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### **Inner Sanctum: Kathy**

The vast majority of patrons of the Westmoreland Library Network of 23 public Libraries see only that part that is their local Library, and take for granted the highly efficient services that bring them requested books from all over Westmoreland County. It is the headquarters staff for the WLN, located in the GreenForge Building in Greensburg, that makes everything possible, in a hidden way. There is the inner sanctum.

The on-line Polaris Integrated Library System, or Westmoreland Information Network™ (WIN), is managed through there, as is the physical distribution of all materials by van, including books that you request. There is much, much more that has to do with the efficient, centralized, and cost-effective management for each and every public Library in the county. The staff is small, but at its core are the Executive Director or System Administrator and a not aptly named District Consultant. Both positions are mandated by the Library Code of the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, under which all approximately 450 public Libraries in Pennsylvania operate. Additionally, and vitally, there is an Information Technology Manager and an IT Support Technician, as well as a Finance/Office Manager.

Recently, there have been a lot of staff changes. At the end of 2022, the Executive Director, Cesare Muccari, retired. He had the foresight to significantly upgrade the WIN, and to successfully gain the large grants that were needed to accomplish that. He did a lot more than that, too, but upgrading was critical. In January, Ann Andrews became Executive Director. She had been WLN District Consultant, so her move up vacated that position, which has just been filled. The District Consultant is responsible for a host of state-mandated services, such as getting all annual reports to the state in a timely way, and overseeing maintenance of uniform cross-county cataloging services.

Beginning at the end of March, longtime Finance/Office Manager Kathy Miller has made full-time retirement a reality, after having served part-time for a few years. She is the one who knows what and where everything is, and how to stay within financial bounds. She will not be easy to replace. I have known Kathy for a long time, because she served in a similar capacity at Murrysville Community Library for some years. This is what a person trained in biology does, right? Most of all, with this column today, I want to recognize Kathy for all the important things that she has done within the inner sanctum. She has kept the machinery of support well oiled, indeed.

Kathy was part of a team, so, also, I want to recognize all the “old” staff at WLN Headquarters for the stability that it has brought to the WLN member Libraries, while even elevating services beyond anything that was imagined a few years ago.

It is possible now that during these overlapping staff transitions that there will be moments of uncertainty about how to get something done. Patrons do not much notice when things are going smoothly, but often do when things begin to appear otherwise. Of course, no such disruptions in service may even be noticed, but, just in case, you

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should know that Kathy is no longer on her watch. As she enjoys full retirement, I wish her the very best.

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