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Executive Director Report, May 2025

Provides leadership in ensuring sustainable, equitable resource sharing

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Updates

Changes and developments about IMLS have continued since we last met in April. As this situation continues to change, I encourage you to visit the RAILS [IMLS Advocacy](#) Pulse page for the most up to date information we have to share.

As Greg McCormick shared at our April meeting, the Illinois State Library has received a portion of the IMLS Grants to States allotment for FY2025 (which funds FY2026). We have also received direction from the Illinois State Library to submit plans at level funding for the upcoming fiscal year (FY2026). Greg also spoke about this to the RAILS membership at May 14th's [RAILS Member Update](#).

On May 1, a federal judge [temporarily blocked](#) the Trump administration from further dismantling of the IMLS, in response to the filing by the American Library Association. You can read the [full ruling](#).

On May 2, President Trump [released an outline](#) of his fiscal year 2026 budget, which calls for the elimination of IMLS, along with other federal agencies. It is important to understand that this budget is a recommendation, and it is up to Congress to determine the funding levels for the federal government.

On May 13, a separate federal judge has now [ruled to halt](#) the dismantling of the IMLS. The judge ordered that the Administration refrain from any further action to eliminate IMLS, restore all staff, and resume the process of releasing awarded funds. This is the result of a lawsuit filed on April 4 by 21 states, including Illinois. The court ordered a status report within seven days.

RAILS has continued to communicate changes related to IMLS to RAILS members. IMLS changes were discussed on the April and May RAILS Minute and at the May RAILS Member Update. RAILS was part of a front page [Chicago Tribune](#) story on the importance of delivery programs for Illinois libraries. Several photos of the RAILS delivery staff were featured. The story was also picked up by national outlets.

We will continue to update you as things change. Thank you for your leadership and your voices about the importance of this agency and funding for libraries and museums.

Illinois Legislative Updates

The Illinois Library Association's Public Policy Committee (PPC) met in the first week of May to review bills of interest to the Illinois library community. The Illinois Library Association has updated their [bill monitoring list](#) and positions available on their website, and that is the best place to check for updates and developments. The next meeting of PPC is scheduled for June 2.

I am including for your review some bills that have now crossed over for consideration by the state legislature. These have the best chances to be passed in this legislative session:

[SB1550](#) and [HB2747](#): Amends the Illinois Library System Act. In provisions concerning State grants, provides that the grants shall include, among other things, planning and construction grants to library systems and public libraries that are members of a library system (rather than planning and construction grants to public libraries and library systems) and grants to improve or enhance security of libraries. Both bills have bipartisan support and are supported by the Illinois Library Association. Secretary Giannoulas recently sent out a message encouraging support of this bill, which you can read on [the RAILS website](#).

[HB1062](#): Amends the Illinois Century Network Act. Provides that the connection of anchor institutions to the Illinois Century Network shall be prioritized according to the type of anchor institution, starting with schools and libraries. This was identified by ILA PPC as a legislative priority for this year and the legislative proposal was submitted by RAILS' Anne Slaughter, IHLS, and Northbrook Public Library. The bill has bipartisan support and will soon be receiving its 3rd reading.

[SJR13](#): Creates the University Library & Professional Librarian Access & Transparency Task Force to examine the current state of libraries and professional librarianship on Illinois public university campuses and present a recommendation to the General Assembly to ensure that public academic libraries and the educational services provided by professional librarian faculty remains a viable and healthy benefit to Illinois students. This joint resolution passed the Senate and has crossed over to the House. It has bipartisan support and is supported by the Illinois Library Association. It has been adopted by the higher education committee.

[HB1910](#): Requires a library, during operating hours, to take reasonable steps to have (rather than to ensure that there is) at least one person present in the library who has completed training in how to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose, including the administration of an opioid antagonist. Provides that training may (rather than shall) be conducted by an organization recognized for providing such training or may be created by the library using free resources available on the Department of Public Health's website or the Department of Human Services' website (rather than may be conducted online or in person). Provides that a library and its authorized personnel are immune from liability for the administration of an opioid antagonist under the provisions, except for willful and wanton misconduct (rather than except for acts of gross recklessness or acts intended to cause harm). Specifies that a library may receive an opioid antagonist from any lawful source. Makes other changes. This bill has crossed over to the Senate and has bipartisan support. It has been placed on the calendar for a 3rd reading.

[HB42](#): Amends the Illinois Local Library Act and the Public Library District Act of 1991. Authorizes costs paid by persons residing outside of the relevant library jurisdiction to be paid quarterly or biannually if permitted by board regulations. This bill has crossed over to the Senate and is supported by the Illinois Library Association. It has been placed on the calendar for a 3rd reading.

RAILS Minute

This month's [RAILS Minute](#) focuses on changes to the IMLS, the Explore More Illinois rebrand, the RAILS Board Election, and the RAILS: Numbers That Count campaign.

Visit to Creston-Dement Public Library's Grand Opening

Thanks to Creston-Dement Public Library's Krisit Scherer for inviting me to the Grand Opening of their beautiful new library! I was so pleased to see what a cornerstone of the community this wonderful new space will be. I encourage you all to take a look at the photos on RAILS social media.

RAILS Staff In-Service Day on May 15

Thank you to the RAILS Board for your willingness to allow the RAILS Team to spend May 15 dedicated to staff learning and connection at our Annual In-Service Day at Joliet Junior College. The day was full of great connections, including trivia, a full Delivery department in-person meeting, learning about communication styles, and an afternoon full of engaging breakout sessions.

One highlight was a new video created for staff to learn about the work of all areas of RAILS. To better understand how RAILS staff work together to meet the goals of the organization, RAILS Digital Marketing & Communications Specialist Ola Gronski created a 13-minute video guide for RAILS departments. All RAILS managers were asked to write a brief script highlighting the responsibilities of their department and were filmed by Ola. The video premiered at the RAILS staff In-Service Day on Thursday, May 15 and will be used in the future onboarding of employees. We are likely to share this with the Board at the July Board Orientation meeting as well.

I hope you enjoy this photo of the RAILS team together on Thursday:



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

Cook County Board Grant for Digital Equity

Anne Slaughter (RAILS Director of Technology Services) and I presented during public comment to the Cook County Board Finance Committee meeting on May 14 to support a resolution to provide funding to RAILS for establishing a digital navigator network through libraries in suburban Cook County, via a collaboration with the Digital Equity department in the Office of the President. Huge thanks to library representatives Todd Miller of Niles-Maine District Library, Skye Lavin of Forest Park Public Library, and Christal Beyer at the Markham Public Library as well as Kyla Williams Tate, Director of Digital Equity at Cook County Government and Mauricio Jimenez, Digital Equity Coordinator at Cook County, for their considerable leadership. The resolution allows RAILS to receive \$850,000 through Cook County's Equity Fund to plan and administer a program to provide funding directly to Cook County public libraries for the implementation of digital navigator services. I am very pleased to share that the Finance Committee approved the resolution with overwhelming support. Anne Slaughter will present to the RAILS Board on this exciting grant opportunity, and other topics related to digital equity, at our June meeting. Huge thanks to Anne for her tireless dedication to this project!

IDEC Grant

You may remember that last month RAILS (along with our partners at CARLI and IHLS) submitted a grant to the Illinois Digital Equity Capacity Grant program. Unfortunately on Friday, May 9 all states received a termination letter related to federal grant funds dedicated to this project. The Illinois Office of Broadband is currently monitoring the situation and assessing all available options. More news will be shared as it is available.

Making DEI FAIR: A Conversation with Lily Zheng

I'm looking forward to facilitating an upcoming event on June 5 with Lily Zheng, author of *Reconstructing DEI* and *DEI Deconstructed*, for a conversation about how Fairness, Access, Inclusion, and Representation principles can be specifically applied to libraries. More about the event can be found [here](#).

Assists Members in Planning for the Future

RAILS Member Update on May 14

Our RAILS Member Update on May 14 included an update from the Illinois State Library, information about the Blueberry book award from Evanston Public Library, the Explore More Illinois rebranding, and a preview of the Libraries Count: RAILS Date Conference. You can view the recording [here](#).

Leads alongside member libraries to develop and strengthen Illinois library community

ICOLC in Chicago May 4 - 7

RAILS partnered with CARLI, ATLA, and IHLS to sponsor the upcoming International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) meeting in Chicago on May 4 – 7. RAILS Delivery and Facilities Director Mark Hatch and Associate Executive Director Joe Filapek hosted a breakout on physical materials delivery, and I cohosted a breakout for Executive Directors with SWAN Executive Director Aaron Skog. The conference was well attended and organized and the RAILS team took home a lot of valuable ideas and connections with library consortia staff.

ILA Statement on the Dismissal of the Librarian of Congress

On May 12, the Illinois Library Association released a [statement](#) on the termination of Dr. Carla Hayden as the Librarian of Congress. Dr. Hayden's career began at the Chicago Public Library where she worked as a children's librarian, and later as deputy commissioner and chief librarian. She was also honored as an Illinois Library Luminary in 2017.

Looking Ahead to June

- **June Service of the Month and Board Development Topics: A Digital Equity update from Anne Slaughter and a presentation on Engaging Potential Trustees**



This Month at RAILS – May 2025

THE TOP THREE

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

New Explore More Illinois Logo Launched

RAILS is excited to announce the rebranding of Explore More Illinois! The updated look includes a new logo, brand colors, and vibrant new marketing materials that reflect the curiosity and convenience of Explore More Illinois. More than 700 public libraries in Illinois currently participate in this program, giving their patrons access to around 80 attractions. Participating libraries received new promotional materials via RAILS Delivery including a poster, bookmarks, and a window cling.



RAILS Participates in Reaching Forward North

On Thursday, May 1, RAILS participated in the Reaching Forward North conference in Rosemont, IL. Over 560 people visited the RAILS booth. This year, the booth included an activity for attendees to talk about one thing that they love about their library. RAILS received over 170 responses! [See what they wrote.](#) Congratulations to Vanessa Gomez from the Schaumburg Township District Library who won the \$50 Bookshop.org gift certificate.



RAILS Catalyst Pilot

On Friday, May 2, RAILS ran a pilot session to give a sneak peek of the RAILS Catalyst program, the leadership training initiative launching this fall. 13 staff from member libraries of different types, with a mix of roles and leadership experience, joined a coaching session with leadership expert Becky Thalmann. The session focused on self-leadership and exploring personal leadership styles. Their feedback is helping fine-tune the program before the fall launch.

Provides leadership in ensuring sustainable, equitable resource sharing

Enhance sharing of knowledge and best practices

April RAILS Site Visits

RAILS Member Engagement Specialist Jessica Silva conducted nine visits at member libraries in April. She visited:

- Brimfield Public Library, Brimfield, IL
- Caterpillar, Inc., Chillicothe, IL
- Center for Research Libraries, Chicago, IL
- Columbia Central Middle School, Steger, IL
- Dunlap Public Library, Dunlap, IL
- Lake Park East High School, Roselle, IL (pictured, right)
- Lake Park West High School, Roselle, IL
- Sherrard High School, Sherrard, IL
- Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library, Steger, IL



To learn more about these visits, see our site visit map, or to request a visit, please visit the [RAILS Library Site Visits page](#).

Jessica Silva Delivers Presentations at Four Libraries

In April 2025, Jessica Silva delivered presentations at four different libraries. Those include:

- Indian Prairie School District, Naperville, IL – 30 school librarians
- Libertyville School District – Libertyville, IL – 10 school librarians
- Messenger Public Library, North Aurora, IL – 15 library staff members
- Walt Disney Middle School, Chicago, IL – 20 Chicago Public School librarians

These presentations covered RAILS benefits and services.

RAILS Hosts Academic & School Library Mixer

On Thursday, April 24, Jessica Silva hosted a virtual mixer for academic and school library staff. This was attended by 13 library staff members from around Illinois. The discussion included ideas for collaboration, dual credit research lessons, and database usage.

New Products Added to RAILS Store

RAILS Digital Marketing & Communications Specialist Ola Gronski added a new “Libraries, Literacy, & Justice for All” design in the [RAILS online store](#). Posters and baseball caps are also now available in all designs.

Can't Shelve This: “E is for Everyone”

Every student deserves to be seen in their school library. Co-hosts RAILS Data Analyst Janette Derucki and IHLS School Library Membership Coordinator Leah Gregory are joined by “A,” local school librarian, and Jessica Silva

to discuss how to create welcoming and inclusive school libraries. Together, they share strategies for supporting EDIA in the changing educational landscape.

2025 Board Candidate Videos Completed

All 16 candidates completed their filming with Ola Gronski for the 2025 RAILS Board election. Each candidate touches on their qualifications, motivation for running, and vision for RAILS. The videos are available to view on the RAILS 2025 Board Candidate YouTube playlist, as well as each candidate's profile on the RAILS website.

Special Grants Submitted to ISL

RAILS staff submitted applications for special grants to the Illinois State Library for FY26. These grants support the World Language Cataloging program and the ongoing development and maintenance of L2.

RAILS Social Media Engagement

See the report at the end for info on our April social media engagement efforts.

Leverage economies of scale to provide greater purchasing power

RAILS members can find information, trial access and pricing on all deals and discounts by logging into the [RAILS Deals & Discounts page](#).

***Chicago Tribune* Pilot Project Update**

Results have been compiled from an initial feedback survey assessing the *Chicago Tribune* digital access pilot and a second feedback survey was issued assessing library users' experience with the resource. Feedback has been positive, with a 9.2/10 rating for rollout and tech support responsiveness, and an 8.4/10 rating for staff and users' ability to access the resource. There are 44+ libraries interested in adopting *Chicago Tribune* digital once the pilot period is over. Tentative timeline for opening general enrollment or subscription opportunities is July 1 or after. RAILS will continue to share updates through the e-News and by email to those who have completed the online interest form (located on the Deals & Discounts page).

Public Web Browser Annual Registration Key Available for RAILS Libraries

As a benefit of RAILS membership, all RAILS libraries have access to Team Software Solutions' [Public Web Browser \(PWB\)](#) free of charge for in-library use only. PWB allows libraries to lock down the web browser on computers and customize workstations for specific uses (e.g., a dedicated catalog computer). The RAILS annual subscription has been renewed through June 8, 2026. The new annual registration key must be entered by June 6, 2025. Libraries can enter this number at any time - no need to wait until the 2024 key expires.

July Renewals

Renewals and signups continued in April for the July 1 deals, including the EBSCO Supplemental Resources, PressReader, and HR Source. The Deals & Discounts team also actively promoted and consulted with members about resource options available for the renewing subscriptions.

Fiero Code Renewals

Fiero Code renewal notifications were sent for existing customers with 7/1 - 10/1 renewal dates to align with RAILS group purchase. Launched Fiero Code promotion highlighting two free months of access for new RAILS subscribers. While there were 5 registered for a last-minute webinar, none attended the live event on 4/17.

Kyle Wiseman from Library Ideas is working with Luke Miller from Fiero Code to develop a recorded webinar highlighting new features in Fiero Code that can be shared with RAILS membership.

Online High School Programs

Due to the expansion of Special Project Librarian Jessica Barnes' work in the Explore More Illinois program, RAILS is happy to announce that RAILS Library Resource Specialist Maggie Thomann assumed management of the COHS/Excel program responsibilities in early May. Jessica is working with Maggie to ensure a smooth transition. RAILS appreciates Jessica's dedication to and development of the online high school programs over the past five years.

RAILS offers two online high school programs for libraries: Career Online High School (implemented Spring 2016) and Gale Excel (implemented Spring 2024). Stats for both programs are listed below:

Career Online High School Stats as of April 30, 2025

Scholarships Awarded	Total Graduates	Current Number of Students in Program	RAILS Graduation Rate/National Rate
496	259	74	62%/53%

Gale Excel Stats as of April 30, 2025

Scholarships Awarded	Total Graduates	Current Number of Students in Program	RAILS Graduation Rate/National Rate
32	12	19	92%/53%

Seek greater efficiencies, innovations, and enhancements to delivery services

Bolingbrook Lighting Issue

RAILS is currently working with the property manager for our Bolingbrook facility to address a lighting issue. Staff have determined that the lighting in our sorting area (Suite D) is inadequate and we are requesting upgraded lighting to remedy this issue. TSW Solutions will be on-site to assess the lighting and determine next steps.

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

Find More Illinois Update

On April 28, the FMI team met with LaGrange Public Library and SWAN to discuss the technical set up process for LaGrange to join FMI. On April 29, the FMI team met with LaGrange Public Library to cover local processes as part of joining FMI.

On April 29, the FMI team met with CCS, Polaris, and Auto-Graphics.



Libraries Participating in Find More Illinois as of April 30, 2025

Academic	Public	School	Special	Total
1	73	12	1	87

Find More Illinois total transactions (loans and borrows)

Time Period	Number of transactions
April 2025	1,148
Fiscal Year to Date	12,883

Find More Illinois catalog

Time Period	Number of items in shared catalog
April 2025	7,565,220

eRead Illinois & Inkie.org Update

eRead Illinois renewals and new signups continued through April. As of May 6, 277 public libraries, 28 academic libraries, 4 special libraries, and 505 school library buildings have renewed their membership in eRead Illinois.



There were 38 e-books submitted to the Indie Author Project in April. (For context, there were 4 submissions in March, 6 submissions in February, and 2 submissions in January.) The increase in submissions can be attributed to the Soon to Be Famous Illinois Author Project contest, which began accepting submissions on April 1. Contest entrants must submit their self-published e-books via the IAP submission portal on Inkie.org. These e-books will be available to read via the Indie Illinois collection in the Inkie.org Library.

eRead Illinois Boundless Checkouts

Time Period	E-Books	Audiobooks	Total
April 2025	22,363	19,698	42,061
Fiscal Year to Date	222,466	198,045	420,511

Inkie.org Library Views

Time Period	Number of Views
April 2025	2,322
Fiscal Year to Date	18,167

Explore More Illinois Update

In April 2025, 2,909 reservations were made in Explore More Illinois. The most popular downstate and suburban attractions in April 2025 were:

- Brookfield Zoo (342)
- Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe (200)
- Morton Arboretum in Lisle (140)
- Cantigny in Wheaton (85)
- DuPage Children's Museum in Naperville (84)



The most popular Chicago attractions in April 2025 were:

- Art Institute of Chicago (513)
- Griffin Museum of Science and Industry (402)
- Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum (311)
- Field Museum (213)
- Chicago Children's Museum (136)

On May 1, Explore More Illinois debuted its new logo after almost a year of planning. New printed materials were sent to all participating libraries across the three library systems, and digital files of these materials along with social media templates, logos, a coloring page and word find, will be available on the Explore More Illinois website.

In April, the Lincoln Douglas Debate Museum and Lincoln Log Cabin, both in Charleston, joined Explore More Illinois.

Libraries Enrolled in Explore More Illinois as of April 30, 2025

RAILS Libraries	IHLS Libraries	Chicago Public Library	Community Colleges	Total
352	96	1	4	453

Attractions in Explore More Illinois as of April 30, 2025

Attractions	67
Total Attractions in 2025	70

Reservations Made in Explore More Illinois in April 2025

Organization	April 2025
RAILS/IHLS	677
CPL	2,232
Total	2,909

Assist member libraries in preparing for the future

Future-focused professional development and member engagement efforts

Continuing Education Presentation at Reaching Forward North

106 people attended RAILS Continuing Education & Consulting Specialist Margae Schmidt's and Diana Rusch's presentation at the Reaching Forward North conference, "Discovering Engaging Training Opportunities for Library Staff." The presentation covered how to identify key training needs, explored a variety of training resources, and outlined strategies for implementing effective training programs.

2025 Directors University

Directors University will once again take place in Bloomington, IL in August 2025. 32 new RAILS member library directors were notified of this opportunity for foundational training in public library directorship. Applications were accepted through May 15, and accepted participants will be notified in the coming weeks.

RAILS Collaborates with IHLS and ICN on New Webinar

RAILS is collaborating with the Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS) and the Illinois Century Network (ICN) to offer [a June 3 webinar](#) for libraries that may be interested in receiving broadband access through ICN at reduced rates by participating in their upcoming procurement as an E-rate provider. Eligible libraries will receive documentation from ICN in early June to indicate their interest, but there would be no commitment required at this time.

Recent CE Events

- **"RAILS Learning Lab: Creating Accessible PDFs with Adobe Acrobat Pro"**, online meeting, April 22
RAILS Learning Labs are an informal, online space for interactive, hands-on learning and collaboration. In April, participants learned key strategies for making PDFs more accessible.
- **"Self-Censorship in School Library Collections"**, webinar, April 23
This session explored the causes and impacts of self-censorship, strategies to avoid self-censorship, and resources for support.
- **"Cataloging Graphic Novels"**, webinar, April 24
This workshop discussed various kinds of graphic novels and things to consider before cataloging, such as national cataloging standards, audience, types of libraries with these collections, and more.
- **"Civic Engagement Through a Political Scientist in Residence Series"**, Vernon Area Public Library District, May 7
Participants heard how a year-long Political Scientist in Residence project engaged patrons in the political process during the divisive 2024 election while fostering safe, respectful civic discussions.
- **"Tools for Defending Intellectual Freedom"**, webinar, May 9
Alison Macrina from Library Freedom Project (LFP) trained participants on using LFP's Intellectual Freedom Toolkit to protect libraries' core values. The session covered strategies for compelling messaging, policy development, coalition building, staff training, board engagement, and legislative advocacy.

- **“Navigating the Levy Process”,** May 16

This presentation covered key aspects of the budget and levy process. Topics include the tax cap, differences between home rule and non-home rule jurisdictions, the role of Tax Increment Financing (TIFs), and the Personal Property Replacement Tax (PPRT).

Upcoming CE Events

- **“RAILS Learning Lab: Prompt like a Pro: Getting the Most Out of AI Tools,”** online meeting, May 20
RAILS Learning Labs are an informal, online space for interactive, hands-on learning and collaboration. In this session, participants will learn how to write effective AI prompts.
- **“Identifying Resources”,** webinar, May 22
This cataloging workshop will explore characteristics of different types of formats including physical presentation, data presentation, and tips for determining treatment (is it a book? is it a serial?) when information may be conflicting.
- **“Exploring Morale in Library Workplaces,”** webinar, May 27
Kaetrena Davis Kendrick will share the causes, development, and outcomes of low-morale experiences in a variety of library workplaces as revealed in her published studies and clarified by her associated ongoing data collection projects. The 2019 ACRL Academic/Research Librarian of the Year, Kendrick will also summarize selected countermeasures to low morale experiences.
- **“Fat Liberation in Libraries,”** webinar, May 29
Explore the often-overlooked role of body size in EDIA work and discover how fat liberation promotes inclusivity for all bodies. Based on research from the forthcoming *Library Quarterly* article, "One size fits none," this session will examine the roots of anti-fatness in Anglo-American society, its connection to accessibility, and strategies for creating welcoming libraries.
- **“RAILS Learning Lab: Canva for Libraries”,** online meeting, June 3
RAILS Learning Labs are an informal, online space for interactive, hands-on learning and collaboration. In this session, participants will learn the fundamentals of Canva.
- **“Making DEI FAIR: Lily Zheng in Conversation with Monica Harris,”** webinar, June 5
Lily Zheng, Fairness, Access, Inclusion, and Representation Strategist and bestselling author of *Reconstructing DEI* and *DEI Deconstructed*, will discuss how to make diversity, equity, and inclusion resonate with skeptics, applying the FAIR Framework to defuse backlash, sustain impact, and build inclusive organizations. The event will include ample time for audience Q&A, making it a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas and gain insights tailored to libraries.
- **“HR Unfiltered: Ask Us Anything,”** online meeting, June 9
Join HR Directors Sam Daly (RAILS) and Jill Trevino (IHLS) to get direct answers on your toughest HR dilemmas in this interactive Q&A session.
- **“Assessing Your Technology Without I.T. Staff,”** webinar, June 10
Participants will learn how to troubleshoot and improve their setup Using the Toward Gigabit Libraries Toolkit. Topics include testing internet speed, assessing Wi-Fi, and creating simple network diagrams.

Leads alongside member libraries to develop and strengthen Illinois library community

Strengthen collaborative relationships with partner library organizations

May Partnership Meeting

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.

May meeting topics included:

- HB2685: Licensed School Librarian Task Force
- Unite Against Books Bans in Illinois update
- Illinois and federal library legislative update

And much more! We will continue to keep the board updated on these meetings.

L2G2 Governance Meeting

The statewide L2 Governance Group (L2G2) had its quarterly meeting on May 6. They reviewed newly created user support documentation, discussed strategies for promoting the need for library administrators to update their libraries' records and post their resource sharing policies, and recapped the priorities for FY2026 development activities that were included in the grant application.

Roundtable Discussion on IMLS

On Wednesday, May 2, Joe Filapek attended a roundtable discussion hosted by Congressman Bill Foster on the topic of IMLS funding impacts. This event was held at the Aurora Public Library and was attended by a number of public library directors in the Congressman's district, including RAILS board member Julie Milavec. In addition to sharing information on the services that RAILS provides with support of IMLS funding, participants described current trends in libraries and the variety of challenges across public libraries in Illinois.

RAILS Staff & Service Center News

Ola Gronski Presents at PrairieCat Resource Sharing Summit

RAILS Digital Marketing & Communications Specialist presented at PrairieCat's Resource Sharing Summit on Friday, April 11 at the DeKalb Public Library. Ola's presentation, "Books to Buzz: Marketing Campaign Basics," covered how to create a marketing campaign, focusing on strategy, resources, and other important things to consider.

Nincy George Participating in South Asia Funnel

RAILS Cataloging Services Manager Nincy George has begun attending meetings of the South Asia Funnel, which is part of the Library of Congress Subject Authority Cooperative Program (SACO). This is a collaborative effort of library professionals dedicated to developing a framework for proposing new South Asia-related Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) and new classification numbers for Library of Congress Classification (LCC). They also propose changes to outdated, inaccurate, and harmful South Asia-related LCSH.

Jessica Silva Participates in Open Education Summit

RAILS Member Engagement Specialist Jessica Silva participated in the Open Education Summit at Heartland Community College in Normal on Monday, April 7. This event was hosted by the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI). Discussions included how libraries and partner organizations can work together to build knowledge around open education in Illinois.

Anna Behm Delivers E-Book Presentation to CARLI Members

RAILS E-Content Specialist Anna Behm presented information to CARLI member libraries about e-book options on Monday April 28. Staff from CARLI and IHLS also participated in the presentation and discussion. Approximately 20 people attended the presentation.

RAILS Co-Facilitates ICOLC Delivery Discussion

RAILS Associate Executive Director Joe Filapek and RAILS Director of Delivery & Facilities Mark Hatch co-facilitated a delivery discussion breakout session with IHLS director Leslie Bednar during the 2025 International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) Conference in Chicago. Discussion topics included the use of outsourced courier services, parcel delivery services, and the potential impacts of IMLS funding cuts on interlibrary loan services.

RAILS IT Update

In April, the RAILS IT team finished work on a new web-based employee performance evaluation system. This platform will replace an older system of PDFs/Word documents. The team also completed an RFP for new copiers/printers. The current copiers are seven years old. This will be posted in May. There is another RFP that will be completed for new servers.

APRIL 2025

RAILS
DIGITAL MARKETING
BOARD REPORT



FOLLOWERS

total subscribers

Facebook +85

2,697

Instagram +35

1,598

LinkedIn +57

1,930

REACH

accounts shown our content

Facebook +19,727

27,818

Instagram -13877

5,489

LinkedIn +831

2,782

VIEWS

times our content was seen

Facebook +51898

78,122

Instagram -12794

12,819

LinkedIn +2205

3,835

ENGAGEMENT

reactions, comments, and shares

Facebook +2805

3,563

Instagram +477

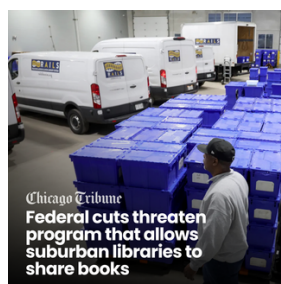
881

LinkedIn +131

256

TOP POST

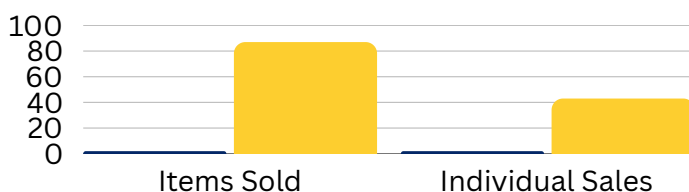
received the most engagement



RAILS Online Store

● March 2025

● April 2025



RAILS Minute Views: 1,094



Can't Shelve This Listens: 883