

February 2010

## INSIDE:

**ANBPR MEMBERS: INFORMED AND READY FOR ACTION** 1,3

**NEW LIBRARIAN BLOG IS A "MEETING POINT" FOR SUPPORT, PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES** 1,3

**WINNER OF THE 2009 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION CONTEST: THE HOLIDAY LIBRARY** 2

**MARAMURES COMMUNITY ENJOYS FREE INTERNET ACCESS** 2

**RURAL LIBRARY'S NEW SERVICES LEAD TO INCREASED REGIONAL INTEREST IN MODERNIZING LIBRARIES IN BIHOR COUNTY** 4

**INTERNET ACCESS SET 5 TO INCREASE IN CONSTANTA COUNTY**

**"** About 40-50 people visit the library every day, compared with 10-15 people before. **"**

-Pietrari librarian  
Crina Popescu

## ANBPR Members: Informed and Ready for Action

Equipped with results from the recent annual member survey, the ANBPR now has the information to begin serving its members in 2010: librarians feel they are engaged in the association's activities and look forward to participating in new online communication techniques.

The ANBPR evaluation was conducted during the association's annual conference in Bucharest last October to measure member awareness and willingness to participate in program initiatives.

"I think the process brought new energy and enthusiasm," ANBPR board

member and Mures County Library Director Monica Avram said, responding to the re-

sults, "It helped us identify both the issues we need to solve and solutions to our



At the ANBPR annual member conference in fall 2009, participants provide useful feedback on the association's organizational development

*Continued on Page 3*

## New Librarian Blog is a "Meeting Point" for Support, Professional Resources

A librarian since 1991, Crina Popescu has always been a passionate booster of her local library. "For me,



Crina Popescu's blog project is providing professional resources to Valcea County librarians

books make life intellectually interesting, they are the spirit's engine, the tools that fight idleness, insufficiency and help the soul rejoice" explains Popescu on her blog.

Lately, Popescu has taken her cause for books online. In January 2010, shortly after joining the Biblionet program, she started a blog at <http://biblioteccom.blogspot.com/>.

Since the small library in Valcea County became part of the Biblionet program, Popescu can't seem to find a moment's rest. "People have to schedule an appointment, or else they don't get to use the computer. About 40-50 peo-

ple visit the library every day, compared to 10-15 people before. Some speak with their relatives abroad, others read the newspapers--because we don't get any newspapers in this commune--others do legal research or look up the information that they need. I help the oldest visitors myself, because they are afraid of touching the computers. They say they don't want to break anything," Ms. Popescu said.

But Popescu's blog project is part of a larger effort to promote modern librarianship and joint activities among her colleagues in the county. Popescu created the blog as a

*Continued on Page 3*

## Winner of 2009 Community Participation Contest: The Holiday Library

The Community Participation Contest that took place in November and December 2009, focused on **"The Library: an entertainment and socializing space,"** a topic selected by biblionet.ro visitors. Ten libraries signed up to compete in the contest, the winner of which was "The Holiday Library," a project proposed by the Alexandru and Aristia Aman County Library in Craiova.

This is the first time the Dolj County Library participated in the CPC, and it did so with three exciting projects: **"The Holiday Library,"** "A Cinema Itinerary in Dolj County," and **"Internet for Senior Citizens."** As two of the three proposed projects were submitted by the Alexandru and Aristia Aman County Library, Craiova was extremely hopeful for success.

The projects were each voted on using the biblionet.ro forum, where **The**

**Holiday Library** received 25 of 30 votes. Rodica Pavalan, head of the library's Public Relations Department and manager of this project, said, "Our decision to participate in the CPC was based on three project ideas; we were confident that we could accomplish them, and that we could design them so as to include all ages ... let me assure you that since we have broken the ice, we will attempt to enter new ideas in future Community Participation Contests."

**The Holiday Library** is devoted to pre-schoolers and primary school children. The purpose of the project is to develop communication skills and stimulate the children's imaginations, regardless of their social background. The Holiday Library provides a suitable alternative to children whose parents cannot afford to take the family on vacation or send the students to camp.

The library offers numerous opportunities for youth including, English lessons, interactive lessons, the chance to view documentaries, cartoons, and movies, as well as minor exhibitions on books, book presentations, lessons on European culture and civilization, civil culture lessons, wildlife, and interactive games and contests. All these programs are being organized and implemented with the support of library partners and volunteers.

Under this program, the library will offer a safe environment where nearly 100 children will socialize, learn, and have fun during the holidays. "We believe that, given the current economic and financial crises, as parents find it more difficult to entertain their sons and daughters during the holidays, this project will cover a range of hobbies that children enjoy. As such, the initiative helps the library become the main pillar of entertainment, social activity and cultural education for youth."

## Maramures Community Gains First Community Access to Broadband through Biblionet

Residents and local dignitaries from Recea and the surrounding communities in Maramures County came together on December 8 to celebrate their library's new services. Some visitors were using the internet for the first time. The local library opened its doors with four new computers, headphones and webcams, a scanner and printer provided through its participation in the Biblionet program.

Teodor Ardelean, Director of the Petre Dulfu County Library, explained that for rural libraries such as the one in his community, access to new communication technologies is particularly important. "We have had challenges getting a broadband connection to our region, given the development level of our communities. This program helps Romania a great deal, because this country has not yet found the financial means that are necessary in order to build these connections. Well now, the connection is there."

Among the first to arrive at the reopened library were local school children from the village of Sasar who immediately began using the computers. One young girl, Georgiana, brought her grandfather Nicolae Madaras, a farmer in Sasar and first time computer user, to help research viticulture and winemaking. Georgiana



Nicolae Madaras, age 63, and his granddaughter Sasar, age 7, were among the first to use Recea's new broadband connection

**“** *The children often come to the library after school in order to do their homework . If a book is missing from the library , they find the information on the internet.* **”**

-Rodica Babut

## ANBPR Members: Informed and Ready for Action

*Continued from Page 1*  
problems”

The focus of the annual evaluation is to gauge training and professional development needs for ANBPR members in order to develop and implement relevant member services and activities. The survey's focus areas aim to anticipate member priorities and obtain feedback to inform activities during the coming year, discuss the organizational development of ANBPR and its communication with and between members, as well as solidify organizational practices.

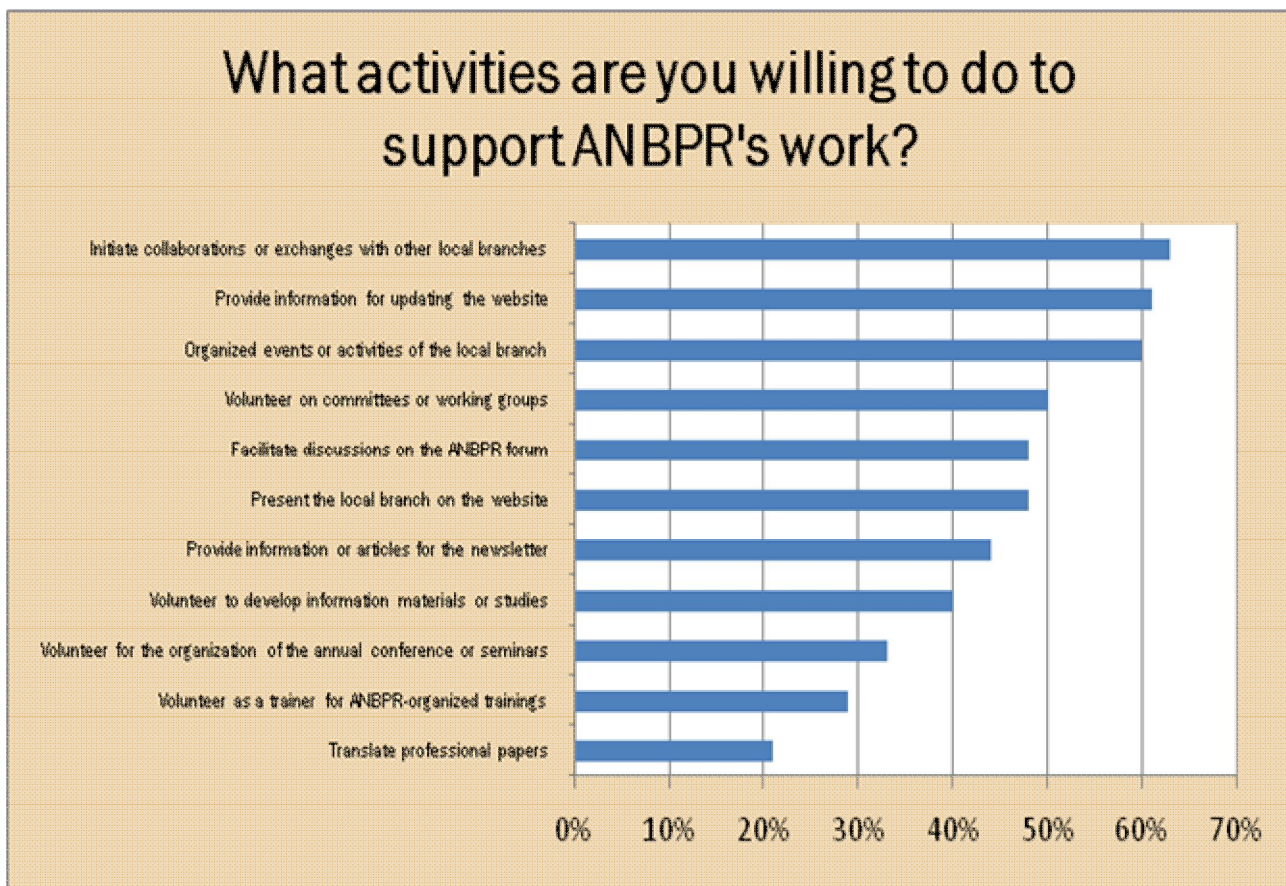
Members responded positively toward ANBPR activities, with 83% of those surveyed citing full knowledge of association activities. Constituents also reported extensive use of online communication, a method particularly popular among librarians working in county libraries. Although many feel participation remains the most effective means to learn new information, they are increasingly looking toward electronic communication including email

correspondence, the ANBPR website, and newsletter to stay informed.

In an effort to learn how the association can serve members' ongoing learning needs, the ANBPR identified several services to improve, including more opportunities for professional training and development, advocacy training, community engagement, and guidance to introduce new library services.

The survey also confirmed that

ANBPR members are looking for new ways to become involved in the association's activities; 60% of respondents are willing to coordinate exchanges with other county libraries or organize ANBPR regional events, while more than 45% volunteered to write articles to include in the ANBPR newsletter and website. Moreover, fully 96% of participating members described their membership as either "useful" or "very useful."



Results from the ANBPR member survey, October 2009

## New Librarian Blog is a "Meeting Point" for Support, Professional Resources

*Continued from Page 1*

professional resource designed to profile the participating communities, promote young talent and local artisans, as well as outline folk traditions and customs specific to the area. Popescu defines this blog as a "meeting point" for her colleagues who want to both improve their professional image and increase the number of library beneficiaries.

"Many of us are already involved in

Biblionet, which makes communication a lot easier. Nine other libraries are partners in bibliotec@com at this moment, although we are just getting started. On January 31, we will have a video conference with all partners to discuss information flow and next steps in developing this project. We need to see exactly what each library can offer to the general public and then decide on a meeting we're holding in February, here in Pietrari"

Popescu explained.

Popescu's entries range from conversations surrounding best practices among librarians, to the use of modern technology and organizing cultural events. In the future, she hopes to expand the site with traveling exhibitions, contests for librarians, and news about Librarian Day. But for now, she's just trying to keep up with the new visitors.

## Rural Library's New Services Lead to Increased Regional Interest in Modernizing Libraries in Bihor County

On December 15, the town of Vadu Crisului plugged into a modern broadband connection for the first time. At a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the local library's new high speed internet service, Mayor Dorel Cosma declared, "This is a project that enables even us, people living in the countryside, to use the internet in order to access information anywhere in this world."

The Vadu Crisului Library is one of the first partner libraries of the Biblionet program, currently being implemented by IREX. Biblionet libraries all depend on the type of support that Vadu Crisului displays; the local council financed a 750,000 lei (over US\$250,000) renovation project for the community center where the library is located. While Biblionet provided the computers and trained the library staff, the



Mayor Dorel Cosma uses the Vadu Crisului library's broadband connect to test video chat on Skype

local government is funding the ongoing broadband internet costs to guarantee that the new services will continue into the future.

"It was no easy thing for a commune like ours to appropriate such a big budget for culture, but we organize lots of event in this building," the mayor explained during the event.

Ligia Mirisan, director of the Bihor county library, encouraged other community leaders to join the Biblionet program. "The local people are so committed and we have been able to work with them very well. We are also thankful to the mayor for having invited mayors from the neighbouring communities, because we have started to think about the next round [of the Biblionet program]. So, dear mayors, please take a tour of the library to see what modernization involves under the Biblionet program."

Zeno Tipter was one such mayor in attendance. The mayor of Alesd, a town located approximately 14 km northwest

of Vadu Crisului, Tipter was impressed with how Vadu Crisului engaged the whole of the community in the project. "We lost the first round for no other reason than that we did not have the proper space," Tipter recounted, but added that the next Biblionet application round will find the Alesd library ready. "Our library is now being renovated under a program which we started last year; it is part of a regional tourist and cultural information center."

The Alesd community will soon have their chance to receive public library computers and staff training. Biblionet's evaluation committee is currently reviewing second round applications and winners will be announced March 25, 2010.

Tipter is hopeful about his chances, "We will be ready soon. We actually had four computers connected to the internet before, which people could use, but there were no webcams, no scanner. We look forward to being accepted in this program"



**IREX Biblionet Office:**

15 Dr. Staicovici Nicolae  
St., 050556, District 5  
Bucharest, Romania

Phone: +4021 410 2563  
Fax: + 4021 410 2564  
Email: [office@irex.ro](mailto:office@irex.ro)

**IREX Headquarters:**

2121 K Street NW #700  
Washington DC 20037

Phone:  
202-628-8188  
Fax: 202-628-8189  
E-mail: [gl@irex.org](mailto:gl@irex.org)



**IREX**  
WWW.IREX.ORG

IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing leadership and innovative programs to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media, and foster pluralistic civil society development. Founded in 1968, IREX works in more than 50 countries.

## Maramures Community Gains First Community Access to Broadband through Biblionet

*Continued from Page 2*

showed her grandfather how to get started, "Here is the on/off switch. You must first press it in order to use the computer."

Librarian Rodica Babut has noticed an increase in library visits from older residents. "I have more and more requests from elderly people who want to learn how to use the computer, send emails, find information and other useful things," she noted.

According to Mayor Octavian Pavel, library visitors like Madaras and his granddaughter

are among the many constituents he expects will benefit from the new services. "We hope to be able to implement this program in other locations too, so that everyone can communicate with relatives, friends, and anyone else outside this community or outside the country, and speak about problems in Romania and Recea to other people, too." He also assured librarian Rodica Babut that she would continue to enjoy the full support of the mayor, the local council, and the Deputy Mayor.

## Internet Access Set to Increase in Constanta County

Computers sit, amidst the bookshelves in Medgidia library, waiting for users. The town was selected to host the opening of a service which is new to libraries in this county. The opening took place on Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, in the presence of local authorities and librarians from neighboring communes, including those not yet part of the Biblionet program.

"This effort is commendable because we are still trying to encourage people to use the library," said Deputy Mayor Sorin Tutuianu, an advocate of libraries and cultural activities in Medgidia.

The municipal library in Medgidia is located in a 150-year old house, built in the days of the Ottoman Empire. Scheduled for demolition nearly twenty years ago, it was the efforts of librarians that saved this building from being

destroyed.

Librarians are implementing modern library services to keep up with the development of the community. Volunteers of "The Centre for Civic Resources – Medgidia Club" developed a webpage for the library ([www.bibliotecamedgidiaresursecivice.ro](http://www.bibliotecamedgidiaresursecivice.ro)) and Biblionet is expected to diversify activities even more.

Asan Neugis, the director of the Medgidia Municipal Library, explained, "When we first started to participate in meetings and heard about the program, I thought it was just a dream that would never come true. However, as soon as I started helping in everything that was necessary for the program, I realized that the dream could come true. I believe this is a great honor for Medgidia."

**"** The effort is commendable because we are trying to encourage people to use the library. **"**

-Medgidia deputy Mayor  
Sorin Tutuianu

