North of Normal: The Experience at the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) Conference
While many people may get their impressions of Fargo, North Dakota from the 1996 Coen brothers film or the recent TV series based on it, a group of Maryland librarians is happy to report that they had a much more positive experience in this “North of Normal” town at the ARSL conference.

Is there a Skeleton in Your Library?
An amazing dinosaur fossil replica of a *Nanotyrannus* now greets you as you step into the children’s section of the new Laurel Branch Library. This dinosaurskeleton is inlaid in a glass casing in the flooring by Stacy Trenary, owner of Darwin and Wallace: A Nature & Fossil Store (www.DarwinAndWallace.com).

Forums at Randallstown Branch Address Social Justice Issues
This October, the Randallstown (BCPL) Library held its third annual community forum. This year’s forum focused on the impact of mass incarceration on African-American and other minority communities.

Big Science in Small Packages
About 250 miles overhead, a satellite the size of a loaf of bread flies in orbit. It’s one of hundreds of so-called CubeSats—spacecraft that come in relatively inexpensive and compact packages—that have launched over the years. So far, most CubeSats have been commercial satellites, student projects, or technology demonstrations. But MinXSS (“minks”) is NASA’s first CubeSat with a bona fide science mission. Launched in December 2015, MinXSS has been observing the sun in X-rays with unprecedented detail.
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The Maryland General Assembly convened January 11th and is in session for 90 days. The Governor must introduce the budget bill by January 18. Maryland has a projected structural deficit that seems to grow daily. Right now, there is approximately a $500 million gap that has to be closed. What does that mean for Maryland’s libraries?

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Editor’s Note

Another new year is upon us and great things are still happening with Maryland librarians and with Maryland’s libraries! This issue is packed with new experiences and new beginnings. A group of librarians from throughout the state recently attended the Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference, held in Fargo, North Dakota. Read more about each librarian’s experience at the conference and their conference “takeaways,” starting on page 7.

As well, the new Laurel Branch Library in Prince George’s County opened last month. Circulation numbers are up (see page 6 for more details) and a dinosaur skeleton is one of the featured pieces of the new building (find out more about the skeleton on page 14).

Forums at the Randallstown Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library system are engaging library patrons on emerging social justice issues (see page 16 for more information).

These articles and others contained within this issue truly show the vast number of topics and issues in which librarians and libraries can engage their clientele and the community at large. From the countryside to the city, libraries all around Maryland are offering both staff and patrons exciting and new journeys into 2017 and beyond.

Annette Haldeman, MLA Crab Editor
Department of Legislative Services Library
In spite of the hectic time of year and some post-election aftereffects, MLA has been working diligently on updating its Strategic Plan. MLA is committed to the Standards of Excellence awarded by Maryland Nonprofits. A requirement of the Standards is an updated Strategic Plan.

I’ve asked Denise Davis, Vice-President/President Elect of MLA, to lead the process. Working with the Executive Director and the Executive Board, she has developed a streamlined process and begun work on the new plan. First, a survey of members was done and I hope you had a chance to express your thoughts and desires by completing it. The results were tabulated and presented to the Steering Committee. The next step was a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis. A part of upcoming Steering Committee meetings will be devoted to planning so that we will be ready to present the plan for approval in the spring.

Now that the public is recognizing the concept of “fake news,” libraries and library staff are more important than ever. Stanford University did a study of middle-schoolers and found that most couldn’t tell the difference between sponsored content and “real” news. A recent article in American Libraries by Marcus Banks cites a Pew study showing that a majority of Americans get their news through social media. He goes on to say that the good news is that library staff can and will play a vital role in helping to educate consumers in evaluating the news and the importance of information literacy. Maryland libraries are working on information literacy every day in many ways. Here’s an opportunity to show our worth.

ALA’s Midwinter Conference will be held in Atlanta this year, from January 20-24. I’ll be there and the highlight for me will be the Chapter Leaders Forum. This is an all-day meeting on Friday, January 20 and some of the topics are Strategic Planning and Restructuring; Making Meetings Work; and Tips for a Successful Library Advocacy Day.

And that reminds me…. The MLA-DLA Annual Conference is shaping up to be the best ever. MLA Conference Chair Julie Ranelli and the conference committee are planning a 2017 conference with the theme, Charting New Courses Together. Please mark your calendars for May 10 - 12, 2017 and note the new location, Hyatt-Chesapeake, Cambridge, MD. Amazing things happen when we come together in conference to share and grow ideas.

Best wishes for a fruitful and peaceful New Year!
Grand Opening Week at the New Laurel Library

Donna Scott-Martin, Prince George’s County Memorial Library System

The Laurel Branch of the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS), located at 507 7th Street, Laurel, Maryland, enjoyed a robust Grand Opening week (November 28 – December 4, 2016). Customers descended on the newly constructed branch in droves from the first day the doors opened to the public. Circulation checkouts totaled 1,923 and with renewal transactions added, the figure jumps to 2,022. During the first week of opening, circulation for the branch was 8,315, excluding renewals. That makes the Laurel Branch one of the busiest in the county. The opening week breakdown is presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity of Checkouts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>2,762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teens</td>
<td>652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>4,588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (ex. Playaway Launchpads and TV series)</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** 8,315

Unique to the Laurel Branch collection are VOX™ books, which had 64 checkouts opening week. PGCMLS is the first library system in the state of Maryland to offer audio-enabled VOX books for young readers. According to the VOX web site, the adding of audio to print reading increases comprehension by 75%.

Opening week also had a total of 140 attendees at four storytimes and 12 chess club participants. The 53 new computers were also winners with customers. The Library had 1,293 computer users in its first week.

These record numbers for the opening week speak for themselves about the excitement surrounding the opening of this newly constructed branch. The Laurel Branch Library has a dinosaur-themed children’s section with a glass-encased dinosaur fossil replica of a Nanotyrannus in its flooring. In addition to the 53 computers, other features include a computer lab, two meeting rooms, multiple study rooms and WiFi. The new building is nearly double the size of the old one, and has an emergency shelter-in-place area equipped with backup generators. Green features include: roof-mounted solar panels; permeable pavers in the parking lot that filter storm water run-off; two charging stations for electric vehicles; and a living plant wall in the Whisper (quiet study) Room.

“This state-of-the-art new library branch will meet community needs now and into the future,” stated Library Chief Executive Officer Kathleen A. Teaze. Click here to view a video of the Grand Opening ceremonies.

Anne Arundel County Public Library Latino Outreach Program

Sandy Owen. Anne Arundel County Public Library

Anne Arundel County Public Library Latino Outreach (ALO) aims to promote library services to the Latino community, highlight Latino culture and celebrate Anne Arundel County’s diversity.

In recent years, the population of the Latino community in Anne Arundel County has increased considerably. As a result, there is a need for a greater understanding of the Latino experience in America and in Anne Arundel County.

Currently, the Library is reaching out to the Latino community by offering bilingual programs and working in collaboration with bilingual facilitators in the county public schools and other local institutions. As AACPL begins to reach this community, many more Latinos are becoming Library users.

AACPL kicked off ALO with several programs during Hispanic Heritage Month. Programs included a Mexican Fashion Show, Bilingual Storytime, and Hispanic Heritage Celebration, among others.

Please visit [http://www.aacpl.net/alo](http://www.aacpl.net/alo) for further information.
Our Experiences at the Association for Rural and Small Libraries 2016 Conference
While many people may get their impressions of Fargo, North Dakota, from the 1996 Coen brothers film or the recent television series based on that film, this group of Maryland librarians is happy to report that we had a much more positive experience in this “North of Normal” town (although we were frankly very excited to see the original woodchipper from the film at the Visitors Center!). All seven of us were able to have the wonderful experience of attending the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) conference for the first time in late October, thanks to generous scholarships from the Maryland State Department of Education’s Division of Library Development and Services (DLDS). We heard a variety of positive comments from veteran attendees, proclaiming the virtues of this conference (“the best library conference to attend without a doubt” “it’s like one big family,” “the networking opportunities are amazing,” “everyone can relate to your challenges, because we all have similar situations,” etc), so we were excited to be in attendance.

There were approximately 500 attendees at this conference, representing almost every state and even Canada. ARSL makes the conference very affordable — the majority of meals are included with conference registration. This year, there were breakfast and lunch sessions with fabulous keynote speakers, including regional authors Will Weaver, Kent Krueger, and Lorna Landvik. There was an added bonus of opportunities at the meal events to meet new people and share ideas with colleagues nationwide. On Thursday night, a selection of dinner dine-around options were presented to us, this time providing a chance to share ideas, as well as food and drink with those having similar tastes in cuisine!

During the conference, there were so many topical program sessions to choose from that would be appropriate and beneficial to attend, it was sometimes difficult to select from four or five listed within the same time slot. Fortunately, the ARSL organizers wisely offered many of the sessions multiple times, allowing conference goers, with some careful planning, the ability to attend almost everything of interest. Some of our general impressions and takeaways from the conference are highlighted here.
**Tess Carper**

The all-day pre-conference I went to was “Frontline Staff and the Issue of Civility” and a large component of the session was about knowing your personality type. One thing that was very interesting about the mix of personalities of library staff was that certain types of personalities were more common in the library world than in the general population. For example, INFJ (introversion, intuition, feeling, judging) is more common in the librarians—in our group alone, the statistic was 11%. Only 1% of the general population is an INFJ. The afternoon was spent focused on customer service and knowing how to interact with your customers. Other sessions I attended were more focused on technology and teaching customers how to use it. One was “Top Tips for Patron Technology Training,” which focused on empowering yourself to tackle devices or problems you have not encountered before. A large portion of technology training is doing the best you can in the moment, increasing your patience with the customer, and explaining what you are doing as you go along. My two favorite sessions were “Being a 21st Century Librarian” and “Be Your Own Graphic Designer.” Both sessions included lists of resources and explained the pros and cons of each resource. The information I learned in the graphic design session will be useful with in-branch posters as well to our social media team for the system. I can see using resources from the 21st Century Librarian session with both customers and staff. It is hard to keep up-to-date with changing technology, and I feel like I learned some great tips and tricks to cope with it. My only regret is not being able to attend all the sessions!

**Kahla Gubanich**

I manage my library’s makerspace, and was very impressed with the variety of maker and STEM related sessions available at ARSL 2016. Vermont librarians presented their experiences in using a state grant to create a series of maker programs at several libraries and they shared their materials and tips in a two-part, hands-on session. I left the session with fresh ideas that I was able to incorporate into an upcoming “toy hack” program for teens, as well as some new ideas for programs incorporating paper circuits and wearable technology. I also attended a session hosted by StarNet, a new project of the National Center for Interactive Learning (NCIL), which focuses on bringing high-quality science and technology resources to libraries. This session focused on collaborative science activities, including building a lever seesaw, creating a balloon-powered rocket, and a team building activity to determine the fastest way to pass a beanbag around in a circle of people. In true library spirit, all of the presenters at ARSL went above and beyond to share their resources whether through printouts, websites or recommendations for further research. To learn more about the above STEM sessions and to download projects and resources, see: There were many great keynote sessions at the ARSL conference, including this one by local Minnesota author Will Weaver.
Chris Thompson

Of the sessions I attended at this year’s ARSL conference, the one that really caught my attention was entitled “Forget-Me-Not: Connecting with Dementia Patients and Their Caregivers,” presented by Johnna Schultz. Effingham Public Library in Illinois has collaborated with a local non-profit, Effingham Area Alzheimer’s Awareness (EAAA), to create the Forget-Me-Not Resource Center - a special collection directed at caregivers of dementia patients. The Forget-Me-Not materials are purchased by the EAAA, but are cataloged and kept at the library. The materials have a unique shelf location in the non-fiction area and have an identifying spine label. The materials from this collection are exempt from fees or fines and are not checked out to individual library card accounts. Instead, all Forget-Me-Not resources are checked out to a universal card specifically for the collection that is kept at the circulation desk.

This process allows for a record to be kept of which items are circulating and if something is not returned for an extended period, they will reorder the title. The EAAA curates the collection and the library relies on their expertise to research and select the best materials available. In addition to books and media, the collection includes circulating “Reminiscence Kits.” These boxes contain items that stimulate different senses to help dementia patients recall particular memories. For instance, the “Cooking Kit” contains fragrant spices, recipes, and kitchen utensils. The idea is that when patients see and interact with these items, it might bring back memories of a time when they cooked or helped in the kitchen. Additionally, library programming has stemmed from the collection and Effingham Public regularly hosts events under the Forget-Me-Not banner. These events range from education lectures to interactive sessions for patients and caregivers to simple social gatherings that allow caregivers to take a break while knowing that their loved ones are in a secure setting.

Crystal Adkins

There were so many great classes at ARSL and I enjoyed each one that I attended. However, I think my favorite one had to be the two-part session, “Hack It, Sew It, Fold It, Squish It: Everything You Need for Maker Programs in Your Library.” Part one concentrated on the “who, what, when, where and how.” I found it neat to see how other small libraries were handling maker spaces with little to no budget. Part two incorporated hands-on activities...
that included: squishy circuits, e-origami, e-textiles, toy-hacking and creative solar creatures. We have coding kits in our library system that include a few of these things, but it was nice to see a different spin on these items. The toy hacking was great. Now, I cannot wait to tear loud noise maker toys apart. I will have to buy some screwdrivers!

**Joyce Wemer**

At the full day pre-conference “Think, Do, Show,” which ways to present and demonstrate your library’s impact, and so much more. There were many tables of four, and at mine, I was seated with librarians from Oklahoma, Minnesota and Washington (state). During this pre-conference, we formed human infographic maps. The first map visually showed the broad representation of attendees at the program. Participants then lined up to show the vast differences in populations served, ranging from several hundred in one-person libraries to approximately 100,000 in regionally based library cooperatives. It drove home the point that even with our differences in geographic locations and demographics, we had so much in common as staff working in or responsible for assisting small and rural libraries. A favorite session of mine was “Bringing Trivia Night into the 21st Century with Kahoot,” which was a demonstration of a free web-based platform that has players respond to questions on their mobile devices.

Now commonly used by teachers for educational purposes, Kahoot has so much potential for public libraries. Users can create Kahoots on any subject for trivia programs or alternatively, can edit one of millions of Kahoots previously created by others. This platform can also be used as a way to gauge public opinion, for training purposes to reinforce skills learned, and to gain staff input by using the survey tool. I have already demonstrated Kahoot in an Adult Services Team meeting and within days, one of my colleagues let me know that she had successfully put it into practice in a teen program.

**Dana Newman**

As the needs and interests of communities vary widely, the ways in which individual libraries serve and engage their communities is as unique as a fingerprint. Nowhere is this more true than in the types of programming that libraries create and offer to their communities. June Somerville, Director of the Stanley Community Library (scl) in Stanley, Idaho (Population: 63) has reimagined and developed library programming to meet her community’s changing needs. In her program “Gold Nuggets: Mining Your Community for Programs,” she took us on her journey of how she partnered with others in the town to offer programming that was both highly engaging and served her patrons’ distinct interests and needs. She explained that programs should offer patrons a unique experience and...
that a compelling program engages, educates, entertains and has interactive elements. For SCL, a very small, rural library, it was imperative that she grow her partnerships in order to engage new audiences as well as to be able to offer a wider variety of programs. Examples of programs that have brought in new audiences and allowed patrons to interact with their community and environment in new ways included:

- local research efforts regarding how to co-exist with wolverines;
- holding wildflower walks with a local expert; and
- hosting a program on home brewing (this program brought in new users that have since returned for other programs).

Somerville shared that she looks for unusual subjects that her patrons and community may not have had any experience with, been exposed to, or that are tied in with an event of high interest. Somerville’s examples of high interest event programs were a program on how oceanographers study and illustrate the unique ecology of life near deep sea vents and a program planned for August of 2017 on viewing and learning more about the solar eclipse. She also stressed the importance of partnerships in a small community when trying to offer a wide variety of programming that requires expertise and skill in many areas. Somerville has a staff of two and relies on volunteers and community organizations to help in providing a robust schedule of programs for all ages. Local businesses also offer space for larger programs, including restaurants who have hosted local play readings and a book discussion called “Books, Burgers and Brews.”

Program offerings that highlight local talents and culture are also very popular. Programming attendance and interest from the community has flourished as a result of offering programming that is unique, engages the community, highlights local talents or topics of high interest, offers interactive elements and requires partnership from local experts or organizations. Intense engagement and support from the community for library programming has also resulted in members of the community being more engaged with other services and resources that the library offers and more volunteers to support library efforts. I found her energy, passion and ideas for programming and connecting to the community to be representative of other sessions that I attended and would encourage everyone to attend the next ARSL conference in St. George, Utah!

Laura Schnackenberg

The ARSL 2016 conference was my first multiple day conference, and I was blown away by the variety and quality of the sessions. It was extremely well organized and gave people plenty of opportunities to network and socialize. The food was great and so were the extra activities, like the Welcome Reception at the Fargo Air Museum and the Game Night...
in the Hotel’s Great Hall. My favorite session was “From Chicken Little to Fred Astaire: Conflict is a Dance” presented by Sharon Morris and Jamie LaRue. The session offered a look at a unique way to handle conflict peacefully, calmly, and gracefully. You have heard all the information on staying calm, cool and collected in the face of conflict, but this presentation gave me a new way to view and handle conflict. We were given ‘Dance Cards’ with instructions and spaces to write comments. The first instruction was, “Don’t Be a Chicken Little,” and there were spaces to write in what that means to you. The next instruction was, “Flow like Fred Astaire.” I immediately was able to picture dancing with the other person in the conflict rather than running around, wringing my hands, and yelling that the sky is falling! The Dance Card had steps (such as: “LISTEN”) to get to the goal of dancing through conflict. The last step was “Practice Your Steps!” I enjoyed and learned a lot in all the sessions that I attended.

My only regret is that I could not go to them all! My favorite bonus benefit of attending the conference was to be surrounded by 500 friendly, talented and like-minded people who wanted to share experiences, ideas and advise! Thank you, DLDS!

In Conclusion…

In addition to the more obvious benefit of meeting and gaining knowledge from so many librarians from small and rural libraries around the country, one extremely valuable experience was having a chance to meet fellow Maryland library colleagues. In both professional and social settings, we got to know more about each library system represented at the conference and how different library systems in the state operate. Some of us have already started communicating via social media and look forward to seeing each other at future statewide library events.

The ARSL conference truly is unlike any other library conference. At ARSL, which has a much smaller group of attendees than most national conferences, it is very easy to walk away with solid information that can be readily put to use. With all of the attendees being small and rural librarians experiencing similar challenges and issues, finding practical tips that can be shared with work colleagues back home and incorporating ideas learned into our own environments takes very little effort. Once again, we offer many thanks to DLDS for allowing us the experience of attending ARSL’s “North of Normal” Conference in Fargo, North Dakota.
Is There a Skeleton
in Your Library?

Donna Scott-Martin, Prince George’s County Memorial Library System

The new Laurel Branch Library of the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System held its Grand Opening on November 28, and an amazing dinosaur fossil replica of a Nanotyrannus greets customers stepping into the children’s section of the library. This dinosaur skeleton is inlaid in a glass casing in the flooring by Stacy Trenary, owner of Darwin and Wallace: A Nature & Fossil Store (www.DarwinAndWallace.com). An interview with Stacy Trenary follows.

How did you get interested in dinosaurs?
Like so many other kids it was a fascination for me. I always loved nature. Ever since childhood, dinosaurs have been my favorite animals, and they still are.

Which one is your favorite and why?
Carnotaurus. It is a meat eating dinosaur with two big horns over its eyes. I like the Carnotaurus because it is so unique. Their fossils are found in Argentina.

How old are the Nanotyrannus fossils, and where are they found?
The Nanotyrannus fossils are 66 million years old. These fossils are found in the

Laurel Branch Library Nanotyrannus skeleton being placed in the flooring.
western part of the United States, primarily Wyoming and Montana.

**Why did you choose the Nanotyrannus dinosaur for the new Laurel Branch Library?**

Besides the practical considerations of being the best fit, this dinosaur is a predator. As a meat eater, it shows its teeth, and I think that makes it more exciting for kids.

**What is the most interesting fact about the Nanotyrannus?**

The controversy over whether or not the Nanotyrannus is indeed its own species, or just a juvenile stage of T-Rex. The debate has heated up within the last five years. I think they are separate, based on certain anatomical differences.

**Explain the process from start to finish. How did you get the fossil initially and what did it take to have it displayed at the Library?**

The fossil was excavated by paleontologists that were digging in the Lance Creek Formation of Wyoming. Though Lance Creek is a known fossil-bearing locality, actually finding the fossils is mostly luck! Once you arrive at a site, you hope some fossils are exposed so that you have an idea where to begin excavation. Then, you dig with shovels, picks, brushes, any tools on hand until you have a slab to take back to the lab, usually located at a museum. You wrap the slab in burlap, cover that with a plaster coating (called a “jacket”) and take it to the lab where it is opened for further excavation. The fossil is then molded and cast to be displayed at the museum, or other facility.

**What type of casting is the Nanotyrannus at the Laurel Library?**

It is a 100 percent high impact resin cast from an original skeleton.

If you come to the Laurel branch to see the Nanotyrannus in person, you can read about dinosaurs in advance of your visit. *Rex* by Simon James; *Lizard from the Park* by Mark Pett; *Edwina the Dinosaur Who Didn’t Know She Was Extinct* by Mo Willems; *Dinosaur Kisses* by David Ezra Stein; and *Dinosaurs* (a giant fold-out book) by Simms Taback are some suggested selections.
Sarah Smith, Baltimore County Public Library

This October, the Randallstown (BCPL) Library held its third annual community forum, focused this year on the impact of mass incarceration on African-American and other minority communities. Randallstown, a largely African-American community on the west side of Baltimore County with a large sub-Saharan African population, fits this description, which helped build interest in the topic.

Panel members at this year’s forum included Dr. Ray Winbush, Director of the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University; Adam Jackson, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle, a grassroots think-tank concerned with the public policy interests of black people; Donald Zaremba, District Public Defender for Baltimore County; and Karen Young of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). Audience members were also able to hear part of a speech from Michelle Alexander, author of *The New Jim Crow*, and view a segment of *POV* film *Kenneth’s Story*. *POV*, a PBS showcase for independent, non-fiction works, produced the film, which describes the life sentence Kenneth Young received when, at 15, he was tried as an adult for robbery.

“I thought it [the forum] was absolutely fantastic,” said Farajii Muhammad, the host of *Listen Up!* on WEAA 88.9 FM and a co-coordinator of the forums since they began in 2014. “The conversation with the panelists, the video, and then the Q & A… all very compelling,” he said, adding that he thought this was the best so far.

The idea for the forums date back to the summer of 2014. Incidents of police brutality were highlighting social media at a seemingly frenetic rate. Brenda Johnson-Perkins, a librarian at BCPL’s Randallstown branch was listening.

To the radio, actually.

“I heard a discussion on the radio one morning about the need to have opportunities to vocalize about these issues and thought that’s what I wanted to do,” she said. “I felt like the library could be a safe space, a democratic environment for people to talk about their fears and frustrations and anger at the police department. We could begin a process of healing by assembling police officers, public officials and activists in the same room with citizens.”

After getting approval for the event from branch management and BCPL administrators, Ms. Johnson-Perkins’ first call was to Mr. Muhammad. She had been acquainted with him since 2003, when he visited the Randallstown Library as part of a grant program designed to develop leadership skills in teens. In addition to his radio work, Mr. Muhammad works with the American Friends Service Committee’s Peace by Piece Baltimore Program.

“I knew he was active in the community and was concerned about issues,” she said. “He seemed like a good starting point.”

“Even then, I thought it would be a much-needed conversation,” Mr. Muhammad said. “The library is a resource center for young people. For the library to be part of these conversations brings it home for them that issues about police brutality are universal, not based on geography.”

Mr. Muhammad moderated that first forum with questions Ms. Johnson-Perkins had developed beforehand, and then opened it up to audience members to share. The panel consisted of Dr. Winbush, two Baltimore County Police Department Community Outreach officers from the local precinct; a representative from the Baltimore Safe Streets program; an ACLU board member; a representative from the Baltimore County Conflict Resolution Center, and youth activists from local organizations.

Ms. Johnson-Perkins’ goal was always improving the relationship between the community and the police department, but there was a lot of hostility and frustration that attendees needed to express.

“People were venting for part of it, but that was good,” she said. “People wanted to be acknowledged for how they’ve been treated. To have the officers in the room was empowering. To be able to direct that to the officers and have them listen was a very powerful thing. To have them talk about their fears for their children was very healing.”
Then, in April 2015, the Baltimore uprisings took place. “The uprisings confirmed for me that libraries can be a place where justice can occur,” Ms. Johnson-Perkins said. “Martin Luther King Jr. said that ‘behind a riot is a language of the unheard.’ That’s where the library comes in. We can be a space for the unheard to voice their concerns, even if people don’t always agree.”

The 2015 forum focused on direct civic action. Panelists were selected to empower the audience and to provide practical strategies for attendees to achieve justice from where they are. The League of Women Voters, ACLU, Baltimore County Conflict Resolution Center, Baltimore County Human Relations Commission and Baltimore Youth Resiliency Institute were among the presenting organizations. Spoken word artist Olu “Butterfly” Woods performed poems and the Unity Musicians delivered songs in between speakers.

“The art worked well,” Ms. Johnson-Perkins said. “It was a good segue but it also brought another perspective, another layer. There are many ways to address the issue. You can rally, you can march, but you can also present the topic through your art.” The topic for this year’s forum occurred to her while attending a BC Reads event in April. BC Reads was the first series of events of its kind. Conceived by BCPL Director Paula Miller and planned by a cross-functional staff team, BC Reads was a month-long initiative designed to promote county-wide discussion through reading and the arts, and was BC Reads was the first series of events of its kind. One of the events was a discussion about the impact of and reactions to Ta-Nehisi Coates’ Between the World and Me at the Randallstown Community Center. WBFF Fox 45 television anchor Kai Jackson moderated.

“We were talking about fatherhood and young men,” Ms. Johnson-Perkins said. “You can’t read that book without thinking that the potential of young black men in our culture is being cut off by systemic racism. The cycle of African-Americans being arrested and rearrested is a huge part of that destruction. Several customers had come in asking for Michelle Alexander’s book [The New Jim Crow] and Ava DuVernay’s 13. I knew it would be a good fit for the community.”

This year, Professor Winbush returned, as well as Adam Jackson, CEO of Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle; Donald Zaremba, District Public Defender for Baltimore County; and Karen Young of the ACLU. Johnson-Perkins played part of a speech by Michelle Alexander as well as a segment from Kenneth’s Story. POVs, a PBS showcase for independent, non-fiction works, produced the film, which describes the life sentence Kenneth Young received when, at 15, he was tried as an adult for robbery.

Muhammad thought that this was the best forum so far. “I thought it was absolutely fantastic. The conversation with the panelists, the video, and then the Q & A…all very compelling.”

Ms. Johnson-Perkins encourages other libraries to hold their own events. Each community’s interests may differ, but providing a space for discussion is important. She suggests getting in touch with people in the community who you trust. They will help let you know what those issues are. Think about who is in your community who would want to participate and who has something important to say about the topic you’ve chosen.

“We give people information in book form, in the form of digital literacy,” she added. “But another way we can give people information is by putting people together with other people so they can learn from each other. These conversations are difficult to have, but they’re necessary.”

Ms. Johnson-Perkins is not sure of next year’s topic, but wants to expand the event geographically as well as thematically by partnering with the Woodlawn branch and addressing a topic that directly impacts youth. The Woodlawn branch neighbors Woodlawn High School and welcomes several hundred students after school each day.

“The library is the perfect place to [have discussions about social justice issues],” said Mr. Muhammad. “The library is not just about books, but learning new things, and guiding people to becoming more informed and aware.”
About 250 miles overhead, a satellite the size of a loaf of bread flies in orbit. It’s one of hundreds of so-called CubeSats—spacecraft that come in relatively inexpensive and compact packages—that have launched over the years. So far, most CubeSats have been commercial satellites, student projects, or technology demonstrations. But this one, dubbed MINXSS (“minks”) is NASA’s first CubeSat with a bona fide science mission.

Launched in December 2015, MINXSS has been observing the sun in X-rays with unprecedented detail. Its goal is to better understand the physics behind phenomena like solar flares—eruptions on the sun that produce dramatic bursts of energy and radiation.

Much of the newly-released radiation from solar flares is concentrated in X-rays, and, in particular, the lower energy range called soft X-rays. But other spacecraft don’t have the capability to measure this part of the sun’s spectrum at high resolution—which is where MINXSS, short for Miniature Solar X-ray Spectrometer, comes in.

Using MINXSS to monitor how the soft X-ray spectrum changes over time, scientists can track changes in the composition in the sun’s corona, the hot outermost layer of the sun. While the sun’s visible surface, the photosphere, is about 6000 Kelvin (10,000 degrees Fahrenheit), areas of the corona reach tens of millions of degrees during a solar flare. But even without a flare, the corona smolders at a million degrees—and no one knows why.

One possibility is that many small nanoflares constantly heat the corona. Or, the heat may come from certain kinds of waves that propagate through the solar plasma. By looking at how the corona’s composition changes, researchers can determine which mechanism is more important, says Tom Woods, a solar scientist at the University of Colorado at Boulder and principal investigator of MINXSS: “It’s helping address this very long-term problem that’s been around for 50 years: how is the corona heated to be so hot.”

The $1 million original mission has been gathering observations since June. The satellite will likely burn up in Earth’s atmosphere in March. But the researchers have built a second one slated for launch in 2017. MINXSS-2 will watch long-term solar activity—related to the sun’s 11-year sunspot cycle—and how variability in the soft X-ray spectrum affects space weather, which can be a hazard for satellites. So the little-mission-that-could will continue—this time, flying at a higher, polar orbit for about five years.

If you’d like to teach kids about where the sun’s energy comes from, please visit the NASA Space Place: http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/sun-heat/
Save the Date!
MLA-DLA Annual Conference
May 10–12, 2017
Hyatt-Chesapeake, Cambridge, MD
Prince George’s Library Trustee Wright Wins Partridge Award

Donna Scott Martin, Prince George’s County Memorial Library System

Dr. Arthuree R. McLaughlin Wright, a member of the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System’s (PGCMLS) Board of Library Trustees, received the 2016 James Partridge Outstanding African American Information Professional Award at the Conference on Inclusion and Diversity in Library and Information Science on October 20-21 at the University of Maryland.

“The Board of Library Trustees is honored to have one of its newer members, Dr. Arthuree Wright, recognized and selected as the recipient of the James Partridge award,” said Dr. Alease J. “Christy” Wright, President of the Board of Library Trustees. “We have already witnessed her dedication and commitment to the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System.” The Partridge Award honors superior librarianship and laudable contributions to the library community by unsung professionals in the field. Winners are selected annually by the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland and the Citizens for Maryland Libraries. “The Library congratulates Dr. Wright on this well-deserved honor,” said Kathleen A. Teaze, the Library’s Chief Executive Officer. “PGCMLS is so pleased to have an advocate with the insight and experience of Dr. Wright on the Board of Library Trustees.” With a 30-year tenure at the Howard University Libraries, Dr. Wright retired in 2015 from the position of Associate Director and Chief Operating Officer. At Howard University, she focused on information literacy, assessment of learning and service effectiveness. Nationally, she chaired the Research Committee of the Association of College and Research Libraries and served on the American Library Association’s Committee on Accreditation.

Dr. Wright’s academic credentials include a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics, Indiana University; a Master of Library Science, Rutgers University; and a Doctor of Philosophy in Library and Information Science, University of Maryland. For additional information about her accomplishments, visit http://ipac.umd.edu/events/partridge.
Herrington Joins Staff of Montgomery College Libraries

Anne Herrington has joined the staff at the Montgomery College Libraries. Herrington is the Web Services and Communications Librarian, focusing on web design projects and marketing. She previously worked as the Director of Library Services at Arizona Summit Law School in Phoenix, Arizona.

Sigwald and Smith Join the Reference Librarian Team at the Maryland Department of Legislative Services Library

Richard Sigwald joined the Library and Information Services unit as a reference librarian in the Maryland Department of Legislative Services in November 2016. Rich received his Master of Library Science degree from Clarion University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance degree from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Prior to joining the department, Rich was employed as a reference librarian in the Baltimore County Public Library system.

Brooke Smith has also joined the Library and Information Services unit in the Maryland Department of Legislative Services as a reference librarian, also starting in November 2016. Brooke received her Master of Library Science from Clarion University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor of Science Degree from California University of Pennsylvania. Prior to joining the Department and completing her master’s degree, Brooke taught elementary school for 15 years.
Well, it is that time of year again. The Maryland General Assembly convened January 11th and is in session for 90 days. The Governor must introduce the budget bill by January 18. Maryland has a projected structural deficit that seems to grow daily. Right now, there is approximately a $500 million gap that has to be closed. What does that mean for Maryland’s libraries? We can only begin to speculate. While public libraries were on track to receive an increase in state aid this year, we see a potential for major cuts. Academic and school libraries face major cuts as their institutions are asked to trim their budgets.

This is why it is so important to advocate for libraries at the national, state and local levels. MLA members are so strategically important at the grassroots level in helping to preserve funding for libraries. Libraries promote quality education for everyone and we need to spread the word in our communities of the importance of libraries in providing educational opportunities for all.

Take a moment and write a letter to your State Delegates or State Senators to thank them for their previous support of libraries. Share a library story. There is no better time than the New Year and the start of a new legislative session to say “thank you” to legislators for all they do for libraries. Libraries have enjoyed widespread support from both sides of the aisle in Maryland. This is a great time to make a library supporter a library champion. We will need our champions this year as libraries may be fighting to retain funding.

One of the best ways MLA advocates for libraries is with the annual Maryland Library Day in Annapolis. This year, Maryland Library Day is on February 14th. Yes, that’s right, Valentine’s Day – a great day to show legislators how much we love our libraries. This coming Library Day, as in years past, will start at 8:30 a.m., with a briefing held at the Law Library of the Anne Arundel Court House on Church Circle. The briefing is followed by the group splitting up to go to either the House Chamber or the Senate Chamber in time to hear February 14, 2017 declared as Maryland Library Day. Then, librarians go to visit their delegations and bring packets of information prepared by the MLA office and added information about our own library systems. The day will conclude with a reception in the President’s Reception Room of the Miller Senate Building to which the Governor and staff and all members of the General Assembly will have received formal invitations. Please come for the day if you can.

If you can’t make the event, please do your part by sending that letter to thank your delegate or senator and ask them to save February 14th on their calendar to attend MLA’s reception.
from the twitterverse...

Denise Davis @ddavismlsjd
2/ Trustees, dedicated citizens & officials from MD iSchool, higher ed, school libs -- “all in” at MACL re value & future of libs. Inspiring!

Denise Davis @ddavismlsjd
1/ Attended MD Advisory Council on Libs (MACL) yest. MD lib law ED 23-106. Members advise state librarian and Gov. Includes reps from MLA.

Denise Davis @ddavismlsjd
2/ Library leaders (& all types of libraries) are on MLA Legis Panel, incl MLA Pres, VP, ED, rep from IF panel, CALD, & Citizens for MD Libs.

Denise Davis @ddavismlsjd
1/ The MLA Legislative Panel meets monthly assessing key issues at state and fed level that face libraries.

Denise Davis @ddavismlsjd
3/ Many Cecil Co. PL Board and staff attended NAACP banquet to receive award honoring their work fostering educational opportunity

Denise Davis @ddavismlsjd
2/ Honored to accept w/CCPL Director Morgan Miller. NAACP Officers Elyse Murray & Valery Coleman presented.

Ms. Davis is MLA’s Vice President/President Elect and Cecil County Public Library Director Emerita.
1/Cecil County Public Library was honored with the 2016 Education Visionary Award by Cecil County Branch of NAACP.

2/Western MD Regional Library (WMRL) is in Hagerstown at the Fletcher Branch- one of MD’s most impressive libraries.

3/MD’s 3 regional libs assure that the high value services, tech, & collections in urban libs are also available in rural communities.

4/In my visit to WMRL, I saw how regional libraries are a key component of education equity in MD. Kudos to impressive staff at WMRL!

1/MLA VPs visit one of MDs regional libraries to study their many roles. I visited Western MD Reg & met w/ Mary Baykan & Elizabeth Hulett.
Send Us Videos!

The Wall Street Journal recently published an article about Vertical Videos. Most of the article is interesting, but one point struck us particularly...

“Ten years ago, most of what people experienced online was text. Now it’s photos. Soon, more and more of it will be videos,” says Fidji Simo, Facebook’s director of product.

So let’s get with the future

All of us know that a video is more engaging than a PowerPoint. A video can pan around and show us the whole new Maker’s Room, while you comment on it with your proud colleagues. A video can capture the happy comments, the pithy remarks, the spontaneous reaction, in an immediate way.

There will always be room here for the text that explains the larger context, the finer points. If a picture (or video) is worth a thousand words, remember it then necessarily requires a thousand words to fully explain the picture!

So let’s have it all

Send us videos, and send us your articles and pictures and everything you have. Let’s make the Crab a premier vehicle for education, networking, library entertainment and sharing the knowledge!

(No rash promises!)

This page includes a sample donated by a colleague as a bit of a test. There are dozens of video formats floating around, and your phone or camera might, probably not, but it might produce a video we just can’t make reliably work in the interactive PDF format of the Crab. We promise to do our best, and bet we’ll be successful (most of the time.)

So let us know if this sample test works for you!

Thank you for your support.
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.

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