also...

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Demystifying Advocacy
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Maryland State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) & FutureMakers Accessible STEAM
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Robots in Libraries: Meet Pepper (Right)
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Editor’s Note

Summer may be a busy season, but that didn’t stop writers for this issue as many weighed in and reported to the Crab about spring activities in libraries and within MLA Divisions and Interest Groups across the state.

The Summer issue of the Crab is always the fourth and final issue of the set of volumes and typically contains a lot of MLA & DLA Annual Conference content. This issue is no different, with a myriad of photos from the conference (starting on page 26) and special articles about Harford County Library as the recipient of the first MLA Marketing Award (page 8) as well as MLA Author Award Winner Mary Amato (page 24).

Let us not forget, though, about all of the other great programming and initiatives going on in Maryland libraries and in MLA groups leading up to and beyond the conference. You’ll find a wealth of that information in this issue, too, with a description of the Reader’s Advisory Interest Group’s (RAIG) “Hot Genres” program (page 9), the use of a robot named Pepper in Carroll County Public Libraries (page 17), a community awards luncheon at the Randallstown Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library (page 22), and much more!

I encourage you, the reader, to dive right in and take a look at the great happenings in libraries and in MLA all around Maryland, whether it be at the Annual Conference or outside of it. I hope that you’ll be as amazed and thrilled as I was at the level of activity and enthusiasm around the state.

Annette Haldeman, MLA Crab Editor; Department of Legislative Services Library
The members of the MLA Executive Board and Advisory Council have heard me place an emphasis on the importance of continuous improvement at each of our meetings over the past year. To act upon this, we’ve set aside time at the end of each meeting in the form of a plus/delta to reflect on what we did well (the “plus”) and areas that could be improved in the future (the “delta”). My hope is that this has helped all of us learn how to maximize the time we have together and between meetings. As our MLA fiscal year 2018-2019 comes to a close, I can’t resist also using this as an opportunity to reflect on what I’ve personally learned from this special opportunity to serve MLA, and reflect on ten insights that I’ve gained in this time.

There is great value in mentors, both formal and informal…

These individuals provide advice and allow others to learn from their example. I am incredibly grateful for the formal working relationships that I’ve developed with my supervisors and colleagues at Baltimore County Public Library (Cockeysville, Towson, Woodlawn, & Information Services), Western Maryland Regional Library, Harford County Public Library, and Carroll County Public Library. Equally important are those individuals I’ve met through professional and volunteer work. Their advice and guidance has helped me focus in ways that I doubt I would have otherwise (Do any of you remember the Enneagram? The 7?). Their guidance, each in their own way, has helped me concentrate on accomplishing work that’s meaningful to my library, community, and profession. I’ve been able to rely on some of these individuals over this past year. Thank you!

It is incredibly important for each of us to have dedicated opportunities to develop our leadership skills.

On April 10th, I was able to attend the most recent Director’s University training, “Overbooked: Prioritization in the Age of Agility.” Though each of us can read articles and books on leadership topics on our own, I find that it’s so much more relevant when I can also gain from the experiences of others in a classroom setting. The availability of this particular training, along with the Nettie B. Taylor Maryland Library Leadership Institute and Everyone Leads, emphasize to me the importance of the close working relationship that MLA has in place with Maryland State Library. Each of these valuable leadership programs is only possible thanks to the support of MSL and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

We have an incredibly strong Maryland library ecosystem.

Our healthy relationships with our Maryland State Library, State Library Resource Center, and reciprocal associations, including the Maryland Association of School Librarians and Citizens for Maryland Libraries, truly set us apart from other states. Beyond our own borders, we also benefit from our close partnership with the Delaware Library Association. Having now attended the “Chapter Leaders Forum” at each of the ALA Midwinter and ALA Annual Conferences, I can see that our situation in Maryland is indeed very special. Our current arrangements and relationships came as a result of the hard work and accomplishments of many people across the Maryland library community over time.

Joseph Thompson, 2018-2019 MLA President
Director of Public Services, Carroll County Public Library
We have an incredibly strong state association.

I’ve realized that some state associations are operating with only volunteers and no staff. We are very lucky to have dedicated MLA staff with expertise in leading professional associations. Thank you, Margaret, Kate, and Tina for handling all of the important work that often happens behind the scenes so that the rest of us volunteers don’t have to.

Our joint conference with Delaware is in the top tier of state library association conferences offered across the country.

Our Conference Committee, staff, and volunteers did an incredible job organizing a 2019 conference that the attendees overwhelmingly found to be of value to their learning needs and interests. It was truly awesome! The programs were informative, thought-provoking, and fun. I especially appreciate the support from the libraries around Maryland who allowed their staff to participate in the work of planning the conference, where they had the opportunity to learn skills beyond the scope of the program content. This is a good place to also recognize my friend and colleague Cathay Keough for her years of service to the Maryland and Delaware library communities, including conference planning. She has taken a new job outside of the Mid-Atlantic, but her contributions will be felt here for years to come.

We have incredible volunteers.

A great sign of the success of a membership association is the degree of engagement demonstrated by its member volunteers. Our volunteers across the MLA divisions, panels, interest groups, and committees truly understand how to commit to accomplishing meaningful work and how to have fun doing it.

We need to make our association easier to understand for new members.

This isn’t only a challenge for MLA, but for all associations. How can new members and potential new members see where they can become involved and contribute to something specific and meaningful? Associations are seeing that this is the leading reason for many individuals to join and sustain their memberships. I’m grateful to the members of our New Members Interest Group for beginning new efforts in this area over the past year, including the Getting to Know MLA web meetups, as well as our Marketing Committee’s I Am MLA initiative, which has been displayed at the MASL, MLA/DLA, and ALA Annual Conferences. We can certainly do more in this area, and I’m excited to see what comes from the efforts of our new Membership Committee in 2019-2020.

Library advocacy works.

We have seen the results of this firsthand. Maryland library supporters understand the importance of communicating the impact and telling the stories that allow decision-makers to understand the value of strong libraries in their communities. At the national level, Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) funds have been preserved for two years, and progress is being made to do the same in this third year. However, the work is far from over, and each one of us will be needed to ensure that this success continues. At the state level, we are seeing that a decade of advocacy work is now paying off. Since legislation was passed in the 2017 session in Annapolis, we have seen the establishment of an independent and empowered Maryland State Library Agency that is better positioned to provide leadership and support for the Maryland library community.

It really helps to have a good plan.

Thankfully we have one. Our 2018-2020 Strategic Plan continues to provide us the direction we need to focus our efforts in this middle year of the plan. It also provided the broad framework for the development of our Annual Goals for 2018-2019 that were endorsed by the Executive Board a year ago. Now is a good opportunity to briefly reflect on what we’ve done to accomplish these goals since last July…

We will ensure that the 2018-2020 MLA Strategic Plan remains the focus of our planning activities in this middle year of the 3-year plan and will continue to work toward achieving our Mission: The Maryland Library Association builds and promotes a strong, engaged, knowledgeable, diverse and inclusive library community to advance the transformational impact of Maryland’s library staff and libraries.

Our unit leaders complete activity reports every-other month that are shared with the Executive Board and Advisory Council. Our work plans and these reports specifically call on each of us to connect our activity to the plan. This has helped us to make sure that the Strategic Plan is front-and-center in our work, and not a document that sits on a shelf collecting dust.

We will ensure the growth of our diverse and inclusive leadership, which will specifically support Goal 4 of our Strategic Plan, to foster “an inclusive organizational culture, representing a growing and increasingly diverse organization, and prepare members for leadership opportunities.”
Leadership opportunities continued to grow this year, very much due to the strong partnership and training opportunities developed with support from the Maryland State Library. Focused efforts have been initiated in the area of EDI with the establishment of MLA’s Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Task Force. Three meetings have taken place so far, and I’m looking forward to seeing what recommendations emerge in the coming year.

We will ensure that member recruitment and retention is a focus of every MLA activity, which will connect to Goal 3 of our Strategic Plan, to make sure that “the library community is well-informed about MLA and the opportunities and value it provides.” We will grow membership by 5% between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

Though we have seen conference attendance increase, we haven’t seen a corresponding increase in membership. Membership is strong and stable, but not growing. During this year we created two separate committees, a “Marketing, Communications, and Social Media Committee” and a “Membership Recruitment and Retention Committee,” each with its own charge and purpose. They will each begin their work starting in July 2019. We also saw the launch of our Branding Task Force, which will be looking out how our MLA brand is recognized and offer recommendations if work to modify our brand identity is needed. The foundation has been established for future growth and improvement.

We will ensure that library advocacy is a focus of attention across all of MLA, which will specifically support Goal 2 of our Strategic Plan, to foster and promote “highly effective advocacy for the Maryland library community, conveying the needs, principles, and value of libraries.” All divisions, committees, panels, and interest groups will support library advocacy.

Hopefully you had the chance to read the Interview with Ashley Rogers & Zeke White of MLA’s Library Advocacy Interest Group in the Spring 2019 issue of The Crab. If not, see https://www.mdlib.org/files/docs/crab/spring19.pdf. Their efforts have served as a focal point for MLA’s work to ensure that the knowledge of how to serve as effective library advocates is expanded and sustained across the next generation of library supporters.

We will work to advance Goal 1 of our Strategic Plan, to “…empower members to successfully address pivotal challenges and opportunities for the Maryland library community.” All divisions, committees, panels, and interest groups will support a future-ready library community.

A key area in this work has been the creation of the Future of Libraries Interest Group, which has quickly established itself as an active forum for discussions on the trends that are impacting libraries and areas where libraries may be able to take advantage of these trends for the benefit of our library communities.

It really helps to have a good team.

I just can’t sufficiently express my appreciation to those individuals who have dedicated their time, energy, and expertise to their MLA leadership roles and now step down from the Steering Committee. Denise Davis has served for three years as Vice President/President/Past President and Patty Sundberg for four as Treasurer. The association is stronger thanks to your dedication and hard work. As a side note, Denise will be remaining on the MLA Executive Board for a fourth year, now as chair of our Nominations Committee. Want to run for something? Talk to Denise. Thanks also to Tiffany Sutherland, who now passes Conference Committee chair responsibilities on to Naomi Keppler. Tiff, I continue to be impressed at just how good you are at keeping the tone light while effectively running a meeting. You’re a great example for all of us. Thank you to all of the members of the 2018-2019 MLA Executive Board and Advisory Council.

Lastly, I want to thank all of our members across the association. I encourage each you to get involved in MLA’s work if you’re not already. Visit a meeting or discussion, whether it’s online or in-person. Register for a program. Talk to a member and learn what gives them their energy.

I also want to express my deep appreciation and best wishes to my CCPL colleague, Andrea Berstler, as she steps up to serve as MLA President. I know that it will be a great year ahead!

Have a great summer everyone!

—Joe
Harford County Public Library Receives first Excellence in Marketing Award from the Maryland Library Association

‘Come In, We’re Awesome’ campaign competed against 31 entrants from around the state

Leslie Greenly Smith, Harford County Public Library

Harford County Public Library received the first Excellence in Marketing Award from the Maryland Library Association at its annual conference. The award was for the library’s “Come In, We’re Awesome” campaign, and was selected for top honors among 32 entries submitted by public and academic libraries from across Maryland.

The goal of the “Come In, We’re Awesome” campaign was to make Harford County residents aware of the many services and products offered by the library and to encourage them to visit the library either in person or online. Submitted designs utilizing the “Come In, We’re Awesome” campaign were an annual report, tote bag, advertisement, mobile-device charger and a wrap on the library’s delivery truck.

“What an incredible honor it is for our marketing team, under the direction of Marketing and Communications Administrator Leslie Greenly Smith to receive the first-ever Excellence in Marketing Award from the Maryland Library Association,” said Mary Hastler, CEO. “The team does quality work every single day on projects that help our customers learn more about Harford County Public Library and the many resources and programs we offer. I am super proud of them, and thank the Maryland Library Association for recognizing their excellent work.”

Five experts in marketing and/or design from around the state judged the entries. Each submission was judged on four criteria: product originality, measurable results, quality of the campaign and campaign design. Additional points were given for audience appeal, presentation of information in a clear and informative way, attractive appearance, appropriateness of design/graphics/photos and uniqueness of format.

The Excellence in Marketing Award was established to recognize the talent of communications and marketing professionals within Maryland libraries and to share ideas, learn from peers and validate the importance of library marketing.

The “Come In, We’re Awesome” campaign was honored last summer by the New York City-based magazine, Graphic Design USA, with its American Inhouse Design Award™.

In addition, the library’s Choose Civility Harford County campaign was recognized in the fall with an American Graphic Design Awards™ for creative use of stock imagery by Graphic Design USA.

Harford County Public Library operates 11 branches located throughout Harford County. More than 1.6 million visitors use library services and resources each year. In 2018 Harford County Public Library was named one of America’s Star Libraries for the eighth time by Library Journal. For more information, visit HCPLonline.org.
Exploring Hot Genres with MLA’s Reader’s Advisory Interest Group

Crystal L Tracy; Technical Services Clerk, Southern Maryland Regional Library Association

On Thursday, May 30, 2019, MLA’s Reader’s Advisory Interest Group (RAIG) hosted its first major stand-alone program since the group was reactivated. “Exploring Hot Genres: Afrofuturism, #MeToo, Up-lit, and Urban Fiction” was held at the Laurel Branch Library in Prince George’s County. Monica McAbee, Meg Faller, Lynn Harlan, Allison Charles, and Amy Jenkins all presented. About 20 library staff attended.

Meg and Lynn presented on Afrofuturism and included movie and music suggestions from the genre along with their book title suggestions. Monica presented on the types of urban fiction available, not only on general urban fiction, but also specifically urban Christian fiction and urban erotica. Meg presented on books that dealt with issues from the #MeToo movement. And Amy and Allison presented on Up-lit, also known as uplifting reads. All presenters discussed the overall genre as well as suggesting read-alikes. PowerPoint slides from the presentations are available upon request (email ctracy@smrla.org).

The second half of the presentation was discussion of each of the four books selected as exemplars for one of the featured genres. The presenters and attendees discussed Bindi (Afrofuturism), Best Laid Plans (urban fiction), Too Fat, Too Slutty, Too Loud (#MeToo), and Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine (up-lit), and shared suggestions for read-alike titles, as well as suggestions for how to best share these titles and genres with patrons.

Feedback in person and via evaluations has been positive. Attendees said that they would be able to use what they learned for Reader’s Advisory when they are working the front desk, as well as when planning displays, and that they found especially helpful the lists of reading ideas that were distributed during the program. They liked the inclusion of “learning from each other” instead of solely being presented to. They also praised the LAIG presenters as “animated and engaging,” “well-read,” and “strong, well-prepared speakers.” Everyone also appreciated the snacks and Laurel Branch Library’s comfortable facilities.

RAIG has already gotten requests for more presentations like this, especially on other topics and/or genres of Reader’s Advisory, as well as hands-on advice on how to do Reader’s Advisory reference interviews. If you have specific ideas or requests for Reader’s Advisory topics for presentations you would like to hear, or if you are interested in joining us in planning and offering Reader’s Advisory programs and resources throughout the year, RAIG would love to hear from you! Come talk about books with RAIG!

Harford County Public Library’s Mary Hastler Honored as an Influential Marylander for the Second Time

Erin McLaughlin, The Daily Record

Harford County Public Library CEO Mary Hastler received one of The Daily Record’s 2019 Influential Marylander awards at a reception and dinner the evening of March 28 at The Grand Lodge of Maryland in Hunt Valley. It was the second time Hastler received the honor.

Editors of The Daily Record selected 53 Marylanders for their significant contributions to their respective fields and for their leadership in Maryland in the following areas: civic leadership, communications, education, finance, freestyle, general business, health care, law, philanthropy, real estate and technology. Elected officials are not eligible for this award because they are by nature influential.

“It is such an honor to be recognized as an Influential Marylander,” said Hastler. “Every day my goal is to provide the library’s customers and the community with the best possible experience, whether it be with books, technology, activities or programs. I am so humbled to receive this award because they are by nature influential.

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The Daily Record launched Influential Marylanders in 2007 to recognize those who are leaving a mark on the community throughout the state.

“Influential Marylanders shape and enrich the communities in which they live and work. They know how to get things done,” said Suzanne Fischer-Huettner.
publisher of *The Daily Record*.

“They demonstrate their influence in the community every day. The Daily Record is pleased to call them Influential Marylanders.”

**MLA @ ALA!**

**ALA Rally in the Conference Exhibit Hall. Maryland is front and center!**
Maryland Library Association

Al Martin is being recognized for his work to establish the Maryland State Library Agency and the Maryland State Library Board, as well as on the board of Citizens for Maryland Libraries and the Washington County Free Library. Congratulations, all.

(Cheers and applause)
Demystifying Advocacy

Jackie Cassidy, Harford County Public Library

MLA’s Library Advocacy Interest Group (LAIG) is demystifying advocacy for Maryland libraries by hosting free Brown Bag Discussions. Formed in 2017, LAIG focuses on observing, assisting and learning about library advocacy at the federal, state and local levels. The term advocacy is multi-faceted and carries a lot of meaning.

When I started my journey as a member of LAIG, I was not sure where I fit in. Is advocacy truly for everyone? The Brown Bag Discussion sessions offered by LAIG were integral in developing my role as an everyday library advocate. They provided relaxed learning and networking sessions for library workers at all levels, exploring different facets of advocacy. Let me share some of my journey…

Joe Thompson, MLA President, shares the ins and outs of navigating Maryland Library Day in Annapolis.
What is your story?

The featured presenter for the first Brown Bag Discussion this year was Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. She spoke about how to craft your personal elevator speech as a tool for sharing unique stories of library value and impact. In crafting your elevator speech, you have 30 seconds to awe the person next to you. Of the ten tips shared, one that stood out to me was tailoring your story to your particular audience and environment. Elevator speeches take practice, and summer is the perfect time to share your stories. Get started with Michelle Golden’s TEDx Talk, “The Elevator Speech Is Out of Order.”

How’d they do that?

Carrie Willson, Executive Director of Calvert Library, shared her expertise of the Legislative Panel and further demystified advocacy at the next Brown Bag Session. Carrie helped paint the picture of successful advocacy as an engaged community and as a library staff that is knowledgeable about the issues. Advocacy is strategic, ensuring that the right message gets to the right people at the right time. This Brown Bag Session helped grow my confidence in taking action on library issues. Now, when I get that email urging us all to connect with a legislator about an important library issue, I make the call.

Where were you on February 5th?

Joe Thompson and Andrea Berstler, MLA President and MLA Vice President/President-Elect, let us all know what to expect for Maryland Library Legislative Day in Annapolis. Not only did we find out the best place to eat (Galway Bay Irish Restaurant), but we learned about the history of “Leg Day” and how best to prepare. The information they shared was extremely valuable, especially for first-time attendees. Session participants dived into the common message of the year, focusing on The E’s of Libraries and reviewing a schedule for the day’s many activities. LAIG helped prepare materials for the briefing packets on The E’s of Libraries and created a slideshow for the Maryland Library Day Reception.

What issues?

LAIG’s last Brown Bag Session of the year provided participants with an overview of the MLA Intellectual Freedom Panel (IFP). Julie Ranelli and Sara Brown shared information and resources on current issues surrounding access, censorship, and privacy. IFP is much more than banned books. They discussed real responses from Maryland libraries to relevant topics like drag queen storytime, 3D printed guns and online privacy for teens. Here’s my big takeaway—there’s no doubt that we’re going to offend someone at some point, but IFP is here to stand with us and provide support that upholds library values.

What’s next?

I look forward to continuing the advocacy work I’ve started, and the Library Advocacy Interest Group is working on the Brown Bag lineup for the upcoming year. Please check out the Marylib listserv for more information. Hope to see you at our next session!
The Maryland State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (LBPH) partnered with FutureMakers and the Maryland Rural Council to help libraries in rural areas provide accessible science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) activities to children with visual impairments. Between February and June of 2019, the program partnered with 23 libraries across five rural regions/counties, including Cecil County, Frederick, Eastern Shore, Western Maryland, Anne Arundel County, and Southern Maryland.

These partner libraries helped create programs that engaged children, families and caregivers with and without disabilities, and ultimately increased engagement of youth who are blind, have low vision or who have limited mobility due to physical impairment. Additionally, professional development training occurred in each area for public librarians to attend and learn about the accessible curricula.

The Maryland State Library (MSL) believes that bringing STEAM activities to public libraries is vital, especially those that promote diversity and inclusion. Wynette Curtis from Project READ in Wicomico Public Libraries has stated, “Thank you so much for sending Coach Sam to do a program for us today! The adult learners loved the program and were able to actually make something that they could see work. Coach Sam had a wonderful rapport with the adult learners, and she was very patient and helpful. It was a wonderful event!”

Within the STEAM program, LBPH and FutureMakers created five accessible units. The units consisted of participants creating wiggling robots, building straw structures and creating beeping circuits. The units also included components focused on exploring kinetic energy and sound. With the help of pre- and post-assessments, all curricula and staff training materials will be distributed to the broader community of Maryland youth librarians and library administrators, extending the impact of accessible STEAM programs statewide.

The Rural Maryland Council’s Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) provided much needed financial support to launch this initiative. The Rural Maryland Council is an independent state agency and federally designated...
State Rural Development Council under the USDA’s National Rural Development Partnership. Its mission is to bring together federal, state, county, and municipal government officials with representatives from both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations to identify challenges unique to rural communities in Maryland and craft public policy, programs, and regulations to support and sustain rural communities. For more information, go to https://rural.maryland.gov/maerdaf_rmpif/

FutureMakers is a not-for-profit organization that creates mobile makerspaces for PK-8 students who love to learn by building and inventing with real tools and creative technologies. Their team of visiting expert-coaches work with students and educators to enhance social, emotional and academic skills while deepening the connection between educators and caregivers with children who have a passion for creative and scientific expression. For more information, visit http://www.kidsmakethingsbetter.com

The Maryland State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of the Maryland State Library, provides accessible and comprehensive library services to Marylanders with vision, physical, or organic impairments that prevent them from reading standard print. For more information: www.lbph.maryland.gov

Jodi Akers, Staff Development Coordinator from Western Maryland, and another librarian trying out the Straw Structure City accessible STEAM activity at the Accessible STEAM Professional Workshop for librarians in Western Maryland at the South Cumberland Library on March 12th.
Robots in Libraries: Meet Pepper!
Carroll County Public Library (CCPL) is exploring the future of robots in libraries with Pepper, a four foot tall social humanoid robot. CCPL is using Pepper as a teaching tool to both introduce the community to practical applications for robots and artificial intelligence (AI) as well as an engaging way to teach coding to youth and adults. We are beginning to see robots introduced in a variety of public spaces such as our local grocery stores, and the library’s goal is to support a broader understanding of positive interactions with robots, their strengths, current limitations, and how the underlying technologies work.

Pepper visited all six CCPL branches in April for Meet Pepper demos and interacted with 400 community members of all ages in a variety of ways including reading the popular children’s story *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons*, playing a Pepper (Simon) Says game, and having basic conversations. These visits were also used to gather ideas from the library’s customers on how they envision robots being used in a public library environment. Customers came up with many ideas for Pepper to learn, including reading and acting out nursery rhymes, playing games such as Red Light Green Light, acting as a greeter, highlighting books or upcoming programs and teaching other languages.

CCPL is also using Pepper to teach coding to youth and adults using Choregraphe—a drag and drop interface—to create applications to run on Pepper. There were two Robo Dojo: Code with Pepper programs in May, with 10 participants at each, where participants learned how to create speech-based interactions, add behaviors such as dancing, and add a tablet image. More coding programs are scheduled for the summer and fall.

The community response to Pepper has been overwhelmingly positive, though we did have some curious but hesitant observers who were not initially comfortable interacting with a robot. One youth participant was initially hesitant to enter the room with Pepper, then after 10 minutes of watching, he came in to write a program with Choregraphe with his parents. By the end of the program he ran his program on Pepper, asked Pepper many of the basic questions, and asked to have his picture taken with Pepper. After Pepper visited a branch storytime, many of the kids used the “create with shapes” craft to design their very own robot.

Pepper is not here to replace library staff but to support CCPL’s goal to connect the community to the potential of current and emerging technologies. Pepper was funded through a Library Services and Technology Act Grant from the Maryland State Library and Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Bob Kuntz & Jen Bishop, Carroll County Public Library
Kindergarten Visit with Pepper at the CCPL Eldersburg Branch.
Robo Dojo Program at the CCPL Westminster Branch.
Robo Dojo Program at the CCPL Westminster Branch.
Randallstown Branch Hosts Annual Community Service Providers’ Luncheon

Sarah Smith, Baltimore County Public Library

On May 6, the Randallstown Branch of Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) hosted its fourth annual community service providers’ luncheon. This annual spring event brings together representatives from local non-profits, schools and government agencies.

This year’s event featured about 30 representatives from a variety of agencies. Attendees included principals of Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), members of the Baltimore County Health Department’s Harm Reduction program, as well as representatives from a local housing non-profit— the conflict resolution center— and the regional Veteran’s Administration office.

This event aligns with BCPL’s strategic plan; one prong of which aims to “establish the library’s role as convener, collaborator, and village green.” BCPL Director Paula Miller regularly discusses the public library’s role as connector and community convener. Connections frequently happen between individuals and resources, but they can also take place between organizations.

The branch team—Tammy Rhue, Cori Jacobs, Jessica Letizia, Stephen Marley and Sarah Smith— began planning the luncheon in January. This year’s event included time for networking and eating, a presentation highlighting library resources and a small group discussion activity. Here are a few things to consider if you are thinking about hosting a similar event.

Consider recent partners

Once the team started brainstorming about community partners they had worked with before, the list quickly became overwhelming. The team then started a little smaller and limited its list to groups it had worked with in the last year. Once that was complete, the team then asked who else it would like to have as part of the discussion. This list included organizations the team knew about, groups that were partnering with other library branches, as well as groups with whom the library had no affiliation but simply wanted to learn more about. These criteria allowed the team to expand its list gradually and deliberately.

Be aware of your ecosystem

Randallstown has an active business association. The branch team limited its luncheon guests to organizations operating in the non-profit or government areas. By doing so, a unique opportunity was provided to non-commercial groups who do not have an existing outlet for networking.

The personal touch

Personal invitations take extra time, but they are worth it. For agencies that the branch had not worked with before, the invitation explained where the library got the person’s contact information, or how much the library appreciated the group’s partnership with BCPL. Some agencies could not send a representative but indicated that they were interested in partnering in the future. A bulk invitation seems easier, but taking the time to personalize your invitations now reaps benefits later.

Planning timeline

The team could have pulled the event together in a shorter timeframe, but starting three months out gave the team plenty of time to compile a guest list, create an agenda, and send out invitations. Keep a detailed track of who you invite and who responds so that you are sending reminders and follow-ups to the correct people. The representative you invited might not be the person who is able to attend.

Highlight the library

You may be excited to give guests time to network but spotlighting the work you are doing is critical. During this year’s event, Tammy let everyone know about new and non-traditional collections, Steve promoted upcoming programs, and Cori highlighted summer activities.

Hosting the event in the late spring allowed the library to get face time with schools before their end-of-year events took place. There was also the added advantage of boosting publicity for the library’s peak season, since the library offers the most programs during the summer.

Get them talking

Within their tables, Jessica had attendees work on a small-group discussion activity. Each table had a different question that attendees discussed, jotted down ideas on post-it notes (which were displayed on larger sheets) and then reported to the larger group. The focus was on topics that would apply to all kinds of organizations.
questions included:

- What does the future Randallstown look like?
- What was your organization’s biggest accomplishment this year?
- What is your organization’s biggest need/challenge?
- Talk about the people that you serve.

In a previous session, the team asked attendees to provide a two minute introduction to the organization that they represented. People who are excited about their organizations can quickly elaborate and unintentionally go over time limits. Be sure to build in networking time where attendees can mingle with each other. The small group discussion activity provides time for attendees to get to know one another while still allowing the program to move along.

**Refreshments**

The team purchased several sandwich platters from a local grocery store and bought all other sides, desserts, and supplies from Wal-Mart. Boxed lunches are also an option, but they are more expensive per person.

If you are working to keep costs to a minimum, brown-bag is also an option. In the exit surveys, several guests thought having the event more often would be helpful because so much changes within organizations over the course of a year. Presenting a fall event as a brown-bag would help keep costs down while keeping the conversation going.

**Be flexible**

Be prepared for last-minute changes. One year, the keynote speaker cancelled the morning of the event. This year, our local councilman stopped by and had an informal question and answer session with guests during the time we had scheduled for networking which was unexpected and excellent! The team was flexible enough to regroup and move to the next planned part of the agenda.

This event is incredibly rewarding to both library staff and the organizations involved. The public library excels at connecting people and we can have the same impact with groups serving our communities.
Mary Amato Wins William G. Wilson Maryland Author Award

Lisa Kenyon, Enoch Pratt Free Library

On May 2, local author Mary Amato received the 2019 William G. Wilson Maryland Author Award at the MLA & DLA Annual Conference in Cambridge, Maryland. This award is given annually by the Maryland Library Association to a Maryland author in one of four rotating genres: adult fiction, youth literature, poetry and nonfiction. Ms. Amato was honored this year for her work in children’s literature.

In addition to writing young adult books, Ms. Amato is an author of poetry, plays, and songs. Her books have won numerous awards, including The Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators National Magazine Writing Award and Nonfiction Book Grant, the Beehive Book Award, the Buckeye Children’s Book Award, and the Arizona Young Readers Award. She is also the founder of a number of monthly gatherings for artists for a variety of artists such as The HIVE, The Brown Bag for Creatives, and the Silver Spring Town Center, Inc. Arts Salon. She is also the co-founder of the Firefly Shadow Theatre. In addition, Ms. Amato works with numerous non-profits in Maryland and teaches workshops on writing and the creative process. She also gives ukulele lessons.

Starting with a song written just for the award luncheon, Ms. Amato shared that when she was a child she knew every inch of her public library where her “friends in fiction” would put images in her head. Her writing career started at the age of seven, when her mother handed her a notebook to start a journal. Ms. Amato then mentioned that Harriet the Spy was her favorite book as a child because Harriet was a “terrific journal keeper.” She discussed the importance of humor in books, even serious books, and how her early novels were rejected for being humorless. She also discussed how she uses the ukulele when doing children’s programs and how to write short songs using well known tunes with new words. She closed her remarks by inviting the audience to join her in a song to the tune of “Lean on Me,” which she called “We are Librarians.”

After the luncheon, Ms. Amato signed copies of her books and chatted with many of the attendees. She also led an afternoon program where she used examples of her works and those of other children’s authors to show how to incorporate themes and songs into programs for children. Passing out several of her own ukuleles, Ms. Amato discussed how useful the instrument can be not only for singing with children, but also how easy they are for children to learn to play and how suited they are for little hands.

As part of Ms. Amato’s lively and fun program, attendees worked together to re-write “Row, Row Your Boat” as a library based song. The group then sang their creation “Read, Read, Read Your Book” while accompanying themselves on the ukuleles.
My Library
Words and music by Mary Amato
Written for the Maryland Library Association on May 2, 2019
In gratitude for receiving the William G. Wilson Maryland Author Award
When I was a child the world outside my house seemed full of danger.
Places I felt truly safe I counted on two fingers.
Friends’ homes didn’t count ’cause they had scary dogs and older brothers.
School had bullies, pressures, rivals, tests of one sort or another.
My house was one place I felt safe. Then there was my library.
The children’s room was on the left, welcoming and bright.
How strange and wonderful that I could roam or read in chairs my size.
I would never be afraid or lonely in my library
surrounded by my friends in fiction, heroes in biographies.
Poems wafting from the shelves made me want to sing
or put an image in my head that I had never thought to think.
In a book I’d meet someone whose life was not like mine,
and yet I’d find that we were kindred spirits. That would blow my mind.
When I was twelve I’d meet somebody else whose mother died.
That character would voice the grief that I’d been taught to hide.
I’d hear these words: you’ll be all right. I’d read them there in black and white.
And when I had two children of my own, we’d go
and check out the same train book eight times in a row.
Yes, they were obsessed with trains and then with bugs and dinosaurs.
In books, we could learn all the facts that there were to know.
Now when I go through those doors no matter if it’s one in New York
or in rural Oklahoma I feel my soul lift to see the patrons from all walks of life. I feel like everything is going to
be all right because this is the world I want to share,
a world where there’s a place for free that feeds our minds: the library.
When I was a child and it was time to go I’d be okay
because I’d know that I could borrow all that my arms could hold.

Lean on Us: We are Librarians
(To the tune of “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers)
New words by Mary Amato for MLA & DLA 2019
Sometimes in your life you’ll need to learn. There’s a place where you can.
We’re right up the road and online, too. We are librarians.
Lean on us for inspiration or help with your research. You know we understand.
And make sure to fund us so we can serve. We are librarians.
We’ve got books and tech. Resources, too. We’ve got a lot to lend.
Clubs, workshops, and more for every age. Get your card. Be a friend.
Lean on us for inspiration or help with your research. You know we understand.
And make sure to fund us so we can serve. We are librarians.

The 2019 Maryland Author Award Committee: Elizabeth Hulett and Nadine Rosendale (co-chairs), Lisa Kenyon, Carrie Sanders, Amanda Spino, and Bethany Vangrin.
The MLA & DLA 2019 Conference, themed “What If?,” was held on May 1-3, 2019. Enjoy these photos from what proved to be another outstanding annual conference!
Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference!
FEATURES: Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference

Grants Workshop

Grants Program

What is Maryland Humanities?

- Non-profit
- Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities

MLA & DLA JOINT LIBRARY CONFERENCE

What if... You could write a winning grant application?

Wednesday, May 1, 2019
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
   - Marilyn Hatz, Program Officer, Grants & Strategic Partnerships
   - Erin Samarasinghe, Grants Officer

2. Maryland Humanities Overview
   - Erin Samarasinghe, Grants Officer

3. Tips and Answers
   - Erin and Marilyn

FREE/BATHROOM BREAK/STRETCH

4. General Grant Writing Tips you can really use – regardless of where you’re applying
   - Erin and Marilyn

5. General Questions & Answers Session, Prize Giveaway

6. Situation and Networking

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!
FEATURES: Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference
FEATURES: Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference

The Crab • Summer, 2018

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FEATURES: Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference
You may shoot me
with your words.
You may cut
me with your
eyes,
You may kill
me with your
hatefulness,
and for her, that meant
be your
own person,
be independent,
be brave.

MY MOTHER
told me to be a
Lady.

Little Thing
Why?

Process art is an open ended, play-based experience. It allows participants a space for creative exploration and innovation. There is no final intended product. There is no wrong way to create process art.

Benefits for Preschoolers

Social Development: Children can make friends and participate in group activities.

Emotional Development: Process art allows children to express their feelings and emotions through art.

Language and Literacy: Talking about the materials and processes children are using during process art can help them develop their language skills.

Gigantic Motor Skills: Process art can help children develop their fine and gross motor skills.

Physical Activity: Process art can be a fun and active way for children to engage in physical activity.

Advantages for Library Staff

Materials to get you started

Examples

Tips

What's the difference?

Process Art: Focus on the process, not the product. Children are encouraged to explore and experiment with materials and techniques.

What? Process Art is a hands-on, child-centered approach to art that emphasizes the process of creating art over the finished product.

How? Process art is a hands-on, child-centered approach to art that emphasizes the process of creating art over the finished product.

Process Art at the Library

Choose a theme for your process art activity. This could be a specific type of art, such as collage, or a more general theme, such as nature. Create a list of materials that will be available for children to use.

Process Art Tips

- Keep materials accessible and easy to use.
- Encourage children to explore and experiment with different materials.
- Allow children to work at their own pace.
- Provide guidance and support as needed.
- Celebrate children's creations with a display or photo gallery.

Be part of the Art

Add your personal touch to our community process art and take back later to decorate your space!

Reaction to Children's Artwork

Children's artwork is a reflection of their unique experiences, emotions, and creativity. It is important to respect and value these expressions.

Favorite things to make art with

- Paper
- Glue
- Paint
- Scissors
- Crayons
- Colored pencils
- Markers
- Construction paper
- Elmer's
- Tape
- Tissue paper
- Constru...
Humor and Heart
Twitter @maryamato
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FEATURES: Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference
LEAVE A NOTE!

HCPL Rocks!

I love my library
FEATURES: Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference
*SLAP*

Get your things out of this hotel before I throw them into the street. Get out before I kill you.
Yes, I did it. I killed Yvette. I hated her so much, it...it...flames, on the side of my face, breathing...breathless...heaving...heaving...
Get your things out of this house right now before I throw them into the street and you with them. Get out before I kill you.
Features: Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference
FEATURES: Scenes from the MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference
GLA inspires you to:

- Examine your personal goals and growth
- Conquer fears
- Build confidence
- Think deeper about the world around you
- Go out and fight injustice all around the world
Our Unbreakable Vow
Here’s what we’re doing to change the world.

OUR JOURNEYS

GENDER EQUALITY
We will fight for equality and stand in solidarity with non-gender people.

GENDER REVEAL
We will promote menstruation, non-binary feminism, and fights for inclusivity toward gender neutrality in all fronts.

YOUTH LITERACY
We will work to expand the political and social capital of young people.

MEDIA RIGHTS
We will fight against censorship and working to dismantle institutionalized censorship and social behaviors.

EDUCATION & LIBRARIES
We will work to make quality education accessible to all and advocate for public libraries.

MEDIA REFORM
We will continue to support and promote media literacy and work actively to increase the media literacy of our membership, and support free press and fact-based journalism.

CLIMATE CHANGE
Climate change and its impacts are unprecedented. We will support regulatory, improved communication, and other initiatives as propelled by the scientific effects.
Keynote Speakers: Jessamyn West

PRESENT THE WORLD, AND YOUR DREAM WORLD

...and maintain a diverse and force.

...when you are coming from a power and use that power for good.
THE WORDS WE USE MATTER

- Beware of unconscious biases
- Understand microaggressions

Are immigrants as patriotic as the rest of us? | Opinion bit.ly/2qAsmHm
Keynote Speakers: Mary Amato
To the tune of “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers

C F C G
Sometimes in your life you’ll need to learn. There’s a place where you can.
C F C G C
We’re right up the road and online, too. We are librarians.

CHORUS:

C F C G
Lean on us for inspiration or help with your research. You know we understand.
C F C G C
And make sure to fund us so we can serve. We are librarians.

C F C G
We’ve got books and tech. Resources, too. We’ve got a lot to lend.
C F C G C
Clubs, workshops, and more for every age. Get your card. Be a friend.

REPEAT CHORUS

www.maryamato.com
Keynote Speakers: Patrick Lee, Jr.
Welcome to Brawny Academy

Where the woods
Are woodsy

And the burliness
IS BURLY
FEATURES: MLA & DLA Annual Conference Keynote Speakers
Keynote Speakers: Rabia Chaudry
MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference: Awards and Official Business
A Visit with the Vendors

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Bringing you together, even when you’re apart.
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FEATURES: MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference: A Visit with the Vendors

![NIH National Library of Medicine booth at the conference](image)

BECAUSE LIBRARIES ARE PARTNERS IN A HEALTHY COMMUNITY.
FEATURES: MLA & DLA 2019 Annual Conference: A Visit with the Vendors
Saturn is at opposition this month, beckoning to future explorers with its beautiful rings and varied, mysterious moons. The Moon prominently passes Saturn mid-month just in time for the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11!

Saturn was in opposition on July 9, rising in the east as the Sun set in the west. It was visible all night, hovering right above the teapot of Sagittarius. Saturn is not nearly as bright as Jupiter—nearby and close to Scorpius—but both giant planets are easily the brightest objects in their constellations, making them easy to identify. A full Moon scrapes by the ringed planet late in the evening of the 15th through the early morning of the 16th. Some observers in South America will even see the Moon occult, or pass in front of, Saturn. Observe how fast the Moon moves in relation to Saturn throughout the night by recording their positions every half hour or so via sketches or photos.

While observing the Saturn-Moon celestial dance the early morning of the 16th, you can also contemplate the 50th anniversary of the launch of the Apollo 11 mission! On June 16, 1969, Apollo 11 blasted off from Cape Canaveral in Florida on a journey of almost a quarter million miles to our nearest celestial neighbor, a mission made possible by the tremendous power of the Saturn V rocket—still the most powerful rocket ever launched. Just a few days later, on July 20, 1969 at 10:56 pm EDT, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin set foot on the lunar surface and became the first people in history to walk on another world. The astronauts set up equipment including a solar wind sampler, laser ranging retroreflector and seismometer, and gathered up almost 22 kilograms (48 pounds) of precious lunar rocks and soil samples. After spending less than a day on the Moon’s surface, the duo blasted off and returned to the orbiting Columbia Command Module piloted by Michael Collins. Just a few days later on July 24, all three astronauts splashed down safely in the Pacific Ocean. You can follow the timeline of the Apollo 11 mission in greater detail at bit.ly/TimelineApollo11 and dig deep into mission history and science on NASA’s Apollo History Site at bit.ly/ApolloNASA.

Observe the larger details on the Moon with help from this map which also pinpoints the Apollo landing site. Full handout available at bit.ly/MoonHandout.
Have you ever wanted to see the flag on the Moon left behind by the Apollo astronauts? While no telescope on Earth is powerful enough to see any items left behind the landing sites, you can discover how much you can observe with the Flag on the Moon handout at bit.ly/MoonFlag

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 https://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/clubs-and-events.cfm to find local clubs, events, and more!

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Editor’s Note:
The monthly article that used to be produced by NASA Space Place is now produced and distributed by NASA’s Night Sky Network.
Keep up with MLA/ALA events…Share job openings…
Offer weeded items from your collection to others…Ask a question!

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