



Montgomery County Library Board

May 11, 2022

ATTENDEES: Briskin-Limehouse, Christman, Duval, Levine, Lighter, Manubay, Pant, Roberts, Spencer, Fiery, Miller, Montgomery, Schiff

STAFF: Anita Vassallo, Director, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary; Maranda Schoppert, Head of Children's Services, Germantown Library; Amy Alapati, Head of Children Services, Damascus Library; Cassandra Malik, Early Literacy and Children's Program Manager

GUESTS: Linda Pottern, Chair, Davis Library Advisory Committee

The meeting was called to order by Chair Roberts at 7:01 PM

INTRODUCTIONS:

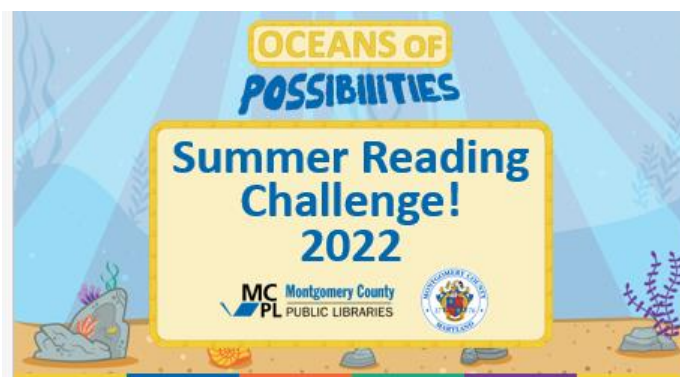
- Roll call of Board members; guests were introduced.

MINUTES AND LAC APPLICATION APPROVALS:

- The minutes from the April 13, 2022, meeting were approved.
- The following LAC applications were approved:
 - Aspen Hill – Illahi, Stephenson
 - Potomac - Satchi

PRESENTATION: Summer Reading Challenge

Cassandra Malik, Early Literacy and Children's Program Manager; Amy Alapati, Head of Children's Services, Damascus Library; Maranda Schoppert, Head of Children's Services, Germantown Library



Background

Summer reading programs began in the late nineteenth century as a way to encourage school children to develop the habit of reading during vacation.

Goals:

- Foster a love of reading through public library programs and services.
- Involve all family members in the library summer reading experience.
- Improve children's access to library materials and activities, encouraging them to become lifelong library users.
- Support the County Executive's "Priority Outcome and Headline Measure" Thriving Youth and Families.

Statistics

Registration Numbers

	Preschool	Elementary	Middle/High	Total Registration
2019	3150	7410	629	11,189
2020	1023	2914	415	4352
2021	1923	4170	500	6593

- Here are the Summer Reading Registration Numbers for MCPL for the past few years. As you can see, there was a decline in 2020, which is completely understandable due to Covid. In 2021, registration numbers increased in every age group.

Program Changes

- Name: Summer Reading Challenge!
- Books at sign up
- Washington Nationals vouchers at midpoint
- Elimination of small giveaway prizes
- Children and teens will make tangible environmental contributions

- So what changes are we making this year? Here are the highlights.
 - Program name: our Summer Reading program is now called the Summer Reading Challenge! instead of Summer Read and Learn. We made this name change after reviewing program names from around the State and the Country. The Summer Reading Committee picked our favorite, and Director Vassallo approved.
 - Every participant, from birth through 17, gets a book when they sign up for the program instead of at the end when they complete it. Several other area library systems have made this change in recent years and said it spurred an increase in registration. This also allows us to get books into the hands of reluctant readers who may not complete the program.
 - All participants get Washington Nationals voucher for 2 tickets at the program midpoint, not the end.

- We are no longer giving away small prizes during the program. Instead, children and teens are going to make tangible environmental contributions.



- Why are we making these changes?
 - First, the theme this year, which is "Oceans of Possibilities," lends itself well to a focus on the environment and conservation. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, there are over 23 million metric tons of plastic waste in the world's oceans and waterways.
 - Second, these changes align with the County Executive's Priority Outcomes and Headline Measure of A Greener County, which emphasizes reducing our footprint through the reduction of waste.
 - Third, by focusing on ways to improve the natural environment along the Bay, we are aligning with the goals of the County's Climate Action Plan, which was released in June 2021.
 - Fourth, a focus on Saving the Bay aligns with MCPS's Curriculum, more specifically the Fifth Grade Chesapeake Bay Unit.



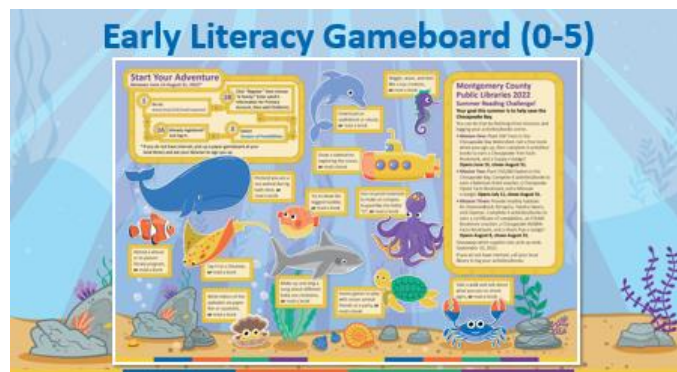
- In order to give children and teens the opportunity to make tangible environmental contributions, we are partnering with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation this summer. As I previously mentioned, with every mission summer readers complete, MCPL will make a contribution to support the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's mission to clean up the bay. The CBF, in turn, will plant trees along the watershed, restore oysters to the bay, and clean up animal habitats.
- How did this partnership come about?
 - The idea of doing something to help the environment was pitched to Director Vassallo last August. We settled on partnering with the CBF to accomplish this because it is local to Maryland, also because of our Summer Reading Theme, Oceans of Possibilities.
 - As stated on their website, the CBF's motto, "Save the Bay," is a regional rallying cry for pollution reduction throughout the Chesapeake's six-state, 64,000-square-mile

watershed, which is home to more than 18 million people and 3,000 species of plants and animals.”

- Every year, the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County give MCPL funds to use to support summer programming. This year, we asked to allocate part of these funds to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to help “Save the Bay.” Summer Reading Committee members pitched this partnership to the FOLMC in November. They enthusiastically supported our proposal.
- We then connected with Jessica Rubino, the Events and Promotions Coordinator for the CBF, in November. With the Committee's help, we brainstormed different ways we could have children and teens help “Save the Bay.” We ultimately settled on the three ways already mentioned: Planting Trees, Planting Oysters in the Bay, and Preserving Animal Habitats – more specifically of Diamondback Terrapins, Tundra Swans, and Ospreys.
- The website: MCPL's digital strategies team and graphic designer have done a fantastic job creating this year's summer reading website. The website will go live prior to the start of the program and will be a place for our patrons to get more information about the program, sign-up & sign-in to the program, access librarian curated booklists, how to videos and more!



- When signing up for the program, children can print or come to one of MCPL's branches to pick up a gameboard. This is a preview of our early literacy gameboard for ages 0-5. Here we see the start and end dates for the program on the front and on the back there is a Certificate of Completion their adults can sign off for them. Children will also get an online Certificate of Completion from READSquared, our summer reading platform.



- On the inside of these gameboards are directions for participating, as well as activities they can do to help save the bay! On our 0-5 gameboard we have fun activities like pretending to be a sea creature or blowing the biggest bubble! Of course, kids can also read a book instead of doing an activity.
- The 6-12 year old gameboard is a similar design, but with different activities and graphics.
- An example of an activity for this age group is to write a story or comic about a submarine or diving adventure OR learn to say the word "Ocean" in three different languages.



- We are very excited about our Summer Reading Challenge! bookmarks. Participants earn these useful and informative bookmarks as they work their way through each mission. The bookmarks have fun facts about an aspect of the Chesapeake Bay and a QR code that leads back to the Summer Reading Challenge! website. As participants complete missions, they earn a different bookmark. Here you see the bookmarks for missions 1 and 2; featuring White Oak trees and oysters, respectively, both of which are very important to the life of the Bay.
- Here you can see the bookmarks for Mission 3. We are featuring the Tundra Swan, Diamondback Turtle and Osprey, who are all residents of the Chesapeake Bay, and whose habitats participants are reading to conserve. Again, you can see the bookmarks have a photo, fun facts and a QR code that leads to the Summer Reading Challenge! website. Our bookmark distribution for Missions 1, 2 & 3 will mirror the changes we will make to the website reflecting our reading milestones. As children meet the milestones, we will populate the website with trees, oysters, Tundra Swans, Diamondback Terrapins, and Ospreys.



- There will also be a summer reading challenge for teens. Teens will have to do activities or read books to earn e-affle tickets. They will also receive a free book for signing up, an FOL voucher, a Nationals voucher and trivia book marks along the way. Teen activities include making videos of themselves working on community service projects or reviewing books on Readsquared.
- This year, MCPL will be holding a Kick-off party to celebrate the start of Summer Reading. This party will be held rain or shine, on Saturday, June 18 from 10:30 -12:00 noon at the Rockville branch. If the weather cooperates, the Chesapeake Bay, Abracadabra Alex and Nationals mascot, Screech will hopefully be visiting. We will have signups, book giveaways and craft tables.
- The Summer Reading Committee has booked 2 programs for each branch, generously funded by FOLMC. That's a total of 40 performer programs we are able to bring to our customers this summer. These include musical performances by Mr. Jon, 123 Andres and Rhythmaya; storytelling by Arianna Ross and Diane Macklin; and Magic and more by Peter Wood and Kevin Sherry. We even have live animals coming to visit with Echoes of Nature and Scales and Tales. And there is a whole lot more, including Science in the Summer and Energy Express.



- Something new we are trying this year is having our own Shark Appreciation Week. It's perfect for the theme and everyone on the committee is really excited about it. Shark Appreciation Week will be from July 24 – 30. Branches will have book displays, display an ancient shark fossil, and create shark themed take and make crafts. We will also be introducing Flat Shark Finley, our sharky friend that kids can take pictures with on their summer adventures. They can post and tag their Flat Shark Finley's on social media during shark week.
- Once again, MCPL is partnering with the Washington Nationals to promote Summer Reading. The most exciting piece of the partnership are the ticket vouchers – every participant who completes Mission 2 will receive a paper voucher for two tickets to a regular Season Nationals game. Participants can redeem the vouchers online and choose the game that works best for them. The Nationals will also give us Nationals-branded promotional items to distribute (bookmarks). The Nationals will promote our Summer Reading program through their website, scoreboard announcements and radio and TV ads. In return, we will include their logo on our gameboards and other Summer Reading materials.



- Our goal is to increase our registration numbers across all age levels so they are closer to 2019 levels. We have developed a comprehensive marketing plan to help us accomplish this.
- Thank you to the Friends of the Library Montgomery County for helping to make the Summer Reading Challenge a success.
- **Feedback/Questions/Comments**
 - Grace Manuby – Thank you for this wonderful presentation. In my non Library Board hat, I work as an environmental educator, and I think there are a lot of parallels that this program can be promoted outside of the library system. I would be happy to chat with the team offline to brainstorm opportunities.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- **Personnel** - The following staff changes took place during the month of April 2022:
 - New Hires:
 - Rajeeni Galloway, Librarian I, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee
 - Chanda Hardin, Librarian I, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee
 - Emma Whitty, Librarian I, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee
 - Anna Morrison, Librarian I, Brigadier General Charles E. McGee
 - Erin Fishman, Librarian II, Long Branch
 - Promotions:
 - Sumi Lee, Library Desk Assistant (Quince Orchard) to Library Assistant I (Little Falls)
 - Shruti Taneja, Library Desk Assistant to Library Assistant I (Connie Morella)
 - Matthew Fowler, Library Desk Assistant to Library Assistant I (Marilyn Praisner)
 - Sandra Sauvajot, Library Desk Assistant (Wheaton) to Library Assistant I (Quince Orchard)
 - Gauri Holman, Library Desk Assistant (Rockville Memorial) to Library Assistant I (Aspen Hill)
 - Lauri Lindqvist, Library Desk Assistant (Connie Morella) to Library Assistant I (Chevy Chase)
 - Wubit Ababe, Library Desk Assistant (Gaithersburg) to Library Assistant I (Rockville Memorial)
 - Koren Nero, Library Aide (Brigadier General Charles E. McGee) to Library Assistant I (White Oak)
 - Leroy Simon, Library Desk Assistant (Brigadier General Charles E. McGee) to Library Assistant I (Long Branch)
 - Transfers:
 - Colleen East, Library Desk Assistant, Connie Morella to Brigadier General Charles E. McGee
 - Anne Gerlach, Librarian II, Twinbrook to White Oak
 - Susan Smith, Librarian I, Long Branch to Davis
 - Sonha Mason, Library Associate, Little Falls to Community Engagement Cluster
 - Separated from County Service:
 - Jamie Kim, Librarian I, Gaithersburg
 - Barbara McClayton, Human Resource Manager (MIII), Central Administration
- **Hiring:**
 - Working on offers to fill eight Senior Librarian positions, four Children's Librarian II positions, and a number of part-time Librarian I positions.
 - Recruitments for Library Assistant II, Library Desk Assistant, and Library Aide have just closed.
 - Vacancies as of today – 107
 - Made an offer to a candidate for the Human Resources Manager; now with the Office of Human Resources (OHR).
 - An advertisement has been sent to OHR for a third assistant director.
- **Refresh/Construction Updates:**
 - Maggie Nightingale - Will reopen on Saturday, May 21, 2022 at 11:30 AM (reopening ceremony).
 - Damascus - Draft Facility Assessment under review by the Division of Building Design and Construction and design will begin in May 2022.
 - Potomac - Will close on Sunday, May 22, 2022. Staff will remain in building. Intent to Award Letter to contractor will be issued week of May 9. Anticipated Notice to Proceed will be given to contractor in early June. Shelving removal tentatively scheduled

for mid-June. Construction to begin week of July 4. Protect and conserve the garden area.

- Noyes – Added back into the Capital Improvements Project Budget.
- Clarksburg – The Department of General Services Division of Building Design and Construction submitted a Program of Requirements for the new Clarksburg library for MCPL to review. MCPL is reviewing and updating outdated items.
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - **Gaithersburg Book Festival**, Saturday, May 21, 10 AM – 6 PM; Bohrer Park, 506 S. Frederick Ave., Gaithersburg; free to attend, free parking.
 - **Creative Bravely: Time to Make Your Mark!** Sunday, May 22, 11 AM, Gaithersburg Library. New York Times best-selling picture book author Peter H. Reynolds and his twin brother and co-author Paul A. Reynolds
 - **Stories to Broaden Understanding: Authors Series**
 - June 14, 7-8 p.m. **Meet Author Laila el-Haddad**
Howard County author, social activist, policy analyst and journalist Laila el-Haddad will discuss her work, *The Gaza Kitchen: A Palestinian Culinary Journey*, which received the “Best Arab Cuisine Book.” With photographs by Maddie Schmitt, it recounts stories about cooking, farming and family.
<https://mcpl.libnet.info/event/6348097>
- **Comments/Questions:**
 - Councilmember Jawando sent a memo suggesting a change in the plans for the refresh for Chevy Chase.
 - Chevy Chase remains in the Capital Improvement Plan as a refresh. We are unsure what is going to happen. No final decision has been made.
 - There was an expression of interest, not a request for proposal, to see if there were any developers who were interested in working with the county on the site to do something that would provide a larger footage for the library building on the site. More information can be found on the DGS site: [Chevy Chase Library Building Project \(montgomerycountymd.gov\)](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/Chevy-Chase-Library-Building-Project)
 - Indoor programs for children – MCPL resumed indoor in person programming on May 1.
 - Updates on the Strategic Planning process – We meet every week. We are currently looking at the mission and vision statements and core values. A survey was sent to staff giving them the opportunity to give feedback. Kate Frades has done an amazing job with this. It is focused, with understandable targets and measurable goals.

CHAIR’ S REPORT:

- Next two Board meetings will be in person. If something changes, we will revisit this.
- Members were encouraged to attend the Maggie Nightingale reopening.
- Summer Reading Challenge Kickoffs on June 15.

WORKGROUP REPORTS:

- Library Policy and Practices (Lighter, Duval, Briskin-Limehouse, Manubay, Fiery)
 - Met last month.
 - Focusing on the Library Policies on the website. Have some questions and want to get some input. Director Vassallo will meet with the workgroup to discuss this in more detail.
 - Proposing and working on a questionnaire for the LACs.
- Legislative and Public Affairs Workgroup (Montgomery, Schiff)
 - Budget is coming up for consideration before Council tomorrow morning. Will be discussing the Jawando memo regarding Chevy Chase.

- The Education and Culture Committee put \$160k for each of these world languages – Chinese and Spanish.
- Had an opportunity to say thank you to Councilmember Friedson for his memo to the State delegation that produced the bond for Noyes.
- The advocacy group will attend the CIP hearing session on May 12.
- LAC and Board Activities (Roberts, Levine)
 - Still trying to connect with inactive LACs with hopes of reconstituting these groups. Thinking of ways to engage the communities. Send an email to LAC chairs by next Friday on how they can engage the communities and get them involved in all of the libraries.

OLD BUSINESS:

- None

NEW BUSINESS:

- LAC Handbook revisions – Tabled until the June meeting.

LIAISON REPORTS:

- Marilyn Praisner – Continues to meet. Gearing up for summer break.
- Silver Spring – Continues to meet. Preparing for summer break.
- Montgomery County Public Schools – Gearing up for the end of school. Had MCPL staff present the Summer Reading Challenge (SRC) presentation to middle school media specialists. Next week there are elementary and high school meetings with media specialist to support MCPL's SRC. A number of MCPS media specialists are volunteering at the Gaithersburg Book Festival. From 8:30 to noon on Saturday is a Pride Town Hall at Walter Johnson High School. MCPS media specialists will have a presence at this event as well. They will bring some library books that support LGBTQ. Summer school is happening at most of the schools; it is not as robust as last year. MCPS is opening a new elementary school in late August. It will be Harriet Tubman ES in an area called Kelly Park in Gaithersburg.
- Rockville Memorial – Met last week. Discussion included LAC recruitment and getting more members with diverse backgrounds. Planning on meeting remotely in June. Continued having questions for FOLMC – centralization issue. This emphasizes the poor communication between the chapters and FOLMC.
- Twinbrook – Continues to be defunct.
- Damascus – Has not had an LAC meeting. They started a daytime book club, which will begin on June 16 and meet every third Thursday.
- Maggie Nightingale – Did not have an LAC meeting. Assume they are ramping up for the reopening later this month. Did reach out to the branch manager to see if she had an update or if she needed support.
- Quince Orchard – Attended first LAC meeting, there were two members and the former chair. The acting branch manager helped pull the meeting together. They are interested in a new organization chart based on the restructure. Wants to know if the Overdrive limits on holds can be raised from ten. The branch is opposite the high school and teachers, subs, parents, and students have been using the library parking lot. Director Vassallo: *Messaging regarding the parking has to come from the school system. The branch manager must reach out to the principal. The assistant director will talk to branch manager.* The LAC will try to meet again at the end of July.
- Accessibility Advisory – Gone quiet; meets quarterly.
- Olney – Meets next week. Had the first meeting of the LEGO club.
- Kensington Park – Doesn't currently have an LAC. Touched base with the branch manager who is moving the reconstitution of the LAC to the forefront since there is no Friends group

anymore. They haven't had an LAC in some time, so they will need some assistance in figuring out how to generate membership.

- Wheaton – Met in April. Had a discussion again about the Friends group, and the branch manager provided some history about why Wheaton never had a Friends group. They had some general questions about how funds are going to get allocated and tracked. Concerned about returning to in person only events. Group meets at 8 PM; the branch is closed at that time. Meeting virtually brings more diverse participation. *It is up to the branch to decide how they will meet.*
- Little Falls – They have been busy. They submitted a memo to both Chair Roberts and the director about some outdoor space renovations that they would like to see. Any feedback that can taken back to them before their meeting in June would be helpful. They are concerned that their request is not being taken seriously. The past LAC chair and current secretary, David Shumaker, is stepping down due to relocation. They will be holding elections next month. Lastly, they've got a nice process for publicizing the library via a community newspaper.
- Long Branch – Does not have an LAC group. Met with the branch manager in late April. On May 15 there will be a picnic at Arliss Park; Long Branch Library will have a table.
- Connie Morella – Met on May 10. Almost a full roster. Eric Carzon helped. Discussed vacancies issue.
- Potomac – Has not met since last report. Meets again in June. Some of the LAC members were involved in the garden and are pleased with the outcome.
- White Oak – Has not met since March. Will meet the first week in June and will hold elections. They did provide some questions for FOLMC.
- Aspen Hill – Met in late April. Dolores, who we approved via a vote last meeting, attended that meeting. She was actually elected secretary at that meeting. So great first meeting for her. Two additional members were added through the vote tonight. Meets again next Monday.
- Germantown - Needs to reconstituted.
- Noyes – Had no meeting in April. Meeting scheduled for May 12.
- Chevy Chase – Doesn't have a functioning LAC. There were three members at the beginning of the year. The branch manager tried to organize a meeting with the two remaining members.
- Davis –Have not yet met with the Davis LAC. This LAC is very, very active and very involved in the branch. They have a joint meeting with their FOL; will be meeting with both of them this month.
- Montgomery College – A resolution regarding the elimination of library fines successfully passed; it is effective May 23 for students, faculty, staff and the public. In the next couple of weeks will meet with Takoma Park Silver Spring Council to update them on the beginning phase of library renovations for the Takoma Park Silver Spring Library location.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- The Davis LAC is happy to have the new liaison, Marilyn. We're excited to see her at our meeting on the 23rd. It's a Zoom meeting, and we're thinking that we're going to keep the virtual meetings because it's what preferred by most of the members. I think we are very lucky also for having Sonja as an acting liaison, who is now able to move on. We loved having you, but know that you have a busy schedule. I think this will be a great time, and hopefully we will have good discussions and be able to accomplish a lot. Thank you. [Linda Pottern]

ADJOURNMENT:

- The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.