

Bridges Library System Staff Reports

October 2024

Karol Kennedy – Library System Director

County Library Tax Exemptions: Documentation on municipal exemptions for all Waukesha County municipalities with a library was provided to the County. All 18 municipalities requested the exemption. Jefferson County municipal exemptions are due to Jefferson County by November 1st.

Mission ERPossible: Waukesha County is in the process of replacing several systems in use to manage HR, payroll, and finances with Workday, a cloud-based, enterprise resource planning (ERP) software system. The current systems are outdated, do not integrate well, and some will no longer be developed by the vendor. A team at the County has been preparing for the transition for some time, with a plan to go live on March 22, 2025. Mellanie Mercier, Nicole Purifoy, and I are now part of a “Change Champion Network,” put in place to engage employees and prepare them to adopt and use the new system when launched.

State Public Library System Plan: Each year, Wisconsin public library systems submit a plan to the Division for Libraries and Technology (DLT) describing the program and budget for library service to be carried out in the subsequent year as required by Wisconsin Statutes. The staff and I worked to compile details of our 2025 service plans and budget information. This will be reviewed by the Bridges Board at their meeting this month for submission to the DLT by October 30th. The DLT must certify to the Department of Administration that the system plan conforms to [Chapter 43](#). Systems that submit plans by that date can expect to receive the first state aid payment no later than December 1st.

Professional Development: I attended the Wisconsin Libraries Tech Days session *Navigating Artificial Intelligence Through a Public Librarian's Lens*.

Mellanie Mercier – Automation Coordinator & Assistant Director

Technology Committee: The Technology committee met and began work on the 2025-2029 technology plan; this will come to the board for approval in November.

Lingopie: I’ve been investigating a new language platform called Lingopie which uses tv shows to teach languages; over 3000 shows are available for 9 different languages.

PC Reservation: Many libraries have a product for time management on PCs called PC Reservation. This product is moving to the cloud and I have been working with the company in regards to getting a group purchase for all libraries moving forward as the current product will be supported but not enhanced.

Laurie Freund – Coordinator of Library Development

SEWI Maker Meetup: On September 19th we had our first regional meeting for library staff involved with maker activities at Menomonee Falls' Forge makerspace room. We had a small but engaged group discuss issues ranging from budgeting to user equipment learning options, resources, staff coverage, policies, integrating library programs and services, and other topics. Attendees expressed a desire to continue and grow this regional meetup.

SEWI Fall Adult Public Programming Meetup: Our fall regional meeting on October 7th was in-person only at New Berlin Public Library. Eighteen attendees shared their biggest program success, discussed some programming issues, and provided input for a proposed regional DIY programming ideas online table.

Bridges Trustee Appreciation reminder (October 17th): Emailed invitations to library trustees and directors have gone out. The theme is "STEM @ the Library." Please encourage your library board members to attend. A final reminder will be sent out soon. The deadline to respond is October 14th, so there is still time to RSVP.

Bridges Friends Morning Coffee (October 24th): Just a reminder to register for our morning meeting for Library Friends board members or designated individuals and library directors. This is an opportunity to gather information, share experiences, and successes. This year's focus will be on engaging and growing your Friends group. [Register here.](#)

CCBC Best Books for Children & Teens (October 30th): The Children's Cooperative Book Center will be in our SEWI region to highlight new books that have come out in 2024. The morning session will focus on titles for young children while the afternoon will focus on titles for older children and teens. Both sessions will offer time for book browsing. Interested library staff can get more [details and register.](#)

Angela Meyers – Coordinator of Youth and Inclusive Services.

Youth Services

I facilitated a School and Public Libraries Partnerships meeting at Pewaukee Public Library with four libraries in attendance and seven school professionals representing four school districts. A second meeting will be offered in Jefferson County at a future date.

The 23rd Annual Kids' Choice program is up and running. All [printed materials](#) for the program have been delivered to the member libraries who will get materials to their school partners. Schools and public libraries will promote the Kids' Choice reading list now through January when kids can start voting for their favorite books and nominate books for next year. A big thank you to Emily Heller for preparing the print materials as well as the video book talks.

Inclusive Services

I have been an advisor to the EMC² (Expanding Memory Cafes/Enhancing Meaningful Connection), a strategic alliance, for the past 12 months. The alliance was focused on creating a plan to help expand memory cafes in the United States from 900 to 9000. A National Plan has been developed and training modules are in development. The ongoing project has been named the Memory Café Alliance and an updated memory café directory, training, and support network will all be housed by Dementia Friendly America. I am contacted regularly for advice in starting up memory cafés in public libraries and I am thrilled that this training resource and network will be available for new memory cafés.

Bridges Library System's Library Memory Project has won the Programming Innovation Award. We will accept the award at the annual Wisconsin Library Association's conference in Green Bay this November. [Read more](#) about this award and others.

The 5th Annual Family Day was held on October 6th at Retzer Nature Center. We had a total of 90 people in attendance, with one family of nine! New this year, we offered family portraits and 14 families took part. We are thankful for the 20 library staff members, ADRC staff, and community volunteers who helped make this event possible.



A group of staff and volunteers at Family Day

Three meeting room hearing loops have been installed at the following libraries: New Berlin, Jefferson, and Watertown. Hearing loops are an assisted listening device that connects to an audio source and provides a wireless signal to a hearing device. I'd like to thank the Waukesha County purchasing division for the assistance with this project.

Professional Development: I attended an Adaptive Umbrella workshop which consisted of four online sessions.

Beth Bechtel – Database Management Librarian

Cataloging Meetings

At the most recent CAFÉ Cats virtual meetup we talked about the new functionality in LEAP for adding catalog records, an alternate arrangement for Dewey decimal religion numbers offered by OCLC, and cleanup of unused Polaris record sets.

At the Cooperative Cataloging Partners virtual meeting, discussion included possibilities for LSTA grant funds, including conference travel and authority control training. We also talked about

assistance to library systems that use MARCIVE, an authority control vendor soon going out of business.

South Central Library System is investigating the use of Polaris and Leap. I attended a meeting at Pewaukee Public Library with SCLS and library staff members. Pewaukee staff demonstrated circulation and cataloging in Leap, and Polaris functionality was discussed by all.

The cataloger at Town Hall Library and I met virtually to discuss call number options for specific series in that library.

Continuing Education

I attended the SEWI Materials Processing Meetup for Circulation and Technical Services staff at Menomonee Falls Public Library. It was good to meet with cataloging staff from the region to discuss processing procedures for new library materials, repair procedures for damaged materials, and managing Library of Things collections.

An interesting virtual Tech Days session I attended was “Trends in Emerging Tech.” Speaker Laura Solomon asked attendees to consider policies that libraries might need as technologies such as augmented reality devices emerge. She also talked about a shift to the fediverse, which is a collection of social networking services that communicate with each other, and superapps, which are widely adopted apps providing multiple services with a common financial component. A well-known superapp is China’s WeChat.

Emily Heller – Public Communications Coordinator

The Library Treasure Adventure – Update!

While we were excited to exceed our goal with 1,507 prize entries, we are thrilled to have finalized our number of interactions with visitors during the event. There were **11,016 interactions** with library staff tallied at 20 of our member libraries. It’s great to see so many people got out to explore our library system this summer!

In the news

- We sent out a news release to our media list to announce the Library Memory Project’s Programming Innovation Award from the Wisconsin Library Association: [News Release](#)
- Story Hike was featured by Waukesha PLU on Fox 6’s *Weekend Wakeup*: [Watch second video](#)
- Waukesha Reads program featured: [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)
- Oconomowoc Public Library welcomes new children’s librarian: [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)
- Dwight Foster Public Library’s Story Times: [Daily Union Article](#)

Outreach

- **Sat., Sept. 21st: Apple Harvest Festival**

The festival brought an estimated 4,500 visitors to Retzer Nature Center. Our outreach booth had a constant flow of people stopping by to play the plinko game, color bookmarks, and talk about “1 card, 24 libraries” and all the great library card perks!



Kids' Choice Award

I updated the 2024/2025 Kids' Choice Award marketing materials with Angela and created fun Book Talk Videos for each title on the list. These short videos are available in a variety of formats online in case access to certain websites are blocked by school districts.

Watch the videos: <https://bridgeslibrarysystem.org/booktalks>

Google Interior Photo Tours

I was trained on August 22nd by Midwest Pano to learn how to use an Insta360 camera to take panoramic photos of library interiors that will be added to each member library's Google profile photos. Some member libraries will also be adding interactive tours to further promote their library. I have also done training on the GoThru tour platform with Midwest Pano and will give that training to those libraries looking to add that feature to their website. This project will go into 2025.

- Waukesha Public Library had their photos taken Aug. 28th and the images are complete and on their [Google profile](#). Their marketing team has been trained on the interactive tour platform and they are working on it going live.
- These libraries have their photography completed and/or scheduled by me so far:
 - Sept. 20th: Muskego / Oct. 10th: Tour platform training
 - Sept. 27th: Brookfield

- Oct. 9th: Watertown
- Oct. 18th: Mukwonago

September/October Newsletters:

Marketing Magic - resources for library staff:

- Oct. 4: 54.55% Open Rate
- Sept. 20: 61.36% Open Rate
- Sept. 6: 65.17% Open Rate

Monthly Bridges:

- October: 51.59% Open Rate
- September: 56.69% Open Rate

Legislators:

- September: 37.5% Open Rate