

### Issues/Challenges

- Lack of space
  - Distance from the population center
  - Tracking statistics to justify case for expansion
  - Internal debate: promotion of services in light of limited space for programming
  - How to make the most of existing space
  - Best practices for weeding
  - Dealing with the amount of space technology takes up/takes away from print collection
- Technology
  - How to keep up with what is new and changes to existing technology in the library
  - How to keep up with patron expectations (ex: wireless)
  - Need refreshers on what is available electronically periodically so library staff can teach patrons
- Publicity/Marketing
  - False perceptions of what the library is and what library staff do – how to combat this?
  - Lack of local newspapers; bigger papers won't carry G.C. library news
  - Difficult to make people understand HomeACCESS and other online services
  - How to attract men ages 20 – pre-retirement age to the library
- Demographics
  - New residents – patterns that lower Hudson Valley experienced a few years ago is now impacting G.C. [families from NYC and Westchester; weekenders]
  - Increase in young families in their communities
  - Transitional population: welfare/low-income/single mom families – difficult to connect and have them use the library's services once they have permanent housing in the community
  - Simply more patrons are coming in – more diverse patron pool translates into demand for a more diverse collection; increased need for educational materials
  - 2022 report still very relevant for G.C.
- Funding
  - Increased health care costs; heating costs – budgets do not increase at the same rate
  - Need for adequate salaries to attract qualified staff
- Staffing
  - Staff are struggling with population and technology changes
  - Social worker role seems to be called for – what are the library's legal responsibilities/liabilities?
- Intellectual Freedom
  - How to balance freedom of information with common sense when it comes to kids
  - How to enforce parental responsibility with respect to visual media (Internet, videos and DVDs)

- Library Role
  - What is the role of the library in today's world?
  - Information broker vs. community center models vs. "all of the above"
- Programming
  - Increased demand for adult programming
- Youth Services
  - How to build the best possible relationships with area schools; alternate delivery of materials to students in school
  - Students in grades 7-12 toughest to reach
- Board of Trustees Concerns
  - Funding and funding decisions dominate their conversation; how to plan for costs increases; question of whether or not to pass costs onto patrons; fundraising options come up a lot
  - Space issues is another large area of concern
  - Outreach/marketing
  - Need better understanding of their legal responsibilities
- Fundraising
  - Importance of using fundraising only for "extras," not for operations
  - Dealing with Friends Groups – starting/organizing/managing
  - What are Friends funds used for
  - Active Friends vs. donating "Friends"

### Quality Library Services

- Always get to speak to a human, not a machine
- Library really needs to know their mission and work at it
- Good collection
- Staff is knowledgeable, patient and positive ("cruise ship activities director")
- A place of refuge
- Dealing appropriate with "higher" expectations – staff is adaptable
- Staff is willing and able to learn new things
- Organization is adaptable
- The atmosphere is welcoming and open

### MHLS Services

- It is important to continue to introduce new ideas and programs that libraries can be a part of; directors don't have time to investigate and implement many new services.
- Availability of MHLS staff expertise via phone, in-person and through the web site is essential
- Web site is great, keep it up
- Samples of all types are most welcomed and appreciated (ex: policies, letters)
- Youth Services
  - Opportunities like Battle of the Books are appreciated
  - Need to adjust services/resources/communication to acknowledge staffing situation in smaller libraries where there is no one staff person devoted to just youth services
  - Postings to the YS Listserv are random and at times overwhelming

- Could use more resources on how to manage youth population in the library (policy issues re: Internet usage, parental responsibility; mandated reporter status, children in temporary housing, kids with bad home situation; making the library a refuge but manageable for a smaller library)
- “Children” is too broad; resources should be broken into categories for ages 0-18
- More resources on parent/child relationship