

Director's Report

WVLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

May 18, 2024

CORRESPONDENCE

2024 Aid Payment

WVLS was notified by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction that our second (final) 2024 State Aid Payment for **\$312,292.75** was approved. This payment allows WVLS to continue to carry out activities in the 2024 WVLS Plan approved by the WVLS Board of Trustees in September 2023 and later reviewed by DPI's Library Services Team. WVLS received its first 2024 payment of **\$936,878.25** in November 2023. Public library system funding is provided through the Universal Service Fund.

Cost per Circulation and County Funding Information

WVLS Business Manager **Brenda Walenton** and Administrative Assistant **Susie Hafemeister** recently sent member libraries information they need if they elect to seek payment from adjacent counties for serving their residents who live in non-librariated communities. Information shared included each library's 2023 Cost Per Circulation calculations along with data on each library's circulation to residents who live in non-librariated communities. According to Wis. Stat. 43.12, libraries must submit invoices to the clerks in adjacent counties by July 1, 2024. In turn, the adjacent county must make payment of at least 70% of the cost for service to those libraries by March 1, 2025.

Notes of Gratitude

WVLS Presentations at Hoot-Con

Hey Marla! I attended Hoot-Con yesterday and got to see Jamie and Kristie in action - they were wonderful! And it was really nice to see some familiar faces :) I was impressed with their knowledge and ability to offer fun and engaging presentations - you have some amazing staff!! Just wanted to share :)
 -- **Taylor Weinfurter**, Programming Librarian at Little Chute Public Library and former Youth Services Librarian at Marathon County Public Library

[NOTE: Spread across three days at three locations, Hoot-Con is a conference for member library staff at the Nicolet Federated Library System (NFLS) and Outagamie Waupaca Library System (OWLS). Jamie Matczak presented on "Giving Great Service," and Kristie Hauer, along with Hannah Good Zima (NFLS) presented on "Analyzing Your Collection – Tools to Diversify Your Picture Books."]

WVLS Mentorship Program

I am grateful for the mentorship program, [Stetsonville Public Library Director] Carla [Huston] has been an invaluable resource for me. I know that if I have a question that needs an almost-immediate answer,

she is here to help me. She has really made me feel more confident and supported - even going as far as to volunteer to come physically help with big projects like weeding. Between the mentorship program and the support provided by WVLS staff, I know that my mentor and the WVLS staff are all available to help me succeed in the director position. – Melissa Highfill, Interim Director at Westboro Public Library

WVLS Review of Library Policies and Board By-Laws

Marla, I just reviewed this again (I will not be presenting it to the BOT this session, I want to see what the discussion is). I have to say, you did an amazing job of standardizing the language, adding missing pieces, and pointing out inconsistencies. I appreciate this so very much. Don't be surprised if you see another chapter or two over the coming months. – Virginia Roberts, Rhinelander District Library Director

WVLS Listening Session

Marla, Erica, Katie, Kristie, Jamie, I wanted to thank each of you for creating and attending the Listening Session today. I am thankful for your attention to our stories and our concerns. I believe these "unstructured" conversations are important to those of us who are looking for support from our fellow librarians and a safe place to vent our concerns. The structure of our VCat meetings is valuable to our system, but being able to talk about the everyday things that make up our libraries is a necessary support system. While it takes away from our day of "being librarian" at our libraries, I wish there were a way they could happen more frequently. I am sure your task to now digest what you learned only adds to things on your plate, but I hope you found it as valuable as I did. Thank you for everything you do every day to make our lives better. You are appreciated! (I would insert a heart emoji here, but maybe it isn't politically correct. But the feeling is there!) -- Teresa Hall, Loyal Public Library Director

WVLS ALSC National Institute Scholarship

Dear trustees of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service, Thank you all for this opportunity to attend the ALSC National Institute focused on library services to children. This will be my first library conference on the national level. I am so excited! It's amazing to be part of a library consortium dedicated to helping provide great services to our patrons through our materials, our spaces, and our programs. And ALSO empowering staff to grow with opportunities like this conference. I am blessed by your investment in my professional life, and by extension the Rib Lake Public Library, and I look forward to sharing my experience with you after the conference in September. P.S. Your support just amazes me. You ROCK! -- Krista Blomberg, Assistant Director and Youth Services Coordinator, Rib Lake Public Library

[NOTE: More information about this scholarship opportunity is shared under Grant Projects and Scholarship Opportunities later in this report.]

PEOPLE / LIBRARIES / SYSTEMS IN THE NEWS

The WVLS Board of Trustees Welcomes Eileen Persike

The Oneida County Board of Supervisors recently appointed **Eileen Persike** to the WVLS Board of Trustees for a 3-year term. She replaces **Pat Pechura** who chose not to seek reappointment for another term. Eileen's term runs from January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2026. Welcome to WVLS, Eileen!

Antigo Public Library Transitions

Antigo Public Library Director **Ada Demlow** resigned from her position on April 27. She replaced **Dominic Frandrup** who resigned from the position in June 2022. Additionally, the Antigo Public Library Board President **Elizabeth Perkins** resigned from her position on April 27 and Antigo Public Library Interloan Librarian **Elizabeth Merry** announced her retirement on May 17.

WVLS and Member Library Staff Present at WAPL Conference

WVLS was well represented at the 2024 Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries (WAPL) Conference held in Stevens Point from May 1-May 3.

Marathon County Public Library (MCPL) Library Services Manager **Katelyn Sabelko** joined **Desiree Bongers** (Ripon Public Library), **Kelly Davis** (Waukesha Public Library) and **Melissa McLimans** (WiLS) for a presentation on **"Beyond the Community Conversation."** In this panel presentation, WiLS and partner libraries shared how different community engagement strategies were utilized to connect with stakeholders through interviews, community gatherings, and Q&A boards.

Public Library Services Consultant **Kristie Hauer**, along with NFLS Outreach Coordinator **Hannah Good Zima** and Kenosha Public Library Youth Collection Development Librarian **Amy Rae Weaver**, youth collection development librarian at Kenosha Public Library, developed a conference session titled **"Analyzing Your Collection: Tools to Diversify Your Children's Collection."** The session focused on the importance of creating a diverse and balanced children's collection, resources for building a diverse collection, and tools, both automated and manual, for analyzing the collection.

MCPL Library Support Services Manager **Alexander Johnson** presented a session on **"Mapping the IT Frontier."** Following a large institutional transition in 2021, the new staff at the Marathon County Public Library found themselves in a vast land equally full of interesting technology and questions about how to make it meet the public's needs in the long run. Alexander described how order emerged from chaos, new partnerships were formed, and solid foundations were laid for the years to come. Themes included: triage in the discovery process, RFP lessons learned, the importance of documentation, and of course, the awe-inspiring power of spreadsheets.

Hauer to Teach UW-Madison’s Public and Community Library Services Course

This fall, WVLS Public Library Services Consultant **Kristie Hauer** will be teaching the course **Public and Community Library Services** at UW-Madison’s Information School. The course focuses on creating the best possible array of services for individual communities. Topics covered will include assessing user needs, programming and outreach, customer service, reference fundamentals, and using technology to enhance services. This 12-week course is required for Grade II and Grade III public library directors in Wisconsin.

Matczak Completes ZingTrain’s Customer Service Seminar

WVLS Continuing Education Consultant Jamie Matczak completed ZingTrain’s *The Art of Giving Great Service* in Ann Arbor, Michigan on April 25-26. This two-day seminar identified the key elements that contribute to a culture of great service, including examples from Zingerman’s internal staff training. Matczak will incorporate highlights of the training in a recorded webinar for WVLS and NWLS member libraries this summer, as well as for a presentation during T.B. Scott Free Library’s (Merrill) Staff Inservice Day on October 14. See **Exhibit 23** later in the agenda for more information about the seminar.

Zimmermann Attending RIPL’s “12 Months to Better Library Data” Webinar Series

WVLS ILS Administrator **Katie Zimmermann** is participating in the Research Institute for Public Libraries (RIPL) webinar series on “12 Months to Better Library Data.” Participants in this series learn how to use data to better serve the community, steps involved in conducting an evaluation, and how libraries can develop a data-informed culture. Katie attended the first webinar “Begin with a Strong Foundation: Developing a Data Plan” on March 7 which included how to create an overarching plan for data collection and use. In May, she will learn about core issues facing the equitable and ethical use of quantitative data via the “Introduction to Data Equity” webinar.

More News on the Libraries Awarded “Libraries Transforming Communities” Grants

While the March Director’s Report announced that three WVLS public libraries were awarded 2024 Libraries Transforming Communities: Accessible Small and Rural Communities grants, how the libraries planned to use the funds was not mentioned. The **Owen Public Library** and **Rib Lake Library** plan to install automatic door openers in public entrances to their buildings. **Tomahawk Public Library** will replace their automatic opener, and possibly install accessible sinks in their bathrooms and accessible tables in their public spaces.

The American Library Association (ALA) in partnership with the Association for Rural & Small Libraries (ARSL) offer [Libraries Transforming Communities \(LTC\): Accessible Small and Rural Communities](#) grants to help small and rural libraries increase the accessibility of facilities, services and programs to better serve people with disabilities. To be eligible, a library must have a legal area population of 25,000 or less and be located at least five miles from an urbanized area.

GRANT PROJECTS and SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

WVLS Awards WAPL Annual Conference Scholarships

Three WVLS member librarians were awarded scholarships to attend the Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries (WAPL) Conference, held May 1-3 in Stevens Point. Recipients were **Amber Brill**, Greenwood Area Library; **Katelyn Sabelko**, Marathon County Public Library; and **Brandon Hardin**, Withee Public Library.

This statewide conference, geared toward public librarians, featured keynote speakers, program sessions, and opportunities to network. Conference reports from Amber, Katelyn and Brandon will be shared with the WVLS Board in August.

Rib Lake Librarian Receives ALSC National Institute Scholarship

WVLS has awarded a \$2,100 scholarship to Rib Lake Public Library Assistant Director and Youth Services Coordinator **Krista Blomberg** to attend the 2024 Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) National Institute on September 19-21, 2024, in Denver, Colorado. The biennial conference is for those serving children and families in libraries. The intimate, intensive learning experience is an opportunity to network with colleagues from across the country, attend practical and meaningful professional development programs, and hear from field leaders and children's literature creators at keynote sessions. The scholarship can be applied to travel expenses such as institute registration, air and ground transportation, and conference lodging.

WVLS Marketing Support Grant

The three member libraries participating in the WVLS Marketing Support Grant wrapped up an analysis of their marketing efforts in March and April. Over the next two months, participants will further explore marketing campaigns and marketing plans and decide which avenue they would like to pursue for the project.

The 2024 WVLS Marketing Support Grant is a pilot project and opportunity for WVLS libraries to evaluate their library's marketing efforts and to work toward a library marketing plan or marketing campaign. Participants include **Loralee Petersen**, Owen Public Library; **Laurie Ollhoff** and **Chris Sprague**, T.B. Scott Free Library (Merrill); and **Brandon Hardin**, Withee Public Library.

WVLS Summer Math Adventure Grants

The 2024 WVLS Summer Math Adventure Grant is a new initiative that enables WVLS libraries to provide math-based activities during the summer. Libraries that participate in the pilot project will receive \$800 in funding to offer the Wisconsin Mathematics Council's Summer Math Adventure program. This grant will be utilized to cover the costs associated with implementing the program, such as printing materials, promotion, incentives, and purchasing math-related items for library collections. The application for the grant was available from February 8 to March 8, 2024. In late March, WVLS announced that grants were awarded to Minocqua Public Library, Rib Lake Public Library, and Thorp Public Library.

2023-2024 LSTA Resource Sharing Grant

WVLS has hired two cataloging assistants for short-term, project-based help with cleaning up bibliographic records. Elisha Scheffer and Maria Pregler, both of whom are employed at V-Cat libraries, are assisting with record clean up. The Northern Waters Library System is using funds from this grant to contract with two individuals for the same purpose.

WVLS SERVICES

Collaborations

LEANWI Partnership, Collaborative Projects, and Core Infrastructure Support

LEANWI Core Infrastructure: In parallel with our colleagues at South Central Library System (SCLS), the LEANWI partnership procured our primary storage appliance replacement along with updated core switching equipment in January 2024. Engineering Lead, Kris Schwartz led the partnership through migration to those replacements in production during March. We will be verifying and finalizing legacy virtual server and equipment deletions during the second quarter 2024.

The TEACH division of the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) has a new contract for statewide networking. The previous network and services, labeled "BadgerNet Service," is still in the process of being replaced by a new network, labeled "TEACH Network Service." AT&T will continue to be the Managed Service Provider (MSP) for the statewide networking fabric for schools and libraries and is still in the process of completing the migration of service connections. The end of the "current" BadgerNet contract was originally January 31, 2024, but after AT&T struggled to meet that deadline, the contract was extended **through June 2024**. Circuit migrations have been paused until management access migrations and handoff from WIN to GLS (the new network management and support provider) is completed (anticipated ETC is end of May) and then circuit migration scheduling will continue until all sites are on TEACH Network.

LEANWI Service Explorations: Last fall, LEANWI partners began exploring a relationship with a new Microsoft Licensing vendor due to struggles with responsiveness from our current vendor, to better

understand program renewal and new procurement options. We are now working with our current MS licensing vendor to affect the necessary program change and a renewal of existing licensing by the current end of term (June 30, 2024) before attempting to procure new licensing. We will review our vendor relationship again once we are through the program migration and renewal process, safely operating in our next three-year term. We also continue to monitor our Microsoft 365 tenancy, currently under an academic program, for indications of the initiation of a mandatory migration to the charity program (e.g., for non-profits).

At the first **WPLC Technology Community of Practice** meeting in mid-April, participants discussed experiences and challenges with the Dept of Administration-TEACH program's project with AT&T to segregate the schools and libraries from BadgerNet onto a new "TEACH Network." The project is taking longer than TEACH or AT&T anticipated and has cost many library systems and their respective members a lot of time to participate in migration events for various sites that have failed and need to roll back. The LEANWI Partnership announced that it has begun reviewing Faronics Deep Freeze licensing and will be engaging with Faronics reps in May/June of 2024 (about 18 months before current five-year term expiration in November 2025). Given other systems' past indications of significantly increased costs, we want to get in front of our own renewal early enough to have time to review alternative options and potentially migrate away from Faronics Deep Freeze if cost increases prove prohibitive. We also want to increase awareness of our project among our peers and maximize the window of opportunity for additional licensing pool mergers with other systems to reduce duplications of effort and increase our collective economy of scale.

LEANWI Partners NWLS and WVLS intend to continue support for currently provisioned mobile hotspots and data plans with Kajeet through the end of 2024 before discontinuing system level direct service management and support. We are working to collect information and to be able to provide guidance to libraries currently hosting Kajeet hotspots so they may gracefully discontinue their own programs by the end of 2024, budget and plan for the continuation of services directly with Kajeet, or migrate from Kajeet to work directly with other services and service providers (e.g., Mobile Beacon via Tech Soup).

Collection Development

Gale Presents: Udemy

Gale Presents: Udemy, an online learning platform that provides more than 15,000 video-based courses in business, technology, leadership, language learning, creative arts, and personal development, was selected by WVLS staff to replace *Gale Courses*, a product that was not renewed due to low usage and high cost per use.

WVLS ILS and Database Support Specialist **Rachel Metzler** is working with our representatives at Gale to set up the product with the goal of making it available to area libraries and library users by the end of May or early June. A Fact Sheet on the *Udemy* product is shared with this report as **Exhibit 16a**.

Communications

WVLS Newsletter Highlights

Published during the first week of each month, the WVLS newsletter highlights ways that member libraries are providing service and support to their communities, national library news, WVLS updates and more. Recent issues include:

- [May 2024](#) – “WVLS Members Attend PLA Conference,” “Last-Minute Planning for Summer Library Programs,” “10 Things to Know About Sonja Ackerman,” “Stetsonville Features Furry Friends,” “Guest Feature: BCL Installs Courtesy Phones,” “Join CCBC for a Literary Journey.”
- [April 2024](#) - “WVLS Listening Sessions Return,” “Spring Webinar Series Focuses on Neurodiversity,” “Celebrate National Library Week 2024,” “Minocqua Features Fiber Arts Skills Workshop,” “WVLS Represented at WEMTA Conference,” “2024 WLA Conference Call for Program Proposals.”

WVLS thanks library colleagues and friends for taking the time to share their library’s news with the WVLS community!

Inclusive Services News

Inclusive Services Updates are published monthly by the Northern Waters Library Service Director and WVLS Inclusive Services Consultant **Sherry Anderson**, emailed to all member libraries in WVLS and NWLS, announced in Monday Mentions and archived on the [WVLS website](#).

The [May Update](#) shared links to a “Toolkit to Defend K-12 Educators and Librarians Against False Accusations of Antisemitism,” a Programming Librarian post on “What Neurodivergent Patrons Want from Small and Rural Libraries,” and a new Project Outcome Accessibility Resource. This update also shares lists of upcoming continuing education opportunities and diverse holidays in May.

The [April Update](#) announced sessions at the upcoming WAPL Conference and several other continuing education opportunities that touch on inclusivity themes, the availability of an ALA Building Library Capacity Grant, and the opening of the Ho-Chunk Nation’s first library in Black River Falls.

Delivery Services

On April 30, WVLS assumed the responsibility of sorting all materials running through the inter- and intra-system delivery at Waltco’s Wausau hub on behalf of our member libraries. Since March 2016, Waltco had been doing the central sort for all items in transit, however staffing challenges have made it difficult for them to sustain this service efficiently and effectively. While they will no longer sort items in delivery, Waltco will continue to deliver materials to member libraries. Delivery times and routes are not affected with this change.

To prepare for the sort of items in delivery, WVLS office spaces were moved to make room for this process, and work benches and flat beds were purchased. For the last two weeks, WVLS in-office staff and a volunteer have been pitching in to complete the sort of all incoming and outgoing materials each day, and the number of incoming/outgoing bins and the amount of time required to complete the sort each day are being tracked. At this time, we are uncertain how much time will be needed each week to get the job done. What we have seen since taking on the sort is that the time needed can vary from one day to the next. To get us through this period of uncertainty, we plan to hire two people on a part-time basis in early June to carry us through the summer months. Once we have a better handle on the ebb and flow of incoming and outgoing loads, WVLS will post a job description that offers a set schedule with required responsibilities.

For the last year, WVLS has been considering the idea of taking on this aspect of delivery service, with funds included in the 2024 budget for this purpose. The multi-year ILS merger exploration with NWLS that started in 2022 (NICE Project) has prompted staff to analyze delivery routes and processes and to investigate mechanisms for improved resource sharing between member libraries in NWLS and WVLS. That said, we did not expect that we would need to take on the sort of materials going through delivery so quickly.

WVLS thanks member library colleagues for their feedback and support during the weeks in March and April when delivery service was significantly disrupted. Problems were communicated with a great deal of patience and grace. And kudos to the WVLS in-office team for lending a hand and offering advice along the way. Member library support and the collaborative efforts of WVLS staff have been a tremendous boost during this transition.

Legislative Update

Updated 2024 Wisconsin Redistricting Maps for the WVLS Area (**Exhibits16b**) and WVLS Libraries and Legislators Handout (**Exhibit 16c**) are shared at the end of this report.

Member Library / WVLS Gatherings

WVLS Listening Session

The first WVLS listening session of 2024 took place on April 17 at the Colby Community Library. Listening sessions are opportunities for member public library directors and WVLS staff to gather informally to discuss current news, challenges, goals and successes. Conversation topics centered on summer library programs, increasing usage of libraries, grants, building maintenance, volunteers, patron behavior, Princh mobile print management system, fine-free initiatives, and programming.

Following the session, **Colby Community Library Director Vicky Calmes** provided a tour of the library. All participants received a penny to press in the library's new penny press machine, which was received through a patron donation. Participants expressed support and enjoyment for the session and found the

informal approach beneficial. The next listening session is scheduled for September 23 at the Francis L. Simek Memorial Library in Medford.

Youth Services Meetup

Several times throughout the year WVLS hosts Youth Services Information Exchanges (YSIEs). Planned and hosted by Kristie Hauer, YSIEs are opportunities for area library staff to gather virtually or in-person for informal discussions on issues relevant to youth services.

A YSIE get-together was held at the **Minocqua Public Library** on March 21. The group discussed and brainstormed all ages programming as well as shelving and presentation of specific collections, such as easy readers and VOX books. The group also reviewed the current NICE project recommendations and had an opportunity to provide feedback.



Pictured from left to right: WVLS Public library consultant **Kristie Hauer**, Tomahawk children's librarian **Annette Miller**, Minocqua children's services coordinator **Erica Dischinger**, Minocqua teen services coordinator **Jennifer Davis** and Minocqua adult services coordinator **Cindy Wendt**.

Participants in the first YSIE of the year, held virtually on January 18, discussed and shared experiences, resources, and information on STEAM activities and self-directed activities. STEAM activities focus on science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. Self-directed activities are interactive opportunities where patrons create their experience with little staff direction.

Upcoming YSIE get-togethers include an in-person meeting at **Granton Community Library** on August 12 and a virtual meeting with IFLS Library System member libraries' youth services staff on September 10.

NICE Town Hall

NWLS and WVLS member libraries were invited to participate in the NICE (Northern Wisconsin ILS Consortium Exploration) Town Hall on April 9. Conducted by members of the NICE Project Team, the Town Hall provided an overview of the process to date, shared information about NICE recommendations made thus far, and discussed the NICE Project Team's next steps. Sufficient time was provided for participants to share feedback and ask questions. A recording of the NICE Town Hall is available [here](#).

Public Library Consultant Services

Data Analysis and Reporting

WVLS Data and Technology Services Consultant **Erica Brewster** will complete the WiLS Data Classroom with a final wrap-up and presentation in May. For her project, she will develop a short summary (“one”-pager) document for the **2023 WVLS Statistics Booklet**. She also plans to develop a process for holding focus groups with WVLS member library administrators on the use of statistics and data.

The **2023 WVLS Statistics Booklet** has been published. A new section was added with library per capita metrics for collection, circulation, programs, hours, FTE. The Booklet will be discussed later in the agenda. See **Exhibit 25**.

Public Library Services Support

Assistance was provided to the Western Taylor County Public Library (Gilman) related to a **library user’s inappropriate computer use**. Following a supportive discussion of the concern, examples of several policies were provided to library staff. Policies on computer use and patron behavior specific to suspension and banning a library user’s access and library user appeals process, and sample written warning notification, were shared.

Assistance was provided to Clark County libraries for **promotion of their collaborative Passport Program** which launched on May 1 and will run through August 31. The program encourages participants to visit each of the ten libraries in Clark County to collect a passport stamp. Participants that visit all ten libraries will be entered into a prize drawing for a \$75 gift card and participants that visit at least five libraries will be entered into a prize drawing for a \$10 gift card. WVLS is considering a system-wide passport program in 2025.

Assistance was provided to Demmer Memorial Library (Three Lakes) related to **collection development policies and requests for reconsideration processes**. Several examples of each were shared. Information on what to expect and **how to handle a first amendment audit** was also shared.

Technology Projects and Support

Communication and Training

Since the last WVLS Board of Trustees meeting, Erica Brewster completed the following:

- Added an About page to the <https://leanwi.org/> website detailing the LEANWI partnership for new library staff and board members.
- Revived the wvls.org/technology-faqs/ page with updated information including technology news, FAQ, services overview, and tech tips including tips shared from Northern Waters Library Service.
- Updated wvls.org/about-wvls/wvls-communications/ with Helpdesk and WVLS staff topic expert contact details.
- Drafted presentation on internet filtering in public libraries, incorporating case law reviews received and information request from the Wisconsin State Law Library.

- Received one-on-one SharePoint training from **Kay McClure**, a retired SharePoint trainer, who now works at the Crandon Public Library. Training enhanced understanding SharePoint structure and permissions.

Procurement and Asset Inventory

New computers were deployed at libraries in Rhinelander, Rib Lake, Stetsonville, with more being staged for libraries in Antigo, Granton, Medford, and Rhinelander. Staff collaborated with NWLS IT staff on uploading asset inventory to the shared LEANWI asset-tracking system.

Member Library Services

Hotspots Update: LSTA grant funding for Kajeet hotspot support will continue through **December 31, 2024**. Due to “educational” limitations of the Kajeet hotspot service (i.e., streaming services blocked), many libraries did not find this program to be the best fit for their patrons. WVLS will work with libraries currently circulating these hotspots to determine options for continuing: 1) transfer current Kajeet devices and contracts to libraries to self-manage; 2) identify alternative hotspot programs for individual libraries to self-manage; or, 3) discontinue hotspot service.

TEACH Internet Migration: TEACH internet migration update: due to issues coordinating circuits with local last-mile carriers, AT&T has revised their approach to migration for WVLS and other LEANWI libraries. Currently libraries that do not have AT&T as their last mile provider are in the process of having management transferred and circuit migrated on the back end. Physical transfers and onsite work will be completed after the virtual circuit migrations are complete.

Ongoing Projects: WVLS is working with MCPL IT staff to test DeepFreeze public PC management, Pharos public PC timing software, and Princh print management for deployment at main and branch locations.

Last fall, LEANWI partners began exploring a relationship with a new Microsoft Licensing vendor and continues working with its team of licensing experts to better understand program renewal and new procurement options. There are two major tracks of licensing management: maintenance of current licensing and procurement of new licensing. **Current licensing maintenance supporting core infrastructure and core services for member libraries is active through June 2024.** Because current licensing is not an option after June 2024, WVLS will work with its current MS licensing vendor during late April and May to affect the necessary program change and a renewal of existing licensing.

With the BadgerNet to TEACH Network migration now in a more known and stable state of process, WVLS will be renewing efforts to work with Taylor County libraries to complete network config updates supporting the use of the new Taylor County Fiber Network (TCFN) services available at each library. Our initial goal is to segregate internet traffic from the libraries’ public Wi-Fi networks to route through their respective TCFN paths. **We will be scheduling a second attempt to affect that change at Western Taylor County Public Library (Gilman) by mid-May.** Once we have a successful split routing config

functioning at Gilman, we will be able to reproduce those config changes for the other Taylor County libraries quickly.

V-Cat and ILS Administration

V-Cat Council Meeting Highlights

During its meeting on April 4, the V-Cat Council:

- approved [Financial reports for January - February 2024](#).
- approved using **Special Project Funds to add an Aspen test server**. The test server will allow V-Cat libraries to test changes to Aspen settings for evaluation without disrupting the patron experience. It provides V-Cat libraries two weeks to review monthly Aspen update changes prior to them going live for patrons.
- approved these recommendations –
 - an UPDATED [Use of Claims Returned Recommendation](#) (to align with invoicing for damaged items);
 - an UPDATED [Maximum Holds and Checkouts Recommendation](#) (to align with current settings in Sierra); and
 - an UPDATED [V-Cat Library Card Application and Patron Record Creation Guidelines](#) (to address Safe at Home addresses and text message notices for 16-17 year olds).
- reviewed a [proposed 2025 V-Cat Budget](#).
- reviewed Innovative’s Sierra Idea Exchange. V-Cat Council members were encouraged to create an account and to participate in guiding future Sierra developments by submitting, commenting, and voting on ideas.

V-Cat Bibliographic and Interface Committee Activity

The V-Cat Bibliographic / Interface Committee met on May 7 to discuss procedural documents for *Cataloging Big Books* and *Requirements for Attaching an Item Record to an Existing Bibliographic Record in V-Cat*. These documents will be ready for use by V-Cat Library staff soon. Additionally, the committee received an Aspen update, heard reports from the ILS Support Specialist and ILS Administrator, discussed the upcoming NICE Project cataloging workgroup act, and were given a demonstration of OCLC’s cataloging desktop client, Connexion.

V-Cat Cooperative Circulation Committee Activity

The V-Cat Cooperative Circulation Committee met on Friday, March 8 and Friday, May 10. In March the committee discussed Safe at Home addresses and patron record information, noting that the current V-Cat recommendation should be updated to include them. The Committee requested additional information be shared with V-Cat about Shoutbomb notice adjustments. The committee reviewed the Use of Claims Returned Recommendation and Maximum Holds and Checkouts Recommendations to bring updates to the V-Cat Council. The V-Cat High Demand Holds practices were discussed at length including concerns about staff overrides and patrons’ dissatisfaction with the inability to place holds.

Options for library users and staff when holds cannot be placed on new high demand items were reviewed. The Committee also discussed aspects of current High Demand practices to research further.

In May, the Committee discussed extended checkout practices in place at member libraries for teachers, institutions, and staff. Reduced checkout periods and limited checkouts for short term / temporary patrons were also discussed. The Committee began outlining points for future recommendations for extended and restricted circulation to V-Cat Council.

Other Projects

Rachel Metzler attended the **Innovative User Group Conference** that was held in Detroit, Michigan from March 25-27. She learned about cataloging techniques in Sierra, AI, and features of upcoming Sierra products. She also discussed best practices for consortiums using Sierra.

WVLS will be welcoming an intern from the UW-Madison iSchool this summer. MCPL staff member, **Jailin Peterson**, will be spending 120 hours with the WVLS team during the summer months. Her areas of interest are cataloging, metadata and digitization.

NICE Project Update. An update on the NICE (Northern Wisconsin ILS Consortium Exploration) Project will be shared later in today's meeting. See **Exhibit 19**.

Website Services and Support

NEW! Help Desk Ticketing System Launched for Website Support

A new Help Desk ticketing system exclusively for website-related support was recently launched. All website help requests from libraries across the four library systems in the LEANWI Website Service – Northern Waters Library Service (NWLS), IFLS Library System, Winding Rivers Library System and WVLS - can now be sent to websitehelp@librarieswin.org. **Erica Brewster** and LEAN WI Technology Support Consultant **Brendan Tuckey** comprise the LEANWI technology team's primary website services staff.

Winding Rivers Library System Websites

Brendan Tuckey and Erica Brewster spent time in recent months cleaning up WRLS member library website back-ends. This process will continue as Erica collaborates with libraries to identify active plugins, discontinue unnecessary ones, and address additional needs.

Erica has met with staff from seven WRLS libraries and WRLS system staff to review the status of their websites and prepare for further cleanup/training. Additional training times are available.

Once library website staff meet with Brendan and Erica, they will be included in LEANWI website training and management processes. Ongoing cleanup and improvements are anticipated for WRLS websites.

Website Development

LEANWI has acquired licenses for additional Divi modules and tools to enhance library website functionality. These tools are undergoing testing and deployment on select websites.

Brendan Tuckey is currently working with two NWLS libraries and one WRLS on website build/redesigns. The two NWLS sites are being transferred to the LEANWI hosting and domain management service.

- NWLS: Winter Public Library
- NWLS: Grantsburg Public Library
- WRLS: Wonewoc Public Library

All websites are designed in collaboration with the individual library and with website accessibility and Divi best practices.

Brendan has also developed a centralized online resources page highlighting system and statewide online resources (e.g., Ancestry, Libby, BadgerLink) allowing all libraries to easily provide links to all online resources that are available through their library system. This page will be deployed on all library websites and can be updated from a single location while allowing for individual libraries to also add their own resource links.

A webpage for the Clark County Passport program was designed and added to nine websites for Clark County libraries.

Other major developments included a rewrite of the Menomonie Library website as its unusual configuration and setup did not allow it to be updated or maintained and it ran the risk of being unrecoverable in the event of a mishap occurring.

Website Training

Training and reference materials are regularly added to <https://training.librarieswin.org/>. At least four virtual training opportunities are offered each month, and each training session has an average of 4-5 participants. All website training webinars are recorded and posted for later viewing to YouTube and posted with the topic on the training blog.

In March and April, training was provided on the following topics:

- Website Calendars
- Website Analytics
- Website Menus
- Promoting Summer Reading
- Promoting MORE Passport Program

CONTINUING EDUCATION and TRAINING

NEW *Digital Bytes*

[Analyzing Your Collection](#). In this *Digital Byte*, Kristie Hauer discusses the importance of diverse children’s collections, tips for selecting anti-bias books, and pitfalls to avoid.

[Repurposing Canva](#). Watch Jamie Matczak demonstrate (in a few minutes!) how Canva templates can be repurposed for library uses.

Upcoming Workshops

Wisconsin Libraries Talk About Race: Navigating the Terrain of Change

Guest Speaker: **Dr. Alonzo Kelly**

Thursday, May 9: 9:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m., Wintergreen Conference Center, Wisconsin Dells

Those who attend this workshop will discover ways to create inter-culturally inclusive work and learning environments for all. Participants will increase their knowledge and ability to problem solve, communicate confidently, and foster more collaborative work environments rooted in authentic relationships with dynamic executive coach, professor, and three-time best-selling author Dr. Alonzo Kelly. Dr. Kelly is recognized as one the nation’s leading experts on leadership development, strategic thinking, and planning. Travel assistance is available. More details and registration information [can be found on the website](#).

The Wisconsin Libraries Talk About Race Project was made possible thanks to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s Public Library Development Team, with funding support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Workforce Collaboration Workshop

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and partners developed through the Library Workforce Connection statewide workgroup are hosting an in-person Workforce Collaboration Workshop at Brown County Library in Green Bay on May 24. Attendees will learn tips, strategies, and best practices for forming local partnerships in their communities and will have the opportunity to network with other library and workforce development staff.

INFO TO GO

In April 2024 during National Library Week, the American Library Association released the [State of America’s Libraries 2024](#) report. The report highlights the ways libraries and library workers have addressed community needs with innovative and critical services as well as the challenges brought on by censorship attempts. According to the report, the number of unique titles targeted for censorship surged by 65% from 2022 to 2023, reaching the highest levels ever documented by ALA.



UPCOMING EVENTS / MEETINGS

- May 18 – **WVLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**
- May 21 – **NICE Team meeting**
- May 21 – 2024 WLA Conference Planning Committee meeting
- May 21 – **Website Accessibility Learning Group meeting**
- May 21 – DPI-hosted meeting of System Inclusive Services Consultants
- May 21 - Statewide Cooperative Cataloging Workgroup meeting
- May 24 – **“Workforce Collaboration Workshop;”** Green Bay, WI
- May 27 – **WVLS Office closed**
- May 28 – Library Workforce Connection meeting
- June 4 – WPLC Technology Backup Committee meeting
- June 6 – **WVLS V-Cat Council meeting**
- June 10 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour**
- June 10 – WPLC (Wisconsin Public Library Consortium) Board meeting
- June 12 - Statewide Bibliographic Standards Committee meeting
- June 12 – Present “Customer Service” Webinar for the Southwest Wisconsin Library System
- June 17 – WPLC Digital Archives Backup Committee meeting
- June 18 – **Website Accessibility Learning Group meeting**
- June 18 – **NICE Team meeting**
- June 18 – 2024 WLA Conference Planning Committee meeting
- June 18 - DPI-hosted meeting of System Youth Services Consultants
- June 18 - Statewide Cooperative Cataloging Workgroup meeting
- June 19 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- June 20 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- June 20 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour**
- June 25 – Library Workforce Connection meeting
- June 26 – DPI-hosted meeting of System Continuing Education Consultants
- June 27 – July 2 – AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE; San Diego
- July 4 – **WVLS Office closed**
- July 8 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour**
- July 10 - Statewide Bibliographic Standards Committee meeting
- July 12 - COLAND (Council on Library and Network Development) meeting
- July 12 - **WVLS V-Cat Cooperative Circulation Committee meeting**
- July 16 – **Website Accessibility Learning Group meeting**
- July 16 – 2024 WLA Conference Planning Committee meeting
- July 16 – DPI-hosted meeting of System Inclusive Services Consultants
- July 16 - Statewide Cooperative Cataloging Workgroup meeting
- July 17 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- July 18 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**

- July 18 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour**
- July 23 – Library Workforce Connection meeting
- July 25 – Connecting WI Libraries meeting
- August 5 – WPLC (Wisconsin Public Library Consortium) Board meeting
- August 6 – **WVLS V-Cat Bibliographic Control / Interface Committee meeting**
- August 12 – **WVLS YSIE (Youth Services Information Exchange); Granton Community Library**
- August 12 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour**
- August 13 – WPLC Technology Steering Committee meeting
- August 14 - Statewide Bibliographic Standards Committee meeting
- August 15 – **WVLS Library Advisory Committee meeting**
- August 15 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- August 15 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS Website Office Hour**
- August 17 – **WVLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**
- August 19-23 – **“Wisconsin Trustee Training Week”**

Thank you for reading!

Marla