Sensory Space Opens in Baltimore County Public Library’s Perry Hall Branch

Staff at the Perry Hall branch of BCPL noted that while sensory-friendly programs were on the rise, two distinctive gaps in services remained: service to elementary-aged children and engagement outside of programs. In an effort to close this dual gap, the Perry Hall branch applied for and received a microgrant to establish a sensory safe space. The Foundation for BCPL provided $1,000 and the Friends of the Perry Hall Library matched the microgrant with an additional $1,000 contribution. Thus, the Sensory Exploration Zone was born.

Intellectual Freedom Legislative Update: Privacy Legislation and Net Neutrality

Lawmakers continue to discuss and propose privacy legislation in the wake of multiple data breaches and heightened awareness of privacy issues.

Story Club for Kids

Robert Chrystal, Librarian III at the Rosedale Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library, and musical performer for most of his life, decided to share his experience and love for the arts through a new program titled "Story Club for Kids."

Leading the Flock (Right)

How can librarians in Maryland learn to become leaders of the flock? It is a great question. A collaboration between Maryland State Library (MSL) and the Maryland Library Association (MLA) is focused on making opportunities available. This partnership is supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act, and is administered by MSL. Working through the Library Leadership Training Committee, MSL and MLA provide a variety of training experiences.

The Future of Libraries Interest Group (FOLIG)

Where are libraries heading in the future? A new MLA interest group, Future of Libraries Interest Group (FOLIG), is working to ensure that MLA members and Maryland libraries are prepared to take advantage of tomorrow’s opportunities.

Night Sky Network: January’s Evening Eclipse and Morning Conjunctions

Observers in the Americas are treated to an evening total lunar eclipse this month. Early risers can spot some striking morning conjunctions between Venus, Jupiter, and the Moon late in January. A total lunar eclipse will occur on January 20th and be visible from start to finish for observers located in North and South America.

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Don’t forget: In addition to these Contents pages, you can use Bookmarks to navigate through your Digital Magazine!
I’ve probably written about this before, but the New Year and the month of January are always one of my favorite times of year (except for any snow that happens during that time). With the start of each year, there is always a sense of promise and better things to come.

I was particularly pleased with the content in this issue and in reading through each article, I realized that libraries in Maryland are definitely moving in the right direction with each passing day.

MLA divisions and interest groups have had or are planning programs to enhance the knowledge and services provided by Maryland’s library community (see the articles in this issue from the Professional Development Panel, the Public Services Division, the Reader’s Advisory Interest Group, the Intellectual Freedom Panel, the Library Leadership Training Institute Committee, and the Future of Libraries Interest Group; as editor, I can’t remember a time where we’ve heard from so many groups in MLA in one issue!).

Library branches throughout Maryland are exploring new programs, new initiatives, and charting new courses, from the selection of a new CEO for the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System to the Sensory Exploration Zone and the Story Club for Kids in branches of Baltimore County Public Library.

Take a peek into how far we’ve come and what lies ahead for Maryland libraries in this issue...Happy New Year to all!!

Annette Haldeman, MLA Crab Editor; Department of Legislative Services Library
I recently had the privilege to speak to the fall 2018 graduating class of Maryland’s Library Associate Training Institute (LATI) about MLA. Much of what I shared was about the organization of our association, in hopes of giving the LATI participants a better sense of the entry-points for involvement and the benefits of participating in the important work of MLA. Those of you who have attended the recent Getting to Know MLA web meetups have been a part of similar conversations. While I greatly appreciated this chance to champion the work of MLA, the part of the day that I found to be the most rewarding – and the most FUN – was participating as part of a panel organized by Linda Zuckerman, LATI Coordinator. She had invited Tonya Kennon (President & CEO, Howard County Library System), Michael Gannon (Chief Operating Officer for Support Services, Prince George’s County Memorial Library System), Lisa Kenyon (Staff Development and Training Coordinator, Enoch Pratt Free Library) and I to share perspectives from our own experience on how the Library Associates can prepare themselves for the next step in their careers.

What I’d like to do here is capture and share some of the themes that came out of this conversation, while also giving credit to one of my many mentors in my career, Pat Hofmann, who spoke at the fall 2012 LATI graduation six years ago and offered her own list – her words of wisdom – on the eve of her own retirement as the Director of the Calvert Library. See the Spring 2013 issue of The Crab (Volume 43, Number 3) for a write-up of her inspiring talk. What follows are some thoughts that came from us on December 19, 2018, with a few additional ideas I’m including that we didn’t have time to get to that day.

What is the best approach to advance an idea when it doesn’t have support from your supervisor? Each situation has its own nuances, but suggestions from our panel including talking with colleagues across your library system and elsewhere (perhaps with friends you’ve made through MLA) and work to strengthen the idea. It was also recommended to make sure that the proposed idea ties-in and supports the library’s mission and goals.

While some of us advised not to let oneself get pigeonholed into one position, it was noted that it can be valuable to develop a specialized expertise that makes you the go-to person in an organization. It can be advantageous to develop expertise on the cusp of when it will be needed by your library system. Having a valuable specialization can also help you stand out from other job candidates.

It really helps to know someone on an interview panel. Not that they will treat you any differently than other candidates, but it can help you feel much less nervous and increase your comfort. Often these kind of professional relationships can be developed by serving on system-wide teams or at the state level by getting to know people through MLA.

Ask someone from outside of your library system who you know through your professional association work to serve as a job reference. Do make sure that they know that you’re using them as a reference. The MLA President might be willing to do this [that’s a hint].
We were asked to reflect on the most important conference program we had ever attended. This provided an opportunity to share this piece of advice: If you get a lot of value out of a program, make sure to let the people who organized it know. Thank them and tell them that you would like to be involved in planning future programs.

Take responsibility for your own skill development. Take the training offered by your library system and also seek out other learning opportunities offered by MLA, Maryland State Library, State Library Resource Center, webinars, and conferences. Read articles. Listen to podcasts. Follow groups and individuals on social media who will introduce you to new ideas. Maintain a strong awareness of library trends and broader trends. Be informed.

Don’t wait for one person to retire or in order to move into their position. The traditional linear ladder of advancement doesn’t exist anymore, so be prepared to participate in “bouldering,” moving up and over to positions that interest and challenge you.

Once you move into supervisory positions, listen to the advice of your staff. If their perspective is different than yours, engage in a dialogue to determine what approach will have the greatest impact toward advancing your community and what activities can be sustained.

A positive attitude, a great sense of humor, and enthusiasm will take you very far, even if you need to develop some technical skills once you are on a job. Admit when you don’t know something, but be prepared to learn and describe how you would handle a particular situation if given the chance.

Champion the accomplishments of those around you!

Looking ahead, now is also an excellent time to make sure that all of Maryland’s emerging library leaders are aware of a very special opportunity. Applications are now being accepted for the Nettie B. Taylor Maryland Library Leadership Institute (MLLI). Held only every two years, the Institute is designed for any library staff person who has demonstrated leadership potential, excellent communication skills, initiative, and a commitment to the profession. These are the individuals who make a difference in your community.

The mission of MLLI is to identify emerging leaders in the library community and provide them with a transformative educational experience; provide a safe, collaborative experience to expand the comfort zone for dealing with risk, success and failure; yield graduates who actively advocate for libraries; and produce committed, capable, and enthusiastic leaders for Maryland libraries.

MLLI has three components in 2019: a Summer intensive (July 17 – 19), a Fall overnight (October 10 – 11), and a follow-up project. Both face-to-face sessions are hosted at the Donaldson Brown Center in Port Deposit, MD and facilitated by Maureen Sullivan. The application process is initiated by nomination from a Maryland library director. Twenty-four participants will be invited to attend. There is a $1,000 registration fee that includes accommodations and meals. Scholarships are available. All Maryland libraries (academic, public, school, and special) are encouraged to submit nominations. The application is due by Friday, February 15, 2019, notifications will be made by Friday, March 29, 2019, and the registration fee will be due by Monday, July 1, 2019.

Want to know more? Find the application materials at https://www.mdlib.org/content.asp?contentid=302 and see the article, “Leading the Flock,” by Bryan Hissong, chair of the MLLI Committee, in this issue.

One last thing before we go… the next “Getting to Know MLA” web meetups will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 13, 2019 and Wednesday, April 17, 2019.

Watch for posts on Marylib to get the web link in order to participate. Not on Marylib? Join the listserv now at https://www.mdlib.org/content.asp?contentid=153

Many thanks to all of our volunteer leaders for their excellent work in 2018 and best wishes to everyone for a successful and joyful 2019!
Maryland Author Award Winner Announced

Elizabeth Hulett and Nadine Rosendale, Maryland Author Award Co-Chairs

Maryland Author Award Winner Mary Amato.

The Maryland Author Award winner for 2019 is Mary Amato.

Mary Amato is an award-winning children’s and young adult author, poet, playwright and songwriter. Her books have been translated into foreign languages, optioned for television, produced onstage, and have won the children’s choice awards in several states. She teaches popular workshops on writing and the creative process around the country. Among her most recent titles are:

News from Me, Lucy McGee; Open Mic Night at Westminster Cemetery; Our Teacher is a Vampire and Other (Not) True Stories; The Chicken of the Family; Please Write in This Book; and the Riot Brothers series. Mary Amato gives voice to the funny, sad, messy, and wondrous stories of life, especially the stories of children and young adults. Her mission is for each book to have humor, heart and grit.

MLA Educational Grants

Martha Zimmerman, Salisbury University

It is that time again… time to apply for an MLA educational grant! If you have been a member of MLA for at least six months, and are NOT a member of the Professional Development Panel (PDP), you are eligible to apply for an MLA educational grant. Grants of up to $100 are available for workshops, conferences and pre-conferences. Scholarship awards of up to $500 are available for library science courses, undergraduate courses at all levels and non-credit courses approved for certification renewal.

Who awards these grants?

The Educational Grants Subcommittee of the Professional Development Panel awards the grants. Criteria for making the award include, but are not limited to, the quality of the submitted application (thoroughness, attention to detail), the applicant’s level of involvement in MLA, and the potential value of the activity to the applicant.

When is the application deadline?

There are two deadlines every year for application: January 15 and July 15.

How do I apply?

The application is available from the MLA Forms webpage: http://www.mdlib.org/content.asp?contentid=292.

How will I know if I am successful?

Awards will be announced within one month after each deadline.

If I am successful, when will I receive my grant?

You will be reimbursed after the activity has been attended and you have submitted one of the following, as appropriate:

- An academic transcript for college courses
- A CEU form with all of the relevant information filled out
- A brief statement outlining the program, your attendance, and what you learned from the activity

If you have any other questions, please contact one of the members of the Subcommittee:

Martha Zimmerman (mczimmerman@salisbury.edu)
John Venditta (john@esrl.org)
Danielle Johnson (dwhren@loyola.edu)
Regina Rose (rgrose513@verizon.net)

The Educational Grants Subcommittee of PDP looks forward to reviewing your application!
Public Services Division (PSD) Update

Jennifer Jones, President of PSD/Harford County Public Library

The Public Services Division’s (PSD) program, “Stocking your Reader’s Advisory Toolbox” had a bit of a hiccup this fall. The program was originally scheduled for September, but Hurricane Florence kept presenter Barry Trott, close to his home libraries in Williamsburg, Virginia. Luckily, PSD and the Reader’s Advisory Interest Group (RAIG) were pleased to go forward with a rescheduled date of November 1. A crowd of over 30 participants spent the afternoon learning about appeal factors such as style, mood, and story elements and how to connect elements these with books or authors.

Often Reader’s Advisory (RA) work can seem very scary, especially if one does not know the requested genre or if the titles that you are familiar with are not currently on the shelf. The training session discussed using tools such as Novelist, GoodReads and Amazon. In using these tools, those performing RA cannot only connect customers with something new, but help them learn to talk more about books and why they like them. An added bonus is getting some of those second tier titles to go out and increase library circulation.

During the afternoon, participants broke into groups for an exercise to come up with suggested titles from pre-made prompts. It was so much fun to hear what each group came up with, how their selections tied to the appeal factors, and what Barry did when he was stumped with a book/author he was not familiar with! All the groups’ suggestions were captured and shared on the PSD Facebook page.

PSD and RAIG want to thank all the enthusiastic participants, Barry for his expertise and in making RA fun, and Novelist who provided financial sponsorship of the program, as well as handouts.

On January 17, PSD is collaborating with Leadership Development Division (LDD) and Support Services Division (SSD) to pair the incomparable Michael Gannon (Chief Operating Officer, Support Services, Prince George’s County Memorial Library System) and the Maryland Emergency Management Association (MEMA) for the program “When Disaster Strikes.” The deadline to register is January 10, 2019 and the program will be worth three continuing education credits.

May 1-3, 2019 will be the MLA/DLA annual conference in Cambridge. PSD Vice President Pam Taylor has been busy coordinating nine programs that PSD will be sponsoring or co-sponsoring. Make sure to mark your calendars as there will be so many great training and networking opportunities.

PSD is a great team and has created many longstanding friendships with library staff from across the state. While some PSD members have been in MLA for a while, some are quite new. PSD always welcomes new members so check out the Division’s Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/PSDmla, join the listserv, attend a program and come to a PSD meeting.

The Readers’s Advisory Interest Group (RAIG) Returns!

Monica McAbee, Prince George’s County Memorial Library System

Attention all readers! After a two-year hiatus, the MLA Reader’s Advisory Interest Group (RAIG) has come back strong. RAIG’s next meeting is April 11, so if you want to join in on the meeting, please contact Monica.McAbee@pgcmls.info.

RAIG has two programs planned for the MLA/DLA 2019 Conference:

Thursday, May 2

What if...you got the scoop on upcoming books? Get inside news on hot books coming from Harper-Collins and Penguin Random House. Boost your cred with your patrons! Amaze your friends with your authoritative knowledge! Add to your “To Be Read” pile! Presenters will include read-alike suggestions and will describe the likely audience for each title.

Friday, May 3

What if...you could hear from local authors? Hey, not all writers live in New York City! Scout out authors for future library programs at this panel, as local writers describe their works, their influences, their writing habits, and the appeal of their books to YOUR patrons. You’ll hear from Josiah Bancroft, A. L. Herbert, Necole Ryse, Alan Smale, and Maggie Thrash.

Also, stay tuned for details on a RAIG spring program, which will explore genres of current interest.

RAIG joined with the Leadership Development Division (LDD) to create a Goodreads group for Maryland library workers who read to lead. It’s called the “Leaders who Library Book Club,” and you can contact Nay Keppler...
Send us the News!

“All the news that’s fit to format.” And we mean all. The more you contribute, the more you help the community innovate and serve. Check the masthead on the last page for our address, and tell us what you and your colleagues have been up to.

You’re making news. Now, let us all read it.
SHARE YOUR GREAT IDEA!

CALL FOR POSTER PROPOSALS

Proposals for the 2019 MLA+DLA conference will be accepted until January 31st. Email megan.jones@pgcmls.info for more information!
Sensory Space Opens in Baltimore County Public Library’s Perry Hall Branch
CHILDREN WITH AUTISM or other sensory disorders often experience sensitivity to or difficulty processing information that they perceive through their senses. This means that everyday situations can feel overwhelming and these children may react to sensory input in ways that make those around them uncomfortable. This can in turn create a sense of isolation for those with sensory sensitivities and their families. Families of children with special needs can be reluctant to visit places like the library for fear of judgmental attitudes about their children’s sensory needs and related behaviors.

Over the past four years, the Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) has taken important steps to address the needs of this underserved population by developing several recurring sensory programs for community members of differing abilities.
The Woodlawn Branch of BCPL began their “Sensory Story Time” in 2014, and the “Wiggles and Giggles” sensory-friendly story time has been a presence at the Rosedale Branch of BCPL since 2016. At BCPL’s Hereford Branch, the “Arts Access” program has offered multi-sensory crafts and activities to adult customers with disabilities since 2017. At the Perry Hall Branch, sensory-friendly programing and equitable access for all has become a defining focus; in 2015 the branch established the successful “Sensory Social for Teens” program, and in 2018 the branch expanded its sensory programming to reach younger children with “Sensory Story Time Saturdays.”

This same year, staff at the Perry Hall branch of BCPL noted that while sensory-friendly programs were on the rise, two distinctive gaps in services remained: service to elementary-aged children and engagement outside of programs. While the programs were bringing those with sensory needs into the library once a month, there was no permanent space where children with sensory needs could engage socially while feeling comfortable exploring and using the library’s resources. In an effort to close this dual gap, the Perry Hall branch applied for and received a microgrant to establish a sensory safe space. The Foundation for BCPL provided $1,000 and the Friends of the Perry Hall Library matched the microgrant with an additional $1,000 contribution. Thus, the Sensory Exploration Zone was born.
The Zone is designed to provide elementary-aged children of all abilities a calming and judgment-free area where they – along with their caregivers – can feel welcome at the library. It features a variety of sensory-focused items that create an environment that is at once soothing while at the same time providing opportunities for sensory stimulation. Sensory wall panels that incorporate fine or gross motor skill activities, floor cushions, bubble tubes, low level lighting and active sitting stools combine to create a welcoming environment for elementary-aged children of all abilities.

Visiting the library offers an important opportunity for socialization for these children and a chance for the larger community to better understand them and their families. Most importantly, spaces like the Sensory Exploration Zone allow the library to be more welcoming and inclusive and better able to foster a foundation of lifelong learning for all children.
Lawmakers continue to discuss and propose privacy legislation in the wake of multiple data breaches and heightened awareness of privacy issues. This fall, Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) released a draft of the Consumer Data Protection Act. It would regulate the use of consumers' personal information, including establishing a national “Do Not Track” system for online activity; create a mechanism for consumers to review and correct personal information that has been collected about them; require that companies assess algorithms that use consumer data for fairness, privacy, bias, and more; and establish penalties for executives at corporations who misuse data [1]. Companies would be required to submit annual data protection reports, and a Bureau of Technology office would be established within the Federal Trade Commission with 175 staffers to enforce the new regulations [2].

In the House of Representatives, Representative Suzan DelBene (D-WA) has introduced the Information Transparency and Personal Data Control Act (H.R. 6864). The act, which is co-sponsored by Representative Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY), would require that privacy policies be written in ways that consumers can easily understand, set regulations about how companies can use consumers’ data, set limits on how data can be shared, require annual privacy audits for companies, and more [3], [4].

After the recent Marriott hack, which exposed the credit card numbers, birth dates, addresses, and more of up to 500 million people [5], senators including Mark Warner (D-VA), Ed Markey (D-MA), John Kennedy (R-LA), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) are also calling for increased privacy protections online. Proposed actions include limits on how much data companies can store, jail time or other consequences for executives who fail to protect data, and fines [6], [7].

Senator Blumenthal is also crafting a bipartisan privacy bill with Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS), who chairs the Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security Subcommittee of the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. The subcommittee met in November to discuss a bill that could give the Federal Trade Commission enforcement powers, including the ability to regulate and penalize telecommunications companies. Terms of the bill have not been settled, but Senator Blumenthal hopes a draft may be finished early next year [8].

Meanwhile, a net neutrality law passed in California is facing opposition from the federal government and the telecommunications industry. The law, which was written in response to the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) decision to eliminate federal net neutrality protections, stipulates that internet service providers (ISPs) cannot slow down website speeds, block access to websites, or offer faster access to prominent sites.

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like Facebook or Netflix [9], [10]. In response to the new law, the Department of Justice is suing California, claiming that net neutrality can only be regulated by the federal government. The law was set to go into effect on January 1, 2019, but California has agreed to postpone implementation while litigation is pending [11]. Lobbying groups representing the broadband industry are also suing California, charging that the regulation is unconstitutional. The lobbying groups represent, among others, companies including Comcast, AT&T, Sprint, Cox, and Verizon [12].

This contested law was passed in response to the FCC’s repeal of net neutrality rules. Formally known as the Restoring Internet Freedom Order [13], this repeal could allow ISPs to provide faster service to favored sites and slow or block service for others. Net neutrality proponents claim that without protections in place, consumers may be charged more to access certain sites, be blocked from accessing others (or have access to them slowed), or be guided toward certain sites who pay ISPs for prioritization [14]. Twenty-two states—including Maryland—and the District of Columbia are suing the FCC over the repeal [15]. Their lawsuit has been consolidated with 11 other lawsuits filed against the FCC in response to the repeal [16].

For updates on privacy issues, including legislation, visit https://chooseprivacyeveryday.org/

For ALA’s position on net neutrality, visit http://www.ala.org/advocacy/net-neutrality

IN A TIME when funding for the arts and music is at risk in school districts across the country, libraries can help to bridge the gap by offering programs focused on developing artistic skills in elementary-aged children. These programs may relate to theater, music, puppetry or storytelling, in addition to the many STEM and “Maker” programs offered across the state.

Three years ago, librarians at the Rosedale Branch of the Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) began to receive requests for programming for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In response to these requests, librarians created special programs and partnerships, but attendance at these programs did not seem to match the perceived need based on the number of requests received. Last spring, the branch programming team decided to explore a different direction. Parents shared that they appreciated the branch’s focus on science, technology and making; however, they were also interested in supporting their children’s education through the arts and literary-based programs.

Robert Chrystal, Librarian III at the Rosedale Branch, and musical performer for most of his life, decided to share his experience and love for the arts through a new program titled “Story Club for Kids.” The three-part series would allow children to learn the art of storytelling by expressing their creativity through role playing, puppetry, theater, mime, and other group activities. It would be a safe place for children to discover and to develop not only their imagination, but also their confidence. To support this freedom, the branch created a seating area called the “Parent Theater” where parents could observe as their children created freely. A set of expectations were created for parents, including an understanding that adults were to allow the children to teach us and only offer words of encouragement, not criticism, during creative sessions.

Activities were designed to take into consideration the various thinking patterns of children ages 6-12, including children on the autism spectrum, but we did not advertise the program in that way. The series was open to all, and everyone would receive a warm welcome.

Children participate in the Minefield Focus and Listening Game.
Some of the activities in the series were:
- Puppetry 101;
- projecting your voice,
- team-building exercises (such as group juggling);
- a minefield focus and listening game;
- RORY’s Story Cubes;
- various drama exercises;
- Mad Libs;
- mime games; and
- sharing your story in five minutes or less using acting, mime, music, puppets, etc.

One of the children’s favorite activities was “Campfire Time,” which is a drama technique used to facilitate a discussion of what the children learned in the session, and it included using a talking stick to help children to listen to one another. You can create your own “Campfire Time” using a story time rug in one corner of the room, a television streaming a crackling fire, dimmed lighting, and the talking stick.

Some important lessons emerged not only for the children, but also for their parents and the librarians because of this powerful experience. The children took to the activities, especially drama activities, with great excitement and commitment. The parents used their “talking time” during Campfire Time to share things the kids had taught them during each session. In addition, the librarians learned over the course of this series that more than half of the children in regular attendance (ranging from 8-12 children per session) were on the autism spectrum. Afterwards, the parents shared that they had felt very welcomed at a general library program for kids, and were hoping to come to many more programs in the future. This series opened the floodgates of creative arts programming at the Rosedale Branch, causing the programming team to set a goal to create 3-4 new cultural and/or creative arts programs this fiscal year.

Sometimes libraries are able to meet their customers at their point of need simply by welcoming them with an open heart, by trying things outside their programming comfort zones, and by allowing children to teach them.
LIKE FACTS ABOUT ANIMALS. I do not know why; I just find them interesting. I like the fact that sea otters hold paws while sleeping to avoid floating away from each other. Cute, huh? Also, did you know that tigers have striped skin as well as striped fur? I had no idea. One bit of trivia that I have been thinking about lately is the fact that some birds (specifically, the bald ibis) take turns leading when they fly in a V-shaped flock. I never really thought about it before, but it turns out it is difficult for the lead bird. The leader battles strong wind currents while their feathered companions trail in the wake. As it turns out though, these birds take turns flying first. This benefits the entire group because at some point, everyone leads. The more I thought about that fact, the more it reminded me of something I heard in a recent training, and that was the idea that everyone has the potential to lead.

Think about that for a minute. We know that some people are excellent leaders. Sometimes it seems to be an inherent quality, as if they were born to lead. And of course, we know folks that do not excel at leading. That can be a challenge, especially when we are expected to follow. However, like the ibis, everyone has the potential to be a good leader, to go against the headwinds for the sake of the group. Leadership is a quality that is inside us. It might be buried, it might take effort and training for it to reach the surface, but we all have the potential to successfully fly at the front of the flock. I find it inspiring, really. And it is one of the reasons I am so passionate about leadership training in Maryland libraries.

How can librarians in Maryland learn to become leaders of the flock? It is a great question. A collaboration between Maryland State Library (MSL) and the Maryland Library Association (MLA) is focused on making opportunities available. This partnership is supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act, and is administered by MSL. Working through the Library Leadership Training Committee, MSL and MLA provide a variety of training experiences. For example, this past June library staff were invited to participate in “Everyone Leads,” a multi-day initiative focusing on how to be a leader and influence organizational change from any position in the organization. Topics included influence without authority, confidence, and basics of leading. An executive-level leadership program entitled “Strategic Leadership” was held in September, allowing participants to reflect on their own experience as library leaders, learn from one another and explore key concepts and approaches from recent research on effective leadership. Coming up in the summer of 2019 will be the “Nettie B. Taylor Maryland Library Leadership Institute.” This initiative is designed to identify emerging leaders in the library community and provide them with a transformative educational experience through three components: a summer intensive, a fall overnight, and a follow-up project. All Maryland libraries (academic, public, school, special, business, etc.) are encouraged to submit nominations.

It is an exciting time for leadership development in Maryland libraries. If you are already a member of MLA and you would like to learn more about these opportunities, check out the MLA website at https://www.mdlib.org/. Keep an eye on the calendar and the newsletters. Not a member of MLA? Consider joining. It is a great way to grow as a librarian. The opportunities are there. All that is left is to decide when it is your turn to take a place at the front of the flock.

Librarians from all over Maryland – from public, school, and academic libraries who participated in the Strategic Leadership program in September 2018.
HERE ARE LIBRARIES HEADING in the future? A new MLA interest group, Future of Libraries Interest Group (FOLIG), is working to ensure that MLA members and Maryland libraries are prepared to take advantage of tomorrow’s opportunities. FOLIG stays aware of emerging trends and motivates library staff to embrace a change-ready mindset and attitude. The group is predictive and proactive about positioning libraries to be future-ready, and wants to ensure that libraries are driving the success of adaptive and resilient Maryland communities. FOLIG is actively sharing what the group has learned and plans to sponsor a session at the annual MLA/DLA Conference. FOLIG’s long-term goal is to create basic competencies that can help establish a “Maryland Brand” of librarian. Conni Strittmatter, Youth and Family Engagement Manager for Baltimore County Public Library (cstrittmatter@bcpl.net), is the FOLIG chair. Conni previously worked for Harford County Public Library where she co-developed the Bel Air Library’s Children’s space renovation. She trains librarians in storytime and media mentorship, and coordinates programming such as “Film This” and “Library Comic Con.” Prior to working in libraries, Conni taught high school English and Creative Writing in Baltimore City.

Michael Blackwell, St. Mary’s County Library Director (mblackwell@stmalib.org), and Dorothy Stoltz, Director for Community Engagement for Carroll County Public Library (dstoltz@carr.org), members of FOLIG, led FOLIG’s discussion on August 6, 2018 (at the Elkridge Branch of Howard County Public Libraries), on the topic of environment and infrastructure, including interior and exterior environments, collections and physical spaces.

Is there a place where libraries should end up? Our conversations and research reinforced the idea that there can be no “one size fits all” model, because libraries in Maryland are as diverse as the communities they serve.

Turning a public space such as a library into a practical and active community service that sparks curiosity does not happen by accident. How can libraries meet community needs more powerfully? The answer lies in having well-trained staff members who inspire customers to fulfill their potential and who listen, respond and celebrate their community’s achievements. But libraries can do—and are doing—more. A library can enhance its community’s character by tapping the “genius loci,” a Latin phrase meaning “the genius of the place.”

The group examined solutions on a range of topics from Amazon Go to “coffeeshopification,” to smart growth, to the challenge of eBook collections. They discussed seeing today’s libraries becoming a “library of the future” in many communities with experimentation through renovation and new building projects. These new and revamped buildings may be Carnegie libraries remastered to accommodate today’s needs, yet maintain a traditional style. Or they may be buildings and collections with a modern look, feel, and layout. The key is making sure it is what the people in the community need and what makes sense for them. One trend dominates: the day of the library as a book warehouse is over. Libraries are now open, light, people spaces, offering access to more than physical collections. There are many challenges to face, including determining the allocation of funds between physical and digital resources while still ensuring access to those on the short side of the digital divide and demonstrating the impact of libraries in a time when overall circulation is on the decline.

The future cannot be embraced by simply copying business models or other libraries. The future emerges out of the creative effort of each library to fulfill its mandate to serve its community.
OBERVERS IN THE AMERICAS are treated to an evening total lunar eclipse this month. Early risers can spot some striking morning conjunctions between Venus, Jupiter, and the Moon late in January.

A total lunar eclipse will occur on January 20th and be visible from start to finish for observers located in North and South America. This eclipse might be a treat for folks with early bedtimes; western observers can even watch the whole event before midnight. Lunar eclipses takes several hours to complete and are at their most impressive during total eclipse, or totality, when the Moon is completely enveloped by the umbra, the darkest part of Earth’s shadow. During totality the color of the Moon can change to a bright orange or red thanks to the sunlight bending through the Earth’s atmosphere - the same reason we see pink sunsets. The eclipse begins at 10:34 pm Eastern Standard Time, with totality beginning at 11:41 pm. The total eclipse lasts for slightly over an hour, ending at 12:43 am. The eclipse finishes when the Moon fully emerges from Earth’s shadow by 1:51 am. Convert these times to your own time zone to plan your own eclipse watching; for example, observers under Pacific Standard Time will see the eclipse start at 7:34 pm and end by 10:51 pm.

Lunar eclipses offer observers a unique opportunity to judge how much the Moon’s glare can interfere with stargazing. On eclipse night, the Moon will be in Cancer, a constellation made up of dim stars. How many stars you can see near the full Moon before or after the eclipse? How many stars can you see during the total eclipse? The difference may surprise you. During these observations, you may spot a fuzzy cloud of stars relatively close to the Moon; this is known as the “Beehive Cluster,” M44, or Praesepe. It’s an open cluster of stars thought to be about 600 million year old and a little under 600 light years distant. Praesepe looks fantastic through binoculars.

Have you ever wondered how eclipses occur? You can model the Earth-Moon system using just a couple of small balls and a measuring stick to find out! The “yardstick eclipse” model shown here is set up to demonstrate a lunar eclipse. The “Earth” ball (front, right) casts its shadow on the smaller “Moon” ball (rear, left). You can also simulate a solar eclipse just by flipping this model around. You can even use the Sun as your light source! Find more details on this simple eclipse model at bit.ly/yardstickekclipse
Mars is visible in the evening and sets before midnight. It is still bright but has faded considerably since its closest approach to Earth last summer. Watch the red planet travel through the constellation Pisces throughout January.

Venus makes notable early morning appearances beside both Jupiter and the Moon later this month; make sure to get up about an hour before sunrise for the best views of these events. First, Venus and Jupiter approach each other during the third full week of January. Watch their conjunction on the 22nd, when the planets appear to pass just under 2 ½ degrees of each other. The next week, observe Venus in a close conjunction with a crescent Moon the morning of the 31st. For many observers their closest pass - just over half a degree apart, or less than a thumb’s width held at arm’s length - will occur after sunrise. Since Venus and the Moon are so bright you may still be able to spot them, even after sunrise. Have you ever seen Venus in the daytime?

If you have missed Saturn this winter, watch for the ringed planet’s return by the end of the month, when it rises right before sunrise in Sagittarius. See if you can spot it after observing Venus’ conjunctions!

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

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.
Roberta Phillips Selected as the Chief Executive Officer of the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System

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

Roberta Phillips has been selected by the Board of Library Trustees of the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS). Ms. Phillips will start in the PGCMLS CEO position in mid-January 2019.

Roberta Phillips currently serves as the Director of Planning and Projects for the award-winning Richland Library in Columbia, South Carolina. The Richland Library comprises a main location and 11 branch locations, serving approximately 415,000 people. Richland Library was a recipient of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service in 2017 for their work in enhancing the quality of life for the entire community. Phillips was named a “Mover and Shaker” by Library Journal in 2013 for her work with a broad range of library customers, both in school and public libraries. She received a Master of Library and Information Science from Wayne State University in Detroit and a Bachelor of Arts in Education from Michigan State University.

Of Ms. Phillips, Samuel Epps IV, President, Board of Library Trustees of PGCMLS, said that “[t]he Board is extremely impressed with Roberta’s experience…and commitment. Her leadership style, record of innovation, fiscal management, team building, and community involvement make her the leader that the Board was seeking to head the Library System.”

Of this opportunity, Ms. Phillips says, “I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as the new CEO for the Prince George’s County Memorial Library System. Libraries have the responsibility to advance our communities and affect lives in meaningful ways. Together we will explore imaginative ways through engagement, enrichment, and education, to create our preferred future for all residents of Prince George’s County!”
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