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Executive Director Report, July 2023

Provides leadership in ensuring sustainable, equitable resource sharing

RAILS at American Library Association Conference in Chicago

We were thrilled to get to engage with so many RAILS members at the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, June 23 – 26. Thanks to the many RAILS staff and Board members who manned the booth and engaged with our many visitors. This is always a great opportunity to hear directly from members in an informal setting, and we heard many compliments about RAILS staff as well as pointed conversations about what they are thinking about in Illinois libraries today.

The Opening Session was especially exciting with an address from Chicago Public Library Commissioner Chris Brown, then ILA President Heather Jagman, and Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias. Secretary Giannoulias spoke about his work on the HB2789 legislation and the announcement of their new website, banbookbans.com. FCC Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel also announced proposed changes to the E-Rate program that would allow for the purchase of wifi hotspots under the program.

I completed my last Annual conference as a Councilor at Large on ALA Council, and I'm grateful for the experience of engaging in governance at ALA. For more of an overview of Council activities, be sure to check out the report to ILA from Paul Mills, ILA Chapter Councilor.

We counted 15 sessions presented by RAILS member libraries at the Annual conference. Kudos to those that are showing off their experience and innovation for a national audience!

June RAILS Member Library Visits

RAILS Engagement Manager Dan Bostrom visited seven of our member libraries in June:

Organization	Type
Exelon	Special
Eureka Public Library District	Public
Methodist College	Academic
Lewistown Carnegie Public Library District	Public
Dunlap Public Library District	Public
Kishwaukee College	Academic
Elgin Community College	Academic

RAILS Minute

The most recent RAILS Minute focused on several current topics, including the selection of a new Associate Executive Director and retirement of Marketing and Communications Director, Mary Witt. They also discuss highlights from ALA Annual and the Secretary of State's new website, banbookbans.com. Thanks to Digital Marketing and Communications Specialist Ola Gronski and Member Engagement Manager Dan Bostrom for all their continued work on this offering.

Find More Illinois

Our newest additions to Find More Illinois are the Marseilles Public Library and the Schaumburg Township District Library. As of the most recent catalog updates provided by participating libraries, the number of items available through Find More Illinois is now 2.3 million.

At the end of June, the Find More Illinois team presented a webinar hosted by CARLI and attended by staff at academic libraries. RAILS staff provided a demonstration of how FMI can be integrated into their ILL workflows, and CARLI staff expressed their enthusiasm for providing the necessary technical support for any of their I-Share members that wish to join. We will continue our collaboration with CARLI to facilitate academic libraries' participation in Find More Illinois.

Deals & Discounts Webinars/Demos

In June, Jody Rubel organized and hosted a webinar for Infobase Streaming Video Streaming resources. Eight libraries registered for the event. A link to the recorded webinar is available on the RAILS Deals & Discounts page.

Career Online High School (COHS)

Career Online High School is an 18-credit, vocation-based high school completion program. The following table provides the latest information on the use of the program as of June 30.

Scholarships Awarded	Total Graduates	Current Number of Students in Program	RAILS Graduation Rate/National Rate
394	169	112	60%/53%

Explore More Illinois Update

Explore More Illinois is RAILS' statewide online cultural and recreational pass program. As of June 30, 425 Illinois libraries participate: 333 RAILS public libraries and three community colleges, 88 Illinois Heartland Library System public libraries and Chicago Public Library. There are 74 attractions.

In June 2023, 2,710 reservations were made in Explore More Illinois. The large increase was due to Chicago Public Library joining on June 5. The most popular attractions in June in Chicago were the Field Museum in Chicago (400), Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago (387), Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum in Chicago (309), the Chicago Children's Museum (287), and the Chicago History Museum (64). The most popular downstate and suburban attractions in June were Brookfield Zoo (500), the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe (200), the Peoria Riverfront Museum (127), the DuPage Children's Museum in Naperville (38), and Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford (35).

Bronzeville Children's Museum in Chicago was added as a new attraction in June.

On June 5, Chicago Public Library joined Explore More Illinois. The launch date went smoothly, with no technical issues. CPL is continuing to work with their staff and patrons to communicate the benefits of Explore More Illinois and how it will help create and more equitable and sustainable museum pass program for the library.

eRead Illinois Update

The eRead Illinois Axis 360 renewal period concluded at the end of June. Karen Goyer and Anna Behm did one last follow up with libraries that have not renewed, most of which are schools. As of July 11, 905 libraries have renewed their eRead Illinois subscription, including 585 school libraries. Libraries that have cancelled or not renewed their subscription will have their Axis 360 sites disabled by the end of July.

Baker & Taylor announced that they will be sunsetting the Axis 360 app and transitioning users to the new Boundless app later this year. eRead Illinois libraries will make the switch to Boundless on September 26.

Anna Behm and Leila Heath met with staff from PrairieCat, SWAN, CCS, RSA, and Pinnacle to discuss the transition from Axis 360 to Boundless. Anna set up additional meetings with consortia staff and the team from Baker & Taylor to discuss the technical specifics of the transition.

Use of RAILS E-Resources
eRead Illinois Axis 360 Checkouts

Time Period	E-Books	Audiobooks	Total
June 2023	14,644	14,986	29,630
FY 2023 (July 2022 – June 2023)	246,985	192,594	439,579

Inkie.org Library Views

Time Period	Number of Views
June 2023	2,256
FY 2023	20,705

RAILS Social Media Engagement
See the report at the end for info on our May social media engagement efforts.

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

New Volunteers for RAILS Board Committees
RAILS put out a call for volunteers for open spots on our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI), Resource Sharing, and Universal Service committees for FY2024. Volunteers from all sizes and types of libraries, as well as all organizational levels were sought, as well as an ongoing commitment to reflecting the diversity of the RAILS membership in terms of race, ethnicity, age, geographic location, background, and other factors. More than 60 submissions for these open seats were received by July 14th, and we are in the process of considering these submissions. We are grateful for such an engaged membership that is eager to volunteer their time to the work of these RAILS Board committees.

Assist member libraries in preparing for the future

Illinois Public Media Roundtable in Rock Island
I had the opportunity to attend a media roundtable organized by Illinois Public Media in Rock Island on June 28th. The event was organized to get a snapshot of life in the Quad Cities and an understanding of what some of the most important issues facing Quad Citizens are today. Rock Island Public Library Director Angela Campbell, who also attended, did a great job sharing the realities of a public library in the area, and what types of issues deserve additional media coverage. I want to offer my thanks to PrairieCat Director Carolyn Coulter and East Moline Public Library Director Laura Long, who were both very helpful to my understanding of specific regional issues faced by area libraries as I headed into this important discussion.

Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency Talking Points

As a result of requests by RAILS member libraries, we compiled and released a series of talking points for libraries that may be helpful as they create their Decennial Committees on Local Government Efficiency. These talking points provide general information about the benefits of different RAILS programs/services, followed by a statement that libraries can fill in with their library name and information on their participation in those programs/services. These talking points, as well as additional information on the Act, are available in the [Policy & Human Resources Guidance for Libraries section](#) of the RAILS website, including an FAQ and a sample library report template, both prepared by the Ancel Glink law firm.

Data in Libraries Discussion

RAILS Data Analysis Manager Grant Halter, Data Research Specialist Janette Derucki, Administrative Assistant Mary Kate Murray, and myself met on July 18 with staff from RAILS member libraries who were interested in discussing the ways they could be better supported by data collection and aggregation tools by RAILS. The discussion, which stemmed from ideas following Northbrook Public Library's Telling Your Library's Story with Data program (in part funded by a RAILS CE grant), was a great opportunity to reimagine what else RAILS could do to support libraries more directly with existing data sets, and how they could be used to create valuable comparison tools for similar libraries. The data team is working on some potential technical innovations that could be developed (likely in the 2nd half of 2023) to speak to some of these needs.

Upcoming Continuing Education Events: July 26 – August 7

Best Children's Literature of 2023 (Webinar)

Wednesday, Jul 26, 2023 | 10:00 am - 11:30 am

https://librarylearning.org/event/2023-07-26/best-childrens-literature-2023

Libraries in the Age of AI: A Primer (Webinar)

Thursday, Jul 27, 2023 | 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

https://librarylearning.org/event/2023-07-27/libraries-age-ai-primer

Manga and Graphic Novels: Essentials and Best Practices (Webinar)

Tuesday, Aug 01, 2023 | 10:00 am - 11:00 am

https://librarylearning.org/event/2023-08-01/manga-and-graphic-novels-essentials-and-best-practices

Intro to Census Business Builder (Webinar)

Wednesday, Aug 02, 2023 | 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

https://librarylearning.org/event/2023-08-02/intro-census-business-builder

Grant Writing 101: Bringing Money to your Library In-person @Galesburg Public Library

Monday, Aug 07, 2023 | 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

https://librarylearning.org/event/2023-08-07/grant-writing-101-bringing-money-your-library

Leads alongside member libraries to develop and strengthen Illinois library community

July Meeting with AISLE, CPS, IHLS, ILA, and ISL
RAILS has monthly meetings 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) to discuss ways we can work collaboratively to support school libraries. Also attending this month was a representative from ISBE.

July meeting topics included an update on RAILS' school library data project, materials challenges and developments with the formation of a Regional Response Team, an update on Illinois legislation, world language cataloging for schools, and the September 20 Illinois School Library Workers Symposium. The next meeting of the group is August 8 at 4 p.m.

Regional Response Team
With censorship efforts surging at unprecedented levels across the country, staff and committee members from ILA, AISLE, IHLS, and RAILS are working to create a network of regional response teams to support libraries and their staff. These volunteer-led teams will be available as a resource for libraries experiencing a challenge to library materials and may provide support in a variety of ways: letter writing to a governing body; attending board meetings; connecting with a library staff member experiencing a materials challenge for advice, consultation and/or moral support; or researching and providing specific information/resources around a particular challenged book or resource. We will be recruiting volunteers from across Illinois over the summer months, with the hopes of launching this service later in 2023. RAILS staff members Joe Filapek and Janette Derucki are part of the planning team for this statewide initiative. The volunteer form can be found here.

SLA Illinois Tour at the Lenhardt Library at the Chicago Botanic Garden
On Wednesday, June 7, SLA Illinois held a tour of the Lenhardt Library at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Twelve people attended the event live. The event was hosted by SLA Illinois member Leora Siegel. The tour included a viewing of the rare book room. Attendees were also given the opportunity to stick around and explore the gardens.

Registration Opens for 2023 SLA Midwest Symposium
Registration is now open for the 2023 SLA Midwest Symposium. Take part in an exciting annual virtual event featuring colleagues from around the Midwest. This year's theme is Unusual Librarianship and topics will relate to special librarianship. The symposium will occur on August 11. It is completely online. This event is being co-hosted by the following SLA communities: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas-Western Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota, and St. Louis Metro.

Planning Continues for Illinois School Library Workers Symposium
Representatives from organizations serving Illinois libraries have been working hard to plan a new event for school library workers. The Illinois School Library Workers Symposium (ISLWS) will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023. This event is designed for individuals who are working in school libraries with no formal library education, certified or non-certified, paraprofessionals, and those considering getting a school library endorsement. Applications are currently open for this event. The deadline to apply is August 30, 2023.

This one-day online training event is being co-hosted by:

- Association of Illinois School Library Educators (AISLE)
- Illinois Library Association (ILA)
- Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS)
- Illinois State Library (ISL)
- Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS)

RAILS and IHLS recently concluded a promotion campaign to reach Regional Offices of Education (ROEs), superintendents, and principals to offer them more information about the event. RAILS sent over 500 letters and over 4,500 emails. Thank you to all of the volunteers who have helped out with this project!

RAILS Staff & Service Center News

Joe Filapek is Promoted to Associate Executive Director

After a long search, we have a new Associate Executive Director at RAILS. Joe Filapek, currently the Director of Consulting and Continuing Education will begin as the Associate Executive Director on July 25.

Filapek first joined RAILS in 2013 as the Consulting and Continuing Education Manager, developing and facilitating training and consulting support for RAILS member libraries to strengthen their ability to best serve their communities. Before his arrival, continuing education and consulting was not offered as a system service to members.

Prior to joining RAILS, Filapek received his MLIS from Dominican University in 2009 and worked in various library roles in Illinois public libraries, including Circulation Manager for Warrenville Public Library and Head of Adult Services at Naperville Public Library. He received the 2022 ILA Trustee of the Year Award for his work as President of the Board of Trustees at Aurora Public Library District, and stills serves in that position.

I'm thrilled to have Joe in this new role and I know he will continue to do terrific work for RAILS and Illinois libraries. Filapek's promotion to Associate Executive Director leaves the position of Director of Consulting and Continuing Education vacant, which will be filled in the next several months.

Updates from IT

RAILS finished its public bid process and ordered new videoconferencing units. These will replace the 10 year old Polycom units at the RAILS service centers, and we anticipate an improved experience particularly with microphones.

After two years of active development and testing, RAILS IT has completed a mobile app for delivery drivers to track routes, item counts, incidents, and other critical delivery functions using iPads rather than paper binders, with the data collected and made easily available to assist in reporting and assessing operations. Kudos to Wayne Dixon for his excellent work in bringing this project to life, and to the Delivery Service Managers and other Delivery staff for their essential input.

Networking List Migration

On July 9, all email lists that RAILS hosts for member networking groups, consortia, and library associations were migrated from our old email list platform to our ListServ installation. We currently host 35 of these email lists, including lists for AISLE and IACRL. With the additional move of several lists used by RAILS for specific services and projects on July 10, all RAILS-hosted email lists that haven't been discontinued have been migrated to ListServ.

Consortia Manager

Jody Rubel and Leila Heath continue to update content/data in Consortia Manager and set up renewals for FY2024. Several high-participation renewals were finalized, including EBSCO, PressReader, and RDA Toolkit, as well as eRead Illinois. On June 20, Leila Heath and Jody Rubel attended the Consortia Manager user group meeting to learn more about recent software development and prioritization plans.

Looking Ahead to August

- **August Board Development topic – RAILS Delivery and Facilities Director Mark Hatch will offer an overview of the RAILS Delivery program**

JUNE 2023: analytics

● **Facebook**   ● **Instagram**   ● **Twitter**   ● **LinkedIn**

followers

	May 2023	June 2023
●	2,281	2,315
●	1,258	1,269
●	1,416	1,421
●	977	998

reach

	May 2023	June 2023
●	8,332	7,754
●	1,867	1,941
●	N/A	N/A
●	N/A	N/A

impressions

	May 2023	June 2023
●	N/A	N/A
●	7,380	6,961
●	7,062	8,646
●	1,801	3,666

engagement

	May 2023	June 2023
●	2,060	2,585
●	394	530
●	N/A	N/A
●	57	193

JUNE 2023: top posts

railslibraries

1/6

View insights   Boost post

Liked by **jolietpubliclibrary** and **134 others**
railslibraries RAILS Executive Director Monica Harris had the privilege of witnessing Governor JB Pritzker sign House Bill 2789 into law early this afternoon!

Instagram

RAILS
Published by Ola Gronski · 27 June at 12:01 · 🌐

That's a wrap on #ALAAC23! ✨

Thank you to all of the RAILS staff and board members who ran our booth, and all of the library workers that stopped by to bling their badges and learn more about what we do.

+6

Facebook

RAILS Libraries @RAILSLibraries · Jun 23
ALA Annual, we're ready for you! #ALAAC23

Stop by our exhibit booth at #3414. We have a badge bling table and staff on hand to answer any questions about our services.

⭐ Plus: RAILS members can show us their badges to receive a limited edition RAILS swag item!

Twitter

Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS)
998 followers
3w · 🌐

RAILS Executive Director Monica Harris had the privilege of witnessing Governor JB Pritzker sign House Bill 2789 into law early this afternoon! 🎉
...see more

+1

LinkedIn

Consortial Reports

CARLI/I-Share

No report.

Cooperative Computer Services (CCS)

Office Move

CCS has relocated to 100 Tri-State International. Governing Board will be held in-person at the new location in August 2023. Library staff committee meetings will alternate between in-person and virtual based on each group's preference.

Warren-Newport

CCS is onboarding Warren-Newport Public Library (WNPL). We are currently training library staff and engaged in data testing. WNPL will go live over Labor Day weekend.

Innovative Updates

Polaris Server Migration

Innovative required that CCS Polaris servers be migrated to a new environment. Several issues seemed to result from the server migration, which have been mitigated.

Notices

CCS will likely be moving to MessageBee in the next month, pending Executive Committee approval. Innovative has no immediate plans to resolve text messaging delivery.

Google Analytics 4

CCS is working with members to update Google Analytics in PowerPAC to GA4.

Documentation Refresh

Member Services staff are refreshing Polaris documentation.

2024 Goals

CCS staff engaged in a multi-step ideation process to set goals for 2023-2024. Long Range Planning has recommended the following to Governing Board:

- Replace outdated text messaging service
- Formalize succession planning for CCS staff
- New member addition
- Consider consortium-wide Find More Illinois membership
- Continue Vega Discover Development Partner Program
- Expose Polaris policies and optimize updates
- Analyze patron use of online catalog

- Move to ACH and Integrated Payables
- Virtualize CCS Domain Controller

Recent CCS Staff Presentations

- *PowerPAC Adjustments: Easy Changes, Big Results* - IUG Presentation co-authored by M.Landers, Matt Hammermeister (Pinnacle) and Debra Wischmeyer (May 12)

- *Conquer Your ILS Upgrade* - IUG Presentation, M. Landers (May 13)

- R. Fischer presented on Homosaurus for the Critical Approaches to Libraries Conference 2023 (May 25)

- R. Fischer presented at a WILIUG session called "You want me to look where for what?" This was a session on training manuals. The other presenters included Katie DuClos and Christina Theobold. (June 2)

Pinnacle Library Cooperative

Our Member Services Librarian, Julie Perenchio, has resigned to accept a position at Elmhurst University. Her position has been posted.

On May 1, we launched MessageBee for all six libraries. This product now handles all SMS and voice notifications from the ILS for all members. Email notifications are still handled by the ILS, but we've been making progress with PatronPoint to send enhanced notices for three libraries.

Our auditor for the last several years, Brian Zabel & Associates, is moving away from government audits. After an RFP process, the Pinnacle Governing Board has selected Lauterbach & Amen as its new auditing firm.

Matt attended the Innovative Users Group annual conference in Phoenix in May. This was the first time this conference was back in-person since the pandemic, and despite being noticeably smaller, was still a great opportunity to connect with colleagues throughout the country. Pinnacle and CCS presented a session on customizing the catalog.

PrairieCat

PrairieCat has received notification that Winnebago Public Library's board voted to join the consortium at the fully participating level. We look forward to adding another member in the Winnebago County area. Work on this project will begin shortly after the IGA is approved by our Delegates Assembly at their July 26 meeting.

PrairieCat just launched our new, upgraded website. PrairieCat worked with Cherry Hill, a Drupal website developer and hosting service provider, to completely redesign our support site. Ongoing improvements will be made as we move forward.

Three members of PrairieCat staff attended the first Alliance for Library Impact mini conference on June 21st at the Chicago Public Library. The ALI was founded recently by library consultants Amanda Standerfer (Fast Forward Libraries) and Cindy Fesemyer (Fesemyer Consulting). Their mission statement reads: "**We bring library-support organizations together to discover the people and resources they need to best serve their member libraries.**"

As of 7/1, PrairieCat has almost completely removed our IT infrastructure from RAILS IT infrastructure. We do retain a minimal server presence in the RAILS data center, however that will be eliminated in the coming year as we move the remainder of our assets to cloud hosted solutions. PrairieCat staff are now working completely remotely, however RAILS has been generous to allow us to retain use of flex office space in both the Coal Valley and Bolingbrook buildings, and to store files and some minimal equipment at the Coal Valley location. Our office address will remain at the Coal Valley location, and we will continue to receive mail there. RAILS has also allowed us to continue to receive cataloging materials at the Bolingbrook location, for periodic pickup by our cataloging staff.

PrairieCat is offering two Zoom training sessions in July that will focus on gathering IPLAR statistical data. To gather the data, we'll use 4 PrairieCat-supplied reports (with tips to isolate your library's data) and 1 Decision Center report that you will need to run for your library. These sessions are useful for all PrairieCat public libraries, whether you're fully participating, basic online, or union list! These sessions will only cover the Sierra-specific data, not 3rd-party data such as OCLC, Overdrive, or eRead Illinois statistics.

The specific IPLAR questions that will be answered are:
16.1 through 16.5 (Registered Users)
17.1 through 17.6d (Resources Owned)
18.1 through 18.10 (Resources Used)
18.16 through 18.17 (Interlibrary Loans)

The first session on **Tuesday, July 11th at 10:30 a.m.** will be a demonstration only and will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour. This session will be recorded and made available on TalentLMS.

The second session on **Friday, July 14th at 10:30 a.m.** will be a workshop format and participants will have the opportunity to follow the steps and gather their library's statistics. This session will take approximately 1 to 1-1/2 hours. This session will not be recorded.

Resource Sharing Alliance NFP (RSA-NFP)

Kendal was out with a medical condition starting mid-May.

We welcomed Antony Deter, former Director of the Dixon Public Library, as our new Operations Manager in early June. His first days coincided with RSA staff returning to the office one day a week for team building and project work.

We upgraded our BLUEcloud Analytics system to a private server to gain control over users, and access to features only available to non-shared servers.

RRLC (Rock River Library Consortium)

We held our quarterly meeting in April. Members voted to withdraw the Center for Change library from the consortium after receiving a request from the principal. He requested the withdrawal after an influx of students to his school and needing the librarian and the space for classrooms. We also voted to remove St. Andrews Grade School after sending a certified letter to the principal requesting information on the position and whether it would be filled in the fall. The principal responded that the position would be a paid one and filled by the fall. Fellow board members searched the school's webpage to see if they had posted the position online. Finding that while other open positions were listed, no listing for

the library job was on the website. The board members believed the principal was not serious about filling the position and voted to have them withdrawn from the consortium. Titles, items, and patrons for both schools have all been removed from the database as of the end of June.

Members also voted on a new logo for the consortium. Antony Deter, Dixon Public Library Director, worked with a local company to produce the logo. There is also a change in leadership for the Dixon Public Library as Antony has resigned.

The logo was designed in several digital formats, orientations, and in the color palette selected and black & white. This makes the design workable for many applications. See design below.

Members voted to continue to offer Press Read for the public libraries and Gale databases for the Junior High through High School libraries. New this year, the consortium voted to sign a three-year contract with MyLibro for Junior/Senior high schools and public libraries. MyLibro is an all-in-one mobile solution which is customizable for each library, connects to our TLC (The Library Corporation), Overdrive, allows patrons to schedule curbside pickup, meeting rooms, connects them to events/programs via the calendar and the library's every important social media accounts. Also, allows libraries to send text messages to patrons if they have an account about current happenings at the library ex. Closures due to weather. The purchase of Press Reader, Gale databases and myLibro are the result of the funds the consortium receives from RAILS (Reaching Across Illinois Library System). Thank you!

System Wide Automated Network (SWAN)

Enhanced Notifications with MessageBee Now Live

The new service for all 100 libraries went live on June 27th with notifications managed under MessageBee, through Unique Management. SWAN staff completed the branding and design of automated email notifications for materials requested and borrowed. Library staff underwent training on the MessageBee portal to learn how to customize the notification, run usage reports, and schedule special event promotion. Each library has language preferences for English, Spanish, and Polish. The impact of the MessageBee service will be tracked using metrics on the return rate of materials as noted by libraries that have moved to enhanced notifications, such as Brooklyn Public Library.

Addison Public Library

The Addison Public Library migration project is entering the "data profiling" phase, which means the bibliographic, item, user, and checkout data will be extracted and mapped to SWAN's library services platform data structure.

Addison has a service population of 36,942 and an operating budget of $5.4 million. The library would become the 5th largest contributor to the consortium, similar to Downers Grove Public Library, and become our 101st library.

The circulation go-live is planned for November 2023.

Security Initiatives

The SWAN Information Technology and Systems Support team has security initiatives underway to harden the security on our systems and protect personally identifiable information.

Managed Detection and Response: Project Underway

While SWAN has endpoint security protection and monitoring/logging configured across our infrastructure, the number of logs generated is tremendous and our monitoring requires tuning to reduce the signal-to-noise ratio and provide relevant information. The time required to properly harden our environment far exceeds not only the staff time, but simply the knowledge of the cybersecurity world to ensure SWAN's users and data remains as secure as possible.

Arctic Wolf is a cybersecurity provider offering Managed Detection and Response (MDR) solutions. Their service provides an umbrella of protection for SWAN by means of a physical device connected at our base network level, which monitors all activity throughout our infrastructure. This is then transmitted to Arctic Wolf's Security Operations Center (SOC) where it is analyzed by their system using Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning to develop an understanding of our 'normal' behavior. Any unusual behavior is then flagged and further investigated. Once automated processing finds a confirmed anomaly, it is then sent to their 24x7 team of two security engineers for final confirmation of malicious activity. Arctic Wolf's MDR solution will provide us with this additional level of security, but also significantly reduce the staff time involved through effectively contacting information security experts.

We will begin implementing the service starting in mid-July.

CollectionHQ Secure File Transport Protocol (SFTP) Migration

We are in the process of working with CollectionHQ to secure our scheduled exports. Currently, they're transmitted via FTP. SirsiDynix has begun to offer a free upgrade of the Symphony FTP report to use Secure FTP.

Transport Layer Security: SIP2 Migration

The use of the SIP2 protocol within the library software market means any services offered by libraries or library consortium will be exposing personally identifiable information of our library cardholders. SWAN has been working to switch vendors to secure, encrypted data transport which effectively "wraps" the SIP2 protocol within a secure layer. The vendors now using secured, encrypted connections to our systems are the following:

- OverDrive
- Hoopla
- Comics Plus
- Kanopy

If other consortia are interested in TLS SIP2, please feel free to contact us for discussion on the methods SWAN is utilizing for this initiative.

Open-Source Software Success for Libraries

SWAN co-hosted an event with ByWater Solutions on June 23rd at DePaul University Loop Campus, as

part of a pre-conference for the ALA 2023 Conference in Chicago. The event registration was free and included presentations and speakers involved with library owned projects such as the Palace Project, Evergreen Open ILS, Aspen Discovery, Koha Library Software, among others. Speakers included representatives from the consortium, Colorado Library Consortium and SAILS Library Network, and libraries Cuyahoga County Public Library and Nashville Public Library, plus the non-profit Lyrasis.