

Around the System | February 2008

The **Small Libraries Roundtable** met at the Palenville Branch Library in February. This is a group of small library directors that meets quarterly to discuss issues in the context of smaller organizations who deal with less staff, space and resources than other libraries in the System. This time around the group talked about best practices in fundraising.

Annual Appeal tips shared:

- Make sure the annual appeal letter isn't the only time residents hear from you.
- If both the Friends and the Board do fundraising consider consolidating to one appeal sent jointly.
- Investigate using a non-profit indicia through the post office for reduced postage costs. Another postage saving idea was to bundle the letter with another mailing (i.e. the library's newsletter).
- Don't use the same letter year after year!
- Send the appeal to non-library-users too.
- Have Trustees or Friends add a handwritten note to the letter to personalize the letter. [Bonny Corrado, director of the Tivoli Library, shared this tip and noted that donations went up last year after doing this!]
- Send thank-you notes
 - To everyone that donates
 - Promptly
- Be specific about what you are fundraising for – people like to identify where their money went and see the results.
- Track donations annually to help identify future large donors



[To see the complete notes from the meeting, including tips about capital campaigns and online fundraising visit the Small Libraries Roundtable page on the MHLS Web site: <http://midhudson.org> → Administration & Management → Small Libraries Roundtable or get there directly at <http://midhudson.org/admin/slr/main.php>. The next meeting of the Small Libraries Roundtable will be Monday, May 19th at the NorthEast-Millerton Library. The topic will be Making the Most of Millennium in a Small Library.]

The **Columbia, Greene, Ulster Youth Services Group** also met at the Palenville Branch Library in

February after getting snowed out in January. This group provides a chance for library staff who work with kids in the library to get together and learn from each other. MHLS Youth Services Coordinator, Margaret Keefe (shown in the center of the picture), facilitated the group and made sure everyone was apprised of upcoming Summer Reading Program opportunities and resources. This meeting also serves as a collaboration forum, libraries discuss ways to piggyback performers to share costs and coordinate other regional efforts.

