President’s Message  5
Out and Proud: Queering the Library  9
### Feature Articles

**Out and Proud** *(Left above)*

Other than a few programs every June, there was a gap in services for LGBTQ+ customers prior to 2020 through the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS). Many staff are invested in this area and were doing great work, but it was all dependent on individual efforts and there was very little system-wide unity or vision. To ensure that Pride month received the attention it deserved, both internally and externally, PGCMLS organized a wave of programs in June 2020 to celebrate the LGBTQ+ experience.

**Night Sky Network: The Orion Nebula** *(Left)*

Winter begins in December for observers in the Northern Hemisphere, bringing cold nights and the return of one of the most famous constellations to our early evening skies: Orion the Hunter! Orion is a striking pattern of stars and is one of the few constellations whose pattern is repeated almost unchanged in the star stories of cultures around the world.
Editor’s Note

Crab readers, I don’t know about you, but I’ve sure felt like I’ve just been “spinning my wheels” lately. Doing and accomplishing things—but somehow still staying in the same place. No doubt this feeling comes from the current state of the world and the fact that we are in the midst of a global pandemic that seems never-ending, but I have to keep believing that the wheels will, eventually turn.

I was heartened to read new MLA President Morgan Miller’s President’s Message for this issue (see page 5), speaking to the heroism of librarians in trying times, both in the past and the present. It gives me hope that we can help to shape a better future and that the collective “wheels of the world” can start spinning once more.

In addition to the President’s Message, see how the Ruth Enlow Library of Garrett County reimagined its summer reading club (page 7) and how the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System transformed its LGBTQ+ programming, even in the midst of a global pandemic (page 9). It is stories like these that will help to inspire us to strive to keep the wheels moving forward in times of crisis and beyond.

Annette Haldeman, MLA Crab Editor;
Department of Legislative Services Library
In historic times of national crisis, people have turned to libraries—not only for information and enlightenment, but also for the peace and certainty that comes with setting foot inside. Personally, and I know this is true for many of you, it has been very difficult to keep the sanctity of our spaces behind locked doors when the world is being redrawn before our eyes.

But libraries are never really closed, even during a global pandemic. In fact, they can be even more accessible. The Depression years saw the proliferation of mobile library services and expanded rural library access through Works Progress Administration investments like the Pack Horse Library project. During World War I, the American Library Association established the Library War Service to send books to soldiers serving in Europe and those training at home. Librarians have always sought out and devised new ways to meet their customers and country where they are at any given moment—especially when a crisis hits. The heroism of librarians serving in cities such as Baltimore and Ferguson during times of civil unrest and turmoil are undeniable proof of this.

Since our founding in 1923, the Maryland Library Association has also navigated its fair share of national crises, including this pandemic. In just a few short months, the Association’s staff and leaders quickly transitioned traditional platforms for supporting and connecting with members into the virtual realm. In doing so, we’ve engaged with hundreds of new colleagues across Maryland. I am extremely proud of the work our 2020 Conference Committee, under the leadership of Naomi Keppler, to shift this year’s conference to what promises to be an outstanding and highly interactive virtual experience.

Though our collective square footage may be reduced for the time being, the impact we’re creating throughout our communities expands each day. New services and spaces for libraries have been carved out. New communities of knowledge and practice are emerging, as are new relationships and alliances. Together, we’re moving into the next era of libraries at light speed. When we look back on this time, as individuals and librarians, I hope that amidst all the challenges we faced, you will also remember your important role, and the Maryland Library Association’s, in reshaping our libraries—and world—for the better.

Continue for links to references!→
**The Pack Horse Library project**


Retrieved from https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/horse-riding-librarians-were-great-depression-bookmobiles-180963786/.

**The American Library Association Established the Library War Service**

Summer Reading Club Reimagined

Laurel Baker, Ruth Enlow Library of Garrett County

This year’s Summer Reading Club at the Ruth Enlow Library may have looked slightly different than in the past,* but it was still an overall success! There were many opportunities for creativity and imagination with the theme of “Imagine Your Story,” bringing to life stories of fairytales, fantasy, and folklore.

While big group events weren’t possible at the time, the kids still had a lot of fun with the reading challenge, their take-home activities every week, and prizes for completing each level.

* Dragons!
We want all of them!
Other than a few programs every June, there was a gap in services for LGBTQ+ customers prior to 2020 through the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS). Many staff are invested in this area and were doing great work, but it was all dependent on individual efforts and there was very little system-wide unity or vision. All library customers deserve to see themselves in the Library’s services, so staff put together a system-wide team with the goal of setting some foundational expectations for staff and equipping them to provide rich programs and services for LGBTQ+ customers. To ensure that Pride month received the attention it deserved, both internally and externally, PGCMLS organized a wave of programs in June 2020 to celebrate the LGBTQ+ experience.

The bulk of the team’s work on staff development involved the creation of a toolkit for library workers serving LGBTQ+ customers. This 17-page document includes information about the LGBTQ+ community and why it should be a focus of library services, guidelines for allyship and how to make libraries safe and affirming, resources for inclusive collection development and programming, book lists, and some ready-made program plans. To accompany the toolkit, the team is currently organizing virtual training sessions for all staff. The toolkit and training sessions are important for getting library personnel on the same page. In any large organization, there are varying levels of comfort with gender and sexual diversity. Staff can create an even foundation for the organization by having clearly stated expectations in this area and providing resources to empower colleagues to meet those expectations. These expectations and accompanying action items establish a unified direction for everyone involved: LGBTQ+ and allied staff are enthusiastically backed by their organization; staff who are supportive, but hesitant because they are worried about getting it wrong are given the resources they need to become stronger allies; and staff who are not supportive understand that those attitudes are personal and must be kept out of the workplace, and hopefully learn to become more tolerant and accepting.

PGCMLS originally planned to highlight Pride month 2020 with a number of programs throughout its branches, and a Rainbow Family Festival for the entire county. This festival was scheduled to include booths with local LGBTQ+ organizations and resources, family activities like crafts and storytime, and a community art project. Once the state and county closed down in response to COVID-19, everything had to be adapted quickly to ensure that LGBTQ+ customers were given the same level of programming and visibility. PGCMLS was a national leader in making library programs and services available.
The Crab • Fall, 2020 • Contents: Features • Contents: Continued

The Crab • Fall, 2020 • Contents: Features • Contents: Continued

The Crab • Fall, 2020 • Contents: Features • Contents: Continued

The Crab • Fall, 2020 • Contents: Features • Contents: Continued

The Crab • Fall, 2020 • Contents: Features • Contents: Continued

virtually. While PGCMLS had to postpone the Rainbow Family Festival, the rest of the staff team’s Pride plans came together, just in a different form. Staff recorded programs from their own homes instead of offering them in branches. To help people feel connected with their community, staff hosted a Pride-themed happy hour that featured the Library’s first presentation by a drag performer. Staff also created a virtual community “quilt,” which was a video with highlights from library programs and submissions from the community showing what Pride month means to them.

The Communications and Outreach Department arranged two high-profile author talks: George Matthew Johnson, author of All Boys Aren’t Blue and R. Eric Thomas, author of Here For It, which were co-presented by libraries throughout the state. Although many adjustments had to be made to accommodate the Library’s new virtual platform, hosting these programs online allowed far more people to participate than if they had taken place in the branches as planned. The team is moving forward with a similar approach for LGBTQ+ History Month in October and other celebrations and observances throughout the year.

After the initial success of the LGBTQ+ team, PGCMLS has created similar teams for other library heritage and history months and thematic interests like health and wellness. These teams have contributed to the Prince George’s County Heritage Project, an initiative of PGCMLS that aims to showcase selected major cultures that contribute to the cultural fabric of life in the United States. This series of webpages gathers featured online resources, recommended reads and streaming content, and educational content from partner organizations, curated by PGCMLS staff.

If you think that an approach similar to the PGCMLS LGBTQ+ team might be a good fit for your organization, here are a couple things to consider:

- An effective team starts with people who are committed to putting in the work to bring real change to their organization.
- Be really honest about what your organization can do better and create actionable steps to address those things. What is your workplace culture like in this area? What are your customers’ experiences? Remember that improving staff culture will result in a better experience for customers, and prioritizing underserved customers will have an impact on your organizational culture.
- Find ways to support your staff as they adjust to changes, while still setting high expectations for them. The PGCMLS toolkit did this by providing resources for staff and making it clear that the library would be prioritizing LGBTQ+ services from now on.
- Be conscious of the diversity of needs in the LGBTQ+ community. LGBTQ+ information needs intersect with all of the library’s service areas - families, job seekers, English language learners, etc. Collaborate with your organization’s other interest groups to enrich all of your services.
- Create a plan for backlash. Consider that this might come from inside or outside of your organization. Ensure that all of the services and programs are in alignment with your organization’s mission, vision, values, and strategic plan; this foundation will be important if the work is scrutinized.

The creation of this team allowed PGCMLS to create a plan to highlight the diversity within the county and provide a platform for staff and customers to feel empowered, seen, and appreciated. By streamlining and unifying the Pride-themed programming through a yearlong work group, the system has created a way to provide quality, inclusive LGBTQ+ programming year round as well as highlight this community’s culture and experience during Pride month.
Winter begins in December for observers in the Northern Hemisphere, bringing cold nights and the return of one of the most famous constellations to our early evening skies: Orion the Hunter!

Orion is a striking pattern of stars and is one of the few constellations whose pattern is repeated almost unchanged in the star stories of cultures around the world. Below the three bright stars of Orion’s Belt lies his sword, where you can find the famous Orion Nebula, also known as M42. The nebula is visible to our unaided eyes in even moderately light-polluted skies as a fuzzy “star” in the middle of Orion’s Sword. M42 is about 20 light years across, which helps with its visibility since it’s roughly 1,344 light years away! Baby stars, including the famous “Trapezium” cluster, are found inside the nebula’s whirling gas clouds. These gas clouds also hide “protostars” from view: objects in the process of becoming stars, but that have not yet achieved fusion at their core.

The Orion Nebula is a small window into a vastly larger area of star formation centered around the constellation of Orion itself. NASA’s Great Observatories, space telescopes like Hubble, Spitzer, Compton, and Chandra, studied this area in wavelengths we can’t see with our earthbound eyes, revealing the entire constellation alight with star birth, not just the comparatively tiny area of the nebula. Why then can we only see the nebula? M42 contains hot young stars whose stellar winds blew away their cocoons of gas after their “birth,” the moment when they begin to fuse hydrogen into helium.

Those gas clouds, which block visible light, were cleared away just enough to give us a peek inside at these young stars. The rest of the complex remains hidden to human eyes, but not to advanced space-based telescopes.

We put telescopes in orbit to get above the interference of our atmosphere, which absorbs many wavelengths of light. Infrared space telescopes,
such as Spitzer and the upcoming James Webb Space Telescope, detect longer wavelengths of light that allow them to see through the dust clouds in Orion, revealing hidden stars and cloud structures. It’s similar to the infrared goggles firefighters wear to see through smoke from burning buildings and wildfires.

This article is distributed by NASA Night Sky Network.
The Night Sky Network program supports astronomy clubs across the USA dedicated to astronomy outreach. Visit nightsky.jpl.nasa.org to find local clubs, events, and more!

This stunning Hubble image offers the sharpest view of the Orion Nebula ever obtained. Created using 520 different Hubble exposures taken in multiple wavelengths of light, this mosaic contains over one billion pixels. Hubble imaged most of the nebula, but ground-based images were used to fill in the gaps in its observations. The orange color in the image can be attributed to hydrogen, green represents oxygen, and the red represents both sulfur and observations made in infrared light.
Wendi Mekins Joins the Montgomery College Library

Wendi Mekins, Montgomery College Library

In June 2020, Wendi Mekins joined the Montgomery College Library in Rockville as a Technical Resources / ERM specialist. She earned a BFA from the Metropolitan State University of Denver in 2011, and in 2015 she received her MLS from Wayne State University in Detroit. Over the past 18+ years, Wendi has worked in a variety of public, academic, corporate and government libraries, including digital image collections and non-circulating historical archives. She’s delighted to be back in her home state of Maryland and she plans to enjoy fresh seafood as often as possible.
the Crab is published quarterly to inform MLA members about events, news and activities of interest to the Maryland library community. Subscriptions are $15 per year (4 issues). For subscription or advertising information, change of address, or extra issues, call the MLA office at 410-947-5090.

the Crab is published online at the MLA web site:
About the Crab

Questions about MLA membership should be directed to the MLA office at mla@mdlib.org. Please address all other Crabby correspondence to: crabedit@mdlib.org.

Deadlines for submissions
Fall Issue: September 5
Winter Issue: December 5
Spring Issue: March 5
Summer Issue: June 5

Crab Editors
Annette Haldeman; Editor
Maryland Department of Legislative Services; 410-946-5400

Regina Rose, Copy Editor
Amy L. Miller, Copy Editor
Carroll County Public Library, 410-386-4490
Robert Miller, Copy Editor
University of Maryland University College Library

Hannah Rosekrans, Copy Editor
Baltimore County Public Library

Art Director and production staff
Bucky Edgett; Lucky Productions, Westminster MD 21158; 410-346-6925; luckypro.biz

Copyright © 2020 Maryland Library Association
1401 Hollins Street; Baltimore MD 21223
Voice: 410-947-5090; Fax: 410-947-5089
mla@mdlib.org

Keep up with MLA/ALA events…Share job openings…
Offer weeded items from your collection to others…Ask a question!

To subscribe to the list:
Send a message to sympa@lists.umaryland.edu from the address you want to subscribe to the list. In the subject line of your message, type in: subscribe marylib Firstname Lastname (indicate your own first and last name). Leave the message body blank. When your request is accepted, the message you receive confirms your subscription to the list.

To post a message to the list:
Address your message to marylib@lists.umaryland.edu.
(When you reply to a message sent through the listserv, your message will go to everyone! Therefore, it might be a good idea to include your email address in the body of any messages you post to the list. In some systems, the reader won’t be able to see the address in the sender line. For private replies, send a separate message addressed to the original sender.)

To unsubscribe from the list:
From the address with which you subscribed to the list, send a message to sympa@lists.umaryland.edu. In the subject line of your email, type in: unsubscribe marylib. Leave the message body blank.