I’ve lost count of the times I’ve been involved in the crafting of a strategic plan. It seems that there is no end to the organizations that are willing to listen to what I have to say about their futures. I would be savagely delighted to tell you how I feel about the strategic planning process, but that will have to wait for some future issue of the Yak. I won’t be critiquing strategic plans today, but want to address an adjective that always comes up during the process, particularly when we’re discussing libraries.

**NIMBLE**

At some point in every planning process, library leaders express their concern that their organization needs to be nimble. What this means in terms of planning is that libraries will “lose” (I never understand what we’ll lose, or what the loss of this thing will do to us) if we are not able to adapt on the fly to changes in technology, economic factors, and/or demographics faster than Barry Allen on a caffeine jag.

Nonsense! I submit that public libraries are the most nimble organizations in existence. We are constantly engaging our users with marketing to get them up to speed on our latest technology, our new information products and our new user-centric policies. So why is there this perception that we need to be more nimble?

**I figured it out. It’s not us.**

**IT IS NOT US!**

Who are these anti-nimble organizations that are holding us back?

Let’s talk about the big database providers, who are selling the same information to tens of thousands of libraries day after day making money like compounded interest. On the Eastern Shore, our EBSCO database usage (downloads) dropped nearly 45% from 2017 to 2018.

**While the cost of the product rose by 5%, ESRL’s cost per download increased by 90%.**

You may have to read those two sentences again, but you should begin to see that this is not a sustainable model. This has been the trend with the majority of the information-style databases that we offer. The prevalence of the Web in everyone’s daily lives contributes significantly to the decline in the usage of these information sources. It is just too quick and easy to get an answer – any old answer is good enough – from Google. Is it too much to ask that these information providers stop swimming in their vaults like Scrooge McDuck and help us find a way to help our users more efficiently and at a more reasonable cost? Could they please be a little more nimble?

In contrast, let’s look at our other type of electronic resources – ebooks and streaming media. The averages for Overdrive and Hoopla on the Eastern Shore tell a different story. Average usage for these two resources increased by 35% from 2017 to 2018, the costs increased 15%, but the cost per download decreased by 15%.

Are these companies making money? They sure are, but as long as our usage increases and the cost per use decreases, it’s a win for libraries.

So, continue to celebrate our nimble-ness/nimble-iciouness/nimble-icity or whatever noun form of nimble you prefer. Just remember when someone tells you libraries need to be more nimble – it’s not us!
As part of my job as Training Coordinator, I attend a lot of conferences. Since this is the time of year when many library systems are planning their staff development and conference attendance plans for the year, I thought I’d take this space and give you my top 5 Conference Tips.

1. **Bring your most comfortable walking shoes**
   I’m always astounded by how much walking I do at any conference, and especially at the larger convention centers, the carpet tends not to have much padding. Save yourself the blisters and the pain!

2. **Talk to as many people as you can**
   I go to conferences as much for the networking as for anything else. I’ve met mentors, collaboration partners, and excellent trainers at conferences – as well as some of my closest friends. Especially here on the Eastern Shore, we don’t always have opportunities for in-person conversations with others in the library field, and conferences are a great place to find those opportunities.

3. **Sign up for a preconference if you can**
   Preconferences provide chances to really dig deep into a topic, and explore details and practical applications to a much greater extent than is possible in a 1-hour presentation. Registration is usually limited, which means that you can expect personal interaction with the presenter and your fellow attendees – but also means you should sign up early!

4. **Broaden your horizons**
   Try to attend at least one session on a topic that’s outside your normal scope of work. One of the best ways to get new ideas is to listen to what people are doing in different departments, or even in different kinds of libraries. Attending those kinds of presentations has often provided me with a fresh perspective, or given me ideas about how to adapt or modify what I’m doing.

5. **Make sure to take notes**
   There’s so much going on at any given conference that it’s easy to suffer from information overload. There’s nothing worse than getting back from a conference, only to find that you can’t quite remember that one brilliant idea you had, or why you wanted to talk to someone whose business card you collected.

---

**Book Club Kits**

Do you lead book clubs on the Eastern Shore? Well, we are revamping our book club kits process to make it easier for you! Incase you didn’t know, ESRL has over 140 book club kits that you can now check out through Polaris! To check out the list of available kits search ‘book club kit’ from ESRL’s branch. Book Clubs are a great program to add to your library’s offerings. If you have a hard time leading book club discussion, here are some professional collection books that might help you out:

- *The Book Club Companion: A Comprehensive Guide to the Reading Group Experience* by Diana Loevy
- *Running Book Discussion Groups: A How-To-Do-It Manual* by Lauren Zina John
CALENDAR OF EVENTS on the shore

JANUARY
January 10th - Intro to Library Work Training
January 21st - MLK Day (ESRL Closed)
January 25-29th - ALA Mid-Winter (Seattle, WA)
January 31st - eGroup Meeting

FEBRUARY
February 4th - CLES
February 5th - Marketing & Printer Liaison Meeting
February 5th - MD Virtual Legal Services Training
February 18th - President's Day (ESRL Closed)

MARCH
March 7th - Social Media Conference (Del Tech)
March 11th - LBPH/Future Makers Training
March 25th - Compassion Fatigue
March 26-28th - Computers in Libraries Conference (Arlington, VA)

APRIL
April 8-11th - Naomi Shihab Nye (Author Visit)
April 19th - Good Friday (ESRL Closed)

MAY
May 1-3rd - MLA/DLA Conference (Hyatt Cambridge)
May 27th - Memorial Day (ESRL Closed)

Please contact Sam@esrl.org for more information on any of our trainings or to sign up!

HELLO!

“With so much change comes new faces, here is one we are welcoming back home to the Shore!”

Ashley Teagle - Wicomico Public Library, Executive Director

Director Teagle began her position in early January 2019. Teagle comes to WPL from her position as Branch Manager of the Waldorf West Branch of the Charles County Public Library. Teagle grew up in Salisbury and relocated to Southern Maryland to begin her career as a librarian. Since 2012 she has worked as a public services librarian, reference supervisor, and branch manager in Charles County. She has experience with creative programming for all ages, implementing innovative technologies, and establishing community partnerships.

“My particular areas of focus in librarianship are under-served populations such as persons experiencing homelessness, leadership development and reader’s advisory.”

Teagle earned her Master’s in Library and Information Science from the University of Southern Mississippi. Her B.A. in English and Communications Arts is from Hood College in Frederick, Maryland. She is an active member of the American Library Association and the Maryland Library Association where she serves on the Leadership Development Division.

“I look forward to working with her on many exciting and innovative education projects in Wicomico County as well as the entire region” said John Venditta.

Book Clubs:
Do you lead book clubs on the Eastern Shore? Well, we are revamping our book club kits process to make it easier for you! Incase you didn't know, ESRL has over 140 book club kits that you can now check out through Polaris! To check out the list of available kits search 'book club kit' from ESRL's branch. Book Clubs are a great program to add to your library's offerings. If you have a hard time leading book club discussion, here are some professional collection books that might help you out:

- The Book Club Companion: A Comprehensive Guide to the Reading Group Experience by Diana Loevy
- Running Book Discussion Groups: A How-To-Do-It Manual by Lauren Zina John
The Eastern Shore Libraries has said ‘Goodbye’ to some great leaders this year that are leaving some rather large shoes to fill.

Andrea Berstler -
Wicomico Public Libraries, Executive Director

A note from Andrea....

As difficult as it is to believe, on November 12 I begin a new chapter as the Executive Director for Carroll County Public Library. It has been a wonderful 6 years here on the Eastern Shore. I have enjoyed getting to meet many of you in that time, and our libraries have had some wonderful growth, including two new buildings.

I have been asked, “What one thing am I most proud of during my time here?” I would have to say the growth of this network of wonderful community partners that have supported our libraries. Thanks to the efforts of these partners and the work of our staff members, Friends and boards, we have been able to expand our services and offer a wide variety of classes and programs on a very constrained budget. It is this cooperative effort that has allowed the libraries here on the Eastern Shore to be leaders throughout the state in many ways.

Our communities should be very proud of their libraries. The people here are doing amazing things, and more are in the works. For my part, I believe that due to the quality work of my staff, the people of Wicomico County can enjoy inclusive, welcoming community libraries that provide a safe place for learning, discovering and connecting; full of resources to enrich and empower the people of this community.

John Walden -
Queen Anne’s County Library, Director

In early January, Walden and his family relocated to the Charleston, S.C., area where he will assume a senior management position with the Charleston County Library system.

The library has flourished thanks to Walden’s six year tenure, focusing on service and technology. Through Walden’s direction a partnership with the Queen Anne’s County schools evolved, enabling students to have virtual library cards, more familiarity with the benefits of the library and greater access to technology. From the start he brought a positive, can-do attitude that helped the Library turn over a new leaf. His initiatives were customer-focused and he embraced ideas that made the Library more user-friendly.

Rachael Stein -
ESRL, Information Services Manager

As you may have heard, Rachael has started a new library adventure at the Eastern Correctional Institution after working at ESRL for 11 years. We have come to expect excellence across the variety of work that Rachael did for the region, from the amazing author visits, to her advocacy for children’s services, her collection development skills, her ability to deal with database vendors, and most of all her conviction that we can impact the quality of library service to the people of the Eastern Shore. We will all miss her dearly.
Eastern Shore Public Libraries

Economic Impact Study

Serves:
- 8 Counties
- 23 Branches
- 351,000 Total Population Served

309 Jobs Supported
$3.65 Value per Dollar Invested
265% Return on Investment

Community Impact:
- Workforce Development, Business Development,
  Literacy, & Community Culture

Financial Impact:
- Economic Impact: Operational $21.7 Million,
  Capital Expenditures $3.8 Million
- Value of Materials $28 Million,
  Services $8.8 Million
- Total Annual Value: $62.3 Million
ESRL has adopted the following anti-harassment policy for all of its events. The policy is not a response to any specific circumstances, but serves to clarify expectations and procedures for ESRL-sponsored activities.

The Eastern Shore Regional Library (ESRL) is dedicated to working towards a harassment-free event experience for all participants, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, age, religion, geographic origin, or class; deliberate intimidation; stalking; body policing (including gender policing in all bathrooms); online harassment, stalking, or doxing; unwelcome photography or recording; sustained disruption of talks or other events; inappropriate physical contact; and unwelcome sexual attention. Participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately. This policy applies alike to audience members, presenters, and ESRL staff.

Harassment does not include: respectful disagreement or critique in good faith. Nor does it include the presentation or discussion of controversial materials or ideas.

If a participant engages in harassing behavior at an ESRL event, the ESRL Director, ESRL Training Coordinator, or other designated ESRL representative may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the offender, expelling the offender from the event, and/or contacting law enforcement. If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact an ESRL staff member immediately. You can also call ESRL at 410-742-1537, or email the ESRL Director or ESRL Training Coordinator to file harassment reports at any time, including after the event has ended.

I recently finished my training needs assessment meetings with each of the eight county libraries, in order to identify training priorities for FY19. Two topics surfaced as priorities for at least half of the systems: Cultural Awareness / Microaggressions & Safety and Security

Additionally, much interest was expressed in the capabilities of the Tableau system, as well as the ways in which Lori can work with the libraries to help them achieve their data visualization goals. We plan on offering trainings on all three of these topics in the coming fiscal year. Stay tuned for further details!
ESRL: How long have you been working at Caroline?

DK: I started working at CCPL in early January, so, close to six months.

ESRL: What were you doing before you started working there?

DK: I was working at a dock in St. Michael’s – at the Inn at Perry Cabin – and performing some concierge duties.

ESRL: What has been the most surprising thing about working in a library?

DK: The overturning of the expectation I had - almost an inherent bias - that the library was going to be a quiet, stuffy place. I think that was mostly reinforced by college libraries where you only went to study and didn’t speak above a whisper. I applied for the job sight unseen. When I stopped by the library to visit I was really amazed by the difference from what I expected initially, both in the maker space and in the rest of the library. The way the librarians carried themselves and the whole environment was really different from what I expected - in a positive way!

ESRL: What is your favorite part of your job?

DK: Really, I feel like my entire job has been a consistent positive experience. Whether it’s dealing with patrons, spending time in the maker space - I have a three hours block every night where I’m just in the maker space with the kids. I actually enjoy working the front desk too, and getting to talk to people and check out materials. The employees are great as well - they have a great work ethic and sense of camaraderie. They made me feel like I was a part of things right away. I’ve just had a really good time.

ESRL: I’ve heard that you’ve formed a rapport with the kids who hang out in the teen area. Do you have any advice for librarians who work with teens?

DK: If there were a winning formula, we’d know it by now, but teens are such complex creatures. A good place to start is meeting them on their level and showing an interest in things they’re interested in. The kids are surprised when they learn that I’ve actually spent some time learning to play Fortnite (the big game right now). Spend time talking to them about what they’re doing, and treat them as people, not nuisances. A lot of times kids have energy levels that librarians don’t relate to - try to channel that energy into something positive. Mostly, I’ve been trying to form a sense of mutual respect with the kids.

ESRL: What have you been reading, watching, listening to, or playing lately?

If you haven't heard, we have a Polaris help desk! Just email polaris-help@esrl.org for assistance with any issues related to the shared ILS. The help desk will be operated by our staff member, Lori Staton.

When submitting a problem to the helpdesk it is important to include the following information:

1. Description of the problem with as many details as possible so the help desk can replicate the issue.

2. Screenshots of any error messages.

3. File attachments of any documents relevant to the issue.

4. Computer or area in which the problem occurred.

We hope that our users will benefit from the new centralized system and invite all of you to direct any questions/queries/issues to the new helpdesk email.

The Polaris Help Desk is the first point of contact for most Polaris issues at ESRL, providing both functional and technical support for the integrated library system for all eight county library systems on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The help desk focuses on providing solutions to library staff seeking assistance in managing acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, and public access within their collections. The help desk also assists other library departments with documentation, planning and user education.

Naomi Shihab Nye is one of the most celebrated writers for young people working today. Her novel *The Turtle of Oman* was named an ALA Notable Children's Book, and she received the 2018 May Hill Arbuthnot Honor Lecture Award. Her newest book is *Voices in the Air: Poems for Listeners.*
1. What fictional place would you most like to go?
L: Jurassic Park (but without participating in the running, screaming, or dying part)
M: Ambridge, Borsetshire (the setting of The Archers, a long-running British radio show)
A: The Hundred-Acre Wood or San Junipero

2. What’s your favorite genre of book or movie?
L: Horror
M: Drama
A: Literary fiction and psychological thrillers

3. Would you rather have unlimited sushi or unlimited tacos for life?
L: Tacos
M: Tacos (vegetarian ones!)
A: Chicken tacos all the way!

4. What’s the best Halloween costume idea you’ve ever had?
L: Laveaus’s Voodoo Doll
M: A volcano
A: I dressed as a wolf in sheep’s clothing

5. If you could rule the world for a day, what one thing would you ban?
L: Politicians using Twitter
M: Social media
A: Adverts or reality television

In case you have not met them yet, here are the new faces at ESRL! Mira (left), our Catalog Maintenance Specialist, who works tirelessly to maintain our Authority control for the ILS, while leading the cataloging interest group. Amanda (center) is ESRL’s Information Services Manager, who leads eGroup, is our database administrator and our lending innovator. And Lori (right), our Information Services Manager, the Polaris troubleshooting marksman, takes care of all your Polaris issues while leading the circulation interest group. If you see them out and about, give these ESRL rockstars a high five!
WORD SCRAMBLE!
Unscramble each of the clue words.
Take the letters that appear in boxes and unscramble them for the final message.

ROHTUA
KOOB
DAARICGN
COFNEECENR
ADTABESSA
COESB
RELS
GOYBEOD
LEHLO
BRLAYRI
ROILASP
CILPOY
FAFST
RAEGILNO
RAGNITNI

FINAL MESSAGE

[ ] W
[ ]
[ ] ,
[ ] W
