

Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative

Director's Report

May 2010

Public Library Association Conference: The conference was held in Portland, Oregon and was attended by over 7,000 librarians from the United States and other countries. Many of the presentations were valuable. See website report for my notes and perspectives on the sessions I attended:

http://www.mmlc.info/directorreport/PLA_2010_Report.pdf

Workshops: On March 16, we hosted a book repair workshop featuring Nora Carr, Michigan State University Archivist. Every seat was taken and evaluations were very positive. Many asked for an advanced session sometime in the future. It is an indication that libraries still believe in preservation of library materials. The April daylong workshop with Michael Sullivan, Patrick Jones, and Erin Helmrich was extremely well-attended. On June 8, four cooperatives have planned a day with Howard County Library CEO, Valerie Gross, MIRS writer/editor Kyle Melinn, and MLA Presidents, Larry Neal (current) and Christine Berro (President-elect.)

May Tour: The May tour with Tim Smith "AKA Buck Wilder" is shaping up nicely. Irene is nearly finished fine-tuning the schedule. Over 30 performances are spread across our cooperative. Board and Advisory Council members will be treated to a short presentation at the May Annual Joint meeting.

Library of Michigan: The library community was stunned to learn in February that the Library of Michigan was, in fact, being downsized in many ways. I sent out articles that detailed those changes and received many shocked responses from Board members and Library Directors. Library of Michigan is meeting regularly with the Michigan Center for Innovation and Reinvention Board to help determine best use for the lower three floors. Library of Michigan functions will be consolidated on the 4th and 5th floors and the staff will eventually be reduced to just over thirty.

Cooperative Directors: The group is working with Gretchen Couraud and MLA to further the legislative agenda and to share advocacy ideas and practices within each cooperative. Topics of greatest importance:

- Increasing the State Aid Budget to \$8 million
- Stronger language in the Dept of Labor bill for libraries working with MI Works
- Articulate the demand for increased services by the public with less funding;
- Nationwide survey of How American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries <http://tascha.washington.edu/usimpact>
- Stressing how libraries benefit their local communities by: helping the unemployed, serving local business and residents, providing access to State and Federal resources, being an area model for statewide resource sharing

Library Law Committee: A group of Co-op Directors, Library Directors, and a Library Law Attorney are working together to revise language in several library acts. The committee has started work on the County Library Law Act.

Rural Libraries Conference: Sheryl Mase, Library of Michigan Statewide Services Coordinator, announced that the Rural Libraries Conference was postponed from 2011 to 2012. In light of the Library of Michigan reorganization, it is easy to understand the difficulty they may have in planning a conference of this size. Cooperative Directors offers to assist Library of Michigan in putting on the conference were declined. This will seriously disappoint many library staff members from our cooperative and across the state.

MCLS: The first two meetings of the new Interim MCLS Board have produced a good working relationship between Michigan and Indiana library representatives. Meeting will alternate between Michigan and Indiana. Randy Dykhuis and MCLS staff is working to reduce duplication of effort and determine which services will best serve this new, larger area. Meetings will be scheduled quarterly with the next one on May 25, 2010 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

American Library Association Conference: I will be at the American Library Conference in Washington, D.C. from June 25 – 29, 2010. The last day will focus on meetings with Michigan legislators and is sure to be interesting and informative.