

Four County Library System



Spring 2009

Automation system enhancements will add tools that support member library customer service

Four County's member libraries will have an expanded kit of automation-based tools that enable the delivery of enhanced levels of customer service. The ultimate goal is to put more control in the hands of directors, according to **David Karre**, Four County's executive director/CEO.

"There are a lot of changes in progress right now. Our goal is to give our member libraries the hands-on control that they want," David says. "These automation system enhancements will help them run more efficiently and deliver an even higher level of customer service than they already provide."

Director's Station has arrived

One of the most important additions is Director's Station. This new software package allows a library's director or other authorized user to directly access critical information about their library without the need to request a special report from Four County's automation department.

SirsiDynix describes the product as a "state-of-the-art business intelligence tool" that can help library staff make better-informed decisions than ever before. It offers a unique customized view of a library's activities and operations to help analyze trends, pinpoint problem areas and identify opportunities.

Information is more current and easily accessible than that which is available now. Examples include data for the annual report; daily, weekly and monthly circulation statistics; and even hour-by-hour library usage breakdowns. Reports and presentations can be easily created to help communicate with trustees and local residents, and comparisons with other 4CLS member libraries can be made.

"Director's Station is currently in place and opera-

tional," says **Jeff Henry**, automation manager. "We'll initially create some custom templates to help simplify the standard reports that the libraries want."

Details about specialized training – likely to use a train-the-trainer approach – will come later from **Pamela Brown**, deputy director.



Librarians **Claire Ottman**, Cherry Valley, and **David Kent**, Cooperstown, represented their institutions at the System meeting in May.

Director's Station runs on a separate server from Symphony (the software that is the backbone of Four County's automation system), which eliminates any negative effects on a library's day-to-day operations. Funding comes from a state grant.

Symphony 3.3 upgrade is coming soon

The next major release of Symphony will be coming in July. This will be another step in an ongoing process that combines desirable features of library software products. The new version will incorporate upgrades requested by users worldwide. "We're currently beta-

testing Symphony 3.3. Ultimately the transition should be transparent to members," Jeff says.

NYS broadband access grant

This state-driven grant initiative continues to move forward. It would provide every member library with a new router for better security and improved capability for controlling bandwidth to prioritize network traffic, which would minimize the effects of public network usage on library staff operations. The grant also would cover hardware and satellite connectivity costs for Four County's Cybermobile.

Gates Grant 2009 and more

The second year of the Gates Foundation program is already underway. Preliminary equipment catalogs were distributed to participating libraries. Orders for approximately 40 computers are expected to be placed during the summer. Questions about the program should be directed to Pamela Brown.

Also on the horizon is the migration to Oracle, the database structure underlying records storage of all library information. This initiative also will be funded by the state grant behind Director's Station.

"It's very clear that we've got a lot of automation system enhancements going on," David says. "We're moving as fast as we can to get all of them done in a timely and cost-effective manner."

Apply for funding by August 7

The Four County Library System has \$403,572 to allocate to eligible NYS Construction Grant projects. Read the FAQs and get application materials at: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/construc/14m/index.html> Send an email to **Paul Golaszewski** to let him know your library will be submitting an application. Identify the project, a total cost, and the daytime phone and email address of the person preparing your application. Five complete sets of all application materials are due at 4CLS no later than Friday, August 7.

Providing consolidated programs, services and specialized resources that help 42 public libraries serve their communities in Broome, Chenango, Delaware and Otsego Counties.

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Representatives of Four County libraries were among more than 1,000 advocates in Albany for NYLA's Library Day 2009. Shown here with **Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo** (fourth from left) are **Lisa Wise, David Karre, Nancy Wilcox, Steve Bachman, Starr LaTronica** and **Ed Dunscombe**.

System meeting highlights

On May 20 in Sidney, directors and trustees representing 18 member libraries gathered for the spring meeting of the Four County Library System. Issues covered in the fast-paced two-hour session included:

► **Training and Continuing Education**

Many topics have been identified and the discussion will be ongoing. Four County will integrate input that came from the CLAC survey. David reminded attendees that the NYS budget crisis means we will no longer have an in-house trainer. Future training will be done through sharing, coordination and collaboration with other agencies and also by electronic means.

► **Gates Grant, Intranet**

Library PCs/workstations must be capable of supporting the upcoming webcam initiative, which will help with training and troubleshooting. It also will reduce the costs of travel and time away from the library. New routers are coming, which will help with bandwidth. The intranet will be redone this year – Pamela wants input from members.

► **Research Center, Wi-Fi, and Tech Services**

Notes from the RC advisory committee meeting were distributed by email on May 22. Changes in the electronic resources collection are expected. Next meeting of the group is tentatively set for July 24. An FAQ on Wi-Fi was distributed; comments should be emailed to Pamela. Four County received 29 applications for technical services manager. Interviews are moving forward and a new manager could be in place by August.

The next System meeting will be held in late September or early October.

Get template for free website

Many of Four County's member libraries have already taken advantage of this easy, no-cost way to create a first-time presence on the Web. Eleven libraries are still eligible for this free program. All it takes to get your library's website up and running is just ten minutes of simple keyboarding using an online form. It can be done by the library director, a staff member or trustee. The website can be updated at any time, as often as necessary, at no cost to your library. It is password-protected for security. Contact Pamela Brown at pbrown@4cls.org or ext.303 for details.

Agencies get full funding

After six years federal funding for libraries has finally reached the level requested by library advocates, including those from 4CLS. The FY09 Omnibus Appropriations bill approved by the Senate contains \$171.5 million for the Grants to State Library Agencies program within the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). That represents more than \$10 million above 2008 and finally allows for full implementation of a 2003 law that ensures that state formula grants are distributed equitably. "Overall, libraries of all types fared well," the American Library Association says.

— from *Library Hotline*



4CLS board president **Dr. Bill Taber** and **Lisa Seivert**, library development specialist from DLD, at Four County's annual dinner on June 8.



4CLS trustees **Wendy Caldiero**, **Marilyn Kochersperger** and **Sandra Sheradin** at the annual dinner.



David Karre and others visited with **Bernie Margolis**, the new state librarian, during a stopover at Four County in May. (photo by **Dannielle Swart**)

Briefly noted . . .

4CLS – For participating in NYLA's Library Day 2009 special thanks to: **Lisa Wise** (BCPL); **Ed Dunscombe** (Endicott); **Mary King**, **Audrey Knapp** and **Heather McCloud-Huff** (Greene); **Steve Bachman** (Johnson City); **Kim Hazen** and **Ruth Mason** (Norwich); **Nancy Wilcox** (Oxford); **Roz Conner** (Sidney); and **Paul Golaszewski**, **David Karre** and **Starr La-Tronica** (4CLS)... Technical services manager **Staci Rogers** resigned... 14 member libraries were represented at the annual dinner... **Bovina** – Will hold a book sale on July 18 as part of "Bovina Day," a town-wide event to benefit the library... **Cherry Valley** – **Christopher Barown** and **Janet Dudley** are new trustees... **Margaretville** – Abolished charges for overdue materials in favor of a donation jar, which is reportedly generating more revenue than collecting fines... **New Berlin** – Director **Darlene LaBrie** and trustees held a "Going Green" open house on May 27 to celebrate the completion of the library's solar panel construction project (*photos and story on p.4*)... **New York Library Association** – Is attempting to get legislation passed (**S.4248** and **A.6155A**) that would reduce the matching requirement from 50% to 25% for NYS Construction Grants for libraries in distressed communities (roughly three-quarters of libraries would qualify) and return the grant award distribution to 90% up front and 10% upon completion... **Norwich** – **Sarah Wiggins** is the new director... **Otego** – Volunteers now deliver books to local senior citizens... **Unadilla** – Board president **Joann Rickard** announced that **Andrea Edwards** is the new director. She had been the library assistant... **Whitney Point** – Held a 50th anniversary open house on June 6... **Worcester** – **Larry De Long** is a new trustee.



Two views of the solar panels at the New Berlin Library. The system is sensitive enough to generate small amounts of electricity from moonlight.



New Berlin Library director **Darlene LaBrie** (far left) and trustees: **Peter Regan**, vice president; **Peggy Finnegan**; **Donna Moseley**, secretary; **Sue Slavicek**, president; **Margaret Caezza**, treasurer; **Chris Aloji**; and **Tammy Carpenter** (absent: **Tom Enstrom**).

New Berlin's solar success story

The library completed the \$82,000 project with virtually no out-of-pocket costs by leveraging funding from the NYS Construction Grant Program and NYSERDA. The solar panels are expected to provide 60% of their electricity. What's next? "A switch to more energy-efficient lighting, which will save us another \$1,000 per year, and a new boiler," Darlene says.



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