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EAGLE BULLETIN

Sen. Mannion secures \$80,000 for local libraries

BY JASON KLAIBER
STAFF WRITER

New York State Sen. John Mannion announced last week that \$80,000 would be allocated to several public libraries in his district.

The state funding will be spread evenly among eight libraries located within Onondaga County in order to support operational needs and help with the expansion of services.

“Every Central New York community deserves a quality public library, and I am

thrilled to have secured these funds to bolster our local libraries,” Mannion said.

Laurie Rachetta, the director of the East Syracuse Free Library, said she will be noting needs and making a wishlist before meeting with the library’s board in September to facilitate a discussion as to how best to use the \$10,000 they’re receiving.

The executive director of the Community Library of DeWitt & Jamesville, Charles Diede, similarly said that it has not been conclusively determined what the money will be reserved for inside his site’s bud-

get, but he said the management team has brainstormed several areas of interest.

“However the funds are eventually spent, they will be needed and appreciated,” Diede said.

He added that the provision of operational funding will be “very helpful” in an era of “high inflation” and increased costs for building maintenance, utilities, insurance and materials like books and movies.

“People need libraries now more than ever,” Fairmount Community Library Director Brenda Shea said. “In these challenging times, when members of our com-

munity are struggling, they reach out to libraries for essential services like internet access, resources and education.”

Manlius Library Executive Director Jennifer Milligan said these funds demonstrate Mannion’s “ongoing commitment” to public libraries, while Minoa Free Library Director Laura Ravera said it will allow an opportunity for “more creative and diverse” programming.

“Programming is costly, and this grant will let us consider some options, such as visiting authors, that we didn’t think were

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possible before,” Ravera said.

Expressing that she’s “grateful” for the support, Heather Matzel, the executive director of the Fayetteville Free Library, said libraries like her’s are working to provide both traditional services like access to

technology and services developed during COVID like homebound deliveries, curbside pickup and take-home activity kits for families.

“This grant came as a total surprise, and it’s very much appreciated,” said the Fayetteville library’s assistant director, Leah Kraus, who had Mannion as an advanced

placement biology teacher at West Genesee High School.

“He was an excellent teacher, so it’s been nice to see his rise in politics, and obviously it’s amazing that he’s supporting local libraries in this way,” Kraus said.

The office of Sen. Mannion, which represents the 50th Senate District, is giving

\$10,000 each to the Maxwell Memorial Library in Camillus and the Solway Public Library as well.

According to a press release from the senator’s office, the funding can also go toward outreach, the digitizing of collections, and the growth of computer workstations.