

Maxwell Memorial Library Director's Report  
November 15th, 2021

Since our last meeting, Melissa and I have attended the New York Library Association yearly conference, held at the Oncenter. The first speaker I listened to was titled Prioritizing Digital Equity When Everyone Says No. Two people from the Red Hook Public Library spoke about how they responded to their community's needs to take internet access beyond its building, eventually leading to getting wifi in a public park. Along the way, as you can imagine, nearly every stakeholder struggled to see the importance of the work and the possibilities of the project. Their talk highlighted how they navigated around the "nos" to make the project happen. That same day, I attended the Empire State Library Network Luncheon titled Collective Power for Collective Good. Emily Drabinski, director of CUNY Graduate Center Library, spoke to us about strategies she used to encourage sharing power and decision making within her institution during COVID. The last talk for Thursday was titled Shared Vocabulary for a Supportive Workplace. Once NYLA gives us access to the digital handouts, I plan to share this with the board for upcoming discussion.

On Friday, I attended the Youth Services Luncheon, where author/illustrator Brian Selznick was presented the 2021 Empire State Award for Excellence in Literature for Young People. I also attend Library Trustees (not in) Legal Jeopardy, which mostly affirmed that we are operating effectively, however, there were a few things I will be following up on with us. Talking to Kids about Race gave Melissa and I plenty of book recommendations to purchase, and Civic Online Reasoning in the Library gave me suggestions on possible programming regarding how to evaluate information found online. There are many pre-recorded talks available online as well, and I plan to listen to a few.

I hired Amanda Janes to take over Michelle Prieto's hours. Amanda comes to us from the Fairmount Wegmans customer service desk, and is a beginner homeschooler for her 2 children. Her customer service skills and her ability to tap into the local homeschooling community will be an asset to the library. She starts training Wednesday, and the 15th will be her official first day. Staff will also receive yearly required sexual harassment training, in partner with Marcellus Library, on November 17th. The library will be closing early for this (5:30 pm) so all staff may attend. We also have a staff meeting that day, and there's an OCPL board meeting I will attend.

I also joined Rotary (thanks George). I've attended two meetings so far. The Member Council, which I chair, met Tuesday. We were updated on Polaris Leap, Overdrive Magazines, a manual on dealing with difficult patrons, and the annual retreat for directors.

The Tree of Gift Cards drawing is up and running. Thanks to those that have already come in to get raffle tickets to sell. Our annual appeal is still steadily receiving donations. I'll update you at the meeting with the latest amount.

George and Rena attended the Friends of Maxwell meeting in my absence. Not only did the Friends contribute to our annual fund drive, they also paid for the rest of the cost of the TV we installed in the Community Room! I cannot thank them enough for that!

I'm taking vacation February 22, 2022 to February 28th. Heading to Florida! Rena and Melissa will be "person in charge" while I'm away. The library is closed Nov. 11th for Veterans Day, on November 24th, we will close at 3 pm, and remain closed for the Thanksgiving holiday through the 28th. In December, we are closed Friday the 24th, through Sunday the 26th, as well as the 31st and 1st of January.

Respectfully submitted,  
Alyssa Ali, Director