

Personnel

As noted elsewhere in this packet, our Quincy Branch clerk is moving out of state, opening up this position. It will be advertised publicly soon, along with advertisements for temporary positions to cover upcoming parenting leaves. We are not posting yet for the additional positions budgeted for the bookmobile, since we still have not received it and there is some internal interest.

State Aid Report

Though not as early as last year, I did get the state aid report filed before the end of December.

Sherwood Branch Contract

The village of Sherwood did discuss our new contract proposal, but they are not yet finished with it and will be discussing it again at their February Meeting.

Facilities

Bronson Twp. voted to allow weddings in the Bronson Library Building. After checking with our insurance agent, we will be able to use the existing framework and policy for this once the township procures the extra insurance needed on their end, with minimal effort on our part.

Approved and ordered last year, Bronson and Coldwater Branches finally both had their new book drops installed. Installation went smoothly and they look good (photo in Christina's report).

At the Quincy Branch, there was a loss of heat last week in the basement. Thankfully, repairs were quickly made by the township.

At the Coldwater Branch, the bathroom project is just waiting on materials to arrive so they can get started. Foulke Construction has visited a couple of times to update us and take measurements. At my request, they will also be providing us with a quote for replacing the busted up sidewalk on the northeast corner of the building and a couple of other small projects.

Two additional external security cameras were ordered to replace ones that had failed a number of years ago. We were not initially planning on replacing them, but the imminent

arrival of the bookmobile and recent difficulties with library guests outside prompted us to reconsider.

IT Department

After months of effort, 20+ years of content from the old "staff" website has been integrated into a password-protected section of the main public site. The main benefit to doing this is no longer needing to maintain and update two separate systems, something that was increasingly a time drain. This has some implications for Board access to certain documents and forms, which I will demonstrate at the meeting.

With help from Jessica and public services staff across the district, we finished our most recent purge of long-expired accounts from the Evergreen System.

Meetings Attended

Decker Insurance, Woodlands Advisory Board, Library of Michigan Directors

Submitted by John Rucker

Happy New Year! I hope everyone has an amazing year ahead, filled with exciting plans and plenty of great reading material! For the digital library users, Libby has made it easier to get access to get ebooks and audiobooks with partner libraries. Multiple partner libraries can be added to your Libby App to expand the scope of your digital checkouts and potentially reduce your wait time. You can add one partner library or all twelve! Watch [Libby how to - adding partner libraries for more digital content](#) on our YouTube channel for a quick tutorial created by Meagan Marsh.

Technical Services

End-of-year projects were completed. As part of our annual catalog cleanup, we focused on removing missing items—those that library staff can't locate on the shelves. For 2024, 200 missing items were removed from a total collection of 110,885. Another 600 lost items, which are items checked out by library users but not returned, were also removed. The larger than normal numbers for items removed from the catalog will be reflected on the December statistical report

In addition to these tasks, we're eagerly anticipating the arrival of larger shipments for the bookmobile, which are coming in slowly.

Programming

My last session of Morning Book Club wrapped up with a fantastic read, [This Tender Land by William Kent Krueger](#), which I highly recommend to anyone who enjoys historical fiction!

In 2025, I'll be launching a new book club called Books on Tap at Trainwreck Grill & Ale House. We'll meet monthly on the fourth Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. The first book for the new club will be [The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon](#). This is only one of many great [book clubs](#) that BDL is offering across the district!

Meetings and Webinars

- Kiwanians Club of Coldwater
- ALA Book Club: Ryan Dowd's The Librarian's Guide to Homelessness
- City of Coldwater and Altrusa for a second StoryWalk® in Coldwater (coming Spring 2025)

Library Marketing Conference

Meagan Marsh and I attended a 2.5-day marketing conference in St. Louis with 450 attendees from various libraries. It was a fantastic opportunity for networking and learning, and I attended the following sessions:

- Maximize Your Library Impact with Strategic Collection Promotion
- Balancing Acts: Navigating Sensitive Community Topics with Grace
- Revising Automated Emails for a Better Brand Experience
- Social Media Strategy Survivor: Outwit, Outplay, Outlast
- Beg, Borrow, Steal: Finding and Implementing Ideas for Library Outreach
- Email Essentials: Increasing Patron Engagement through Marketing
- From Brand Guides to Wayfinding and Websites: Creating Consistent Customer Experiences
- Building Buy-In: Change Management Strategies for Library Marketers

Some of the key takeaways were:

- Learned how to engage our community with the collection, reaching readers in the places where they are both looking for reading suggestions and places where they didn't even know the library could help them. Connect the library user by highlighting related materials, programs, and events based on their interests.
- LibraryAware, a service provided by Novelist, has provided [benchmark email metrics for libraries](#). These insights give us a clearer idea of the engagement we should aim for with our monthly newsletter. To improve email performance, we could implement tactics such as segmenting our mailing lists, using a double opt-in process, and making the emails more personalized.
- Effective visual merchandising and strategic displays can significantly boost circulation and patron engagement. Use both social media and in-library signage to highlight key resources.
- Since not all patrons are comfortable with digital tools, distributing printed materials—like bookmarks with library contact information—can help connect with offline communities and ensure broader engagement.

Meagan has already started applying some of the new social media strategies she learned, and we're already seeing the results. One of her recent posts, featuring [awkward family photos of library staff](#), was a huge success, receiving 220 likes, 51 comments, and 28 shares. This post is a great example of how fun, personal content can really drive engagement.

Human Resources

A new emergency alert system for staff has been successfully tested. We will be able to use our timekeeping provider, When I Work, to send text notifications to staff in the event of any emergency closures.

Submitted:

Kimberly Feltner

- At the MLA Conference I attended in October, there was a session on “Stay Interviews” that really blew me away. The concept is essentially that when you know better, you do better, and our admin team wants to continually grow in how we manage our staff. I’ll be conducting interviews with all staff members and asking questions about their happiness and feelings of job satisfaction beginning on January 13th.
- Attended the BCCN meeting, a Spring Programming meeting, and joined service club NIKA.
- Our annual Patron Purge is ramping up to begin next week!
- The One Book One County book for 2025 is *My Murder* by Katie Williams. This Michigan Notable Reads book is about Lou, a happily married mother of an adorable toddler. She’s also the victim of a local serial killer. Recently brought back to life and returned to her grieving family by a government project, she is grateful for this second chance. But as the new Lou re-adapts to her old routines, and as she bonds with other female victims, she realizes that disturbing questions remain about what exactly preceded her death and how much she can really trust those around her.

