

Bridges Library System Staff Reports

September 2024

Karol Kennedy – Library System Director

2025 Bridges Library System Budget: Changes to the 2023 annual report operating revenue and expenditures for one of our member libraries resulted in some slight adjustment to the preliminary 2025 Bridges Program Plan and Budget approved by the System Board in July. The new budget request includes a small increase in reimbursement from Prairie Lakes Library System and a small increase in the Waukesha County library levy. The updated budget will be reviewed at the upcoming APL and Bridges Board meetings. I have also begun work on the state-required annual plan and budget. The deadline for this has been moved to October 30th due to changes in the submission process. This will be reviewed at the October Board meeting.

2025 Jefferson County Library Budget: I will present the budget to the Jefferson County Finance Committee on Wednesday, September 18th.

County Library Tax Exemptions: I completed the Waukesha County library tax exemption calculations and sent the information to each municipality with a library. Municipalities with a library are allowed to exempt their residents from the county library tax if they levy and expend an amount equal to or greater than the mill rate set by Waukesha County in the preceding year AND if they meet the Waukesha County library minimum to exempt standards. Standards certification has been received from all Waukesha County libraries. Much smaller increases in the equalized value in Waukesha County municipalities compared to last year, resulted in decreases in the minimum appropriation required to exempt for most Waukesha County municipalities with libraries. I worked with the Waukesha County budget team to provide information to municipalities about the impact of non-exemption. Waukesha County municipal exemptions are due at our office by September 30th. Jefferson County handles the county library tax exemption work in their county. Jefferson County municipal exemptions are due to Jefferson County by November 1st.

New Director Orientation: Minetta Lippert, new Dwight Foster Public Library director, attended a system orientation session at the Bridges office. She had an opportunity learn about system services and to spend a little one-on-one time with Bridges staff.

New Director in Butler: The Butler Public Library Board announced the hiring of Beth Stavros as the library's new director. Beth comes from a varied background, combining library science, theater arts, and literary skills and is currently enrolled as a graduate student in UW-Milwaukee's Library and Information Sciences program.

Professional Development: I attended several great sessions this month including Trustee Training Week – Everything You Want to Know About Book Challenges...and a Bit You Probably Don't, Wisconsin Library Law, Making Each Other Look Good: the Library Board and Library

Director, Organizational and Governance Best Practices. I also attended the SEWI Directors Retreat which included sessions employment laws like ADA, FMLA, and FLSA, Annual Report data, and challenging discussions.

Mellanie Mercier – Automation Coordinator & Assistant Director

WPLC Data Dashboard: WPLC has released a data dashboard allowing libraries to compare themselves on 35 aspects of annual report data to other similar sized libraries throughout the state. Annual report data goes back to 2015. This is a trial and will be available to libraries through the end of 2024.

Technology Committee: The technology committee will begin meeting this month to work on the 2024-2029 Technology Plan which is due to DPI by December 20th. This report is required for our libraries to receive discounts on their fiber connections through the TEACH program.

Laurie Freund – Coordinator of Library Development

Bridges Trustee Appreciation: Celebrate our trustees and our libraries at this year's Bridges Library Trustee Appreciation event on October 17th from 6-8pm at Brookfield Public Library. Our theme this year is "STEM @ the Library." Library trustees and directors will be receiving an email invitation starting Monday, September 16th with RSVPs by October 14th. Please encourage your library board members to attend.

Ready for Reentry Webinar: I hosted a statewide webinar, along with South Central Library System and Workforce Development on August 13th to provide information on online resources that are available to people who are reentering their community after being in jail or prison. Resources covered were *Reentry Ready Resources* through UW-Extension, *Legal Turn-up Tool* through Lift Wisconsin, and *Wisconsin Reentry Access Portal (WRAP)* which allows community-based service providers to help connected reentry individuals to the services they need. We had 57 attendees and so far, 30 views of the recordings. Recordings, slides, and other items from the webinar are available on the [SEWI Libraries Archives](#) page.

SEWI Library Directors Retreat: We had roughly 30 attendees for this annual regional, all-day workshop for library directors that was held on August 23rd at New Berlin Public Library. Sessions included information on employment laws, library annual report data, round table discussions on topics of high interest, and mastering challenging conversations. An optional Wisconsin Trustee Training Session webcast was also offered during the noon hour. Handouts and materials are available on the [SEWI Libraries Archives](#) page.

Upcoming SEWI regional offerings: We have several opportunities for library staff to network, engage, and learn this fall.

- **September 19:** [SEWI Maker Meetup](#) at Menomonee Falls Public Library
This is our first regional meetup for library staff involved in maker activities.
- **October 2, 9, 15, 23, 30:** [Marketing: from Scary to Attainable](#). Online.
Library staff can register and join online from 1:00-2:00 pm on Wednesdays in October with Library System marketing and communications consultants in our SEWI Libraries region. Learn how you can boost their library's visibility or effectively promote a new program.
- **October 7:** [SEWI Adult Public Programming Meetup](#) at New Berlin Public Library.
Library staff involved in providing and coordinating public programs for adults are welcome to register and attend this regional fall meetup to network, share and discuss common issues and program ideas.
- **October 30:** [CCBC Best New Books for Children and Teens](#) at New Berlin Public Library.
Library staff who work with children and teens can register and attend presentations from the Cooperative Children's Book Center staff. The morning session will focus on new books for children, birth through grade 5. The afternoon session will be on new books for older children and teens, grades 6-12. There will be time to browse the books. Library staff are welcome to invite school librarians and educators to register and attend.

Bridges Adult Services Meetings: Meetings are now held on the second Wednesday except for three in-person meetings for selected months. The times will alternate between morning and afternoon to allow more staff to attend. The meeting this month will be online on September 11 at 1:30 pm. Dates, times, and links to connect online have been sent out to the Adult Services listserv.

MRA On-Demand Online Courses: With funds from the last SEWI LSTA grant period, we were able to add additional courses for library staff in the areas of Leadership for Hiring Managers and Microsoft Training. More information about these courses will be coming this month.

SEWI LSTA Library Conference Scholarships: We once again will have funds available this fall that libraries can apply to receive reimbursements for staff who wish to attend in-state and national library conferences. More information will be coming soon.

Angela Meyers – Coordinator of Youth and Inclusive Services.

Youth Services

Facilitated Gatherings: I led a morning session for youth services staff to reflect on their summer library programs. Sixteen staff members from 12 libraries attended. We discussed program structures, incentives, preferred performers, and strategies to prevent burnout.

I also organized a virtual Teen Think Tank meeting with six staff members and facilitated a Youth Services meeting at Waukesha Public Library, attended by 12 staff from 11 libraries.

Coming Up

- **School and Public Library Partnerships Meeting** at Jefferson Public Library on Thursday, September 26th 4:30pm-6:30pm. [Sign up](#) and share with schools.
- **School and Public Library Partnerships Meeting** at Pewaukee Public Library on Monday, September 30th 4:30-6:30pm. [Sign up](#) and share with schools.

Inclusive Services

Library Memory Project Update : I've been meeting with each group in the Library Memory Project to discuss what's working well, areas for improvement, and future goals. I am also working on coordinating Family Day, an annual event held on a weekend so those living with dementia can invite their children, grandchildren, and close friends to an inclusive event. Family Day for Waukesha County will be held on Sunday, October 6th from 12-3pm at Retzer Nature Center. Volunteer opportunities are available via this [sign up](#).

A Panel Discussion on Accessibility: October 14th @ 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Join us at the Pewaukee Public Library for an insightful panel discussion on accessibility, moderated by Dawn Koceja, Community Engagement & Advocacy at the Milwaukee Public Museum. This event will feature local organization representatives and community members who will discuss how to support individuals with diverse needs and accommodation requests. Library staff will learn how to better serve and support community members with disabilities and neurodiverse conditions. Don't miss this crucial opportunity to enhance your library's accessibility and inclusivity. [Register](#) today!

Professional Development: I completed the KnowB4 Training Human Firewalls in Action: Social Engineering & Accidental Insider Threats, Ready for Reentry webinar, and PLA's webinar on Yoga & Mindfulness

Emily Heller – Public Communications Coordinator

The Library Treasure Adventure Has Come to an End!: The Library Treasure Adventure event ended on August 31st and was a great success! We received 647 August entry forms for a total of 1,507 entries (so far)! This met the Planning Committee’s goal of increasing the number of entries received by 15% over last year’s passport challenge for a total of 1,237 entries. For the library’s that tracked their adventurer interactions, we have received 9,693 interaction tallies so far! Check out the video of the [2024 Library Treasures!](#)

The August prize winners will be drawn on 9/10 and will be announced by 9/11 (or sooner). <https://bridgeslibrarysystem.org/treasure>

September is Library Card Sign-up Month: We have created messaging and advertising to promote “Library Card Perks – From Pages to Possibilities” to carry throughout the fall.

Member Libraries have also received the state cohort’s promotional stickers and are using them for promotions. [See Brookfield’s post.](#)



- Press release was picked up:
 - Library Card Sign-up Month: [Watertown Daily Times](#)
 - Library Card Sign-up Month: [Waukesha Freeman](#)
- Radio ads B93.3 FM – Running September 2 – October 26
- Waukesha Freeman ‘Fall Fun Guide’ Ad
- Daily Union and Watertown Daily Times Ad



1 LIBRARY CARD 24 LIBRARIES

Use all 24 public libraries in Waukesha and Jefferson counties with your card

Alice Baker Memorial Library - Eagle 262.594.2800 - alicebaker.lib.wi.us	L.D. Fargo Public Library - Lake Mills 920.648.2166 - lakemills.lib.wi.us
Big Bend Village Library 262.662.3571 - bigbend.lib.wi.us	Menomonee Falls Public Library 262.532.9900 - menomoneefallslibrary.org
Brookfield Public Library 262.782.4140 - brookfieldlibrary.com	Mukwonago Community Library 262.363.6411 - mukwonagolibrary.org
Butler Public Library 262.783.2535 - butler.lib.wi.us	Muskego Public Library 262.971.2100 - library.muskego.wi.gov
Delafield Public Library 262.646.6230 - delafieldlibrary.org	New Berlin Public Library 262.785.4960 - newberlinlibrary.org
Dwight Foster Public Library - Fort Atkinson 920.563.7790 - fortatkinsonlibrary.org	Oconomowoc Public Library 262.569.2193 - oconomowoclibrary.org
Elm Grove Public Library 262.782.6717 - elmgrovelibrary.org	Pauline Haass Public Library - Sussex 262.246.5180 - phplonline.org
Hartland Public Library 262.367.3350 - hartlandlibrary.org	Pewaukee Public Library 262.691.5670 - pewaukeelibrary.org
Irvin L. Young Memorial Library - Whitewater 262.473.0530 - whitewaterlibrary.org	Powers Memorial Library - Palmyra 262.495.4605 - palmyra.lib.wi.us
Jefferson Public Library 920.674.7733 - jeffersonwillibrary.org	Town Hall Library - North Lake 262.966.2933 - townhalllibrary.org
Johnson Creek Public Library 920.699.3741 - johnsoncreeklibrary.org	Watertown Public Library 920.262.4090 - watertownpubliclibrary.org
Karl Junginger Memorial Library - Waterloo 920.478.3344 - waterloolib.wi.us	Waukesha Public Library 262.524.3680 - waukeshapubliclibrary.org

BRIDGES LIBRARY SYSTEM
bridgeslibrarysystem.org





LIBRARY CARD PERKS

FROM PAGES TO POSSIBILITIES



SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE TO **READ**

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS, COMICS & MORE

In the news

- Waukesha Public Library welcomes new children’s librarian: [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)
- Menomonee Falls Public Library to hold Latitude Café grand opening: [Waukesha Freeman Article](#)
- Dwight Foster Public Library announces September events: [Daily Union Article](#)
- Jefferson Public Library September programs and events: [Daily Union Article](#)
- Irvin L. Young Memorial Library Expansion/Renovation: [Whitewater Banner Article](#)
- Mukwonago Community Library Funerary Items returned: [League of WI Municipalities Article](#)

Outreach

- **Sat., Sept. 21:** Visit our Bridges outreach table at Retzer Nature Center’s annual Apple Harvest Festival. We will be promoting library card perks in “The Pines” activity area. We will be featuring the Spinning Wheel, a Dr. Seuss “Oh, the Places You’ll Go!” Photobooth, and offer color-your-own bookmarks and other giveaways. Event details: <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/appleharvestfestival>
- Waukesha Public Library will also be there to kick-off [Waukesha Reads](#) with their book giveaway.

Story Hike at Retzer Nature Center: Bridges is partnering with Retzer Nature Center again for the fall Story Hike. The book, “Goodbye Summer, Hello Autumn,” by Kenard Pak, will be at Retzer from September 21 – October 31.

<https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/storyhike>

Marketing: We were very excited to receive a nice acknowledgement from Angela Hursh of NoveList on her LinkedIn page. We were recognized as her “Library of the Day” for our August system email newsletter titled “Wanna go book clubbing?” [See Angela’s LinkedIn Post](#)

August Newsletters:

Marketing Magic - resources for library staff:

- August 23: 64.13% Open Rate

Monthly Bridges:

- August 13: 49.83% Open rate

Legislators:

- August 12: 25% Open rate



Angela Hursh (She/Her) • Following
Library Marketing Expert | Library Journal 2023 Mover and Shaker
1w •

Library consortia or systems: You can help your member libraries with email! Case in point:

[Bridges Library System](#) sends a monthly newsletter highlighting key library services. With a table of contents at the top of the newsletter, and informative, easy-to-understand content, these emails are fun to receive! This month’s subject line was “Let’s go Book Clubbing!”

That’s why Bridges is our [#LibraryOfTheDay](#). See the full email here: <https://lnkd.in/gWjQ-xF8>

Wanna go clubbing?

Check out 3 ways to enjoy book clubs with your library.

