

Bridges Library System Staff Reports

June 2024

Karol Kennedy – Library System Director

Budget 2025: Nicole and I attended the Waukesha County budget training. I attended the annual Waukesha County budget kick-off at Fox Brook Park on June 12th. I am now reviewing staff budget information, preparing preliminary information on member charges for the June APL meeting, reviewing adjacent county requests, and working to finalize Waukesha and Jefferson County library levy requests.

CAFÉ Catalog Discovery Layer RFP Process: I attended the three discovery layer vendor demonstrations conducted as part of this process. It was interesting to get a more in depth look at what each product offered. Thank you to the many Bridges and member library staff who participated in this lengthy process. The Committee recommendation will be discussed with CAFÉ Council and a recommendation will be brought to the Bridges Board this month.

Possible Overdrive Advantage Lucky Day Collection: Concerns regarding the costs of electronic materials prompted the formation of an APL committee to explore the possibility of creating an Overdrive Advantage Lucky Day Collection. Nan Champe, Pewaukee Public Library Director, agreed to chair the committee. Data is being collected and a recommendation will be brought to APL for future budget discussions.

Continuing Education: I attended the WLA Virtual Intellectual Freedom Workshop, *The First Amendment: Fighting Censorship through Library Advocacy*. Lisa Varga, Executive Director of the Virginia Library Association, and Martin Garnar, Amherst College Library Director and Editor of the 10th Edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Manual*, provided some interesting ideas and helpful resources.

Laurie Freund – Coordinator of Library Development

Bridges Adult Public Programs Grant: Sixteen out of twenty-four member libraries submitted applications for funds to help support a library program or program series geared toward adults in their communities. Applicants were notified by the beginning of May and programs are to be provided during this calendar year with Bridges reimbursing costs up to \$400 per library. There are a several exciting programs these libraries are planning to serve adults from younger to older. Programs include a variety of art, craft and music programs, mocktail mixology, Wisconsin history, antiques, and more.

Library Visits: I visited the Powers Memorial Library in Palmyra and the Irvin L. Young Library in Whitewater.

Next Steps Survey: WI Buildings & Spaces and Facilities Assessment: Our planning team and DPI are conducting a survey Wisconsin library to find out what staff would like to see expanded on the Wisconsin Library Buildings & Spaces web page, located on the SEWI Libraries website, and for planning the next steps for the Wisconsin Library Facilities Assessment. We announced a slow roll out of the survey at the WAPL Conference session and then posted it on several email listservs to Wisconsin public libraries. The deadline to submit feedback was due June 7th. We had a total of 125 responses. Our planning team, along with the DPI Library Team, will be looking over the responses and planning for new

learning opportunities and on-demand content, resources, lists, and toolkits that can be added to the web page.

MRA On-Demand Courses for Staff: On-demand courses for library staff from MRA, a non-profit human resources organization, are available. There are 22 courses staff can choose from in customer service, HR general topics, and leadership skills. These courses are available through May 31, 2025, with funding from LSTA funds for professional development. Anyone who is not currently enrolled in these courses but would like to be can email me with your first and last name, work email address and library. New enrollees will be added the beginning of each month. An email notice was sent out to all libraries. Library staff can contact me if they have any questions.

Upcoming Summer SEWI Libraries Opportunities: Library staff can mark their calendars for the following offerings.

- **SEWI Materials processes Meetup (1-4pm, August 15 at Menomonee Falls Public Library):** This in-person meetup is for Circulation and Technical Services staff who process materials to share procedures, best processes, and discuss common issues. [Details and Registration](#) available.
- **SEWI Library Directors Retreat (9am-4pm, August 23 at New Berlin Public Library):** Plans are under way for this annual regional retreat. Session presentations and discussions will revolve around topics and issues of concern to public library directors. Details and registration will be coming soon.

Angela Meyers – Coordinator of Youth and Inclusive Services.

Youth Services

Libraries across both counties have launched their summer library programs. Bridges Library System's sponsored performances started June 10th with Miss Kim's Amazing Animals in Watertown and James the Magician in Muskego. Both acts brought a lot of attendees to the libraries. The [Bridges' web site](#) has a list of all 72 performances.

I facilitated a Teen Think Tank meeting that was attended by six library staff. Mellanie Mercier from the Bridges' office gave an overview of the DEI collection analysis tool that will be available through late January 2025. We also had a guest speaker, Maura F. from the Pauline Haass Public Library, share resources for starting a Dungeons & Dragons program at your library.

Inclusive Services

The Greater Milwaukee Pharmacists Association asked me to present to their group on the Library Memory Project. I gave a 20 minute presentation to a group of 20 very engaged participants. I am hopeful that they will take the information back to their pharmacies or spread the word about memory cafes via their personal networks.

I coordinated an accessibility scan for Brookfield Public Library through Independence First, an independent living center in Milwaukee. I met with Cathy Tuttrup and Betsy Bleck with the Brookfield



James the Magician performs a magic trick with an audience member at Muskego Public Library

Public Library to go over the results. The library is planning to tackle some of the barriers in the short-term and are looking at solutions for the long-term.

Other/Professional Development

I attended the three discovery layer demonstrations and provided feedback to Mellanie Mercier.

Library Memory Project facilitators (library staff) were invited to the Brilliant Minds Symposium held at the Alzheimer's Association. Two Bridges' library staff members and I learned about the brain and how an arts approach can elevate cognitive health and well-being. I also listened to the recording for a session titled "For Managers & Supervisors: Cultivating an Inclusive Workplace for Neurodivergent Staff."

Beth Bechtel – Database Management Librarian

Library Visits and Meetings

This month, I visited Elm Grove Public Library for a consultation about the Polaris serials module.

I coordinated a meeting for our Polaris acquisition module users. On June 6th, we met in Pewaukee to discuss working with vendors, find out about available training, and share tips and advice. Meeting follow-up included an updated contact list and links to online training.

Catalog Maintenance

Multi-system LSTA grant funds are being used for a bibliographic improvement project. Prairie Lakes Library System is creating an automated tool to search OCLC to improve Monarch's and Bridges' catalogs. While the project will result in each system having its own search tool, Bridges and Monarch both use Polaris so it is useful to collaborate. In the last couple of months, I've worked with Monarch and Prairie Lakes staff as we test and finalize the tool to do some of our OCLC searching. I am very happy about this project, which will efficiently improve many of our newest bibliographic records.

Occasionally, OverDrive titles in our catalog display in the state-wide WISCAT database as print books rather than e-books. I do a quarterly check to make sure our OverDrive titles show only as electronic resources to prevent them from being requested for interlibrary loan. This month I corrected 431 OverDrive records.

In May, I sent copies of 8,290 CAFÉ bibliographic records to Backstage Library Works for editing. Backstage deletes unneeded data, adds reading levels, standardizes subjects, and performs other enrichments. I reloaded the returned improved bibs and their new authority records during off-peak hours.

Emily Heller – Public Communications Coordinator

Summer Library Program

Many member libraries have begun their Summer Library Programs and are seeing great success at their kickoff parties.

- Pauline Haass Public Library in Sussex had over 500 readers sign up for their Summer Reading Program during their Kickoff Party on May 31st! [\[Facebook photos.\]](#)

- Pewaukee Public Library is attracting attention to their June 17th event with their fantastic Indiana Jones-inspired video. It has over 1,400 views! [\[Facebook video.\]](#)
- Mukwonago Community Library had 29 new library card signups at their event on June 8th. [\[Facebook post.\]](#)

Social media posts to thank our [sponsors](#) run June 10th – July 31st to share our gratitude for the great incentives and coupons offered by sponsors for the summer programs. [\[Facebook post.\]](#)

The Library Treasure Adventure

The systemwide summer event has been going very well again this year. From the libraries:

- New Berlin:
 “The Library Treasure Adventure has been great so far at New Berlin. We've had about 160 interactions and handed out probably as many maps! I personally have interacted with several patrons who do not call NBPL their home library, so it's been really great seeing so many new faces. Our "treasure" has been a little challenging for some participants to find, but we've been giving extra hints to help. Nearly everyone (including our own patrons) has been so impressed with the fact that we have a circulating record collection and a few circulating record players too! The one thing we keep hearing over and over is how fun this program is. I think people are really enjoying visiting new libraries and seeing all the unique things we have to offer.”
 - Jessica, Lead Adult Services Librarian
- Eagle:
 Reported that they have already stamped 40 maps and received one entry form so far. There were also many positive comments about the map and their library.
 “We have had many positive comments about the 1,000 cranes in the library – how beautiful they are, and one woman had made one and was quite emotional to see the cranes still in the library.”
 - Alli, Director
- Watertown:
 “So far we have had 41 people stop in for stamps. We saw a big surge this past weekend. I'm not sure if people are exploring the library more, but the grandfather clock they need to find is on the second floor, so we've definitely had more families coming upstairs than usual. We haven't had any challenges...the program is very clear and well-thought-out!”
 - Jamie, Adult Services Librarian

In the news:

- Bridges Library Treasure Adventure event:
 - [Daily Union Article](#)
 - [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)
 - [Jefferson County Tourism](#)
- Mukwonago Community Library's Repatriation of an Associated Funerary Object (AFO) to the Wilton Rancheria Tribe in California:
 - [CBS58 News Story](#)
 - [TMJ4 News Story](#)
 - [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)

- [Facebook Photo](#)
- Delafield Public Library Container Gardening – [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)
- New Berlin Public Library Director, Natalie Beacom, received the 27th Annual John W. Bauer Employee Excellence Award from the City of New Berlin – [Facebook post](#)
- Hartland Public Library's Snapping Turtle – [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)

Outreach

Later in June, I will be giving presentations to three of Waukesha County's Health and Human Services committees about the lesser-known library resources and services that could benefit the community.

- June 17th - Mental Health Advisory Committee (MHAC)
- June 18th - Substance Use Advisory Committee
- July 15th - Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) Coordinating Committee

Consulting

- May 15th: I held a Marketing Meetup at Watertown Public Library. We had a great discussion on developing media relations now to make communications easier during stressful/tragic times, if ever there is a need. We also discussed having a communications plan outline and templates for emergency responses and communications.
- May 30th: I had a Marketing Review Meeting at Powers Memorial Library in Palmyra.

Professional Development

May 23rd: I attended the Marketing and Communication Conference Online and learned a lot from all 5 sessions. The sessions covered accessibility, website projects, building story brands, promotions workflow Ideas, and collecting and using data. I will be sharing many of the resources with the marketing group.

May/June Newsletters:

Marketing Magic - resources for library staff:

- June 7: 61.86% Open Rate (so far)
- May 17: 57.29% Open Rate
- May 3: 66.32% Open Rate

Monthly Bridges:

- May 9: 46.28% Open Rate

Legislators:

- May 6: 16.67% Open Rate