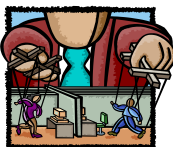


# Seneca District Newsletter

Seneca Library  
District

December 15, 2011



## Micromanagement?

All too often we hear library directors complain, "The Board is micromanaging!"; and board members responding, "Aren't we supposed to be guiding & leading?" The library director and the board then become entangled in a debate over whether the issue is a staff decision or a board decision.

What is micromanagement; and how are such issues resolved? What steps can the director take? One of the first facts the director should be aware of is that the hidden reason for micromanagement is usually based on a lack of confidence in the director. More often than not, when the board has confidence in the director, they will step back and let them do their job. But when there is a lack of confidence, they move closer and closer.

As the director, try to look at things from the trustees'

point of view. Typically the board does not get much direct evidence on whether they should have confidence in their director. So if the director seems unsure, the board packet is sloppy, the budget was not controlled last year, or donor thank-you letters were late, the board often decides to closely monitor and "direct" the director.

Frequently, board members are all over the place in terms of what oversight they believe is appropriate. Sometimes there is a board member who believes *every* decision is a board decision.

To avoid this confusion two elements need to be in place. First, the library should have a written statement clearly differentiating the duties of the board, the director, and the staff. Then the board president MUST organize the board so that the director is not plagued with conflicting orders.

As the director, if you think the board is micromanaging, ask yourself *and* the board president what signals the board is getting that causes them to doubt your ability to lead & manage the library. Then tackle that issue rather than argue over who makes what decisions.

Be careful to pick your battles. Pick ones that are meaningful & not symptomatic of some underlying issue. It is also important to give the board direct feedback by making statements such as, "I appreciate the confidence you have in me demonstrated by your agreeing that this was a staff decision." or "Is this input to my eventual decision or are you saying this is a board decision?"

Based on: Masaoka, Jan, "What is Micromanagement and What Isn't?" *Blue Avocado Board Café*, November 15, 2010.



## District Happenings

### WELCOME:

Please welcome Tamara McIntyre as the new director of the Bradford Area Public Library. Tamara began her duties on November 7.

### SALUTING:

S.W. Smith Memorial Library in Port Allegany broke ground for a new library building in November 2011.

Barbara Moscato Brown Memorial Library received a \$1,250 donation for Children's programming and books from GrafTech Emporium, previously

*(Continued on page 2)*

### District Libraries

- Barbara M. Brown Memorial Library
- Bradford Area Public Library
- Johnsonburg Public Library
- Friends' Memorial Library
- Marienville Area Library
- Mt Jewett Memorial Library
- S.W. Smith Memorial Public Library
- Ridgway Free Public Library
- Sheffield Township Library
- Hamlin Memorial Library
- St Marys Public Library
- Sugar Grove Free Library
- Tidioute Public Library
- S.S. Bovard Memorial Library
- Warren Library Association
- Wilcox Public Library
- Youngsville Public Library

## District Happenings (cont'd from page 1)

(Continued from page 1)

Micron Research. The donation was made in celebration of GrafTech International's 125th anniversary.

St Marys Public Library was awarded a \$4,000 grant from the Elk County Foundation's Harrison and Muriel Dauer Stackpole Family Fund. These funds will be used to cover the cost of downloadable eBooks and audio books.

### **FUNDRAISING:**

Marienville Area Library Friends group held a successful book sale during Oktoberfest in Marienville. In

addition, the annual auction and open house brought in \$1,400.

Marienville Area Library hosted a book signing for Mike Schultz's new book *The Civilian Conservation Corps in the Allegheny National Forest*. For every book sold Mike contributed \$5 to the library which netted \$150.

### **PROGRAMMING:**

Warren Public Library Children's Dept. kicked off the holiday season with an interactive "Christmas with Betsy & Friends Puppet Show" on November 5th. Following the show children made their own puppets.

### **New Years Quotes and Humor:**

"Youth is when you're allowed to stay up late on New Year's Eve. Middle age is when you're forced to."

*Bill Vaughan*

"May all your troubles last as long as your New Year's resolutions!"

*Joey Adams*

"A New Year's resolution is something that goes in one Year and out the other." *Anonymous*

"An optimist stays up until midnight to see the New Year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves." *Bill Vaughan*



### **Schedule Board Visit:**

Please contact the District Consultant to schedule a visit with your board. The visit is needed to introduce *Getting on Board: Tools for Board Development & Assessment* and will take approximately 30 minutes.

### **Regional Trustee Workshop:**

The tentative date for the 2012 regional trustee workshop is May 19, 2012 in Clarion. Please start encouraging

trustees to attend.

### **Spring District Meeting Schedule:**

Here are some very tentative dates for the Spring District Meetings:  
April 27, 2012—Warren Public Library  
May 18, 2012—TBA

### **Children's Program Presenter:**

The Betsy & Friends Puppet Show mentioned above is presented by Betsy McGallis from Erie. Susan Slater says she is affordable and if you would like

Betsy's contact information, you can email Susan(sslater@warrenlibrary.org).

### **Summer Reading Workshop:**

**March 16 or 23**—tentatively at the Sawmill Center for the Arts in Cook Forest from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Watch for the brochure with more details. This is a joint workshop by the Oil Creek and Seneca Districts.

### **E-rate 471 Window:**

January 9, 2012 to March 20, 2012

## District Reminders

## District Professional Collection

### **The New Governance Series from BoardSource**

Board members need more than enthusiasm or good intentions. To be effective, they need to understand & perform all of their governing responsibilities. This updated second edition of BoardSource's series will help board members, chief executives, and senior

staff understand the fundamental elements of service common to most boards, including board member responsibilities, how to structure the board in the most efficient manner, and how to accomplish governance work in the spirit of the mission of the organization. Real-world examples are given as well as tips and pitfalls that provide advice on thorny issues. The series is written by experts

in the nonprofit sector and includes the following six books:

**Dambach, Charles F., Melissa Davis, and Robert L. Gale, Structures and practices of nonprofit boards. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: BoardSource, 2009.**

**Grace, Kay Sprinkel, Amy McClellan, and John A. Yankey, The**



## More District Professional Collection

**nonprofit board's role in mission, planning, and evaluation. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: BoardSource, 2009.**

**Greenfield, James M., Fundraising responsibilities of nonprofit boards. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: BoardSource, 2009.**

**Hopkins, Bruce R., Legal responsibilities of nonprofit boards. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: BoardSource, 2009.**

**Ingram, Richard T., Ten basic responsibilities of nonprofit boards. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: BoardSource, 2009.**

**Lang, Andrew S., Financial responsibilities of nonprofit**

**boards. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: BoardSource, 2009.**

**Dowd, Nancy, Mary Evangeliste, and Jonathan Silberman, Bite-sized marketing: realistic solutions for the overworked librarian. Chicago: American Library Association, 2010.**

The authors, veterans of marketing libraries, suggest small projects for promoting a library that can be combined with everyday procedures. These "mini-campaigns" are designed to make a difference in and of themselves, but they also permit librarians to test a number of strategies and techniques on the cheap. Once it is clear what works in your community, efforts and funds can be directed to those approaches. The book covers word-of-mouth mar-

keting, bringing the library to life with a story, how to market electronic resources, public relations, outreach, advocacy, new marketing tools, design, branding, and marketing best practices.

**Getting on board: tools for board development and assessment.**

**Harrisburg, PA: Office of Commonwealth Libraries, 2011.**

*Getting on board* is designed to address specific issues that are roadblocks for improvement in public libraries. The entire program is intended to encourage positive change in boards so libraries will subsequently improve. Included in these materials is a printed manual, a board training DVD, and a board development checklist.



### Golden Gown

Artist and designer Ryan Novelline creat-

ed this gown by stitching together pages from 300 Golden Books. Pages from the books are sewed into strips using gold thread and the metallic spines form the bodice.



We welcome Cathy Van Aken back to the Seneca District. She is happy to return to the Johnsonburg Public Library after an absence of 10 years. Cathy attended Clarion and has 13 undergraduate library science credits. She has worked in libraries since she was 21 years old. She started out as a library clerk in school libraries & moved on to work in an Army hospital patient library, a Coast Guard Community

### Free SAT Preparation

BLine Test Prep now offers **free** online SAT preparation. The site has interactive web based SAT courses created by top tutors to simulate the real exam and real exam conditions.

[www.blinetestprep.com/sat/](http://www.blinetestprep.com/sat/)

### Virtual Field Trips

The following is a list of world-class art museum web sites that allow you to

view the art as well as include numerous resources and lesson plans for teachers.

#### **Art Institute of Chicago**

[www.artic.edu/aic/resourcefinder/](http://www.artic.edu/aic/resourcefinder/)

#### **Denver Art Museum**

[www.wackykids.org/welcome.htm](http://www.wackykids.org/welcome.htm)

For grades 2-5

#### **J. Paul Getty Museum**

[www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom\\_resources/](http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/)

## Quick Notes

## Meet the Librarian

Library, & an Army Community Library where she was the Library Manager.

As an Army wife, she lived in Germany as well as numerous locations in the US. Cathy has two sons, both married, & three granddaughters, "the gaggle of girls." Her sons live in Rochester, NY & Chicago; but other family members

live in this area.

Of course, Cathy's favorite hobby is reading but she also enjoys yard work. Cathy also confesses that her favorite library tasks are ordering & covering books.

She has enjoyed seeing past friends from the District & is looking forward to getting to know those who are new.

## Seneca Library District

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*Serving libraries in five counties.*



## Seneca Library District

We're on the web at  
[www.warrenlibrary.org](http://www.warrenlibrary.org)



- ◆ New Year's is the oldest of all holidays, as it was first observed in ancient Babylon.
- ◆ The tradition of using a baby to signify the New Year was started by ancient Greeks around 600 B.C. They would carry a baby around to honor Dionysus, the god of fertility and symbolize his annual rebirth.
- ◆ The very first ball was lowered in Times Square on December 31, 1907.
- ◆ Celebrating New Year on January 1 is purely arbitrary, as it has neither agricultural or astronomical significance. Many countries still celebrate it in spring.
- ◆ Noisemaking and fireworks on New Year's Eve is believed to have originated in ancient times, when noise and fire were thought to dispel evil spirits and bring good luck.
- ◆ *Auld Lang Syne* was composed by Robert Burns sometime in the 1700's and means "old long ago" or "the good old days."
- ◆ The ball in Times Square was **not** lowered in 1942 and 1943 due to wartime restrictions.
- ◆ Many cultures believe that anything given or taken on New Year's in the shape of a ring is good luck, because it symbolizes "coming full circle."
- ◆ Traditionally, it was thought that people could alter the luck they would have throughout the coming year by what they did or ate on the first day of the year. Therefore, it was important to celebrate in the company of family and friends.
- ◆ In Brazil, most people wear white clothes on New Year's Eve to bring good luck and peace for the year.
- ◆ In Colombia, Cuba and Puerto Rico, families stuff a life-sized male doll with things that have bad memories or sadness associated with them. The doll is dressed in old clothes from each family member and at midnight, this "Mr. Old Year" is set on fire.



## Moments in Our Lives

\* **Cindy Parker** is delighted to announce that her son-Frank proposed to his girlfriend during a recent trip to Ireland. Cindy is also very happy to say that she and her husband Joe have recently moved to a home on the outskirts of Kane. She is anxiously awaiting her first bear sighting.



## New Years