
Consortial Reports

October 20, 2025

Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI)

CARLI Governance Board

The CARLI Annual Meeting will be October 21, 2025, in Champaign. CARLI holds an Annual Directors Meeting on the same date.

I-Share

The Field Museum of Natural History was approved as a new I-Share participant with an implementation for a go-live date in June 2026 along with the Chicago History Museum.

CARLI has been working with RAILS staff to assist in implementing Find More Illinois for South Suburban College (both borrowing and lending). Additionally, Northern Illinois University has joined the University of Illinois Chicago as a Find More Illinois lender only.

Staff

The search for CARLI's new Senior Director is underway.

Continuing Education

CARLI continues to sponsor continuing education programs offered both to its members and to those in the Professional Development Alliance as well as other Illinois libraries.

EResources

CARLI has joined the Library Accessibility Alliance, a collaborative effort that promotes equitable access to library services and electronic resources.

Other

CARLI staff has been working with the [Education Justice Project](#) to promote their Reentry Guides. CARLI has had these titles cataloged by the Catalog Maintenance Center and is working with the EJP to have those available via their website.

There will be a webinar on November 3, 2025. [Registration is available.](#)

Program description: The Reentry Resource Program at the Education Justice Project (EJP) publishes practical guides for people returning home from prison and for those being deported from the US. These roughly [200-page guides](#), published in English and Spanish, offer empowering information and resources for individuals going through often-traumatic transitions. Lee Ragsdale will discuss the resources, how to access them, anticipated updates, and more. In addition, Lee will talk about EJP's Reentry Guide Project through which the

organization provides a year of technical and financial assistance to organizations to create their own reentry guides. Those already published through this project can be found [here](#).

CARLI is moving from RT to TeamDynamix (TDX) for its email support ticketing system. This transition will happen in February 2026.

Cooperative Computer Services (CCS)

New Staff Member: Manager of Analytics and Technology

Molly Sum started with CCS in August. She has a background in software product management and analytics and will be leading the CCS implementation of OrangeBoy's Savannah for our central team site. Molly will also be collaborating with the Executive Director and CCS staff to provide updated analytics to the Governing Board for monthly and annual reports, project analysis, and more.

She has already been in touch with colleagues at RAILS and other agencies and we appreciate the support as she adjusts to the library industry.

Savannah Implementation

Molly Sum and Bob Barth have been working with the Orange Boy team on initial implementation of Savannah. The Polaris connection is now live and collecting data. Molly has collected initial responses from members for a data inventory to inform the larger implementation plan.

Discovery Interface Selected

At their September meeting, the CCS Governing Board selected Bibliocore as our discovery interface. The contract was completed on September 30 and implementation will begin soon. Mikeo Fujiura-Landers will lead implementation for CCS and will attend BiblioCon in Ontario this month to begin building relationships with the Bibliocommons team and the customer base.

Polaris Contract Renewal

With the new discovery layer selected, CCS can now continue with contract negotiations with Innovative for our Polaris renewal. Our existing contract expires at the end of April 2026.

Vernon Area Public Library Addition

Vernon Area Public Library began circulating on Polaris in September. Post-go-live training on Simply Reports and additional data work will continue. CCS has partnered with the Cataloging Maintenance Center (CMC) for assistance with bibliographic record deduplication. Five CMC staff will be deduplicating one day per week in addition to CCS and member library staff. We anticipate this will reduce the long tail of duplicate records that persist after the automated processes are completed.

Potential New Members

In October 2025, CCS Executive Committee will vote to recommend Wauconda and Rolling Meadows libraries as new CCS members. The Governing Board will vote at their November meeting. We anticipate a positive outcome and have begun planning for their additions. CCS expects a go-live in Fall 2026.

Find More Illinois Analysis

The CCS Governing Board will discuss Find More Illinois at the November and February meetings and will decide whether to continue consortium-wide membership for FY27. Leila Heath, RAILS, will attend the November meeting to share Find More Illinois progress and strategy with the Board.

Technology Infrastructure Changes In Process

CCS will be transitioning from our physical phone server and analog phone lines for patron notices to a cloud-based service. Once the transition is complete, we will decommission that server and our dedicated fiber circuit in favor of shared business fiber for our main office. This will result in a significant cost savings that reflects our reduced need based on our remaining local server and hybrid workplace. This work should be complete by early Spring 2026.

Enhanced Notice Options Coming

CCS will begin implementation of LX Starter, an email notice service included with our Polaris subscription. These enhanced notices allow more customization to the look and feel of notices which will be more reflective of patron expectations regarding email communication. Member library staff will also be able to customize notices without CCS intervention allowing them to quickly update messaging to patrons. We will offer members opt-in windows in 2026.

Website Accessibility Audit

Website accessibility remediation will begin in November with the goal of completion by April 2026. While the CCS website is intended for library staff rather than the general public, we're committed to presenting accessible experiences to our members. As we implement BiblioCore, accessibility will be a key concern.

Annual Report and Audit

CCS staff are working on our annual report and supporting our external financial audit. Both documents should be presented to the Governing Board in November.

Pinnacle Library Cooperative

New Website

Pinnacle's new website is live! The updated site addresses many of the concerns identified during the strategic planning process, including limited awareness of available resources and difficulties accessing the staff intranet. This new interface combines the public website and the private intranet into a single, unified platform with certain pages remaining password-protected.

Polaris Upgrade

In September, we successfully upgraded to Polaris 7.8. The upgrade was performed off-hours and went very smoothly. This version focuses on transitioning System Administration and some remaining Technical Services functions onto the web. Clarivate is continuing their push to get customers away from the legacy Windows Client and onto their web-based services.

Enriched Data Provider in PowerPAC

In what now seems like very good timing, we changed our catalog's cover image source away from Baker & Taylor's ContentCafe to Syndetics Unbound. As we continue to move closer to Vega Discover, this was a change that was going to need to happen anyway, so making the switch now is one less migration task when that time comes.

PrairieCat

PrairieCat has been busy with many activities over the course of the last few months. Please see below for some highlights.

Governance

- The first draft FY2 budget was presented and reviewed by the PrairieCat Finance Committee at their September meeting.
- A new mobile app contract was approved in April. Go-live of our new Vega Mobile app was on Oct. 2 and libraries are busy downloading and testing. Some are opening the app up for patrons.
- A new succession plan for the Director was approved by the Administrative Council on 10/3. Transition planning for the staff is underway.
- An in-person staff meeting for all PrairieCat staff will be held on 10/8. Transition planning will be a central part of our discussions.
- PrairieCat met with representatives from the newly formed Wallace Township Library to discuss their needs and help with their questions regarding library service in Illinois.

Member Services and UX

- PrairieCat hosted a successful in-person PUG Day event with 260 attendees with representation from more than 60 member libraries. PrairieCat offered 28 sessions during this event and received positive feedback from event surveys.
- PrairieCat staff continued to work with the 71 participating libraries and Innovative for a successful launch of the new Vega Mobile app on 10/2. Staff provided support resources, consultation and testing, marketing materials, training guides, and 5 live training sessions to help support the implementation of the new app. Staff will continue to provide support and training for the Vega Mobile app, which allows for extensive library customizations.
- PrairieCat hosted our annual Back to School session for school member libraries. This virtual event allows school library staff to reconnect with PrairieCat at the start of the school.
- PrairieCat staff continue to actively participate in the IUG and WILIUG organizations by attending meetings and serving on committees to advocate for enhancements that will benefit the PrairieCat members.

IT/Systems

- The IT/Systems department is currently working on documenting all procedures in anticipation of starting cross-training. This is part of our ongoing transition planning process, which all PrairieCat is undertaking currently.
- We have purchased our new staff laptops and have been gathering new software required for staff before starting setup.

- We have successfully tested the automated restoration from our redundant backup system.
- We have completed the fall student and staff patron loads for several PrairieCat school members.
- Systems is currently assisting with the rollout of our Solus app.
- We have started our annual IP verification and firewall cleanup project.
- Systems resolved 119 helpdesk tickets for member libraries.
- PrairieCat resolved 990 tickets in the last quarter.

Library Services

Over the past quarter, the Library Services team has participated in a variety of key meetings, including those with PrairieCat Staff, weekly department meetings, the Training Committee, the Technical Services Committee, the Circulation Committee, and the Delegates Assembly.

Training and Presentations

- We have conducted multiple training sessions, including one-on-one sessions via Zoom. Several staff members from our member libraries have successfully completed courses and achieved Item Entry certification.
- Library site visits were conducted to support members with specific projects and to provide clarification on circulation and technical services policies.
- Several courses offered through TalentLMS have been revised to improve content and relevance.

Two Excellent Presentations were delivered at PUG Day

1. Streamlining Physical Processing and Cataloging Workflow -- **Sandy Tedder**
 2. Excel Tips for Patron and Item Data -- **Melissa Landis**
- Melissa Landis is preparing a 90-minute presentation for the ILA Pre-conference in Rosemont, Illinois.
 - Planning and development for the MARC Cataloging Course, scheduled for January, are currently underway.

Database Maintenance and Cleanups

Our team has processed numerous original cataloging requests, merged duplicate records, overlaid records, created volume entries, and linked items to their corresponding volume records. We have also managed the submission of records from various libraries through the PrairieCat bib-loading process, ensuring the accuracy and completeness of the database.

Database Standardization

We are currently evaluating Mitinet as a potential replacement for MARCive to improve our database record updates and maintain consistent standardization. Three of us are actively exploring BEST MARC, a product offered by Mitinet. We will continue to share updates on our progress.

Rock River Library Consortium (RRLC)

RRLC report from September 2025 meeting

Discussion focused on how schools manage overdue notices and unreturned library materials at the end of the school year. Practices vary:

- Some schools carry fines over from year to year.
- Others transfer fines to the business office for accounting and waive them, as they are added to student accounts at the district level.

Preparation for upgrading to version 5.8 was discussed.

Concerns were raised about catalog maintenance, including:

- Creation of multiple records for the same book copy.
- Best practices for creating on-the-fly records.
- General cataloguing standards.

RRLC will be hiring Mitinet to clean up the current catalog. Further discussion highlighted the need for a cataloguing training manual to ensure consistency across libraries and among librarians.

Resource Sharing Alliance (RSA)

Staff Independence Update

The IRS has issued RSA a new EIN. That allowed us to start moving forward again towards our goal start date of direct staff employment on 1 Jan 2026.

- We've updated LIMRiCC and started the onboarding process for our health and unemployment insurance.
- We were accepted by IMRF as full members at their last meeting in September! We can't finish the setup work until 1 Jan at the earliest.
- We've already got Mission Square set up and are ready to go there.
- We've applied with the State of IL to pay taxes for employees and for the tax-free certificate.
- We've started setting up work on Paylocity for our payroll.
- All other benefits setup work is coming along nicely.

We still await the outcome of the HR Source review of our new job descriptions and pay scale. We'll deal with, and make modifications to things as we see fit, from their suggestions when we get them.

We've procured Microsoft O365. They needed an EIN to do that. We expect to be ready to fully cutover from RAILS' O365 system at the end of December. Best to separate on our start date for FOIA requests and to help our members understand that we're no longer RAILS employees.

The RSA Board approved our new Employee Handbook. Internally, we're creating or tweaking other personnel policies with an eye on improving our focus on being a direct support organization. RSA will have at least 25% new staff starting in January. That means we must do a lot of groundwork for training and orientation purposes. We've taken this opportunity to go back and reworked all internal guidance

and standards to refocus on servicing our members. Everything from documentation, training, visits, and how and where staff work is being tweaked.

We've just advertised our Bibliographic Services Specialist and Library Systems & Data Analyst positions. In November we'll post our Business & Marketing Coordinator position. Interviews should be starting in mid to late November.

Other Updates

Starting in July, running through December 2026 we've focused our efforts on in-person library visits to each member and branch library in RSA. We expect to continue this 18-month visit cadence into the foreseeable future. The Library Services and Bibliographic Services departments are splitting the visits 50-50. Between the past year's parameter party in-person or virtual visits, and these scheduled visits, we hope to get our membership fully back on track post COVID changes, to impart knowledge on various topics, do some cleanup for our members, and to reset our relationship with our members. No visits for several years has led to some less-than-ideal trends. Mostly things that could have been easily remediated with a quick conversation about the best way to do things in the system. Also that we exist to help our members and they should call us with issues. We saw the same types of issues and trends happen in 2005 and 2010-2011 timeframes where we weren't visiting libraries.

One of our three catalogers has retired. For now, we've spread out the work to the remaining two catalogers and lowered or suspended some less critical tasks. The Bibliographic Services Specialist position will not be doing original cataloging or solo site visits. We hope to train and promote whoever we hire by the end of 2026.

Both Hamilton PL and Camp Point PL, our newest members, have had their local catalog training and are starting to add their collections in RSA. For almost all new RSA members we find it's quicker and less work to manually copy catalog their collection than to import their records. Our experience with record imports is that we get about a 30% match rate, leaving the library to track down 70% of their collection to move to an RSA record. In the meantime, their patrons experience a holds experience that is quite poor because the majority of their library's items are on temp records, not the RSA-wide record with all the items.

We recently rolled out BLUEcloud Circulation for a beta testing group of 2 public and 1 school libraries. This is the SirsiDynix online Circulation module. We're working with SirsiDynix to fix whatever issues are fixable via configuration changes and getting ready to roll out the testing to 2 or 3 smaller public libraries and 2 or 3 more schools.

System Wide Automated Network (SWAN)

Annual event SWAN Expo

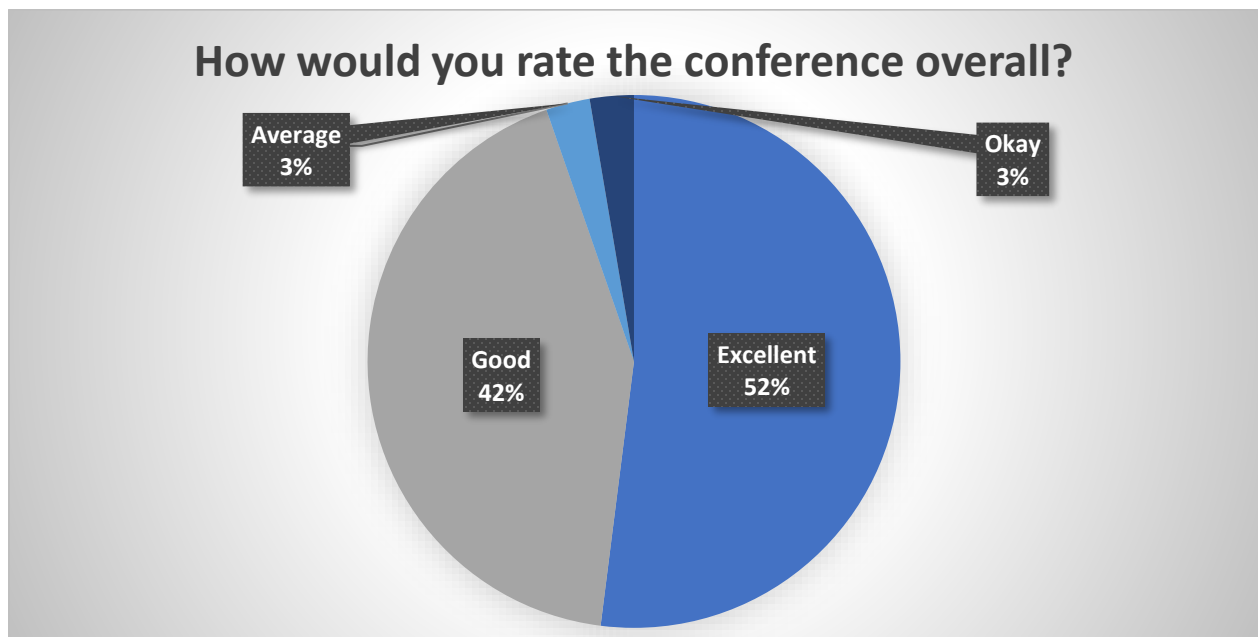
The annual event held on August 22, 2025, concluded with 18 sessions and a majority rating of “excellent.” The attendance dropped slightly from the year prior, but notably there were very few no shows.

Expo year	Attendees	Libraries
2023	213	54
2024	227	53
2025	208	54

Selected attendee feedback from the post event survey included the following comments:

“This was my first SWAN Expo. I liked networking between the sessions. I liked hearing the keynote speaker and the CPL session the most. It felt good being reminded how great is the library system we enjoy and contribute to. The conference helped me develop a deeper appreciation for SWAN.”

“I thought John’s Chrastka’s presentation was really exceptional. It was good hear from someone who was out there fighting for libraries in the climate right now. On the whole, great Expo this year. I took something valuable away from each session I attended.”



SWAN in-service day

We are conducting an in-service day on October 24, 2025 as part of the initial phase of creating SWAN's next strategic plan.

Aspen Library Software Foundation Board Seated

The Aspen community selected its first 7-member governing board. The board will oversee the application to join the Open Library Foundation, as well as the appointment of several standing and ad-hoc committees to work out its software development and communications platforms.

2026 SWAN Events now in L2

The 50 events for the upcoming year are now posted in L2 for member libraries. We tag all SWAN events in a given year with "swan2026" in L2 so that all they can be found using a [simple keyword search](#). We are also planning workshops and special events for 2026 as well.