

# Bridges Library System Staff Reports

## November 2023

### Karol Kennedy – Library System Director

**2024 County Budgets:** I presented the 2024 budget to a joint meeting of the Waukesha County Finance and Executive Committees on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Both Waukesha and Jefferson Counties are scheduled to adopt their 2024 budgets in November. These budgets include funding for each county's library tax levy, the System, and CAFÉ. I will be able to provide a status update at the board meeting.

**County Library Tax Exemptions:** Documentation on municipal exemptions for all municipalities with libraries was provided to Jefferson County. Waukesha County exemptions were submitted last month.

**Director Vacancy:** Irvin L. Young Memorial Library (Whitewater) is now accepting applications for a new library director, following the resignation last month of current Director Stacey Lunsford. Priority will be given to applications received by December 3<sup>rd</sup>. I have been asked to serve on the search committee.

**Welcome Nicole:** Nicole Purifoy started in the position of Executive Assistant on October 30<sup>th</sup>. It's been wonderful to have her on board. She is a quick study and is jumping right into a number of projects.

**Waukesha County Employee Recognition:** Angela Meyers was recognized for her 10 years of service at the annual County Employee Recognition Breakfast. Angela has done some amazing things in those 10 years! Here's to at least 10 more!

**System and Resource Library Administrators Association of Wisconsin (SRLAAW):** This group met in Middleton, just prior to the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) Conference. The meeting included a significant amount of discussion regarding intellectual freedom issues and the new WLA handout on parental notification and library material location. We also talked about the idea of developing standards for public library storytimes.

**Professional Development:** I attended the WLA Conference in Middleton. It was great to spend time with other library professionals talking about libraries, the work we do, and how we might be able to do it better. A favorite session for me was the keynote presentation *Three Ways to Improve Your Inclusion with DEI Consultant Lisa Koenecke*. Other interesting and useful sessions included: *Should We Start Believing: Chat GPT and Libraries*; *What Do the Numbers Say? Trends and Reflections from the Annual Report*; *Wisconsin Library Compensation: Looking at the Data*; and *All Aboard! Developing High-Impact Onboarding Practices to Promote Employee Retention*. I will be presenting some of what I learned about the Wisconsin Library Compensation Study at the APL meeting in November. It was also very exciting to celebrate three award winners connected to the Bridges Library System: Amy Schlotthauer – Trustee of the Year (Menomonee Falls), Lisa Baudoin – Citation of Merit (Books & Company, Oconomowoc), and former Bridges Director Connie Meyer – Wisconsin Library Hall of Fame Inductee.

### Mellanie Mercier – Automation Coordinator & Assistant Director

On this month's bill list are many payments to libraries for their Library Improvement and Enhancement grants. This year 3 competitive grants were awarded for \$5k based on the size of library. The large library category went to Pewaukee to start a Library of Things collection and scheduling software for their explore passes and Library of Things. The medium library category went to Jefferson for front

facing book bins for their children's books to display books better to appeal to the little ones. The small library category was shared between the Big Bend and Palmyra libraries - Big Bend purchased STEM kits and Palmyra purchased a book bike.



*Palmyra Book Bike*



*Pewaukee Pressure Washer*

Each library was also able to apply for a non-competitive grant, and award amounts were based on size. Small libraries received \$2,000, medium libraries received \$2,500 and large libraries received \$3,000. Projects funded were to be in either accessibility, marketing or technology categories. Some of the items purchased included RFID pads, iPads for board member's electronic packets, window display units, Library of Things items, step and wash for youth to use in bathrooms, Yoto players, early literacy kits, water fountains with bottle fillers, people counters, teen space upgrades, STEM kits, changing station, outdoor seating and dye sublimation printer, inks and supplies.



*Karl Juninger Memorial Library*



*Big Bend*

Thanks to a grant from the [Bridges Library System](#), three new adventure backpacks available to check out for more summer fun! Birdwatching, Geocaching, and Hiking

Birdwatching  
♦ Bird books  
♦ Compass  
♦ ... See more



*Adventure backpacks*



*Yoto Players at Dwight Foster and Oconomowoc*

## Laurie Freund – Coordinator of Library Development

### Bridges Friends Morning Coffee 2023:

We had a total of 25 people, representing eleven member libraries, attend a meetup that was open to Library Friends and directors, to talk and share on topics of high interest. The focus for this year was on Library Friends' roles and engagement. Two opportunities to attend were offered the week of October 16<sup>th</sup>—one morning in Waukesha County at Pauline Haass Public Library in Sussex and another morning in Jefferson County at Karl Junginger Memorial Library in Waterloo.

Many thanks to library directors Jacqueline Rammer (Menomonee Falls) and Jodi Kessel Szpiszar (Johnson Creek) for providing a presentation and explanation of the [Who Runs the Library: Guidelines to Roles & Responsibilities in Wisconsin's Public Libraries](#) chart that helps people better understand the role of Library Friends & Foundations in relation to their library board, director, and municipality. You can also click on the link to the [table discussion ideas](#) that were gathered from both meetings. Table discussions centered around how Library Friends recruit new members, communicate with their members and their library, engage their members, and the different ways they supported their library this past year.



**Laurie's CE activities:** I attended the Wisconsin Library Association Annual Conference in late October. Some of the session topics I sat in on were on working with library teams, artificial intelligence (AI) developments, and helping patrons use critical thinking to identify good and bad websites.



## Angela Meyers – Coordinator of Youth and Inclusive Services.

### Youth Services:

I coordinated a School Public Library Partnerships Meeting in Jefferson. Six public library staff were in attendance and 9 from local schools. We shared favorite books/series that kids are devouring right now, discussed suggestions for partner programming, and talked about literacy ideas to implement at school or for school family evening events.

### Inclusive Services:

The 4th Annual Family Day was held at Retzer Nature Center in Waukesha on October 15<sup>th</sup>. We welcomed 140 people living with dementia and their families to the event. They participated in planetarium shows, naturalist led programming, bingo, s'mores around the campfire, and live music.

I have been invited to serve on the Expanding Memory Cafes Enhancing Meaningful Connections (EMC<sup>2</sup>) Alliance over the next 12 months. The Alliance has been formed to create a national plan to grow memory cafes from 900 to 9000 across the United States. Monthly virtual meetings are being held with alliance members and advisors on specific topics related to creating a plan. I am particularly interested in the training model to get memory café facilitators trained.



*Families gather around to play bingo at Family Day*

### Professional Development:

I attended the Association of Bookmobiles & Outreach Services conference in Hershey, PA as well as the Wisconsin Library Association Conference in Middleton, WI. I also attended a webinar on hiring Interpreters and Tips to Make Your Organization More Accessible. I attended a staff in-service session at New Berlin Public Library called "Understanding and Appreciating Neurodivergence." I also completed three assigned KnowB4 security training modules.

## Beth Bechtel – Database Management Librarian

### Library Visits:

This month I visited four libraries for cataloging consults: Big Bend, Town Hall Library (Merton), Johnson Creek, and Butler.

### Meetings:

At the CAFÉ Cats virtual meetup this month we talked about editing new data fields in bibliographic records from OCLC, capitalization in library catalogs, and website link enhancements in our experience pass bib records.

I attended three virtual state-wide cataloger meetings. At the Cooperative Cataloging meeting, public library system catalogers discussed possibilities for sharing our cataloging manuals. A spin-off group of the Cooperative Cataloging meeting is the Bibliographic Standards Committee. At the Standards meeting, the main topic was planning for a statewide bibliographic comparison project to determine

current cataloging standards in Wisconsin public libraries. Finally, I attended the bi-monthly WLA Technical Services Section meeting that featured a demonstration of the cataloging utility, SkyRiver.

### **Catalog Maintenance:**

This month I prepared bib records in the catalog for next year's magazines that will have the most items in the most libraries. Duplicating these bib records each year keeps the number of items on each title manageable for catalog users.

### **Continuing Education:**

I was grateful to attend the Wisconsin Library Association conference in Middleton. Informative and interesting sessions I attended included "Should We Start Believing? ChatGPT and Libraries" and "After All These Years - Initial Lessons Learned from Implementing a Library System Merger." Networking with peers from other library systems and meeting with vendors was very useful. Best of all was seeing former Bridges director Connie Meyer accept her induction to the Wisconsin Library Hall of Fame for her exceptional contribution to Wisconsin's libraries.

## **Emily Heller – Public Communications Coordinator**

### **Thankful for the Library: Tales of Gratitude Campaign**

Bridges will be collecting testimonials from library patrons, highlighting the reasons they are thankful for their public libraries throughout the month of November. Patron stories will be used to inspire others to visit, strengthen the library's connection with the community, and promote the value of public libraries.

Submit your Tales of Gratitude:

<https://bridgeslibrarysystem.org/member-libraries/advocate/>

And share on social media!



### **Award Winners Across the System:**

The Bridges Library System celebrated numerous awards and honors in October!

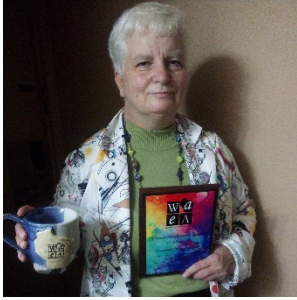
From the Wisconsin Library Association:

- Connie Meyer - 2023 Library Hall of Fame Inductee (left)
- Amy Schlotthauer - Trustee of the Year, Menomonee Falls Public Library (center)
- Lisa Baudoin - Citation of Merit, owner of Books & Company in Oconomowoc (right)



Read the **The Waukesha Freeman** article:

[https://waukeshafreemanwi.newsmemory.com/?publink=307ee42ce\\_134ad9b](https://waukeshafreemanwi.newsmemory.com/?publink=307ee42ce_134ad9b)



From the Wisconsin Art Education Association:

Alli Chase - Concerned Citizen of the Year Award (right)  
Alice Baker Library Director in Eagle

Read **The Waukesha Freeman** article:

[https://waukeshafreemanwi.newsmemory.com/?publink=3926f4476\\_134ade3](https://waukeshafreemanwi.newsmemory.com/?publink=3926f4476_134ade3)

### **Continuing Education:**

I attended my first Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) Annual Conference on October 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. It was a great experience and I gathered great information from the sessions I attended. These were my favorites:

- Improving Your Marketing Reach with Instagram Reels by Jessica Hodges, Kenosha Public Library
- Your Strategic Plan Needs A Plan with Rachel Arndt

### **October Newsletters:**

Marketing Magic - resources for library staff:

- Oct. 6: 59.38% Open Rate
- Oct. 20: 58.95% Open Rate

Monthly Bridges:

- Oct. 10: 47.71% Open Rate

Legislators:

- Oct. 9: 27.78% Open Rate