

Personnel

As it turns out, the Quincy position is still open after all. We have conducted additional interviews this week, with more planned for next week. We had so many applications for the Quincy position that we have not reposted for the open Coldwater position but have been conducting interviews of candidates from that initial pool. Two temporary clerks have been hired for summer to cover parenting leave absences, with one more planned.

MERS Transition

It took some time to get Nationwide to respond to messages, but the transition is under way now. MERS has given us some great information packets, so we can start to have conversations with current Nationwide participants now, as well as schedule introductory visits for all staff to encourage wider participation.

Bookmobile

See Cheryl's report for more, but I will just add that Matthews Specialty Vehicles has been absolutely great: design, construction, delivery, training, and making things right when they go (only slightly!) wrong—they have been first-rate in all of these areas. Their recommendation for a FreightLiner mechanic (Stoops, in Fremont) was also an excellent resource who really knows their stuff!

I spent an hour at the Secretary of State's office getting our new title, registration, and plates. It took a little extra time since the library had not had a vehicle in so long and was not in their system. All we are waiting on at this point is our permanent license plate.

Freedom of Information Act Request

We received our semi-annual FOIA request for staff contact information from the same Florida data broker who has been doing this for several years now. The request was filled and closed.

Facilities

The sound we heard at the 2/24 meeting seems to have been a critter that entered through a hole where a board is rotten in the soffit above our air conditioning units at the Coldwater Branch. We called a wildlife control service to trap it. Our restroom contractor, Foulke Construction, has lots of experience with historical buildings at Hillsdale College and they said they'd take a look to provide an estimate. They will be out to do that on 3/17.

The upstairs restrooms at the Coldwater Branch are basically completed, and look great! Work on the downstairs bathrooms will begin on 3/17.

The tables authorized in January are expected to be delivered tomorrow, 3/14.

IT Department

The 2 new servers approved earlier finally arrived. They will have to sit on the back burner for a while as I work through other projects...

...like the bookmobile! I have been working with our Verizon rep this week to get the cell phone service and mobile data on the vehicle's onboard wifi hotspot set up. Once that is done, I will move on to getting the computer and printing ready.

I also worked with our Verizon rep to get 6 more hotspots activated. We were down that many due to loss and equipment failure. Verizon replaces these at no cost to us, which is very much appreciated!

Meetings Attended

Joining Sarah, I met with the new Quincy Twp. Supervisor, Kurt Barve. It was a really good meeting, and I am looking forward to his term in office.

Along with the director of the Hillsdale Community Library, and a representative from MLA, I met with our new State Representative, Jennifer Wortz. We talked about library services and challenges, and made sure to discuss the importance of penal fines to library budgets.

Other meetings included the Union Twp. Friends of the Library, Coldwater Area Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner, and the Library of Michigan Directors monthly meeting.

Submitted by John Rucker

MeLCat Celebrates 20 Years of Resource Sharing!

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Michigan eLibrary Catalog (MeLCat) and inter-library loan service. Over the past two decades, the service has grown from 12 member libraries to more than 435 public, school, academic and special libraries. MeLCat has amassed holdings of over 34 million items.

Branch District Library has been a proud member of MeLCat since 2007. The goal of the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) is to provide equitable access to a comprehensive array of high-quality information resources for Michigan residents. Using MeLCat as a discovery tool fosters collaboration among libraries and other organizations to enhance knowledge-sharing and ensure resources, including special, unique or historical materials, are available to all, regardless of geographic or economic barriers.

MeL and MeLCat receive support from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the State of Michigan through the Library of Michigan. The State of Michigan provides additional funding.

Hoopla Digital Library

For several years, the Woodlands Library Cooperative helped supplement BDL's annual funding for the highly popular Hoopla digital library service. However, in November of last year, the cooperative decided to discontinue its financial support. This change led to some challenges for our patrons in 2025, as the daily borrowing limit was being reached much earlier in the day. Patrons were calling the library regularly asking why their Hoopla wasn't working.

Thankfully, the 2025 budget included additional funds for Hoopla to purchase digital flex titles. Instead of using this money for new flex materials, it was allocated to increase the monthly budget slightly,, giving our patrons more time and opportunity to borrow materials. Hoopla remains popular service for our digital users.

Marketing

Summer Reading planning is in full swing! Meagan has been busy creating flyers, social media posts, and calendars to help spread the word about our biggest event of the year!

New library cards have arrived including a nature-themed design and a special bookmobile card. The bookmobile card will be at all locations to promote our newest branch, though it won't be available



just yet. Stay tuned for the card's release when the bookmobile hits the road!

Human Resources

The enrollment for Colonial Life is complete. One staff member canceled their benefits and another signed up. Currently, we are working on setting up and transferring staff to the new retirement system with MERS. Additionally, we interviewed and onboarded a new temporary staff member who will be assisting with library operations throughout the summer. Other interviews were conducted for the open position in Quincy.

Meetings/Trainings/Webinars

- Kiwanians Club of Coldwater

Submitted:

Kimberly Feltner