

Director's Report

WVLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

November 16, 2024

CORRESPONDENCE

WVLS BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Five WVLS trustees have terms set to expire at the end of the year: **Louise Olszewski** (Clark County), **Judy Peterson** (Langlade County), and **Jessica Bernett, Michael Otten** and **Sonja Ackerman** (Marathon County). Notifications were sent to the clerks in those counties in October, and we anticipate hearing back from them following their December 2024 and January 2025 county board meetings when appointments to the WVLS Board are approved. A replacement to fill the unexpired term for Tyson Cain (Marathon County) who resigned in 2021 remains unfilled.

Louise Olszewski (Clark County) has announced her resignation from the WVLS Board. We were notified this week that the Clark County Board of Supervisors selected Loyal Public Library Board member **Jim Mildbrand** as her replacement. **Jessica Bernett** (Marathon County) also does not plan to seek reappointment.

NOTES OF GRATITUDE

Nic-Con Thank You

*"I am writing to express my deep gratitude for WVLS supporting Jamie in her presentation at NicCon yesterday. After seeing **Jamie** [Matczak] present at HootCon, the NicCon planning committee threw away our typical break-out session format to allow for two featured presenters that all attendees would see. We knew her customer service presentation would be invaluable to all our attendees. With updated content, Jamie more than exceeded our expectations! Her session was practical, engaging, and grounded in actual library work. I have heard numerous people rave about her presentation since yesterday. I am always so appreciative of the ways in which Wisconsin libraries support each other. Thank you!"*

– **Emily Rogers**, Brown County Library Deputy Director

V-Cat Conference Scholarship

"After attending the [UW-Madison iSchool's 2024 Back In Circulation Conference held in October], I came away with some new ideas and met some great people. I loved the wide variety of presentations and so many different topics. It's conferences like these that allow for us to get new ideas for our own library as well as make changes to existing services to better serve our communities in the future." – **Maxx Handel**, Frances L. Simek Memorial Library (Medford) Director

Wessler Scholarship Memorials

Seven donations to the WVLS Carol Ruth Wessler Scholarship Fund were received in September following the passing of former WVLS Director Heather Eldred. Letters of thanks were sent to **Marla Sepnafski** and **Sue Hafemeister**, and former WVLS staff members **Beth Sillars**, **Ellen Buchberger**, **Kathy Leitza**, and **Leora Young**.

PEOPLE / LIBRARIES / SYSTEMS IN THE NEWS

DPI LIBRARY SERVICES TEAM WELCOMES NEW MEMBER

In late October, the DPI Library Services Team announced that **Michael Dennison** had rejoined the team as the new Interlibrary Loan (ILL Coordinator). Michael had been on the Library Services Team in 2019-2020, serving public libraries and public library systems as the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Coordinator and State Data Coordinator. Michael's work included administering compliance requirements and state aid payments for public library systems, budget planning and coordination of the federal LSTA grant funding, annual report data collection, reporting the annual report data to the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services, and promoting the use and understanding of data in decision-making. Since then, Michael has administered Wisconsin's \$2.4 billion stimulus grant funding to local educational agencies through policy creation, training, technical assistance, and budget expenditure and performance data review.

Michael returns to the Library Services Team to facilitate resource sharing and improve access to library resources by libraries and those they serve.

(edited from a DPI Libraries Team news release; 10/28/24)

WVLS STAFF MEMBER ANNOUNCES RESIGNATION

WVLS Public Library Services Consultant **Kristie Hauer** recently announced her resignation from WVLS to become the new assistant director of the Nicolet Federated Library System headquartered in Green Bay. Prior to joining WVLS, Kristie was the Director of the Shawano County Library. Her last day with WVLS will be November 15.

In her announcement to WVLS colleagues, Kristie stated, *"Since joining WVLS in August 2023, I have had the privilege of getting to know and work with many of you. This position has significantly expanded my understanding of the vital role public library systems play in Wisconsin. I have learned so much from each of you, and I am grateful for the collaborative spirit and support that has been a hallmark of my time here. I am excited about the new opportunities and challenges that await me at the Nicolet Federated Library System. However, leaving WVLS is bittersweet because of the wonderful relationships I have built and the meaningful work we have accomplished together. Your dedication and passion for library services have been truly inspiring. Thank you for welcoming me into the WVLS family and for the many memorable experiences we have shared."*

In the brief time Kristie was with us, she quickly became an integral member of the WVLS community. Her dedication to serving WVLS member libraries and aspiration to improve WVLS services will be deeply missed. We congratulate Kristie on taking this next step, and also NFLS on attaining a remarkable colleague. While we are so sorry to see Kristie leave WVLS, we are pleased that she will continue to work in a public library system environment and look forward to working with her in this new capacity.

BREWSTER ATTENDS GOVERNOR'S CYBERSECURITY SUMMIT

WVLS Data and Technology Services Consultant **Erica Brewster** attended the **Governor's Cybersecurity Summit** in Appleton, October 28-30. Several other technology staff from other library systems also participated this year. The summit focused on state and local government and businesses in Wisconsin and featured keynote and breakout speakers from both national/international viewpoints and those focused specifically on Wisconsin. Key takeaways from the event:

Phishing remains the top security risk concern for business and government (some statistics say it is the source of 96% of all successful attacks). Rapid improvements in artificial intelligence means scammers are able to create highly sophisticated schemes that are much more likely to be successful. Previous red flags such as poor grammar and misspellings are less common.

In general, **artificial intelligence is exponentially increasing cybercrime evolution**. This includes the speed at which new scams can be created and the quality of those scams is rapidly improving. New crimes involving AI include voice cloning to create phone and audio message scams, website/social media cloning, SIM swap (gaining access to your phone number), and improved identity theft.

Open communication about incidents (malicious or accidental) and avoiding shaming or finger-pointing is critical. Being a victim of a cybercrime is no longer just a matter of lack of diligence or training. If we attempt to downplay, cover up, or sweep incidents under the rug, we run the risk of becoming bigger targets rather than bringing attention to areas of weakness or concern. Use incidents as opportunities for growth and improvement.

Libraries and other "small" actors are not immune. If a bad actor deploys ransomware and discovers we don't have anything of value, that doesn't mean they're just going to give it all back. They will still hold out for ransom or any other thing of value they can find.

Every presenter said the words "asset management" multiple times. If you don't know what devices are connected to your network and what their status is (age, update status, etc.), you also don't know the extent to which the doors to your castle are unlocked.

AREA LIBRARIANS RECEIVE SCHOLARSHIPS

Power Up Conference Scholarship

Staff from three WVLS member libraries will be attending the Power Up: A Leadership Conference for Youth Services Managers and Staff that will be held February 13-14, 2025. This virtual conference brings together youth services librarians and staff from public libraries, schools, after-school programs, museums, and other community partners. The conference is sponsored by the iSchool at UW-Madison.

Congratulations to **Andrea Bennett**, T.B. Scott Free Library (Merrill); **Erica Dischinger**, Minocqua Public Library; and **Sarah Moscatello**, Marathon County Public Library Mosinee Branch.

Free Registration for Continuing Education Course

The iSchool at UW-Madison recently awarded a free registration to a member of each public library system to attend its online course, What's New in Children's Books. The course will run from November 11 - December 8. **Amber Brill**, Director of the Greenwood Area Library, was selected to represent WVLS. Learning objectives for the course include creating and maintaining inclusive collections, understanding current trends in children's literature, connecting collections to popular media, and more. Amber will receive 14 contact hours toward public library certification upon course completion.

Congratulations, Amber!

ANTIGO PUBLIC LIBRARY CLOSES A BRANCH

In September, the Board of Trustees for the joint city-county Antigo Public Library made the decision to close a branch library in Elcho. With the closure, service to residents will be provided through a weekly bookmobile stop at the Elcho Town Hall. The Elton Branch closed in March 2020. A branch in White Lake remains open.

WVLS ASSISTS at WLA CONFERENCE

The 2024 Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) Conference, held Tuesday, November 5 – Friday, November 8 at the KI Convention Center in Green Bay has concluded. The theme for this year's conference was "All In: Include and Innovate." WVLS Education Consultant **Jamie Matczak** served as the 2024 Conference Local Arrangements Chair, and WVLS Business Manager **Brenda Walenton** served as Exhibit Hall Chair. Both attended monthly meetings with other members of the 2024 WLA Conference Planning Committee since January, and weekly meetings since September.

Jamie helped in the following ways:

- Local Arrangements Chair: Coordinated the conference tours, food and drink specials, the professional headshots, and assisted with other questions as they arose.
- Presenter: Solo presentation on "Giving Great Service" and helped facilitate the discussion for "Library Programs Ideas Exchange."
- Volunteer: Wayfinder, Room Monitor, and the emcee for the Exhibit Hall Closing Showcase.

As 2024 WLA Conference Exhibits Chair, Brenda supervised the exhibit area at all times the exhibit area was open and assisted vendors with setting up and tearing down their booths and displays; insured the head “exhibit table,” the primary point of communication between WLA Conference staff and vendors, was staffed during exhibit hours; solicited feedback from conference exhibitors to share with WLA staff and conference planning committees; and assisted with onsite coordination of all special initiatives and activities held in the exhibit hall. Brenda will serve as an advisor to the WLA Conference Exhibits Chair in 2025.

GRANT PROJECTS and SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

WVLS OFFERS WLA CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIPS

Six area colleagues received scholarships to attend the 2024 WLA (Wisconsin Library Association) Conference on November 5-8 in Green Bay.

WVLS awarded \$1,200 scholarships to **Alice Sturzl**, Edith Evans Community Library (Laona) Trustee; **Andrea Bennett**, T.B. Scott Free Library (Merrill); **Laurie Renel-Faledas**, Crandon Public Library;

Leah Giordano and **Murray Johnson**, Marathon County Public Library; and **Teresa Hall**, Loyal Public Library. **Annette Miller**, Tomahawk Public Library, received a Wisconsin Library Association Foundation (WLA Foundation) Gloria Hoegh Memorial Fund Education for Rural Librarians Scholarship to attend the conference.



Pictured left to right are Marla Sepnanski, WVLS Director; Leah Giordano, MCPL Director; Laurie Renel-Faledas, Crandon Public Library Director; Teresa Hall, Loyal Public Library Director; Murray Johnson, MCPL Youth Services Collection Development Librarian; Alice Sturzl, Edith Evans Community Library Trustee; Andrea Bennett, T.B. Scott Free Library Assistant Director; and, Annette Miller, Tomahawk Public Library Children’s Librarian

Conference reports from WVLS scholarship recipients will be shared in the WVLS Board of Trustees February 2025 packet.

WVLS MARKETING SUPPORT GRANT

In 2024, WVLS offered a Marketing Support Grant, 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 included **Loralee Petersen**, Owen Public Library; **Laurie Ollhoff** and **Chris Sprague**, T.B. Scott Free Library (Merrill); and **Brandon Hardin**, Withee Public Library. The libraries received \$250-\$500 in funds to support their marketing plan or campaign. The marketing campaigns wrapped up and the funds were spent by early October.

A report on the Marketing Grant Pilot is shared as **Exhibit 16** later on the agenda.

WVLS SERVICES

COLLABORATIONS

NEW! Trustee Training Resources

New trustee training materials are now available for public library board members across Wisconsin. The training aims to provide knowledge and skills for effective governance, oversight, and advocacy, enabling responsible management of resources and support for the library's mission. The materials include a series of short videos for each chapter in [Trustee Essentials: A Handbook for Wisconsin Public Library Trustees](#) and can be found [here](#). Additionally [Trustee Tail](#), an online newsletter for public library and system trustees, will be published monthly.

These new resources are a collaborative project of the Manitowoc Calumet Library System, Nicolet Federated Library System, Outagamie Waupaca Library System, Winnefox Library System, and Wisconsin Valley Library Service.

Workforce Development

JobPod is a collaborative initiative by the Bay Area Workforce Development Board, the Brown County Library, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and the Nicolet Federated Library System (NFLS). The primary purpose of JobPod is to create dedicated workspaces in libraries where patrons can access job seeker services available virtually through DWD. Libraries utilize their resources, such as space, internet access, technology, and staff, to support job seekers. This setup allows library staff to focus on their expertise in providing library services and basic digital literacy, while workforce development professionals offer specialized job search assistance.

JobPod launched three pilot sites in Northeast Wisconsin in 2024 and funding is available to open six more sites by September 2025. While five member libraries expressed interest in being a future site for JobPod, only **Frances L. Simek Memorial Library** in Medford was selected to participate.

WPLC Board Approves Mission and Vision

During its meeting in October, the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) Board elected 2025 officers, approved the Digital Library Steering Committee Seat Apportionment, approved the WiLS

Project Management Agreement, discussed the annual membership meeting, and approved the following mission and vision statements for WPLC.

Mission: The Wisconsin Public Library Consortium brings together expertise and resources to support collaborative work resulting in greater equity and affordability for Wisconsin public libraries and their communities.

Vision: To serve as the strategic center of experimentation, collaboration, and innovation for Wisconsin public libraries.

COMMUNICATIONS

WVLS Newsletter Highlights

Published during the first week of each month, the *WVLS Newsletter* showcases ways that member libraries are providing service and support to their communities, national library news, WVLS updates and more. Recent issues included the following articles:

- [September 2024](#) - "WLA Conference Scholarships Available," "Annual Youth Services Workshop Next Month," "MCPL Provides Reading to Therapy Dogs," "Essential Library," "Withee Receives AED," "Schedule Tally Week in October."
- [October 2024](#) - "Wendt Inducted into Wisconsin Library Hall of Fame," "WVLS Members Attend DPI Workshop," "Clark County Passport Program Comes to an End," "MCPL Circulates Tonieboxes," "RDL Now Fine Free," "V-Cat Training Day Set for October 17," "WVLS Launches Data Dashboard Dissections."
- [November 2024](#) - "Readers' Advisory: Bringing Readers and Books Together," "Tomahawk Catalogs Record Board Game," "Marketing Support Grant Pilot Project Concludes," "Minocqua Holds Story Time at Local Museum," "WVLS Awards First Ever Scholarship to ALSC Institute," "Data Dashboard Dissections' Continue."

Thank you to all area library staff for sharing news from their libraries!

DELIVERY SERVICES

WVLS Statewide Delivery Tracking

All WVLS libraries (including branches) have been asked to track incoming and outgoing bins and bags for one week sometime between October 26 - November 22. The data received from all public libraries in Wisconsin will be used to study trends and delivery efficiencies among systems. All data should be reported by Monday, November 25. Libraries that have questions should contact Jamie Matczak.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

An updated WVLS Libraries and Legislators Handout is shared at the end of this report as **Exhibit 12a**.

MEMBER LIBRARY / WVLS GATHERINGS

WVLS Listening Session Held In September

A Listening Session was held at the Frances L. Simek Memorial Library in Medford on Monday, September 23, 2024. Five WVLS staff members and eight public library directors attended this event.

Planned and hosted by Kristie, WVLS listening sessions are opportunities for informal conversations between directors and to ask questions of WVLS staff. Conversation topics at the September session included Friends of the Library groups, volunteers, handling of donations, upcoming programs, outreach opportunities, technology, and budgets for 2025. Rib Lake Public Library Director **Tammie Blomberg** gave an overview of the library's experiences with the American Library Association's Libraries Transforming Communities grant. The library was awarded the grant earlier this year and ALA has recently released another round of funding.

PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSULTANT SERVICES

Data Analysis and Reporting

In September 2024, a statewide Data Dashboard Pilot developed by WiLS became accessible to public libraries and systems to explore and evaluate. The pilot dashboard and accompanying feedback form are available to data dashboard users through the end of the year. In 2025 the pilot dashboard will be evaluated and plans for a permanent tool will be made.

To encourage participation and feedback from area library directors and staff, a curriculum of brief self-paced activities to test the pilot dashboard was developed by Erica, Jamie and Kristie. The activities are based on the exercises recommended in a toolkit that WiLS provided with the dashboard.

Instructions for the first activity was sent to member libraries in September, the second in October, and the third will go out shortly. The final activity will be completed in conjunction with a WVLS public library annual report refresher slated for December 12.

Details about the Data Dashboard pilot are available on the WPLC website at <https://wplc.info/dashboard>.

TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS OVERVIEW

Communication and Training

October was Cybersecurity Awareness Month. Several events happened during the month that both reinforced the importance of cybersecurity awareness internally within WVLS and the need to educate staff at member libraries about awareness and steps they can take to improve our cybersecurity position.

Recent events reminded us of why cybersecurity is a major issue of concern for WVLS and our local libraries. **Three websites were hacked** in early October, resulting in one website needing to be rebuilt as

it couldn't be restored from backup. There was also a **semi-successful phishing attempt** in that one email from a Wisconsin library was compromised and new phishing emails were sent to LEANWI libraries from the compromised account. Fortunately, our systems alerted us to the malicious hyperlink and quickly automatically isolated those emails. Unfortunately, a couple of users did click on the link before the email was removed and later manually scrubbed from the system. However, blocking access and resetting passwords on those accounts prevented any further access by bad actors.

Erica presented a **training on password use in libraries** on October 16. That training was recorded and is posted in the password protected section of the Technology Resources page on the WVLS website. Erica plans to present technology trainings monthly. Based on feedback from 10 library responses to a survey and from other sources (known issues, etc.), key messages in future technology trainings and communications include: use of Deep Freeze on public computers, technology and patron privacy, changing passwords, managing files, Office 365, libraries and open records.

The WVLS ILS and Technology team continues to refine the **Library Staffing Changes Form** which tracks member library hires, departures, or job roles changes that require adjustments to email, Sierra ILS use, or email list membership. Questions about the Aspen online catalog and library website management were added. On the WVLS side backend workflows were created to track implementation of changes. More than 11 staffing changes have been processed since the form was released.

A survey was sent to member library directors for feedback on technology and data training topics, target audiences, and training delivery methods. Future technology training will be planned based on survey feedback and follow-up discussion.

Procurement and Asset Inventory

New computers have been deployed at the Abbotsford, Antigo, Colby, Gilman, Neillsville, Owen and Rhinelander libraries. Staging computers and scheduling installations at the Greenwood Library is underway. Installation totals YTD:

Libraries	Computers	Monitors	Peripherals	Days to installation
19/25	90	40	37	37

Erica Brewster continues to update the asset inventory and to work on network inventories. As part of these projects, she is also updating internet outage reporting procedures.

Member Library Services

October also reminded us that cybercrime is not the only cause of incidents impacting day-to-day functions. **Microsoft released the 2024 Feature Update for Windows in October.** Unfortunately, this update would cause public computers running the previous version of Deep Freeze to lock up, requiring reimaging. Erica, Josh, and IFLS Library System Technology Support Specialist **Brad Jensen** worked to rapidly migrate the old Deep Freeze server and transfer all 140 or so public computers to the new server and upgrade the program on each computer.

Unfortunately due to a schedule difference for the Medford update cycle, three Medford computers were affected by this incident. They were sent to the WVLS office and successfully reimaged and redeployed at the library. Support was provided to MCPL IT staff as they continue to test and soft deploy Pharos, Princh, and Deep Freeze for public PCs and with network/internet connection instability.

Project Tracking

Member site	Asset Inventory	Network inventory	Replace EdgeRouter Lite	DF Central Console	Pharos	Princh
a1 Antigo	complete	in progress	complete	complete	complete	complete
a4 White Lake	complete	complete	complete	complete	n/a	n/a
ab Abbotsford	in progress	in progress	complete	complete	complete	interested
co Colby	in progress	in progress	complete	complete	interested	interested
cr Crandon	complete	complete	pending	complete	no	no
do Dorchester	in progress	pending	pending	in progress	no	no
ga Granton	complete	pending	complete	complete	no	complete
ge Greenwood	complete	complete	complete	complete	no	no
gi Gilman	in progress	pending	complete	complete	interested	interested
la Laona	complete	pending	pending	in progress	no	no
lo Loyal	complete	pending	pending	complete	no	complete
m1 Wausau	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete
m2 Athens	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete
m3 Edgar	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete
m4 Hatley	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete
m5 Marathon City	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete
m6 Mosinee	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete
m7 Rothschild	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete

m8 Spencer	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete
m9 Stratford	pending	pending	n/a	complete	in progress	complete
me Medford	complete	pending	complete	complete	complete	complete
mi Minocqua	in progress	in progress	pending	complete	interested	complete
mr Merrill	in progress	complete	complete	complete	Cassie	complete
ne Neillsville	in progress	complete	complete	complete	interested	complete
ow Owen	in progress	in progress	pending	complete	interested	interested
rh Rhinelander	in progress	pending	complete	complete	complete	interested
rl Rib Lake	complete	complete	pending	complete	complete	no
st Stetsonville	complete	pending	pending	in progress	no	no
th Thorp	complete	pending	pending	complete	no	complete
tl Three Lakes	complete	complete	complete	complete	no	complete
to Tomahawk	complete	pending	complete	complete	no	no
wa Wabeno	complete	pending	pending	complete	no	no
we Westboro	complete	complete	pending	complete	no	no
wi Withee	complete	pending	pending	in progress	no	no

TEACH internet migration update: nine new attempted migrations with two successful since September 1, 2024. At the time of this report, migrations were pending in Greenwood and Stetsonville.

Member Site	TEACH TTU Migration	2023 Circuit Speed	Circuit Alt/Increase to 100 GB
a1 Antigo	9/18/2024	100	yes
a4 White Lake	2/29/2024	50	pending
ab Abbotsford	3/4/2024	50	pending
co Colby	pending	100	yes
cr Crandon	2/29/2024	50	pending
do Dorchester	pending	50	pending
ga Granton	pending	50	pending
ge Greenwood	pending	50	pending
gi Gilman	pending	50	pending

la Laona	pending		50	pending
lo Loyal	pending		50	pending
me Medford		10/31/2024	100	yes
mi Minocqua	pending		100	yes
mr Merrill		1/16/2024	100	yes
ne Neillsville	pending		100	yes
ow Owen		8/28/2024	50	pending
rh Rhinelander	pending		100	yes
rl Rib Lake	pending		50	pending
st Stetsonville	pending		50	pending
th Thorp	pending		50	yes
tl Three Lakes		1/25/2024	100	yes
to Tomahawk		9/6/2024	100	yes
wa Wabeno		10/23/2024	50	pending
we Westboro	pending		50	pending
wi Withee	pending		50	pending

V-CAT AND ILS ADMINISTRATION

V-Cat Council/Committee Meeting Highlights

V-Cat Bibliographic and Interface Committee; October 8

Members discussed possible unneeded series information to remove from the online catalog, changes to the order formats display in the online catalog, and a procedure for cataloging Tonie figurines. The committee will meet again in December.

V-Cat Cooperative Circulation Committee; October 11

The committee finalized application and circulation guidelines for unique cases such as Book Clubs, Teacher/Institutional library cards to present to the V-Cat Council in November. The group also discussed circulation and application guidelines in progress for Short Term/Temporary borrower applications.

Other Projects

Backstage. The quarterly Backstage bibliographic record clean-up process was run on October 14. During this process, 6,784 new records were sent for cataloging improvements, Lexile and Accelerated Reader information, and additions and corrections to subject and genre headings.

V-Cat Patron Record Clean Up. Adult patron records that were expired and inactive over 5 years with no fines or fees as of July 1, 2024 were removed from the V-Cat database. A total of 7,074 records were deleted. All libraries received the number of records deleted, and upon request, a report including additional information.

This is the second year WVLS has coordinated a purge for all libraries. Birth date is used to determine "adult" records rather than patron type. Juvenile patron records, as determined by birth dates, and patron records with fines or fees were not purged at this time. WVLS offers assistance to library staff with purging inactive juvenile patron records, and/or patron records with minimal fines if desired.

WVLS has completed the first steps for systematic review of residency information in patron records.

- A patron code 4 accuracy check for all V-Cat patrons with Langlade County Patron Code 4 residency was completed using the US Census Bureau's Geocoder Batch Addressing tool. A total of 7,806 records were reviewed.
- WVLS was able to identify and correct 887 patron records with inaccurate patron code 4 information.
- Libraries were asked to review patron records with Langlade county addresses and residency codes that could not be verified using the US Census Geocoder tools.
- Accuracy of these codes is important for statutory payments for library service. When creating new patron records, staff are expected to verify patron residency codes at the time of application/record creation. In addition, libraries complete a second review of address and residency information in patron records. This project is intended as a third verification of patron record information.

Examples of ILS Administration Support Provided in September and October:

- APL Antigo Bookmobile / Mobile Outreach set up
- Copy Use function in Sierra for multiple libraries
- Correction to loan rules for Medford
- Lending Yoto cards and readers at Rhinelander
- Emergency library closure adjustments for MCPL Hatley
- Statistical circulation, patron and/or item reports for T. B. Scott, MCPL, Colby, Granton and others.
- Fine free lending adjustments and batch waivers of old overdue fines for Rhinelander
- Fine free lending adjustments for Stetsonville
- Follow up on stale holds and stale holds shelf items at multiple libraries
- Adjustments for lending Tonie players and figurines at Abbotsford
- Adjustments and troubleshooting for new RFID pad installation at MCPL
- Adjustments and clean up for permanent closure of APL Elcho branch
- Setup for Rhinelander self-checkout station
- Adjustments for staffing changes at multiple libraries
- Investigate and follow up on hold over-rides at multiple libraries
- Investigate and follow up on patron notice issues at multiple libraries
- Troubleshoot receipt printing issues experienced at multiple libraries
- Troubleshoot spine label printing issue for MCPL
- Update MCPL paging list settings for improved format
- Update Medford patron record information for patron record renewals

Training Opportunities

Training Attended: WILIUG. WVLS ILS & Database Support Specialist Rachel Metzler attended the virtual WILIUG (Wisconsin/Illinois Innovative Users Group) conference in October. Sessions included an update from Innovative, a tour of upcoming Sierra features, a lesson on AI for libraries, and building a workplace centered on well-being.

Training Offered. trainings provided include:

- V-Cat Sierra Cataloging Training – Attaching Items – Thursday, September 12
- V-Cat Sierra Cataloging Training – MARC Alerts – Thursday, September 26
- Staff training for new T. B. Scott Free Library Circulation Coordinator – Friday, September 27 & Tuesday, October 29
- V-Cat Aspen Patron Experience & Collection Showcase Training – Tuesday, October 29

WVLS staff prepared for in-person training day sessions, V-Cat Sierra Z39.50 Cataloging Training and V-Cat Resource Sharing and Holds. Due to very low registration, this training opportunity was cancelled.

Registration is open for one additional fall training session **V-Cat Reports the Easy Way** slated for Thursday, November 21 from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

WEBSITE SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Website Development

LEANWI Technology Support Consultant **Brendan Tuckey** continues to **develop and design new websites** and to rebuild others upon request. All websites are designed in collaboration with the individual library and with website accessibility and Divi best practices.

List of current new builds: Kendall (awaiting initial site information); Bayfield (awaiting initial site information), Winter (NWLS, stalled, waiting library feedback), Wonewoc (WRLS, active development – nearing deployment), Viroqua/McIntosh (WRLS, active development – nearing deployment), LaFarge/Lawton (WRLS, in development), Trempealeau (WRLS, deployed), Mercer (NWLS, deployed).

Rebuilds: Rhinelander (WVLS, rebuilt due to website compromise).

2024 Website Development

On deck	New design (current)	Rebuild (current)	Deployed
0	6	0	10

WRLS implemented their new catalog from Vega (Polaris ILS) which required some minor changes to sites to change links and add some code for performing searches from a library website page.

Minor updates to the **Online Resources** page included changes to specific resources. We are reviewing/cross referencing the BadgerLink resource list for 2025.

Brendan is working on developing an **online room (venue) booking and event booking function for library websites**. Progress on the LEANWI-Book-A-Room plugin is progressing well. The core functionality has been finished and we plan to have a beta version (customer test version) on a library site in November, likely Olsen Memorial Library in Eagle River. Once functionality for the Room Booking plugin has been completed and tested, we will look into work on completing a plugin for an Events Booking system. The core functionality will be based on the room booking plugin and will benefit from current testing. Timeline: early 2025.

Learning about and implementing website accessibility features in website design is an ongoing effort.

On October 1, a **website compromise was detected**, first at the E.U. Demmer Memorial Library (Three Lakes), and eventually at libraries in Barron and Rhinelander. After much forensics effort during troubleshooting, **Kris Schwartz** identified the source of the infection to be a specific plugin, “Give” donation plugin. **Josh Klingbeil** identified a known vulnerability listed in official publications as the plugin being susceptible to Cross Site Scripting (XSS) attacks. The plugin vulnerability was targeted in August, so the implanted code was injected 4-6 weeks before symptoms appeared on websites.

The first symptom of the attack was library users being unable to log in through traditional methods. We were still able to access the websites through our management dashboard. We could see non-standard administrative users had been added to the site and other existing administrative accounts were disabled.

To the best of our knowledge, Kris was able to prevent the attackers from fulfilling their end mission on the website (still not entirely clear), but the vector was persistent and required several back-up/restore cycles to completely clear any remaining malicious code from Three Lakes and Barron websites. Unfortunately, the attack was silent long enough that all of the backups for Rhinelander were infected, so that site had to be wiped and rebuilt from scratch.

Two other websites also had the plugin activated on their site. It was not in use on the Jean M. Thomsen Memorial Library (Stetsonville) website and was quickly disabled. It was active at the TB Scott Free Library (Merrill), but that instance appears to have been patched before an attack could happen.

Lessons learned:

- Plugins are a major source of security concern on the open-source WP platform. At first, we suspected a phishing attack as being the source of the compromise, but Kris was able to correctly identify the Give plugin as the source – which was confirmed by posted documentation. We believe “Give” was specifically targeted because it deals with accepting donations (though the actual fund transfer occurs through separate authentication with PayPal or Stripe).
- Reviewing quality of plugin management, maintaining a library of known plugins, and updating plugins regularly is critical to ensuring plugin security. Plugins are key to WP website functions, and are patched and updated frequently, sometimes even multiple times a day if a known issue

is addressed. We are looking into enabling auto-updates on websites (researching downsides) and establishing a plugin library and reinforcing library management procedures that request review of a plugin before it is deployed on a website.

- Adjustments were made to the website backup and retention schedule to create a repository of archive backups that could be used in the case of more frequent/recent backups being compromised. This would save us from having to rebuild a website from scratch, even if significant recent changes were lost.
- Success: the LEANWI website team was able to prioritize and respond to the incident when it was discovered very quickly. The technical code-reading and website file management skills of IFLS Library System IT Director **Kris Schwartz** were invaluable, and all team members contributed information that quickly identified extent, threat, and methods to prevent further harm. Brendan was then able to quickly rebuild the Rhinelander website, getting them back up within two or three days of the initial discovery. Libraries received prompt communication about what was happening with their websites and were appreciative of the response and understanding of the disruption and inconvenience.

Website Training

October website training focused on specific aspects of website accessibility. Erica presented two trainings on specific practical steps libraries will need to take to assure accessible website content: adding alternative text to images and an overview of making documents (Word, PDF) accessible. Trainings are recorded and publicly available at <https://training.leanwi.org>.

Alt + Text: <https://training.librarieswin.org/website-accessibility/alttext>

Accessible Documents: <https://training.librarieswin.org/website-accessibility/accessible-documents/>

November website trainings will feature the website plugin compromise incident as an opportunity to educate about website plugins and website security.

CONTINUING EDUCATION and TRAINING

NEW DIGIAL BYTES

Readers' Advisory: In this *Digital Byte*, Kristie talks about what readers' advisory is, why libraries should offer it, and what tools are available to help staff develop readers' advisory skills.

Evaluating Resources: In this *Digital Byte*, Kristie addresses why the evaluation of resources is a necessary skill for librarians and ways in which it can be done. She also examines the difference between disinformation and misinformation.

WVLS ANNUAL YOUTH SERVICES WORKSHOP A SUCCESS

The annual youth services workshop held October 2 at the TB Scott Free Library (Merrill) brought together 21 people from three library systems – WVLS, Nicolet Federated Library System (NFLS), and Outagamie-Waupaca Library System (OWLS). The workshop included presentations by **Pam Corcoran**, a performer and puppet master, and **Mary Newton**, the founding president of The Reading League Wisconsin. Mary presented a session on science-based reading, explaining what it entails and exploring how public libraries can contribute to this school initiative. Feedback from all who attended the workshop was very positive. A representative from NEWI reached out to Kristie for contact information for Mary Newton as they were interested in providing a workshop on the science-based reading initiative. NEWI is Northeast Wisconsin CE Partnership among four public library systems – NFLS, OWLS, Manitowoc Calumet and Winnefox (Oshkosh).

WVLS PARTICIPATES IN LIBRARIES' STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY

Jamie Matczak and **Katie Zimmermann** presented at a Staff Development Day for T.B. Scott Library (Merrill) staff in October. Jamie presented a workshop on “Giving Great Service” and Katie spoke about Aspen Discovery.

WVLS ASSISTS WITH MCPL STAFF IN-SERVICE

On January 20, 2025, Marathon County will provide a half-day of training to all county employees and then encourage individual departments, such as the library, to coordinate their own training in the afternoon. **Jamie Matczak** is working with **Katelyn Sabelko**, Library Services Manager from MCPL, to host and coordinate a presenter in the afternoon for the entire staff.

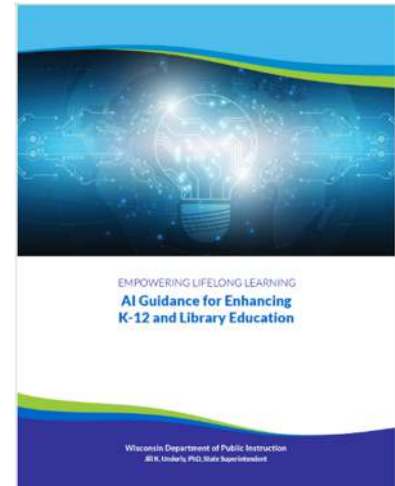
13th ANNUAL WILD WISCONSIN WINTER WEB CONFERENCE

WVLS is working with colleagues from the South Central Library System and IFLS Library System on final details for the 13th annual Wild Wisconsin Winter Web Conference scheduled for **January 22-23, 2025**. Fourteen sessions are planned for the conference. [Registration will open](#) in early December.

INFO to GO

NEW! AI GUIDANCE RESOURCE

The WI Department of Public Instruction has developed an evolving guidance document to assist K-12 educators, librarians, students, and administrators in effectively integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies within educational settings and public libraries. ***AI Guidance for Enhancing K-12 and Library Education*** will be regularly updated to ensure it aligns with the latest advancements in AI technology, ethics, and policy, promoting the responsible use of AI to enhance personalized learning, foster critical thinking, and improve education outcomes.



AI Guidance for Enhancing K-12 and Library Education is available on the WI Department of Public Instruction website [here](#). (DPI Connect Ed: Wisconsin's Education Newsletter; July 30, 2024)

UPCOMING EVENTS / MEETINGS

- November 11 – **WVLS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**
- November 11 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour**
- November 12 – Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) Technology Steering Committee meeting
- November 12 – Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (WECCP) Northeast Region meeting
- November 13 – Statewide Bibliographic Standards Committee meeting
- November 13-14 – **Library Marketing and Communications Conference**; St. Louis, Missouri
- November 14 – **WVLS V-Cat Council meeting**
- November 14 – WPLC Digital Library Steering Committee meeting
- November 16 – **WVLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**
- November 19 – DPI-hosted meeting of System Directors
- November 19 - **Website Accessibility Learning Group meeting**
- November 19 – LSTA Cooperative Cataloging meeting
- November 20 – DPI-hosted meeting of System Continuing Education Consultants
- November 20 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- November 20 – “Inspire, Advocate, Communicate: Library Data Storytelling” webinar
- November 21 - **V-Cat Training: Reports the Easy Way**
- November 21 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- November 21 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour**

- November 22 - WLA Library Development and Legislation Committee meeting
- November 22 – System and Resource Library Administrators Association of Wisconsin (SRLAAW) meeting
- November 22 – System Marketing Co-Hort meeting
- November 28 – **WVLS OFFICE closed** (Thanksgiving Day)
- November 29 – **WVLS OFFICE closed**
- December 2 – WPLC Technology Backup meeting
- December 3 – WLA Virtual Performers Showcase
- December 3 - **WVLS V-Cat Bibliographic / Interface Committee meeting**
- December 4 – WISCAT User Group meeting
- December 5 – Collaborative Summer Library Program (CLSP) Symposium
- December 9 – WPLC Digital Archives Backup meeting
- December 9 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour**
- December 11 – WECCP meeting
- December 12 – **WVLS 2024 Public Library Annual Report Workshop**
- December 13 - **WVLS V-Cat Cooperative Circulation Committee meeting**
- December 17 - **Website Accessibility Learning Group meeting**
- December 17 – DPI-hosted meeting of System Youth Services Consultants
- December 17 – LSTA Cooperative Cataloging meeting
- December 18 – DPI-hosted Data Workgroup meeting
- December 18 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- December 19 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- December 19 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour**
- December 24 - **WVLS OFFICE closed** (day before Christmas)
- December 25 – **WVLS OFFICE closed** (Christmas)
- January 1 - **WVLS OFFICE closed** (New Year’s Day)
- January 8 – **WVLS Youth Services Information Exchange (YSIE), virtual**
- January 10 - Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND) meeting
- January 13 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour**
- January 15 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- January 16 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour: Website 201 [Just] Beyond the Basics**
- January 16 - **WVLS/IFLS/NWLS/WRLS Website Office Hour**
- January 18 - **WVLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

Thank you for reading!

Marla