# Courier Service Partner Libraries

## Tips & Feedback

Tips for ensuring partnerships work well:

Have the payment plan, arrangements for picking up partner library, as well as courier bags and labels supplied to each individual library prior to the first scheduled stop.

- Check with your Board of Trustees to make sure they know about and support this plan.
- Each stop will cost $15, libraries should plan out the anticipated contribution of each library prior to the beginning of the partnership. The grants from VTLIB will only be available for **one** of the libraries included in the stop, and the remainder of the cost for the courier service can be worked out between the libraries. Bills from Green Mountain Messenger will also be sent to the one library.
- There are courier bag labels for each library, including all at partnership stops. These are to help with sorting once the bin has arrived at your library. Unfortunately, they are not always used, so libraries should double-check the bag contents as the bin is being sorted.
- Partner libraries will need to have a schedule worked out for picking up their books at the drop-off library. Volunteers, trustees, and even residents are all options, but there should be a scheduled time with the drop-off library to help this happen each week.

Feedback on how partnerships have worked:

"Each of us pays one third of the cost. I e-mail a copy of the bill and the amount of their share for the month and then they send us a check as we pay the entire bill. We are a municipal library. With the grant, I am paying for as many months as the grant will cover and no library will pay anything."

"We have no formal contract. I drop off books, and I pick up books Monday evening. As I live quite near the library, and I like the staff there, I don't charge my library for this time. I am one of the largest ILL users in my library, as well, for my own use. I see this as a win-win situation."

"The Reading Library piggybacks on to our courier delivery. The Reading Library typed ou a brief proposal which stated the amount they would be paying to our library per year for the service. Our library board voted to sign and accept the proposal.

Tony from the Reading Library comes by once a week to pick up Readings delivered items and drop off items going to other libraries. When we unpack our bins we put aside Reading's items on a shelf. We do not take them out of the bags. "

"Poultney, as you know, is the courier hub for Poultney, Middletown, and Pawlet. When we first started it was Poultney and Middletown, and we each got a courier grant for one stop. Because of that we set up two stops per week. When Pawlet asked to join, they did not get grant funds. We divided the cost of service by 3. Both Poultney and Middletown used their own courier funds towards the cost of their third. When the grant rules were modified and Middletown could no longer get grant funding, they did not feel that they could afford to pay their full third. To keep the program running for all libraries, we are subsidizing the difference for Middletown. So, for each $15 stop Pawlet pays $5, Middletown pays $3.75, and Poultney pays $6.25 (less grant monies). It is not exactly a fair split, but we wanted to make sure everyone could continue to participate.

As for logistics, all three libraries have their own supply of bags and labels. Middletown comes to Poultney 2-3 times per week (generally Middletown residents who work in Poultney, and volunteer to make the runs) to drop off bagged outgoing items and pick up items we received for them in our courier bin. Pawlet has an employee make the trip, so they only come once per week. We add their bagged items to the bin as they come in. When we receive a bin from GMM, we sort items for the three libraries. I've found you need a really thorough and detail oriented staffer for this job, as you have to open every bag and check the contents. If a library is sending items to more than one of us, they are often in the same bag. We also have a lot of problems with the bags not being marked properly for which library at our hub is receiving the book."