

I had a conversation this past month with Nathaniel Mottinger, Library Director at the Burlington Twp. Library. As you may remember, some residents of Union City, Michigan, actually reside in Calhoun County, in Burlington Township. As such, they are unable to patronize the Union Twp. Branch of BDL without paying an out of district fee because their property taxes go to Burlington Twp.

In the past, this wasn't much of an issue since both BDL and Burlington participated in MichiCard, a statewide reciprocal borrowing system whereby patrons from participating libraries could visit and checkout materials from any other participating library. When MichiCard recently ended, some of our Union City patrons were left in the bind of not being able to use the library right down the street from them with out paying a fee, a library which some of them helped to build.

There is something that's a bit of a replacement to MichiCard, MILibrary Card (www.milibrarycard.org), but the participants are largely in the Detroit area. Also, with the MeLCat interlibrary loan system, there hasn't been much demand from our patrons to rejoin a system that allows for physical visits and borrowing at other libraries.

Since this particular situation is limited just to our two entities, the Burlington Director and I agreed that a simple reciprocal agreement between our two libraries would be best. I double checked with our Woodlands Cooperative Director, and was told there is no problem doing such a thing.

So we just need to decide on the details. On the phone, Mr. Mottinger agreed in principle to my suggestion that we do a simple swap; that is, people in Union township would be allowed to obtain a library card at the Burlington Township library, and people in Burlington Township would be allowed to obtain a card with BDL. We could, of course, be more focused and limit the swap to Union City residents only. Union City residents in Burlington Twp. could come to BDL, and Union City residents in Union Twp. could go to Burlington Twp. Library.

I would request that our Public Services Committee meet to decide these details, craft a draft resolution to that effect, and an accompanying agreement that both libraries could sign. I would recommend scheduling this meeting after July 5 so that Linda Lyshol can be involved.

The Burlington Township Board meets next in September, so we would have time to make a recommendation, discuss with Mr. Mottinger, vote on it, and get it to the Burlington Board before their next meeting.

Submitted by John Rucker