamic, engaging speaker

who confronts many critical issues facing our society, including political corruption and economic inequality. This was my third year on the board of PLS, and as such, it was my responsibility to curate this session. It was a good experience, but as this was my final year on the board, I have decided not to run for any more NYLA positions for the time being.

I was also a panelist at a session on the NYS minimum standards for public libraries, sponsored by the Division of Library Development. Frank Rees from DLD moderated. Other panelists were Mary Lou Carolan, Executive Director of the Newburgh Free Library in the Ramapo-Catskill Library System, and Sarah Glogowski, Executive Director of the Finger Lakes Library System. The session was well attended and well received.

Beyond this, I attended a session on Top Legal Issues facing Libraries, led by attorney Robert Schofield from the law firm Whiteman, Ostermann, and Hanna, which specializes in library law. The session had a lot of interesting information, which I will share with the board at a later time. I also attended a session that dealt with public libraries serving the homeless population, and a session on the crisis of censorship of books and free speech over the past couple of years. The session was led by best-selling young adult fiction writer Laurie Halse Anderson.

It was a great conference with fantastic attendance. Everyone was ready to meet in person again!