

Bridges Library System Staff Reports

February 2023

Karol Kennedy – Library System Director

Annual Reports: I spent many hours answering questions about and reviewing library annual reports. I offered a virtual walk-through of the annual report for any interested directors. I am also offering office hours in February. Directors may drop in anytime with their annual report questions. Reports are due Tuesday, March 1. Several library reports have already been completed. The system annual reports are now due on March 31. This will be on the Bridges board agenda in March.

Jefferson County Library Contracts: In November, I prepared and distributed the 2023 contracts to Jefferson County libraries. These were due to the Jefferson County by February 1. All have been successfully completed and submitted.

Executive Assistant Position: We are still in the process of hiring someone for this open position. The job was re-posted. Applications were reviewed and interviews were held this week. We hope to have a new person in place by mid-March.

Library Legislative Day 2023: WLA noted the event this year had one of the largest turnouts on record. It was reported that 214 were pre-registered. Bridges had 33 in attendance. Thank you to everyone who joined us in Madison on February 7! All attendees are encouraged to send handwritten thank you notes to the legislators and aides we met with.

Continuing Education: I attended the several sessions of the Wild Wisconsin Winter Web Conference and the Intellectual Freedom SIG meeting.

Mellanie Mercier – Automation Coordinator & Assistant Director

Listserv Changes: Bridges has about 20 listservs for our libraries to exchange information and ask questions through our ISP (Internet Service Provider) Wiscnet. The software of our current setup is from 2006 running on a server that has been out of support since 2012 and they weren't able to support us adding new lists, so we had started using Office365 distribution lists as an alternative for new lists. They now have had staff time to look at this service and are implementing up-to-date software on a new server. We began the process of setting up the lists in the new software the last week of January and have been working out bugs and setting up the list structure. This change will allow us to update our domain from wcfls.lib.wi.us to lists.bridgeslibrarysystem.org and we are able to update the names of lists to better reflect the use of the lists. The changes will begin being implemented the week of February 6th. The new interface for administering the lists is much better than the old that all lists are in one dashboard.

Laurie Freund – Coordinator of Library Development

Library Book Repair Workshop (Mar 28): Back by popular demand, this workshop will provide hands-on training on techniques to extend the shelf life of library books and other print materials. Two sessions are available with limited seating. Go to [this link](#) for more details and registration.

Privacy & WI Public Libraries online tutorial: I served on the development team for this on-demand, online tutorial that is now ready and available to library staffs. Wisconsin public library workers now have access to a tutorial covering the basics of privacy and public libraries, with specific attention to Wisconsin laws. The tutorial for front-line staff includes three modules. Each module consists of a short (8-9 minute) video, links to additional reading, and a short comprehension quiz. The goal is to help front-line staff understand the reasons behind privacy policies and laws, as well as learning how to interact effectively with library users about privacy. Additionally, library directors and managers can access a short tutorial with suggestions for working with staff, creating policies, and other administrative tasks related to protecting patron privacy. Those who complete the tutorials will be able to print a certificate of completion. These tutorials were created by UW-Madison's iSchool and are sponsored by Wisconsin Public Library Systems with support from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, with funding from the Institute for Museum and Library Services.

- Privacy and Wisconsin Public Libraries Tutorial for Front-Line Staff:
<https://my.nicheacademy.com/ifslib-staff/course/56679>
- Privacy and Wisconsin Public Libraries Tutorial for Managers and Directors:
<https://my.nicheacademy.com/ifslib-staff/course/56903>

Workforce News: The LAWDS (Libraries Activating Workforce Development Skills) grant project has now ended, but that does not mean public libraries and workforce centers stopped collaborating to help the people who need assistance with needed job-related services and programs. The new project is now called "Library Workforce Connection." Library System representatives and DPI staff will continue to meet monthly to share information and plan any statewide library staff training and other projects.

Cultural Competence Symposium: Neurodivergence (Feb 28): Interested library staff members and Job Center partners are invited to register and attend an in-person workshop to better understand the barriers and misconceptions of individuals whose brain differences affect how their brain works (i.e., medical disorders, learning disabilities, autism spectrum, and other conditions). The symposium will be held at Independence First in Milwaukee and is sponsored by the seven-county regional workforce regions of WOW (Waukesha, Ozaukee, Washington Counties), SE (Southeast Wisconsin) and MKE (Milwaukee County). Registration can be found [here](#). Information has been sent to member libraries.

Angela Meyers – Coordinator of Youth and Inclusive Services.

Library Memory Project: In January, we were notified that Bridges Library System and the [Library Memory Project](#) had won a national award from the Family Caregivers Alliance. The Innovations in Alzheimer's Caregiving Awards is given to three organizations across the country, along with a \$20,000 award. We will be recognized at a formal reception in conjunction with the On Aging Conference in

Atlanta, GA in late March. Karol will be attending the reception and giving a presentation about the Library Memory Project on my behalf as I am unable to attend due to a prior commitment. [Read more](#) about the award winners.

In 2022, the Library Memory Project offered 70 memory cafes and had 640 attendees. We also provided an opportunity for participants to bring their close family and friends to the Retzer Nature Center for Family Day. Eighty-nine people participated in the 2022 Family Day.

Hearing Loop Refresher Training: I provided [hearing loop](#) refresher training sessions at the following libraries: Oconomowoc, Mukwonago, and Watertown. Hearing loops were installed in several of the member libraries in 2014 and 2015 as part of a LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) grant. Since then, a couple of other member libraries have added hearing loops to their meeting rooms.

Youth Services: Now in its 22nd year, the [Kids' Choice Awards](#) is stronger than ever. Kids' Choice is a collaborative program between the system, our member libraries, and local schools. Students in grades 4th-6th read and vote for their favorite books over a two-week period. Voting is open through February 10 and the winner and runners-up will be announced February 14.

I facilitated a Teen Think Tank meeting at Lake Mills library attended by five libraries. We discussed summer reading, teen advisory boards, and programming.

Professional Development: Youth Services Workshop: Compassion Resilience and Year-Round Planning

Jill Fuller - Marketing & Communications Librarian

Consulting: I met with library staff for our first Marketing Meetup of 2023 on January 23 where we discussed plans and ideas for the spring Library Passport program. I did a virtual training with staff from Mukwonago Community Library on how to use LibraryAware, since they are going to start using it for their email communications with patrons. Finally, I reviewed the results of the 2022 marketing survey I sent out to library staffs. The results gave me insight in what was helpful to staff in 2022 and what they need in 2023. For example, 83% of respondents said LibraryAware was very helpful to their work in 2022 and consulting with me was very helpful for 66% of respondents. Email marketing and signage/displays are the top two topics staff are interested in learning more about in 2023. Some of the biggest challenges for staff included lack of time for marketing, needing a marketing plan and style guide, reaching non-users, and expanding on social media.

Outreach and Advocacy: On Saturday, January 14, I participated in Waukesha Janboree at the Retzer Nature Center; our "booth" was called "Wild Stories by the Fire." I read children's books about winter at the Center's fire pit for several hours and always had a crowd listening. Everyone had a great time and many families stayed for multiple books before moving on to the next activity. Some families returned several times, so I'm glad I had brought a large stack of books with me! According to Retzer staff, over 400 people attended the event that day. Retzer has already asked us to participate again next year.

I attended Library Legislative Day in Madison on February 7 to speak to my legislators about how library systems benefit public libraries and their communities. I enjoy attending LLD every year and this was no exception.

Content Creation: The English-language versions of the Lifelong Learning Campaign materials are done, and the toolkit was sent to member libraries. Library staff can download materials from the toolkit or from our website; besides the downloadable materials, the toolkit includes a marketing plan, sample text, and a letter to local business leaders. The materials were also professionally printed. I am now working on Spanish-language versions. I worked with a graphic designer on a new Bridges Library System brochure; that is finished and has been printed as well.

Professional Development: I attended the Wisconsin Winter Web Conference at the end of January. I still have a few more recorded sessions to watch, but from the live ones I attended, I especially liked “A Sustainable Approach: Following the Lead of the Community,” where I learned about the three “E’s” of sustainable libraries and the keynote on Wednesday called “The Future Is Unwritten,” which focused on how libraries offer a model and resources for the collective impact that our communities need for the future.

Beth Bechtel – Database Management Librarian

Meetings and Library Visits: In January’s virtual cataloger meetup we discussed matching and merging large print bib records, adding replacement copy information to existing bib records, delays from book vendors, differing editions of study guides, and two new collection codes. Also this month, I visited Town Hall Library to work with the cataloger on how to create new bib records for the CAFÉ catalog when existing ones are not available for import.

Documentation: I tested and edited the instructions for importing and cleaning up OverDrive bib records. I updated contact lists for the catalogers and the main users of the Polaris serials module and the Polaris acquisitions module.

American Girl Dolls: I standardized and edited American Girl doll information in the CAFÉ catalog to prepare for the new American Girl doll collection at Johnson Creek Library. Those dolls will be joining the Watertown and Fort Atkinson libraries’ existing collections of American Girl dolls available for check out from the CAFÉ catalog.

Continuing Education: I attended the online Innovative User Group (IUG) Acquisitions Forum where the discussion included dealing with slow shipments from vendors and tips on finding unneeded acquisitions data in the online catalog. I also attended the Wild Wisconsin Winter Web Conference opening keynote and two sessions about collections--one about audiobooks, the other about nonfiction.