

Bridges Library System Staff Reports

August 2024

Karol Kennedy – Library System Director

2025 Bridges Library System Budget: I attended the Waukesha County Executive budget review and presented the preliminary budget approved by the Bridges Library System Board in July. The final version of the budget will be brought to the Board for consideration at the September Bridges Board meeting.

Jefferson County Library Service Board: The Board met on July 24th to review and approve the 2025 Jefferson County Library budget request and 2023 Jefferson County Libraries Annual Report. I presented the Annual Report to the County Board in August.

2025 Jefferson County Library Budget: This budget request was approved by the Jefferson County Library Service Board and then submitted to the Jefferson County Finance Director. Dwight Foster Public Library Director Minetta Lippert and I met with County Administrator Ben Wehmeier and Finance Director Marc DeVries to discuss the budget request. The Finance Committee Budget Hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, September 18th.

System and Resource Library Administrator Association of Wisconsin (SRLAAW): I attended the third quarter meeting of this group. Staff from Legal Intervention for Transforming Wisconsin (LIFT WI) provided an overview of their services. The 2025-27 Biennial Budget request was discussed followed by reports from affiliated organizations and discussion of current library topics.

Merton Village Board Presentation: I had the opportunity to attend the Merton Town Board meeting to present an overview of county library funding and the Waukesha County minimum to exempt requirements for municipalities with libraries.

Laurie Freund – Coordinator of Library Development

Bridges Adult Services Meeting: We had a good turnout of adult services library staff at our in-person meeting at Pewaukee Public Library on July 30th. There was some discussion and sharing from those who are using or started using the collection assessment tool. The group then talked about future meetings and agreed on monthly virtual meetings, except for three months when it will be in-person. Meetings will alternate morning and afternoon at the half-hour mark to allow more people to attend. The group also came up with a list of high interest discussion topics for future discussions. Attendees then shared what their library offered for the summer library reading program and activities for adults. The meeting summary and a new meeting schedule have been sent to the adult services email list.

Bridges Trustee Appreciation (Thursday, October 17th): Our annual evening program for library trustees and directors will be in the evening on October 17th at Brookfield Public Library. The theme will be STEM @ the Library. Library directors will soon receive blank posters so their library team can show what programs and activities were offered for youth and adults in the past year related to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. Details and invitations will be coming soon.

Angela Meyers – Coordinator of Youth and Inclusive Services.

Youth Services

Summer Library Program: Many of our libraries have shared that participation in their Summer Library Programs has been high, possibly on par with pre-pandemic numbers. Bridges coordinates three family or two family and one teen program for each of the member libraries. This year, we hosted magicians, animal experts, a science-based show, an artist, and nerf games. It was exciting to see all the activity at the libraries this summer. There were 61 family programs with 8,485 people in attendance and 11 programs geared toward teens and tweens with 187 in attendance. In total, these programs served 8,672 people. Library staff serving youth are encouraged to attend the summer wrap up meeting, [Summer Celebration](#), on August 21st from 9:00am-Noon at the Oconomowoc Public Library.

Meetings: There are several opportunities to meet this fall for staff serving youth.

- **Teen Think Tank** Hartland Public Library on Tuesday, August 27th 1:30pm-3:30pm. [Sign up](#).
- **Youth Services Meet Up** at Waukesha Public Library on Thursday, September 5 1:30pm-3:30pm. [Sign up](#).
- **School and Public Library Partnerships Meeting** at Jefferson Public Library on Thursday, September 26 4:00pm-7:00pm. [Sign up](#) and share with schools.
- **School and Public Library Partnerships Meeting** at Pewaukee Public Library on Monday, September 30 4:00pm-7:00pm. [Sign up](#) and share with schools.

Inclusive Services


DEI Grant: We were awarded a DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) Consultant grant through the Wisconsin Libraries Talk About Race and IDEA Team. This grant, valued at \$1,000, will allow Bridges Library System to work with a consultant to extend the reach of the Library Memory Project to underrepresented communities. Work on this project will begin this fall.

Observation Deck: I am in a testing group for an IMLS project called [Observation Deck](#). This is a tool developed by Madison Public Library to capture the library's story through observation. Myself and two librarians from Delafield Public Library are observing programs and entering data into the Observation Deck online tool. We are working with a contact at Madison Public Library to make improvements to the tool, which will hopefully roll out to more libraries in Wisconsin in its next iteration (pending additional funding).

Professional Development: I attended the Play, Make, Learn conference in Madison.

Edit Observation ×

☆ Highlight for social media or storytelling



Note: Mother and daughter work on alcohol ink project together. Daughter dispenses ink while mother blows air from the straw causing the ink to spread across the coaster

Dimension: Engagement

Indication: Spending time with activities

Attendee Code

UPDATE OBSERVATION 🗑️

Sample observation from New Berlin's recent memory cafe

Beth Bechtel – Database Management Librarian

Cataloging Meetings: At the CAFÉ Cats virtual meetup this month we talked about the results of the CAFÉ cataloger survey. Among topics high on the list for desired training were using Leap for cataloging and working with bib record fixed fields.

In the WLA Technical Services Section virtual meeting, the main topics of discussion were changes in section leadership and preparing for the section's presentation at the annual WLA conference.

The Bibliographic Standards Committee is a subcommittee of the LSTA Cooperative Cataloging partners group. In July, the subcommittee discussed statewide standards for cataloging large print, standard print, and graphic novels. This group is also working with a representative from Wiscat to ensure searching Wisconsin's online public catalogs via Wiscat works as well as possible.

Cataloging Projects: This month, Shawn Carlson and I worked on fine tuning our OCLC Record Matching Service process to work well with Polaris. This useful service was created by Prairie Lakes Library System to improve data in our online catalog and has become part of my weekly workflow.

Angela Meyer and I have been collaborating to plan and implement a process to add data about Bridges' Story Corps and Community Voices recordings to the Recollection Wisconsin website. This will provide more exposure and access to the recordings.

Emily Heller – Public Communications Coordinator

The Library Treasure Adventure: July was a very busy month for the Treasure Adventure. Member libraries reported many happy visitors. We received 491 July entry forms for a total of 860 entries so far!

Great patron story on the impact of libraries from Johnson Creek Public Library:

"A regular patron, Theresa, and her two kids, ages 5 and 8, were in and sharing their experiences with me on how much they are enjoying Treasure Adventure! After her son's orthodontist appointment in Greenfield, they stopped at the libraries on that end of the county. They didn't realize everything that each library had and that they were all so different. Loved Town Hall and would have liked to spend more time in their Makerspace. They stopped at a McDonald's for sundaes and fries and the kids said it was the best day ever!

Another day they were in Hartland and her son saw a kid playing a Switch game (how cool that they have that?!) and asked if he could play with him. Of course he said, sure. The boys were playing, younger siblings were playing, and the moms were talking. That alone was great for them. As they were walking to their cars, they realized they both planned on going to the Splash Pad at Nixon Park. They all hung out with new friends and exchanged phone numbers to get together again!

Theresa got very emotional talking about her love of libraries and how she wanted her kids to be library kids. As a child the library was always her safe place. As we know, it is often the only safe space for some people."

- Jodi Kessel Szpiszar, Johnson Creek Public Library Director

The July winners are:

- Ray J. - 5 O'Clock Club Restaurant Gift Card
- Colin O. - AMC Theatres Gift Card
- Michael W. - Day Dream Believer Book Store Gift Card
- Morgan C. - Jodi Picoult Author Event at the Pabst Theater and a Books & Company Gift Card

Statewide Marketing Cohort Collaboration: The orders have been placed for the promotional stickers to support Library Card Sign-up Month in September! These will also be available in our outreach bins. There are 5 designs to choose from:



In the news

- Pewaukee Public Library's New Helping Library Kits: [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)

Marketing: I have been working on creating and updating marketing materials for upcoming programs and events.

- Kids Choice Award – Posters, bookmarks, and stickers
- Library Memory Project Family Day – Invitation and Social Graphics
- SEWI Marketing Plan Workshops Training – Promotional language and website setup
- Café “Under Construction” – Graphics for websites, app, social media, etc.

Outreach: Due to an increase in requests from member libraries, we added two additional outreach bins to circulate to events. There are now four bins filled with Bridges Library System information and giveaways. Some items include Café App Brochures, 24 Library Locations Card, Udemy Info, Libby/Hoopla info, Consumer Reports and Badgerlink info. There are also pens, pencils, stickers, magnets and more to attract table visitors.

Professional Development: July 23rd - I attended a webinar: “Social Media Strategies for Libraries.” It was focused on how to use the two-way conversations on social media channels as part of promotional strategies. They also covered reviewing policies and ways to manage while still being creative.

July/August Newsletters:

Marketing Magic - resources for library staff:

- August 2 = 63.44% Open Rate
- July 19 = 66.67% Open Rate
- July 3 = 58.06% Open Rate

Monthly Bridges:

- July 10: 50.95% Open Rate

Legislators:

- July 9: 18.75% Open Rate