



This Month at RAILS – November 2022

THE TOP THREE

In response to board member feedback, each month we provide brief talking points on select This Month at RAILS items to help you spread the word about our programs/services. Here are this month's top three:

Reminder about RAILS World Language Cataloging Services Program

Illinois academic, public, school, and specialized libraries statewide can get help cataloging materials in a wide variety of world languages through RAILS' World Language Cataloging Services program. The service is made possible through an Illinois State Library grant and there is no charge for system member libraries to participate. [Find out more](#) on the RAILS website.

RAILS Services for School Libraries

RAILS school library staff who were not able to visit the RAILS booth at the November Association of Illinois School Library Educators conference can find out more about the programs/services RAILS offers for school libraries by reviewing the [special handout](#) we developed. The handout is posted in the Members/School Libraries section of the RAILS website.

Learn How Find More Illinois Can Benefit All Illinois Libraries

Help spread the word about [Find More Illinois](#), RAILS' interlibrary loan platform that provides access to a growing number of library holdings in one seamless interface by reviewing the information/talking points in a recent [My Library Is... blog post](#). Library staff can also view this post to learn more about Find More Illinois and to find suggestions for promoting the service to library patrons.

Provides leadership in ensuring sustainable, equitable resource sharing

Enhance sharing of knowledge and best practices

RAILS Member Engagement at ILA and AISLE Conferences

RAILS had approximately 691 visitors to our exhibit booth at the Illinois Library Association (ILA) Conference on October 19 and 20. Thanks to all the RAILS Board members who stopped by to say hello. Special thanks to Rosie Camargo for working at the booth!

We had approximately 253 visitors to our booth at the Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE) Conference on November 4. We developed a special handout highlighting RAILS' services for school libraries. School library staff who missed visiting the booth can find this information on the [RAILS website](#).

Leverage economies of scale to provide greater purchasing power

RAILS Deals & Discounts

Renewals and sign-ups are currently in progress for these RAILS offers: [Swank Movie Licensing](#), [BookBrowse for Libraries](#) (readers' advisory resource), and [Gale E-Books](#). RAILS members can find information, trial access details, and pricing on all our deals and discounts by logging into the RAILS [Deals & Discounts](#) page.

Career Online High School Update

[Career Online High School](#) (COHS) is an 18-credit, vocation-based high school completion program. RAILS coordinates and administers the program for libraries statewide and negotiates lower fees for the scholarships that participating libraries award to students.

Chicago Heights Public Library and Markham Public Library recently joined COHS. RAILS staff also met with COHS staff during the Illinois Library Association conference to discuss RAILS member feedback on the program and new ideas for expansion.

The following table provides the latest information on the program as of November 3.

Scholarships Awarded	Total Graduates	Current Number of Students in Program	RAILS Graduation Rate/National Rate
350	158	94	62%/53%

Work collaboratively to identify and support shared catalog solutions and expand resource sharing

Inkie.org and Inkie.org Library Update

[Inkie.org](#) is a suite of resources - available to everyone in Illinois at no charge - that supports local authors with online creation and publishing tools and helps readers access locally produced content. The Inkie.org Library includes the Indie Illinois collection of self-published e-books by Illinois authors and RAILS Community Collections, featuring content added by local libraries.

Anna Behm, RAILS E-Content Specialist, gave a virtual presentation at the Evergreen Park Public Library about inkie.org and the Inkie.org Library on October 27. Five people attended and showed great interest in the program.

Use of RAILS E-Resources

eRead Illinois Axis 360 Checkouts

Time Period	E-Books	Audiobooks	Total
October 2022	23,941	17,055	40,996
FY 2023 (July 2022 – June 2023)	85,294	64,889	150,183

Inkie.org Library Views

Time Period	Number of Views
October 2022	1,279
FY 2023	6,009

Explore More Illinois Update

[Explore More Illinois](#) is RAILS’ statewide online cultural and recreational pass program. As of November 3, 411 Illinois libraries participate (326 RAILS and 85 Illinois Heartland Library System libraries) and there are [48 attractions](#).



Explore More Illinois added two exciting attractions in October: The Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago, one of the largest science museums in the world, and Bistro Verde, a restaurant on the campus of Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield.

Patrons from participating libraries made 54 reservations in October. The most popular attractions (measured by number of reservations) were DuPage Children’s Museum in Naperville (8), Chicago Children’s Museum (7), Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford (6), and Chicago History Museum (3).

Models best practices in equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion

RAILS World Language Cataloging Services Program

RAILS continues to look for opportunities to promote our statewide [World Language Cataloging Services program](#), which provides original and copy cataloging for materials in a wide variety of world languages for Illinois academic, public, school, and specialized libraries. The service is made possible by an Illinois State Library grant and there is no charge for system member libraries to participate.

Recent promotional efforts included talking to booth visitors at the Illinois Library Association and Association of Illinois School Library Educators conferences, speaking about the service at the September RAILS Member Update and a recent RAILS World Language Networking group meeting, and regularly publicizing the program via the *RAILS E-News* and email lists.

As a result of this publicity, members from all types of libraries are showing interest in the program. As a recent example, one Illinois academic library plans to send 310 Lao/Malay language materials for cataloging. The library is very grateful for the opportunity to finally be able to make these materials available to library customers.

Assist member libraries in preparing for the future

Help member libraries of all types and sizes demonstrate their value



Ask Us Anything: Public/School Library Partnerships

RAILS hosted its third Ask Us Anything session in October on public/school library partnerships. The event featured short presentations by RAILS member library staff:

- Jessica Banko, West Chicago Public Library District
- Linda Sawyer, Saint Francis Xavier School
- Norma Hacke, Wauconda Area Public Library District

A total of 56 people registered and 18 participated live. This event is [archived on the RAILS YouTube page](#).

Find More Illinois Talking Points

RAILS members often ask us for talking points to use when speaking about RAILS programs/services that are available to library patrons. A [recent post to the My Library Is... blog](#) provides helpful suggestions and talking points to use when speaking to all types of libraries about [Find More Illinois](#), RAILS' interlibrary loan platform that provides access to a growing number of library holdings in one seamless interface.

Future-focused professional development and member engagement efforts

RAILS In-Person CE Opportunities Becoming More Popular with Members

RAILS is once again offering in-person continuing education. Nearly 100 RAILS members attended events at the following locations:

Renovation and New Space Workshop (September)

- Burr Ridge Service Center
- Barrington Area Public Library

Dealing with Challenging Situations (November)

- East Moline Public Library
- Messenger Public Library (North Aurora)
- Morton Public Library

Classification Basics: Understanding Dewey Decimal Classification & Using WebDewey Moodle Course

RAILS is offering a [four-week Moodle training course](#) for members that runs from January 9 – February 6, 2023. This asynchronous course will provide practical, hands-on training on the Dewey Decimal Classification System and WebDewey. All 55 seats for the class were filled in one day and we received many requests to expand the capacity of the class. We set capacity limits to ensure an optimal learning experience for each student. RAILS will consider adding additional sessions to fill the obvious need for this type of training in our community.

Leads alongside member libraries to develop and strengthen Illinois library community

Strengthen collaborative relationships with partner library organizations

November Meeting with AISLE, CPS, IHLS, ILA, and ISL

RAILS had our monthly meeting with representatives from the Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE), Chicago Public Schools (CPS), Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS), Illinois Library Association (ILA), and the Illinois State Library (ISL) on November 1 to discuss ways we can work collaboratively to support school libraries. Topics discussed included an update on RAILS' school library data project, materials challenges, an update on the ILA and AISLE conferences, and the proposed idea for holding a Directors University type event for school libraries.

SLA Illinois at Illinois Library Association Annual Conference

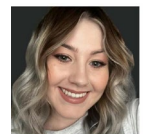
The Special Libraries Association Illinois Community made its presence felt at the 2022 ILA Annual Conference. RAILS Member Engagement Manager Dan Bostrom moderated a panel of specialized library workers titled, "The Crisis in Specialized Libraries: Survival in a Catch-All Field." The session included discussion of the trends in specialized librarianship, how titles and responsibilities are changing, and how people can become more involved. The community also hosted an exhibit booth to encourage people to get more involved in the specialized library field.

RAILS Staff News

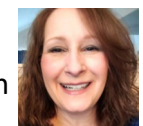
New RAILS Staff

RAILS recently filled our three newly created administrative positions:

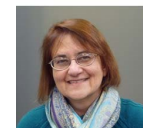
Ola Gronski is our new Digital Marketing & Communications Specialist and will help RAILS communicate with members using video and social media and help our member libraries communicate more effectively with their customers.



Barb Miller, Consortial Services Supervisor, will help lead Find More Illinois as it continues to grow and expand its service portfolio. She has a background in school libraries, which will be an additional asset to the RAILS team.



Jody Rubel, Administrative Assistant at RAILS for nine years, is our new Library Resource Specialist, and will focus on responsibilities, practices, and procedures related to the RAILS Deals & Discounts program.



RAILS at ILA Conference

In addition to staffing an exhibit booth at the October Illinois Library Association conference in Rosemont, a number of RAILS staff attended conference programs as well, including programs on First Amendment challenges, advocacy for libraries, patron privacy protections, hybrid programming after COVID, programming for and about diverse communities, using TikTok to engage with library users, what to do when library staff form a union, and open educational resources (OER) in libraries. Staff also met with vendors and attended networking events.

RAILS at AISLE Conference

In addition to staffing our exhibit booth at the November Association of Illinois School Library Educators Conference, RAILS staff attended sessions on a variety of topics, including school library book challenges, working effectively with school administration, solo librarianship, and advocacy. RAILS Staff Grant Halter and Janette Derucki and IHLS staff Leah Gregory presented “By the Numbers: School Library Advocacy through Data” in a Jeopardy style format. RAILS Executive Director Deirdre Brennan received a Certificate of Recognition for her outstanding leadership contributions to the library profession.

RAILS at Charleston Conference

Leila Heath, Director of Library Resources & Programs, attended the Charleston Conference in Charleston, SC November 1-4. This conference focuses on collection development issues, vendor product development, and academic library issues. She met with several other consortia purchasing managers, including managers from the Greater Western Library Alliance, Midwest Collaborative for Library Services, and the Florida Virtual Campus. She also met with staff from ConsortiaManager to discuss progress and issues related to the platform and group purchasing.

RAILS Service Center News

Capital Needs Assessment for Burr Ridge Service Center

Building Technology Consultants, Inc. will conduct a capital needs assessment of the RAILS Burr Ridge service center. It will include a background review, field assessment, preliminary financial analysis indicating present and future values for capital expenditure over the next 20 years, and a preliminary summary with recommendations for rehabilitation and maintenance. The timing for the assessment is still being arranged.