



Reaching Across Illinois Library System

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July 21, 2017

TO: RAILS Board of Directors
FROM: RAILS staff
ABOUT: RAILS service and operations report—July 2017

Major sections in this report correspond to the goals in the RAILS strategic plan (<https://www.railslibraries.info/about/strategic-plan>).

Resource Sharing

Delivery

- RAILS and LASA staff have agreed on a scope of work for a delivery study. (LASA is the Laboratory for Applied Spatial Analysis at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.) LASA will develop an official proposal and send it to RAILS after it works its way through the university's process.

E-book Projects

- On June 22, Veronda Pitchford had a content roadmap meeting with the Independent Publishers Group (IPG) and BiblioLabs at the IPG offices in Chicago. IPG and BiblioLabs are partners in the Popup Picks collaboration.
- Veronda Pitchford represented Dee Brennan at the SimplyE for Consortia meeting on June 23. SimplyE for Consortia is an Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant project to support consortial access development for patron use of the single sign-on to the SimplyE app to access e-books across platforms such as cloudLibrary, Axis 360, and OverDrive. Patrons would have single sign-on access to e-books from their local public library, statewide collections offered by a consortium (such as eRead Illinois), or state library and national collections.
- Veronda Pitchford and Jane Plass met with Baker & Taylor executives on June 26 for an Axis 360 eRead Illinois strategy meeting.
- See the attached report for eRead Illinois Axis 360 statistics.
- Live and webinar trainings are ongoing and listed at <http://www.librarylearning.info>.

Group Purchases and Discounts

- On June 26, during the ALA conference, Veronda Pitchford attended a preliminary demonstration of Demco Software's new DiscoverLocal product, which improves Internet discoverability for a library's programs, services, and collections.

LLSAPs and Other Consortia

- The Consortial Model Working Group met on May 25, June 20, and July 5, 2017. Many ideas have been shared and discussed. The group will meet again on August 7 to develop recommendations to present to the Consortia Committee.

- The Overlay Software Search Working Group met on July 11, 2017 and made a recommendation on overlay software. This recommendation will be brought to the Consortia Committee on July 24 and to the RAILS Board on July 28.
- The Cataloging Working Group met on July 14, 2017. The group expects to present its recommendations at the October 2017 meeting of the Consortia Committee. The suite of recommendations will include consortial cataloging best practices, staff competencies, guidelines for a comprehensive and recurring basic training curriculum, and other general recommendations.

Access to Information

Illinois Talking Book Outreach Center

- Consolidation Progress
 - ITBOC's committed, caring, and outstanding staff continues to prepare for the transfer of ITBOC's services to the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service (ISLTBBS), which will assume all talking book services as of September 1, 2017. ITBOC staff are committed to making the transition as responsibly as possible to ease the ISLTBBS load for the first several months.
 - As ITBOC staff prepared their Burr Ridge office for new carpeting, they sent National Library Service (NLS) supplies and other useful items to the Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service (ISLTBBS). They also downsized other supplies and items as much as possible.
 - Final informational mailings to partners will be mailed before July 28. This includes Centers for Independent Learning in the state and organizations that invited ITBOC to participate in senior fairs, low vision groups, and others.
 - Communications with the ISLTBBS are ramping up as its new staff members are hired and training begins. Sharon Ruda (Associate Director, Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service) has looked at ITBOC's scheduling procedures and other methods as she analyzes their possible use with the newly hired ISLTBBS staff. Some of the new ISLTBBS staff started in mid-July, with the others starting in mid-August.
 - In the past two months, ITBOC sent notifications to all ITBOC patrons explaining the upcoming changes, sent 2,500 notices of overdue books to patrons, and is currently doing a patron database cleanup. The cleanup is called a patron status review. Staff purge patrons who have been deceased or gone from the talking book program for three years, withdraw patrons who have been suspended from the program for two years, and suspend patrons who have not checked out a book in over a year. This has been a major project.
- Annual Statistics
 - Circulation: 602,080 digital books + 132,589 downloadable books = 734,669 books. The average circulation per month in FY2017 was 82% digital books and 18% BARD (Braille and Audio Reading Download).
 - Counties: Most new patrons came from the following counties: Cook (283), DuPage (151), Kane (116), Lake (64), St. Clair (44), Peoria (43), and Winnebago (40).
- Outreach Report
 - July 10—Lincoln Low Vision Support Group. Lincoln. Presentation
 - July 11—Brookdale Des Plaines Optimum Eye Low Vision Group. Des Plaines. Presentation

Member Engagement

Communications

- The latest episode of the *Sparks* podcast features an interview between RAILS Executive Director Dee Brennan and Liz Aviles, Vice President of Market Intelligence at Upshot, about the marketing agency’s report on seven retail trends to watch in 2017 and how libraries can capitalize on these trends to better serve their customers. Listen at <http://www.railslibraries.info/sparks>.
- RAILS had approximately 1,216 visitors to its booth at the American Library Association conference in Chicago on June 23–26. In addition to learning more about RAILS programs and services, one of the more popular attractions was the RAILS trivia “spin the wheel” contest.
- Over 1,050 RAILS library staff members from different departments at different types of libraries (academic, public, school, and special) signed up for the free ALA exhibit passes RAILS offered in connection with its ALA exhibit booth. Many stopped by the booth to thank RAILS and to tell us they would not have been able to visit the exhibits were it not for the free passes. RAILS staff were able to engage with many library staff members they had never met before as a result.
- Nikki Zimmermann, RAILS Marketing and Public Relations Specialist, designed a new RAILS brochure, which was rolled out at the RAILS ALA exhibit booth. The brochure has brief information about all RAILS programs and services with URLs for finding more details on the RAILS website. The brochure proved more popular than the multiple paper flyers RAILS distributed at previous conferences, as members do not want to be “weighted down” with paper. The brochure will also be made available to members via library visits and other venues.
- RAILS will have a table at the annual SWANstravaganza on Friday, August 11, at Moraine Valley Community College, to talk with SWAN members about RAILS programs and services.

Multitype Collaborative Grants

- For the application period ending April 28, RAILS received twenty-two applications and awarded three grants. These grants will fund projects proposed through a collaboration of at least two different library types (public, school, special, academic). The grant recipients are:
 - Indian Prairie Public Library District in Darien and Hinsdale South High School (in Hinsdale Township High School District #86)—\$2, 500 for development of formal and informal virtual reality learning experiences
 - Theosophical Society in America’s Henry S. Olcott Memorial Library in Wheaton and Carol Stream Public Library—\$575 for a joint local authors and exhibit program
 - Peoria Public Library and Hines Primary School (in Peoria PSD #150)—\$2,070 to expand the “Barbers Love Books” program

Networking Events

- Eighteen people attended the RAILS networking event and lunch held at the Galesburg Public Library on June 16 prior to the RAILS board meeting. Members had an opportunity to network with RAILS staff and board members.

Member Visits

- See the attached report for statistics on member visits during June 2017.

Continuing Education and Consulting Services

Continuing Education

- See the attached report for statistics on recent RAILS continuing education events.
- The continuing education requirement for the FY2018 public library per capita and equalization grant is for “staff and trustees to complete at least one free online education opportunity focusing on safety in the library.” RAILS will work with Illinois State Library staff to promote the availability of RAILS archived webinars on this topic. RAILS will also offer webinars on safety in the library during the fall (September 13 and 20) and spring to help members satisfy this requirement.
- On July 12, Joe Filapek met with Julie Morgan, new Director, Staff and Organization Development at the Chicago Public Library. In addition to potential opportunities for collaboration on design thinking, they will continue to explore other opportunities to collaborate around CE topics of shared interest.
- Upcoming CE opportunities include a five-webinar series on Thursdays in August that will focus on ransomware and other IT security issues. This series will be presented by Blake Carver, Senior Systems Engineer at LYRASIS. RAILS will also offer a webinar on August 22 focusing on human resources documentation, presented by an attorney from the Management Association.

Consulting

- RAILS continues to accept renewals for the 2017–2018 Management Association discounted membership program for qualifying public libraries. As of July 17, thirty-nine of forty-six memberships have been renewed. Renewals will continue to be accepted through October 2017 and prorated accordingly.
- RAILS has added a website toolkit page to the RAILS website that features the best practices document developing by Influx|Library User Experience, relevant archived webinars on web design, as well as a document outlining website posting requirements compiled by Ancel Glink. This page can be accessed through the trending topics portion of the home page.

Leadership and Innovation

- Several RAILS staff participated in programs and committee meetings during the recent American Library Association in Chicago.
 - On June 23, Veronda Pitchford co-chaired the Association of Cooperative and Specialized Library Services Association (ASCLA) consortial e-book interest group meeting.
 - On June 24 and 25, Amanda Musacchio participated in meetings as a member of the Committee on Organization and the Reference and User Services Association Sharing and Transforming Access to Resources Section Policy Committee (RUSA STARS).
 - On June 25, Veronda Pitchford participated on the Library and Information Technology Association’s (LITA) Top Tech Trends panel. Veronda spoke about the statewide geolocated Popup Picks collection, which offers e-book content curated every three months. The collection is available with no holds for Illinois residents on the BiblioBoard platform.
 - On June 25, Joe Filapek participated in meetings of the Training, Orientation, and Leadership Development (TOLD) committee and the Emerging Leaders Subcommittee.
 - On June 26, Dee Brennan and Veronda Pitchford attended the ASCLA board meeting to propose a national ASCLA e-book summit. The summit would enable libraries, e-book

vendors, publishers, and other partners to set a national agenda to design the future of e-content through collaboration.

- On July 13, Amanda Musacchio and Jane Plass participated in the last Planning Committee meeting for the 2017 Great Lakes Resource Sharing Conference. The meeting focused on debriefing the 2017 conference and beginning to plan the 2018 conference. Amanda will continue to serve on the 2018 Planning Committee and will chair the program subcommittee.
- On July 20, Anne Slaughter attended the Illinois Library Association (ILA) committee orientation, where she began her service as a member of the ILA Executive Board as well as its Finance Committee.

Organizational Excellence

Human Resources

- Since the June operations report, RAILS had four new hires (Patrick Pletcher, Driver; Gregory Jones, Driver; Lisa Schemensky, RSA Cataloging and Database Coordinator; Kellie Green, RSA Cataloging and Database Coordinator) and two terminations (Paul Alfredson, Driver; Janet Ford, Driver). (Terminations refer to all persons leaving RAILS employment for any reason, including resignation and retirements.)
- The RAILS executive team has discussed alternatives to filling the vacant Human Resources Director position. Dee Brennan will have further information and recommendations in her report and at the board meeting. All other open positions have been filled.
- Work has been completed on the LIMRICC PHIP-Employee Navigator Data Verification audit of 2017 benefits in preparation for the upcoming open enrollment.
- The July–December vacation allotment is now available for employees to use.
- HR staff coordinated an IMRF presentation by John Renner at the Rockford service center on July 18, 2017.

Information Technology

- RAILS IT staff installed a disaster recovery cluster at the Central Management Services (CMS) data center in Springfield. This will provide RAILS and the LLSAPs with redundancy for email, telephones, websites, and ticket systems so that members will always be able to reach RAILS staff and services.
- RAILS IT staff have worked diligently on packing and moving equipment to accommodate recarpeting and to prepare for the move to a different space within the Burr Ridge service center after renovations are complete.

Professional Development

- The annual RAILS staff in-service day was held on July 20 at Starved Rock State Park conference center in Oglesby, IL, which is fairly centrally located in relation to RAILS service centers. Staff from Chicago Public Library led a design thinking workshop. Other activities included department meetings (especially useful for departments with staff in multiple service centers) and staff service awards.

Stewardship

Administration and Finance

- The Finance department is getting ready for the FY2017 annual audit. Staff are working to ensure proper posting of all entries applicable to FY2017. They are also compiling the reports used by the auditors to verify the accuracy and reliability of the RAILS financial statement as of June 30, 2017. Fieldwork for the audit begins on July 31, 2017.
- Since the departure of Barb Brooks on June 10, the Finance Department has processed the biweekly payroll.

Facilities

- *Bolingbrook*: The owner of the Bolingbrook facility is repainting the exterior. Anyone who goes there should look for a gray building with blue trim rather than the previous gray and dark red color scheme. The photo on the RAILS website will be updated when painting is finished.
- *Burr Ridge*: The renovation project is going smoothly overall. Several materials have been delayed, but not to the point of affecting the overall timeline for completion. Carpeting installation began on July 5, earlier than expected, so staff have been busy packing and relocating as recarpeting work moved into their areas. Staff were encouraged to work at home when possible, as the process has been quite disruptive and there has been some odor. Carpeting installation is scheduled to be finished by August 4, but may be done a few days earlier.

eRead Illinois Monthly Axis 360 Statistics - June 2017					
Confirmed Libraries					
RAILS	396				
IHLS	23				
Other	2				
Total	421				
Confirmed Libraries by Type					
	Academic	Public	School	Special	Total
RAILS	18	245	126	7	396
IHLS	2	8	13	0	23
Other				2	2
Total	20	253	139	9	421
Adoption Rate by Type (RAILS members only)	13%	60%	23%	3%	32%
Confirmed Population Served					
	Academic	Public	School	Special	Total
RAILS	48,485	3,939,723	172,756	11,882	4,172,846
IHLS	2,625	140,913	18,034	0	161,572
Other				62,563	62,563
Total	51,110	4,080,636	190,790	74,445	4,396,981
Summary Statistics					
	June 2016	June 2017	July 2015 - June 2016	July 2016 - June 2017	PROJECT LIFETIME TOTAL**
Circulation	22,071	25,517	215,017	312,932	620,487
Total Items Added to the collection	978	663	8,935	6,518	34,173

RAILS Networking Events and Member Visits - June 2017

Networking Events			
Event	Date	Location	Attendance
RAILS Networking Event at Galesburg Public Library	June 16, 2017	Galesburg	18
Member Visits			
Library Name	Date	Location	Library Type
Lincoln College of Technology	June 1, 2017	Melrose Park	Academic
Loyola University Chicago Health Sciences Library	June 1, 2017	Maywood	Special
Messenger Public Library of North Aurora	June 1, 2017	North Aurora	Public
Messenger Public Library of North Aurora	June 2, 2017	North Aurora	Public
Messenger Public Library of North Aurora	June 5, 2017	North Aurora	Public
LaHarpe Carnegie Public Library District	June 6, 2017	LaHarpe	Public
Creve Coeur Public Library District	June 7, 2017	Creve Coeur	Public
Bensenville Community Public Library District	June 8, 2017	Bensenville	Public
McCook Public Library District	June 8, 2017	McCook	Public
Warren Township Public Library	June 9, 2017	Warren	Public
El Paso District Library	June 12, 2017	El Paso	Public
Sherrard Public Library District	June 13, 2017	Sherrard	Public
Warrenville Public Library District	June 13, 2017	Warrenville	Public
William Rainey Harper College	June 13, 2017	Palatine	Academic
Oak Brook Public Library	June 14, 2017	Oak Brook	Public
National University of Health Sciences	June 15, 2017	Lombard	Academic
New Windsor Public Library District	June 15, 2017	New Windsor	Public
Toulon Public Library District	June 15, 2017	Toulon	Public
Brown County Public Library District	June 19, 2017	Mount Sterling	Public
North Riverside Public Library District	June 19, 2017	North Riverside	Public
Robert W. Rowe Public Library District	June 19, 2017	Sheridan	Public
Moline Public Library	June 20, 2017	Moline	Public
Hinsdale Public Library	June 21, 2017	Hinsdale	Public
Morris Area Public Library District	June 28, 2017	Morris	Public
		Total Visits:	24

June 2017 Continuing Education Events

Event	Date	Locations	Category	Format	Attendance
Creating a Friendly Environment for English Language Learners	June 13, 2017	Online (GoToWebinar)	Literacy	Webinar	25
Podcasting Basics for Library Professionals	June 19-30, 2017	Online (Teachable & GoToWebinar)	Technology	Online course	41
Supporting Diversity and Inclusivity in Libraries	June 21, 2017	Hinsdale Public Library	Diversity	In-person	37
				Monthly Total	103