

Attendance:

Deanna DiCarlo (UHLS), Anne Pitlyk (UHLS), Jennifer Ward (APLB), Lynne O'Donnell (COLN), Tracey Pause (VOOR), Gordon Noble (BETH), Jim Davies (APL), Melissa Tacke (CAST), Sue Hoadley (WSTR), Michelle Conte (RCSC), Kate Seidlinger (TROY), Natalie McDonough (BETH), Meg Maurer (APLM), Lois Papp (EGRN), Laurene Teachout (STEP/NASS), Kristina Ronald (GUIL)

Meeting Minutes:**1. Program Go-round**

- S. Hoadley – April Roggio approached the library about conducting a Hilltowns sustainable farming workshop atWSTR. S. Hoadley foresees this becoming a recurring program at the library, and RVLL and BERN will host the workshop as well.
- L. Teachout – STEP has a Celtic band playing at the library 3/17. They have played before and they always draw a crowd. NASS has a decluttering class coming up and she anticipates that it will be very popular. STEP would like to host a cake decorating program, L. Teachout is currently looking for a baker to lead the class.
- L. Papp – EGRN had a very successful decluttering class for the New Year. The 4th annual Adult Winter Reading Program was very successful. The 2nd annual film festival the day before the Oscars was attended by 350 people.
- N. McDonough – BETH has been organizing trivia nights. BETH has hosted Gary Ferris, who recreates WWII radio programs. They are working on capitalizing on their success with this program to create a regular Friday afternoon program for seniors. They've partnered with the Bethlehem Senior Center. Their Adult Coloring class had 55 participants on a Monday night.
 - L Papp pointed out that you can get free samples of coloring sheets from Dover.
- M. Conte – RCS is starting Tea Times for seniors to come in and have some tea and read the New York Times together. They're also hosting their first evening party for adults, an '80s night.
- L. Teachout asked for advice putting together a Hamilton-themed program since the Schuyler Mansion isn't able to offer off site programs at the moment. G. Noble recommended the NY Council of Humanities and L. Papp recommended Tricia Shaw, a freelance historian.
- M. Maurer – APLM is hosting their annual Homebuyer Fair in partnership with the Affordable Housing Partnership on April 16th.
- S. Hoadley encourages everyone to share fliers for upcoming events.

Calendar:

Several attendees new to UHLS asked about why adult programs were not included in the online Youth Services calendar. Most agreed a separate calendar for adult programs is not desirable. D. DiCarlo will speak to UHLS management about the possibility and desirability of reimagining the calendar to include programs for all services.

Advocacy:

The Advocacy Day handout was passed out and discussed. S. Hoadley noted she has distributed it at her location. D. DiCarlo encouraged everyone to respond to the NYLA advocacy alert that was sent to the listserv.

2. Spotlight on Reference

We had a lengthy discussion on how “reference” is evolving in the digital age with the following sub-topics. See Appendix A for discussion slides.

The “Reference Desk”

- L. O’Donnell – COLN recently added a second desk near the entrance.
- G. Noble – BETH is planning on combining their Adult Reference Desk and the Children’s Reference Desk into one Information Desk.
- J. Ward said that there has been a shift towards more tech help related reference questions.
- L. Papp – EGRN has reduced the size of their reference collection by about 1/3. She is no longer buying many of the reference materials that she used to, but she does update legal, business, medical, and education print materials.
- G. Noble – BETH donated literary criticism to the Bethlehem Central High School so the books could stay within the tax base

Reference FAQs across types of libraries:

- S. Hoadley said she mostly gets tech questions. She thinks patrons don’t realize that they can ask librarians everything.
- L. Papp pointed out that the questions that do come tend to be the more challenging ones.
- G. Noble – definitely getting more and more tech questions, but still getting traditional reference questions from students.
- L. Teachout said that people are asking a lot of Readers’ Advisory questions
 - N. McDonough said that Novelist and Kent District Library are two great Readers’ Advisory resources.
- K. Seidlinger – Troy sees a lot of computer questions, but she still finds herself answering traditional reference questions regularly. Troy sees a lot of legal reference questions, which she refers to the law library at the county courthouse.
- M. Maurer gets a lot of legal, job, and housing questions.
- L. Papp sees a lot of ancestry and genealogical reference questions
- L. Teachout – NASS has a specialist on staff for local history and genealogical research, STEP has a great local history society she can refer patrons to
- M. Conte pointed out that it can be a challenge to get patrons to realize that they are welcome to ask librarians reference questions.
- L. Teachout mentioned the difficulty of assisting job applicants who have never seen a computer before and G. Noble shared that BETH sent out a call for volunteers on social

media and in their newsletter and found two job coaches who meet with applicants one on one. He will share the name of their organization with the listserv.

- M. Conte asked for advice working with patrons who speak languages other than English. D. DiCarlo stated she has used Google Translate to type to each other and get an idea of what resources the patron needs.
 - Would Literacy Volunteers still travel for ESOL assistance?
 - L. Papp – EGRN has ESOL classes twice a week
 - J. Davies asked what locations have bilingual staff.
 - Letting people know what locations have what kinds of non-English resources would be helpful.
 - D. DiCarlo said she would survey the members and see which locations offer ESOL classes, have bilingual staff members, and have notary service available.

Turning reference FAQs into programs:

- J. Davies gets a lot of questions about the history of area homes so he created program with materials that can guide patrons to answer those questions.
- M. Maurer was seeing a lot of financial questions so she organized a monthly credit repair workshop.
- M. Tacke was getting a lot of legal questions so she partnered with The Legal Project for a monthly legal consultation clinic.
 - APL has offered this service as well for many years, and mentioned that The Legal Project also has a speaker's bureau for programming.
- L. Teachout has organized financial literacy programming in response to reference questions.

Reference as community engagement – identifying community partnerships:

- L. Papp said that Rensselaer County Chamber of Commerce offers great networking opportunities.
 - G. Noble agreed. BETH has hosted Chamber of Commerce meetings in the past.
- L. Teachout regularly attends town meetings to demonstrate the role that the libraries can play in the community.
- K. Seidlinger said that Troy participated in Troy Night Out
- G. Noble – BETH provides Wi-Fi access in the town park
- L. Papp said that having the police and fire departments for summer reading created new partnerships with the organizations.
 - S. Hoadley had the same experience with the highway department.
- M. Conte pointed out that tagging organizations on social media that RCS has partnered with brings awareness of what the library does to more people.
- D. DiCarlo brought up field trips for adults per J. Wines at RCS.

Popular reference tools:

- J. Ward borrows SALS's NovelIST links for Readers' Advisory.
- L. Teachout said that traditional databases don't get much use at her libraries.
- M. Conte uses KDL What's Next for Readers' Advisory.
- N. McDonough says her patrons are happy to see Consumer Reports online.
- G. Noble talked about Flipster. It has Consumer Reports in PDF format and it has back issues.
- S. Hoadley uses google and her own personal Ancestry account. She finds the state databases insufficient when it comes to up-to-date articles, she gets articles through ILL.
 - G. Noble said that BETH accesses 150 articles a year through ILL
- L. Teachout has had success with Google Scholar.

Training new professionals and paraprofessionals in reference services:

- G. Noble views reference work as customer service and strives for positive patron interactions.
- S. Hoadley's staff send reference questions to her.
- M. Tacke asks if other libraries are training clerks in reference.
 - The general consensus is that clerical staff in smaller libraries are trained to refer reference questions to librarians once the questions go beyond what's provided on site
- M. Conte asked for NYLA Library Assistant
 - N. McDonough suggested reaching out to CALA
 - D. DiCarlo will explore if UHLS can to host a database training for paraprofessionals

Innovations and challenges:

- G. Noble tried text and chat reference resources but they never took off
- L. Papp said that East Greenbush participated in Ask 24/7 but they were answering more questions than their patrons were submitting so they cancelled.

3. Outreach Update

D. DiCarlo demoed WhereInQueens.org, an open source database with a simple interface with easily accessible and information for homeless and at risk individuals to locate and get directions to the nearest shelter, meal, legal and medical assistance, and library. UHLS is building a Capital District version using the same platform (Parse; GitHub) and data scheme (Human Services Open Referral).

4. Database Update

Bookflix and GVRL are both authenticating correctly, but the usage is low. Member libraries that have not added the links to their webpages were encouraged to do so. At the May meeting, we should have a bigger picture of usage and cost/download.

5. Upcoming CEs

D. DiCarlo announced the following 2016 CEs. All are welcome to attend the trainings, even staff that do not need CEs. D. DiCarlo will distribute more information on the listserv.

2016 CEs:

- **Marketing Your Library: Doug Bixler (at UHLS) | 3/24 | 9-11 | 2 CEs**
- **Social Media Marketing Part 1: Polly Farrington (CDLC/3PLS: at SCPL) | 3/31 | 9am-12pm | 3 CEs**
- **UHLS eTeam: Confident Customer Service (at UHLS) | 4/14 | 3-5pm | 2 CEs**
- **Local Senior Resources (UHLS/BETH/Albany Guardian Society: at BETH) | 5/9 | 9-11am | 2 CEs**
- **Improving Library Services for LGBTQ Communities (by the Albany Pride Center; at UHLS) | 5/26 | 9am-12pm | 3 CEs**
- **Social Media Marketing Part 2: Polly Farrington (CDLC/3PLS: at SALS) | 9/29 | 9am-12pm | 3 CEs**
- **Productivity Tech Tools: Polly Farrington (CDLC/3PLS: at UHLS) | 12/15 | 9am-12pm | 3 CEs**

5. Next Meeting:

May 19th from 9-11am at Albany Public Library's Delaware Branch

Spotlight on Book Discussions and Reading Programs for Adults. D. DiCarlo will reach out to specific ASAC members and ask them to share what has worked for them in the past; discussion and brainstorming to follow.

Appendix A: Reference as Community Engagement Discussion Slides

Slide 1:

Reference as Community Engagement

— Google Hasn't (Quite) Killed the Library Star —

Slide 2:

The Reference Desk



Source: <https://mrlibrarydude.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/p8159623.jpg>



Traditionally:

- Reference Question as “Transaction”
- Reference Librarian as “Paid to Wait.”

Is the “Reference Desk:”

- A. Still necessary?
- B. No longer relevant?
- C. An opportunity for patron engagement & program ideas?
- D. Both A & C?

Slide 3:

Urban | Suburban | Rural FAQs

What do *your* patrons ask you about most often?



Slide 4:

Turning FAQs into Programs

- Tax Assistance
- Legal Resources
- Financial Literacy
- Senior Resources
- Medical Reference
- Computer/Device Assistance
- Local History
- eContent
- Readers Advisory
- ???



Slide 5:

Reference as Community Engagement

“Leave the building and go out and add value.”

“We are not (just) information professionals; we are (also) relationship builders.”

Ask 3 Questions to identify partnerships:

- Who are our community leaders?
- What organizations are active in our community?
- What issues is our community facing?



Slide 6:

Reference and Readers' Advisory Tools: What do we use most? Others?

Professional/Traditional*:

Databases?
 NYS NOVEL
 NoveList
 Consumer Reports
 Ancestry
 Web Sources
 Medline Plus

Popular/Contemporary*:

Wikipedia
 GoodReads
 Social Media/Blogs:
 Book Riot
 BuzzFeed Books

* Disclaimer: These terms are up for debate

Slide 7:

Reference Services Training

How do we train new librarians and/or paraprofessional staff?

How many of your libraries use:

- Shadowing
- Mentoring
- Sink or Swim

“Reference Interview” Open Questions

- What do you mean by ____?
- What further info can you give me?
- What examples can you give me?
- I’m not familiar wit _____. Can you explain it to me?
- Where did you hear/read about ____?
- What is it you want to know about ____?
- Where have you checked for information so far?

Reference Interview = Customer Service

- Building rapport
- Active listening
- Respecting privacy
- Undivided attention
- Avoiding judgement/assumptions

<http://www.statelibraryofiowa.org/ld/i-j/infolit/toolkit/geninfo/refinterview>

Slide 8:

Challenges & Innovations?

Anyone use:

- Instant Messaging?
- Text Messaging?
- Social Media?
- Roving/Going Mobile?



Urban Librarians Unite are all about promoting the use and appreciation of libraries, so it only makes sense that they'd set up one of their roving, temporary libraries outside the Brooklyn 7th Fest 2013!

AlbanyMuskrat @albanymuskrat · 30 Oct 2014
 @AlbanyArchives @OldEnglishPub @AlbanyNYLibrary 1930s from LOC called Doyle Bldg.



← ↻ 1 ❤️ 2 ⋮

Ross Thompson @tchef_rthompson · 30 Oct 2014
 @AlbanyArchives @OldEnglishPub @AlbanyNYLibrary perfect Halloween picture

← ↻ ❤️ 2 ⋮

AlbanyMuskrat @albanymuskrat · 30 Oct 2014
 @AlbanyArchives @OldEnglishPub @AlbanyNYLibrary can u pull older images? I'm away from laptop.

← ↻ ❤️ ⋮