

Personnel

Anissa Stevens will be joining us as the last of the temporary summer workers. We are excited to have her helping to cover marketing duties during Meagan's leave time.

Friends of the Library

The Annual Combined Friends meeting was hosted on April 22 by the Union Twp. Friends of the Library. The event was well attended, with about 20 people there representing all district Friends groups except for Coldwater, who did send a written report. It was a lovely evening of sharing, along with some fun games and prizes for those in attendance. We also brought the bookmobile to the event and gave those present a preview.

In other Friends news, Bronson Friends of the library learned that their longtime fundraising partner of Terri Lynn Nuts will be closing this month. You can still support the Bronson Friends by placing an order on the online store at <http://bronsonfriends.terrilynn.com> until May 23.

MLA Advocacy Day

A few days before our actual launch, we had a soft launch at MLA's Advocacy Day. BDL joined a long line of about a dozen bookmobiles to park in front of the State Capitol to raise awareness of all the good going on in our libraries. For our part, this was also an excellent time to talk with a bunch of library professionals operating bookmobiles and learn from them. Over 200 people visited our vehicle, including a representative from State Senator Lindsey's office.



One of MLA's goals for the day was to secure more funding for MeLCat in the upcoming state budget, but there didn't seem to be much reception for this. Indeed, in a recent budget draft, while State Aid to libraries has gone up by a small amount, direct funding to the library of Michigan was actually lowered for the next fiscal year.

Facilities

BDL was closed to the public on April 28 for our annual spring cleanup in-service day. We started the day all got together for a brief meet-up with our new MERS representatives for an education session on participating in retirement savings. Then we took a moment to celebrate our three colleagues who are about to welcome their new bundles of joy.

After that, we split up to do a number of projects, with some Coldwater/District staff traveling to branches to aid their efforts. Some highlights include:

- program supply prep and maintenance on Playaways and VOXBooks at Bronson
- shelf reading and organizing the collection at Quincy
- weeding and organizing the cupboards at Sherwood
- dusting all the lights and shelves as well as going through the cupboards and storage at Union Twp.
- and many, many jobs at the Coldwater branch in and out, including a Herculean task by Christina to organize and clean the Library of Things storage room
- I helped Curtis organized IT supplies and the server room

At the Coldwater Branch, the barriers approved in January for the front porch and east entrance were installed and look great (pictures in Christina's report). Foulke Construction said it will be a while yet before they can do the sidewalk repair the Board approved,

At the Union Twp. Branch, with the permission of the Township, Curtis and I installed a door to the manager's office to provide some privacy for upcoming maternity needs.

IMLS News

On April 24, I attended a special meeting for directors with the Library of Michigan about the ongoing events with funding from IMLS and the prospect of IMLS being cut entirely. At this point, it does look like IMLS will be providing some funding, just not the full, expected amount. Library of Michigan staff believe that they can fully fund the interlibrary loan portion of MeLCat, but that the MeL databases might have to be dramatically cut. If so, this would be a great hit, not just to libraries, but to schools and Michigan residents who heavily use the databases. Current services are funded through the end of the State's fiscal year, so no changes are expected until October 1.

The State of Michigan is participating in a lawsuit over the cuts to IMLS, and [a federal judge has issued a preliminary injunction blocking the cuts](#). This is an ongoing situation, and I'm sure there will be more to report in the future!

IT Department

I had a walkthrough of the Sherwood Branch with site engineers from Frontier for our upcoming fiber optic installation there. Some work will be required by us so that Frontier can bring the connection into the building. We received permission from the Village Board and have secured Ludwick Electric to do this work. Frontier's installation should be by mid July.

Evergreen Conference

I attended this year's Evergreen conference May 12-14 to learn about the latest for our library circulation software. This year the conference was online, and attended by several hundred people. I attended sessions on making the best use of automated notices, data reporting, batch processing options, better utilizing custom data fields on both patron and item records, new patron-facing front end options, kid's catalog, what's new in the latest Evergreen versions, new support for 3rd party vendors, cataloging foreign-language titles, supporting the latest cataloging standards, The Evergreen Project strategic plan update, and more. It was a GREAT conference and my brain is overflowing with great new Evergreen information. Now to just find time to implement my inspiration!

Meetings Attended

Sherwood Village, Quincy Twp., Decker Insurance

Submitted by John Rucker

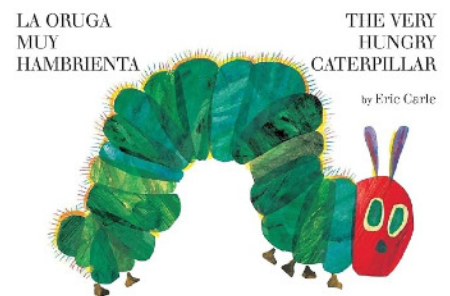
StoryWalk Ribbon-Cutting

I am thrilled to announce the ribbon-cutting ceremony for our new StoryWalk installation, set for Tuesday, May 21 at 10:00 AM at Waterworks Park. This exciting project would not have been possible without the generous financial support of Altrusa International of Branch County. Their unwavering commitment to literacy and community enrichment has made this initiative a reality, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions.

A special thanks also goes to the Coldwater Board of Public Utilities, who maintains Waterworks Park. Their swift action in helping us install the StoryWalk in record time has been invaluable.

The first featured book will be *The Very Hungry Caterpillar/La Oruga Muy Hambrienta* by Eric Carle, presented in both English and Spanish to ensure accessibility and engagement for our diverse community.

Board members and the public are warmly invited to attend and help celebrate this milestone for early literacy and our community.



Marketing

Planning and promotion for the 2025 Summer Reading Program is nearing completion. With early deadlines in place, our team will begin transitioning to Fall marketing development in July.

The marketing team, working closely with branch managers, is actively distributing flyers and coloring contest sheets to schools, daycares, and local businesses to raise awareness and encourage participation. Outreach is further supported through social media, email newsletters, and in-branch signage to reach as many families as possible.

This year's theme, Color Our World, invites our community on a vibrant journey through art and creativity. The theme inspired the design of our latest Event Guide, now available both in print and [online](#). The guide features programs and activities planned for June and July across all library locations.



Human Resources

MERS presented to employees at our Spring cleaning day on April 28. This voluntary post-employment savings program allows staff to set aside funds on a pre-tax or post-tax basis. Informational materials have been shared with all staff, and I am currently coordinating enrollment for those interested in participating. The program remains open year-round, allowing employees the flexibility to enroll at their convenience, and make changes as needed.

Meetings/Trainings/Webinars

- Annual county-wide Friends Meeting held at Union Twp.
- Kiwanis weekly meetings

Submitted:

Kimberly Feltner

- The 2025 Summer Reading Program is at our doorstep! BDL's SRP will run from June 2nd - July 26th with winners being notified during the week of July 28th. It will begin with a carnival-themed Kickoff on June 1st. Grand prizes for the winners of SRP range from stacking blocks for the Littles to Meijer Gift Cards for Adults. See the library website for more details!



- The Summer Reading Kickoff Party is June 1 from 5PM-7PM at Heritage Park near the Youth fields. The Kickoff is carnival-themed, and will have a host of fun things to do including: Inflatables, a Duck Pond game, a Win-a-Goldfish game, and large yard games. Additionally, it will have delicious snacks, like Popcorn, Sno-cones, Cotton Candy, and even some food trucks for families to purchase dinner or dessert!
- It's hard to believe but our first Family Fright Night meeting was held on May 12th! The date and theme were chosen and while it's a secret for now, it be a plunderful theme, and all will be hooked on it!