

**Mid-Michigan Library League  
Director's Report  
September 2020**



**Note: Much of this information is repeated from the August report, with updates.**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many things have changed in our world. Public libraries were ordered to be closed for three months, and then to have a plan for reopening after June 8<sup>th</sup> that includes how the library will be sanitized and open safely with social distancing, mask wearing, and barriers at service points. Many have chosen to reopen slowly, offering curbside service as the first step. MeLCat and RIDES were suspended, but have now resumed. Most of the MMLL libraries are open again to the public, but have limited hours and capacity. Some are using appointments for library and computer use, some use doorbells or restaurant buzzers to remind patrons of time limits, etc. We have ordered and distributed PPE such as masks, gloves, and hand sanitizer, and have helped members understand the many Executive Orders issued.

Most conferences and in-person trainings have been cancelled or postponed. It is unclear when we will be able to meet again in person. Teleconferencing systems are heavily used these days, with Zoom being the most common. Boards are meeting virtually, and programs offered online. Online resources are being used heavily, and patrons are grateful for eBooks, eAudiobooks, and streaming movie and music services. Schools are now re-opened with options for in-person instruction as well as online, and much effort has been made to provide Internet and devices for those without. The lack of rural broadband is more apparent than ever, as so much government information, unemployment filing and resources, education, and access to essential services happens online.

**Administrative:**

- Board members, groups they represent, year term ends, officers for FY20
  - Group 1 – Mary Edens –20
  - Group 2 – Susan LaBelle –20
  - Group 3 – Patti Colvin, Vice-Chair –20
  - Group 4 – Diane Eisenga –22
  - Group 5 – Eric Smith, Chair –21
  - Group 6 – Lois Langenburg, Treasurer –22
  - Group 7 – Valerie Church-McHugh, Secretary –22
  - Group 8 – Sarah Welch -23
  - Group 9 – OPEN
  
- Board members, groups they represent, year term ends for FY21
  - Group 1 – Mary Edens (?) –23
  - Group 2 – Debra Greenacre –23
  - Group 3 – Emily Thompson –23
  - Group 4 – Diane Eisenga –22
  - Group 5 – Eric Smith, Chair –21
  - Group 6 – Lois Langenburg – 22
  - Group 7 – Valerie Church-McHugh –22
  - Group 8 – Sarah Welch -23
  - Group 9 – Patty Rockafellow - 23
  
- Advisory Council
  - FY20 Co-Chairs – Debra Greenacre (Manistee) and Mary Barker (Pentwater)

- Informal meetings have been held Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m. via Zoom during the *Stay Home/Stay Safe* order and biweekly since.
- We need a new Advisory Council Chair (or co-chairs) for FY21.

### **Continuing Education:**

- In-person trainings have been cancelled or postponed, including national conferences, state conferences and workshops, and MMLL events. Many options for online training have been offered, with the conferences going virtual or available on demand via archived webinars and training modules.
- Soon we will have a recorded presentation on Human Resources by Brian Mortimore from Kent District Library. This was originally to be an in-person workshop.
- Library of Michigan has held Friday Zoom meetings for directors each week – very helpful for obtaining guidance and discussing issues during the pandemic. They have provided regular Youth check-ins. MLA and MCLS have also offered regular Zoom meetings and trainings.
- The MMLL annual meeting will be Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020, via Zoom. We will have speakers and activities for 90 minutes, and then have the Board meeting at 11:30.

### **eResources:**

- OverDrive purchased the digital services portion of Recorded Books, and they are migrating digital content from RBdigital to OverDrive. The [Up North Digital/OverDrive](#) consortium has been doing well under reorganization. We are recommending that the remaining MMLL libraries not currently in the Up North Digital consortium to join, since the RBdigital service will end for us after September 30, 2020. We hope to be able to subsidize some of the costs of Up North Digital for our members, but it is unclear what will happen with state aid in FY21.
- The RBdigital collection of over 30,000 instantly downloadable eAudiobooks is still available to all members of MMLL. The link to this service is <https://wmlpmi.rbdigital.com/>. **This service will go away at the end of September.** eMagazines will also go away, and members have the option of joining the TLN group (ask if you do not have the information). Transparent Language Online (TLO) **will be renewed** for next year, beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>. It should be provided via the Libby app, but so far they have not made this clear.

### **Grants:**

- Eleven libraries were funded in the first round of the mini-grant program and fifteen libraries were funded in the second round, for a total commitment to our members of \$15,000 (<https://www.mml.org/a/grants>).
- The CARES Act grant program, run by the Library of Michigan to fund PPE supplies/service and digital inclusion supplies/service (<http://mi.gov/LSTA>), funded 28 of our 36 member libraries.
- MMLL received a \$5,000 H.O.P.E. grant from Michigan Humanities to assist with RIDES payments for members. We received the money and have submitted the final report.

### **Tech Assistance:**

- FY20 began with each MMLL member library holding four hours of credit for computer services from Cory Walker, “Emergency Geek.” Unused hours were shared with others.

- We will renew this tech support in FY21, beginning October 1, 2020 with members each having four hours of paid tech support, with mileage covered by the cooperative.

#### **Member Libraries:**

- The Seville Township Library has a new director: Justine Peterson.
- The Luther Area Public Library has a new director: Amy Shank.
- LeRoy Community Library has a new director: Laura Jacobson-Pentces.
- Glen Lake Community Library is finally open back in their original building in Empire. The expansion and renovation added needed room and resources.
- Benzie Shores District Library is beginning work on their expansion this fall.

#### **In the News:**

- As of this writing, 195,761 people have died in the United States from the COVID-19 coronavirus. Michigan has seen 6,887 deaths and 119,872 confirmed cases so far. (<https://ncov2019.live/data>)
- The REALM study has released information on the testing of several types of library materials. Most libraries are quarantining materials for 96 hours, but some guidance suggests even a longer period. Most libraries do not have the space and believe the virus is largely spread person to person sustained contact and not by materials. See WebJunction at <https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/COVID-19-research-project.html>

#### **Other:**

The MCDA – Cooperative Directors Association – has been working together to create a mailing for public library trustees to let them know about cooperatives and library establishment and offer any assistance needed. MMLL will use the documents created to do a mailing out to trustees of member libraries in the cooperative and send close to the beginning of October.

The eleven library cooperatives in Michigan receive their revenue from state aid to public libraries (PA 89 of 1977). Co-ops are 100% state aid funded (public libraries hover around 10% of funding from State Aid), so the state budget heavily impacts our budgets. We are drafting budgets to anticipate cuts to state aid in FY21. We are presenting three versions of the FY21 budget for MMLL, one at full revenue, one at 75% revenue, and a third at 50% revenue. If these cuts happen, we can use fund balance, but tough choices must be made.

#### **Travel/Meetings:**

No travel.

Zoom, Zoom, Zoom meetings galore.

*~ Sheryl*

Sheryl L. Mase  
MMLL director