

Director's COVID-19 Report

WVLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

April 18, 2020

COMMUNICATION

In mid-March, several communication channels were implemented by to address member libraries' concerns and questions about the ever-evolving news related to the pandemic and Governor Evers' Safer @ Home Order. With oversight by **Jamie Matczak**, methods of communicating COVID-19 information to colleagues include:

- a **COVID-19 Webpage**: Updated on a daily basis, this website shares the status on services at area libraries, health resources, upcoming webinars related to COVID-19, the Daily Updates, the recordings of the Staying Together Discussion, V-Cat-related documents and more.
- a **COVID-19 Daily Update**: In response to the rapid changes for libraries and communities regarding COVID-19, an email update is sent to area colleagues at 9 a.m. each weekday. Archived on the WVLS COVID-19 webpage, these updates replace the "*Monday Mentions*" email for the time being.
- **"Staying Together" Discussions**: To address the need for member library directors to connect with one another, ask questions and share expertise, and to lend counsel and support when needed, WVLS is hosting a 60-minute online meeting twice a week for library directors or a proxy. Each meeting has a discussion topic, and recorded and archived.

WVLS PROJECTS

Donations to Member Library/WVLS Overdrive Advantage Digital Collection

With the closure of library buildings, requests for and usage of digital library titles available through OverDrive is seeing dramatic increases across the state. In response, **Anne Hamland**, **Katie Zimmermann** and the **WVLS OverDrive Advantage Selection Committee** developed and released another set of marketing tools to invite donations to the WVLS OverDrive Advantage account. Donors may designate how their donations be spent, whether by genre, topic, specific title/s, number of titles to purchase, etc. Also, donors, whether member library or a patron, can choose to send WVLS a check or request to be invoiced for a donation.

Thus far, donations have been received from **Granton Community Library**, **Granton School District**, **T.B. Scott Free Library (Merrill)**, **Abbotsford Public Library** and **Jamie Matczak**. On behalf of our member libraries and the communities they serve, WVLS thanks them for their generous support of a collection that benefits all Wisconsin citizens.

Anne is also working with **WILS** and **Monica Treptow**, the DPI School Library Education Consultant, to provide information to school librarians that promotes public library collections and outlines opportunities for school districts to provide digital collections.

Inclusive Services Update

The statewide inclusivity “**Toward One Wisconsin**” 2020 Conference slated to be held April 28-29 in Green Bay as canceled due to the virus, so many plans and idea gathering stemming from that event have now ceased. While library closures have created opportunities for giving the public **free and unrestricted access to many digital services**, we are now more aware of how limited internet service is and how digital services may not be accessible for people with disabilities. **Sherry Machones** been answering questions about how to provide access to library services to those without internet access and have been working with inclusive services consultants across the country for more ideas and solutions. In American Library Association news, ALA has been experiencing severe financial shortages and is having to slim down the amount of staff, and therefore Divisions, that they have. As President of the inclusive services division, **Association of Specialized Government and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASGCLA)**, Sherry has been notified the division will be discontinued and members will need to find another way to make inclusion part of the association. The Division has until September to find a solution before it loses its staff at ALA.

DPI Partnership Regarding Potential Mobile Hotspots Procurement and Deployment

We were **approached by DPI to act as fiscal agent** for one or more projects connected to repurposed FY19 LSTA funds not yet committed and CARES Act funds not yet fully understood. LEAN WI has since been working with DPI to consult and collaborate on internet accessibility project ideas to consume these channels of funding made available for relief under the current operational environment.

In alignment with our suggestion, DPI decided to adjust the LSTA relief from a single comprehensive project to an even distribution of the \$100,000 in available funding across the sixteen library systems, or **\$6,250 per system** to be used to support system and library operations in this new highly-remote operational state.

As of this writing, DPI is looking toward the CARES Act funding with a broader slate of projects that will fit within the scope and constraints of the CARES Act. LEAN WI is still ready to act as fiscal agent for any statewide or multi-system project(s) that may need one, though our primary focus will be on working with DPI to maximize the benefit of the CARES Act (and any other) funding in as equitable a manner across the state as is feasible.

ILS Administration/V-Cat Covid-19 Update

Rachel Metzler and **Katie Zimmermann** have been focusing a lot of time over the past few weeks on V-Cat database/ILS adjustments to help libraries in various states of being open, closed and open with limited services to manage holds, paging lists, transits, due dates etc. In conversations with other ILS administrators around the state we learned that, in the early stages of library closures, we were more proactive than other library systems in making ILS changes to serve individual libraries’ needs.

While WVLS has historically offered individualized support and services to member libraries, the abrupt and untimely closures of libraries prompted WVLS to make some high level decisions that impacted all V-Cat member libraries. These decisions were not made lightly.

One area of concern expressed was about the **extension of due dates**. The WVLS-initiated extension of due dates on all titles checked out during library closures was prevented fines from accruing on patron cards, and kept patrons in “good standing.” If a patron is in “good standing”, they can access their library’s online resources, an important service in this unprecedented time.

The concern raised about the WVLS-initiated due date extension is that an extension of a due date on an item, unlike a renewal of an item, does *not count as a circulation*. Recognizing how important this data is to our

libraries and communities, we shared this concern with DPI and with other ILS administrators around the state. It is our understanding that the practice of extending due dates, instead of batch renewing items, is the accepted practice across library systems. We have confirmed that IFLS, NWLS, WRLS, OWLS, and MCFLS have extended due dates during the time their libraries are closed.

Historically, circulation and renewal counts have been a measure of patron/library interaction. Keeping this in mind, we are doing our best to keep a record of items that are currently checked out, including owning library, original checkout date, updated date, checkout location, patron type, patron code 4, and patron home library in case this information is helpful in any future count of use.

A report of items with due dates extended to 5/4/2020 on 3/24/2020 has been shared with member libraries. We have some information on titles extended before 3/24/2020, however the data is not as clear. Initially WVLS anticipated that library closures would be somewhat short lived and responded to libraries' extension requests in a more individualized way. As a result, we were not capturing detailed item data for each set of due date extensions prior to 3/24/2020. Because this data includes multiple extension dates that overlap with new checkout dates, and Sierra does not track due date extensions in a meaningful way, we consider the numbers in this report soft data. If we can find a way to process the data and present it in a meaningful way, we will do that.

During this time when libraries are closed to the public, we are encouraging libraries to grant a new library patron access to its digital resources by way of a **temporary digital library card**. A new feature has been set up in the online catalog for libraries to create temporary cards for patrons without the need to visit the library or provide proof of address or ID. Patrons can contact their local library to request a temporary library card. We recommend that libraries attempt to follow their usual policies and procedures as closely as possible when creating new, online only, library cards.

We are moving forward with **fully remote V-Cat Council and committee meetings**. The V-Cat Council had a brief meeting on April 2, 2020 to test connections and the ability of member libraries to participate in discussion. A full meeting is scheduled for May 7, 2020. The V-Cat Cooperative Circulation Committee, Bibliographic and Interface Committee, and Voting Models Exploratory Committee all have remote only meetings scheduled in April.

A **checklist of ILS changes and guidelines is being developed** for colleagues to follow as libraries transition to reopening for limited services to fully reopening to the public. The guidelines and modifications to ILS settings will help all libraries manage holds, paging lists, transits, due dates, and overdue fines.

Bluejeans Enterprise Virtual Conferencing Licensing Deployment and Support

LEAN WI accelerated its **Bluejeans Enterprise licensing expansion** with the TEACH program and were authorized for a large pool of licensing to deploy among member libraries for remote meeting hosting. The reason for continuing with Bluejeans rather than other options (Zoom, GoToMeeting, Google Communities, Microsoft Teams, etc.) is that we have access to centrally manageable and supportable Enterprise level licensing through TEACH as a BadgerNet customer benefit. This access is independent of the current COVID-19 response measures and service level increases many products are offering temporarily and will allow us to continue use without unexpected or unsustainable cost increases a few months from now. Information on how WVLS is providing training on the use of this product is provided under **"Continuing Education and Training"** later in this report.

Splashtop Remote Desktop and/or VPN Access Support for Member Library Staff

LEAN WI partners procured licensing and began deploying Splashtop remote desktop tools for library administrators and staff who needed to access staff desktop computers in libraries from library-owned or personal computers from home. We also enabled virtual private network (vpn) connections for several library administrators and staff using library-owned laptops from home networks. These options remain available to other staff upon request.

WiFi Coverage Adjustments/Expansion

Working with DPI and Public Service Commission (PSC) to collect and map public Wi-Fi access availability throughout Wisconsin, LEAN WI partners began working with DPI to collect data from member libraries about public Wi-Fi accessibility outside of the library buildings (drive-by Wi-Fi). We developed a modified version of the DPI survey, including more detail on the ranges of coverage around the library buildings, to proxy responses. About half of the libraries indicated a desire for some assistance adjusting their Wi-Fi coverage to better reach and cover parking areas outside of the buildings.

Working with Member Libraries to Expand Coverage Areas Outside of Buildings

We have begun working with libraries to review their coverage situations and are piloting two direct-ship equipment deployment projects to determine feasibility of remotely supporting equipment adds. One for an outdoor placement, and one for an indoor placement.

Youth Services Update

Anne Hamland has been working on alternative offerings to support member libraries in youth services and programming. Hamland met with librarians serving youth on April 15 to talk through options for the WVLS Summer Library Program Performer Grant for 2020 and strategies for providing a summer library program safely. Hamland lead investigation and starting negotiations for a **statewide contract with [Beanstack](#)**, an app and website service for supporting an online supported summer library program.

SCLS State Aid Proposal Discussions and Advisory

The South Central Library System (SCLS) put forth a technology-specific funding proposal to WLA's Library Development and Legislation Committee (LD&L) for inclusion in an overall funding proposal to the State. There was concern that the SCLS proposal ended up coupling the almost ubiquitously desirable vision of a more consolidated and unified technology infrastructure platform with some specific operational ideas and project concepts not yet richly discussed or vetted by all potential stakeholders. That still needs to be addressed with care and diligence, but our current economic state and forecast raise a more fundamental question of timing regarding any ask for any funding increase at all right now.

LEAN WI partners represent a smaller version of one example of what an equitable larger-scale or state-wide technology resource sharing operation could look like. Our leadership considers future planning through this lens and recognize that systems like SCLS do not yet have the same degree of inter-organizational operational experience as our partnership or some of the other well-established technology resource sharing partnerships in operation. The vision of technology service consolidation, efficiency, and unity has been guiding WVLS technology planning for over a decade now and the LEAN WI partnership for five years. Our state of being is representative of that vision and demonstrates that it can be feasible and durable. We will continue to bring that experience to bear in discussions and planning efforts as we ramp up our leadership role, and more proactively engage directly with other systems and especially with DPI in collaboration building and towards well-planned, durable technology services unification efforts.

WVLS 2020 Scholarships Update

In early February, WVLS announced the availability of eight conference scholarships for 2020, with the following being offered.

- One **ALA** (American Library Association) Annual Conference Scholarship, June 25-30, Chicago, IL **CANCELLED**
- Two **WAPL** (Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries)/ **WLA** (Wisconsin Library Association) Conference Scholarships; WAPL Conference in Oshkosh **CANCELLED**; WLA Conference, October in Green Bay
- One **WAPL** Conference **CANCELLED** /**WLA** Conference Youth Services Scholarship
- Four **ARSL** (Association of Rural and Small Libraries) Conference Scholarships, Sept. 30 – Oct. 3, Wichita, KS

The application deadlines for the 2020 WVLS Scholarships application deadline were extended from various dates in March to **April 13**. Because of the "Safer at Home" Order, and with many library boards meeting virtually, the requirement for a library board president signature on the application has been altered to accommodate a signature retroactively. Scholarship recipients will also have the option of deferring their award scholarship to a 2021 conference. A full announcement of recipients will be provided soon. For more information, visit the [WVLS Scholarships and Grants webpage](#).

CONTINUING EDUCATION & TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Customer Service Webinar Series

Nationally-known library consultant **Pat Wagner** presented a three-part webinar series on April 1, 8 and 15, [focusing on customer service in libraries](#). The series, which was presented by the WVLS, along with support from the Northern Waters Library Service and the Southwest Wisconsin Library System, covered the following topics

- The Ethics of Library Customer Service: Fair Treatment for Everyone, Wednesday, April 1; 1 pm
- Dealing with Hostile and Potentially Dangerous Library Users, Wednesday, April 8; 1 pm
- When the Library Makes Mistakes, Wednesday, April 15; 1 pm

With library closures, WVLS anticipated there would be heightened interest in virtual professional development opportunities. However interest in this webinar series was unprecedented and over 300 people each webinar. The webinars were recorded and archived the WVLS website for later viewing.

“Giving Bad News” Pre-Recorded Webinar

The first pre-recorded webinar for 2020 “Giving Bad News” is now published. **Jamie Matcak** worked with **Betsy Bleck**, director of the Oconomowoc Public Library, on the presentation. This is the first of three pre-recorded webinars that will be produced in 2020. The webinar can be accessed through the [WVLS Continuing Education page](#), and is worth 1 contact hour of Continuing Education credit in Category C (self-directed credit).

Training Opportunities

Rachel Metzler provided online **cataloging (Z39.50) training** for two area librarians via GoToMeeting recently, and the “virtual” training method went well. Additional training will be offered to area colleagues later in the year.

With the closure of library buildings, many libraries are now planning for virtual board meetings. To help, **Jamie Matczak** created a “Using Bluejeans” *Digital Byte* and Katie **Zimmermann** created a “Participant Guide for Users” to help people new to hosting or moderating virtual meetings using BlueJeans, a product now available through WVLS. Jamie is also helping library staff with audio checks prior to the library’s first online meeting.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **April 8 – WVLS “Staying Together” Discussion** (Matczak)
- **April 9 – WVLS Library Advisory Committee meeting** (Matczak, Sepnafski, Klingbeil, Hamland, Metzler, Zimmermann)
- April 10 – WVLS Office Closed
- April 13 – Meeting with DPI Regarding Mobile Hotspots (Klingbeil)
- **April 14 – IFLS Library System/WVLS Webmaster Office Hours** (Hamland)
- April 14 – System Directors/DPI Discussion (Sepnafski)
- **April 14 – WVLS “Staying Together” Discussion** (Matczak)
- **April 14 – WVLS Staff Meeting**
- **April 15 – NWLS/SWLS/WVLS “When the Library Makes Mistakes” webinar – third in a 3-part customer service series** (Matczak, Sepnafski)
- **April 15 – Virtual Youth Services Check-In (Hamland)**
- **April 15 – V-Cat Voting Models Exploratory Committee meeting (Zimmermann)**
- April 15-18 – Innovative User Group Conference, Minneapolis (Zimmermann) **CANCELLED**
- **April 16 – WVLS “Staying Together” Discussion** (Hamland)
- April 16 – System and Resource Library Administrators Association of Wisconsin (SRLAAW) meeting (Sepnafski, Klingbeil)
- April 16-17 – DLT-hosted meeting of WI Public Library System Consultants (Hamland, Matczak) **CANCELLED**
- April 17 – DPI-hosted State Virtual Meeting of Library Consultants (Hamland, Matczak)
- April 17 – State Innovative Administrator’s meeting “Bringing Up Libraries” (Metzler, Zimmermann)
- April 18 – Western Taylor County Public Library Grand Opening Celebration, Gilman (Sepnafski) **POSTPONED**
- **April 18 – WVLS Board of Trustees virtual meeting** (Sepnafski, Wendt, Klingbeil, Hamland, Matczak, Metzler, Zimmermann)
- **April 20 – IFLS Library System/WVLS Webmaster Office Hours** (Hamland)
- **April 20 – WVLS/V-Cat Steering Committee meeting** (Klingbeil, Zimmermann, Metzler, Sepnafski)
- **April 20 – WVLS Staff Meeting**
- April 21 – WVLS V-Cat Bibliographic Control Committee meeting (Metzler)
- April 21 – LAWDS SUPER PAC meeting (Hamland)
- April 21 – System Directors/DPI Discussion (Sepnafski)
- **April 21 – WVLS “Staying Together” Discussion** (Matczak)
- April 21 – “III SQL Course” (Zimmermann)

- April 23 – Antigo Public Library Foundation Fundraiser (Sepnafski)
- April 24 – WLA’s Youth Services Section (YSS) Board meeting (Hamland)
- **April 24 – WVLS “Staying Together” Discussion** (Matczak)
- April 27 – System Continuing Education Consultants meeting (Matczak)
- April 28 – System Directors/DPI Discussion (Sepnafski)
- **April 28 – WVLS “Staying Together” Discussion** (Matczak)
- April 28-29 – Toward One Wisconsin 2020 Conference, Green Bay (Machones) **CANCELLED**
- April 29 – Wisconsin Public Library Consortium Board meeting (Hamland)
- April 29 – “Sierra SQL for Record Data Review” training (Zimmermann)
- **April 29 - May 1 – Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries Conference**, Oshkosh **CANCELLED**
- April 30 – “Sierra System Coordinators Basics with ASAA” training (Zimmermann)
- **May 1 – WVLS “Staying Together” Discussion** (Matczak)
- **May 6 – WVLS Listening Session, Antigo** (Sepnafski, Klingbeil, Matczak, Metzler, Zimmermann)
POSTPONED
- May 6 – CESA 10 meeting (Hamland)
- **May 7 – WVLS V-Cat Council meeting** (Klingbeil, Zimmermann, Metzler, Sepnafski)
- May 7 – Oneida County Library Board meeting, Rhinelander (Wendt)
- May 8 – COLAND meeting (Klingbeil)
- May 8 – “Streamline for Success: Library Programs and Services Reboot” workshop, Rice Lake
(Hamland) **POSTPONED to MAY 2021**
- **May 12 – IFLS Library System/WVLS Webmaster Office Hours** (Hamland)
- May 12-13 – WiscNet Connections Conference, Madison (Klingbeil) **CANCELLED**
- May 14 – WPLC Selectors meeting (Zimmermann)
- May 15 – WLA’s Youth Services Section (YSS) Board meeting (Hamland)
- May 15 – WLA’s Library Development and Legislation Committee (LD&L) meeting, Madison (Wendt)
- **May 16 – WVLS Board of Trustees meeting** (Hamland, Hafemeister, Klingbeil, Matczak, Metzler,
Sepnafski, Wendt, Zimmermann)
- **May 19 – LAWDS meeting with public library, system, and workforce development representatives**
Stevens Point (Hamland)
- May 19 – LAWDS SUPER PAC meeting (Hamland)
- May 25 – WVLS office closed
- June 2-4 – DPI PLSR Implementation Summit
- **June 4 – WVLS V-Cat Council meeting** (Zimmermann, Klingbeil, Metzler, Sepnafski)
- **June 9 – IFLS Library System/WVLS Webmaster Office Hours** (Hamland)

Be safe everyone!

Marla