President’s Message

Many of you probably joined me in celebrating the end of 2020, a year that introduced challenges that most people never would have imagined. Dr. Cynthia Dudenhoffer provided incredible leadership as MLA President in that very difficult year, and I thank her for her strength and compassion at a time that it was so deeply needed. Thanks to her, I feel far more prepared to take on this role as president with her support and that of past-president Erin Gray and the rest of the board. The new year has not resolved all of the challenges that were introduced in 2020, but I feel ready to start thinking about our future, and about all of the opportunities we have moving forward.

There are also enormous opportunities for new ways to serve library workers throughout Missouri with the Access and Innovation Fund, which is getting very close to being able to make distributions, and in developing new opportunities for networking and continuing education. Our conference coordinators Asia Gross, Jennifer Alexander, and Desiree Schumann are planning a flexible in-person conference in the St. Louis area this fall, and I hope with so much of my heart that we will be able to come together again then.

We also have a different kind of year ahead of us with legislation as our state attempts to work through recovery, in addition to their normal work. I have total confidence in the Legislative Committee’s ability to usher us through this, advocating for libraries and building support throughout the Missouri legislature. If you’re interested in being a part of this, watch the MLA listserv and social media for more information on our Virtual Missouri Library Advocacy Day next month.

In the meantime, I will be working with the Board, Committee and Community of Interest Leadership, and anyone else I can find to build a stronger infrastructure for MLA. We need better support for each of you, better communication, and more opportunities to be involved and engaged in meaningful ways. In the coming weeks I’ll be finalizing committee appointments, reaching out to CI leadership, and working on building new structures to improve continuity through our many transitions. Of course, last year taught me that plans often change, and I will be here to support you all however I can through whatever comes in 2021.

I love collaborating with my fellow Missouri library workers, and can’t wait to get to know you all better. If you have ideas, questions, or want to help out (in specific or ambiguous ways!), please reach out to me any time.

Cindy Thompson
2021 Missouri Library Association President
mlapresident@molib.org
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New Year, New Issue of MO INFO!

MO INFO is produced by the MLA Publications Committee to be both informative and useful. Read it online (saves paper!), share an interesting idea or upcoming training with a colleague (be a team player!), or take the time to send an encouraging note to someone you’ve read about (and make their day!).

Submission Guidelines

MO INFO is published six times each year, on the 15th of January, March, May, July, September, and November. We collect, edit, and publish this newsletter; all you need to do is share your news, events, successes, and resources with us. Submission deadlines are the 15th of the preceding months, submitted by email to the committee at moinfonews@gmail.com. (Please include MO INFO in the subject line.) Our next deadline is Monday, February 15. If you have questions or a new contact person, just let us know!

To facilitate the production process, please follow the submission suggestions below. Article format should be:

- Microsoft Word document
- Include desired headline and your contact email and role in MLA
- Include digital photos (with captions) and graphics with your articles as desired
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<td>Avoiding the Rabbit Hole: How to Recognize and Understand Conspiratorial Thinking</td>
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<td>Discover How Amigos Library Services Can Help Your Library!</td>
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<td>Creating a Training Program Framework for Information and Reference Staff</td>
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<td>Media Literacy for Adults: Architecture of the Internet</td>
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<td>Mar. 9-18</td>
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<td>Library Management: Everyday Negotiations</td>
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<td>Using and Creating Infographics in Libraries</td>
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Meet this issue’s Featured Library Employees for the Missouri Library Association, the Mid-Continent Public Library’s HR Team!

What is your name, your library, and your role at the library?

Jennifer Ridley, HR Director
Dionne Wheeler, Associate HR Director
Rochelle Farmer, HR Specialist
Courtney Meyer, Employment Specialist
Talishia Robins, Leave and Accommodation Specialist
Bonnie Witt, Wellness Coordinator

What originally got you interested in working at a library?

Bonnie – It’s a funny story how I started working for the library. A friend called me out of the blue and said that she knew of a Wellness Coordinator position that would be a great fit. Honestly, I wasn’t even looking for a job at the time. Turns out that she had been offered the position and turned it down to take a school nurse job. She recommended me and I was hired. So, I guess I was the 2nd choice, but I think I landed right where I was supposed to. That was nearly nine years ago. I am still amazed by the people I work with, both closely and at branches via email (now it’s all via Teams and email). There’s a level of caring here that I’ve not seen at other places. At the end of the day, I really like the people I work with!

Jennifer – My siblings and I like to joke that libraries are our “family business.” My brother is a public librarian and my sister has been a public and school librarian. I started at MCPL in Interlibrary Loan in 2003 and an opportunity came up the following year to use my HR experience at the library. I couldn’t pass it up even though I had no idea where it would lead.

What keeps you coming back every day?

Talishia – Firstly, I work with an amazing team of HR professionals who are some of the most dedicated, committed, and knowledgeable people I have ever worked with. It is extremely refreshing to work with people who have similar work missions and drive and who deeply care to do the right thing for our staff. Though we have designated specialties and different personalities, we truly work as a cohesive unit. Secondly, working for an organization that genuinely supports its staff and knowing the Senior Leadership Team actively exhibits that effort daily…it starts from the top, down. I am grateful to have found this organization and to be able to contribute a small part to that process.

Courtney – Organizations can’t run and thrive without the people that get up and come to work each day. So, having a chance to change these people’s life by offering them a job or knowing the feeling they must have when they find out they were just promoted is what keeps me coming back each day. Knowing that I have the chance, through our people to make MCPL the best library system in North America is a great feeling!

What’s challenging about your work?

Dionne – One of the biggest challenges we have in our department is balancing all the things we "want" to do with those things we "must" do. We talk about capacity a lot amongst our team, and we have so many great ideas, but carving out the time to plan and execute our ideas is a challenge.

Rochelle – Each employee’s path at MCPL is different, and we want each experience to be a positive one. Whether it’s making sure a new employee receives great training and feels included, communicating to a mid-career employee additional benefits they may not have needed previously, or helping a long-tenured employee move through the steps of retirement, any given day can present unique challenges. Being prepared for this requires staying on top of changing guidance and guidelines to represent and protect the interests of MCPL employees.

Continued on page 5
Has your work made you either curious, or passionate, or awestruck about something?

Dionne – I am awestruck by how much the people I work with who are purpose-driven. It gives me great satisfaction to work around people whose values aren't tied to money and material things. I think it has made me a better person.

Courtney – Working in HR for larger organizations has made me more passionate about streamlining communication and engagement of employees. When you have a diverse workforce, you must diversify your communication and engagement styles to meet individual needs, which can prove challenging. At the library we have multiple generations and people from all backgrounds working alongside each other, we also have people working multiple shifts throughout the day and different levels of the organization getting the same message. In HR a lot of our messages need to get to each person in our organization, and we have to ensure everyone understands. So, finding and creating new innovative ways to communicate and keep our employees engaged in their work is something I am very passionate about.

Who is one of your mentors?

Dionne – I know this sounds corny, but my mother has been my greatest mentor my entire life. The best parts of me come from my mom.

Jennifer – Don Bridgforth, our retired HR Director, invited me to have a seat at the table at every opportunity and let me soak up everything I could. He always treated me like a collaborator rather than a subordinate. And, we always found a way to laugh even when things were bleak. I think about how valuable that camaraderie was when I am leading this team.

What book, author, artist, show, or music are you engaging with this week, either personally or professionally? Persuade us in one or two sentences that we should pick this up, too.

Bonnie – I’ve been listening to Christmas music on the radio, even with all the advertisement interruptions. Growing up, my Mother had all of the Firestone Christmas record albums and she played them all season long. These were the classic songs by Julie Andrews, Barbara Streisand, Andy Williams, and others. So every few songs, I hear one of those classics and I’m happily transported back to a magical holiday time in my life. Those memories come back clearly; the smells, sounds, tastes and the feelings. Music is good for our souls.

Rochelle – Check out Joe Rogan’s podcast. He is a smart and well-read guy who can talk to you about anything from MMA to aliens. He often features guests who are controversial in mainstream media, offering them a platform to dive deep into a variety of topics.

Jennifer – 2020 was redeemed by the triumphant return of Allie Brosh with “Solutions and Other Problems” which I recommend to anyone with mental illness who also embraces silliness to carve a way through the struggle. Also, I just finished watching “Fleabag” and “Killing Eve.” I became an instant fan of Phoebe Waller-Bridge’s cleverness and dark humor.

Is there anything else you’d like to share with us?

Dionne – I tell people all the time that I love my job, and I mean it. It is easy for me to show up every day, and not everyone can say that.

Jennifer – We hear every day that 2020 has been a rough year for all of us, and that includes librarians and the people who support them. I am grateful to be on this unbelievable team of pros who have spent every day of this year working on improving the harmony between work and life for all MCPL team members. It has not been easy for anyone, but we are driven by witnessing the important and innovative work of the MCPL team in the communities we serve.

Like to nominate someone to be our next Featured Library Employee? Examples could be:

…a new employee you’d like to introduce
…someone with a unique job or on a unique career path
…an employee you find inspirational
…a coworker whose gifts you wish were more widely known
…someone who’s “an institution” full of interesting stories
…a role that has a new focus or is reaching a new audience
…someone you’d like to make more visible to potential employers

Submit name(s) and contact information, along with place of employment, to Shannon Mawhiney at smawhiney@missouristate.edu.

We’ll do all the work of contacting; we just need you to connect us!
Amigos Launched its 100th SimplyE Library: The Lake Whitney Public Library!

In November, Amigos Library Services welcomed Lake Whitney Public Library of Texas as our 100th SimplyE service client. Lake Whitney is participating in SimplyE through a unique program from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission: E-Read Texas. "We are excited to launch our 100th SimplyE library – the Lake Whitney Public Library – and excited for all of the libraries currently participating in SimplyE and those preparing to join. SimplyE dramatically improves readers' experiences by changing the ways libraries make their ebook and audiobook collections available to their communities," said Miguel Figueroa, President and CEO, Amigos Library Services. You can learn more about the program in the press release here.

Early Bird Registration for "Moving On: Migrating Library Content and Data" ends 1/22

When it comes to integrated library systems and electronic resources platforms, the one constant is change. Migration processes can be daunting, but they don’t have to be scary.

Join Amigos Library Services February 11, 2021, for “Moving On: Migrating Library Content and Data” and explore ways to lessen the pain of migrations between library systems and platforms. Attendance is FREE for Amigos members and early-bird registration for non-members is available through January 22, 2021.

Save the Date for our next conference: May 12, 2021 – the Annual Amigos Member Conference! Keep an eye out for the Call for Proposals and session announcements on twitter @AmigosLibServ and in our AmigosNow newsletter.

PrivCo Announces News and Wishes You a Very Happy New Year!

In December the PrivCo 50 Report was released, highlighting the 50 most resilient private companies of 2020. (Spoiler Alert: Instacart snagged the #1 spot!). You can view and download the full rankings from the link above to share with your clients and schools that you work with. As long as they are logged into the PrivCo platform, they can click into these private company profiles directly from this report. We are also excited to announce that the PrivCo platform will be adding an additional 200,000 private companies to its database.

Please email Laurence at zuercher@amigos.org if you would like to know more about PrivCo.

Gain Access to Over 500k Articles with Association for Computing Machinery

Amigos is adding new Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) subscribers for 2021. Established when computer science was in its infancy, today ACM continues to bring discoveries of those working at the forefront of computer science to the attention of the world. Their Digital Library is the premier source for computing literature with content from over 89 journals, magazines and newsletters. Over 580,000 articles. Over 7,500 conference proceedings. Content from over 89 journals, magazines and newsletters. All with a curated index containing over 2.8 million citations to the world’s computing literature.

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Continuing Education Opportunities

Know & Go Updates
Know & Go’s are part of a series of informative web sessions covering topics of current interest. Designed for group participation, FREE for Amigos members and only $35 for non-members, Know & Go Updates are presented online on Monday afternoons from 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. CDT. Register today!

- Tech Tools and Apps for the Reference Desk January 25
- Access, Use, and Rights Information in Catalog Records February 1
- Getting Started with Bitmoji and Flipgrid for Libraries February 8
- Customer Service Basics for Any Librarian February 22
- RDA 3R Update March 1
- Always Look a Gift Horse in the Mouth: Donation and Gift Policy Best Practices for Libraries March 8
- Using and Creating Infographics in Libraries March 15
- How to Catalog Kits March 22

Upcoming Live Online Classes
Here’s a quick look at upcoming Live Online classes. Classes are always being added so be sure to check out our full course schedule!
*All times are listed in the Central Time Zone.

- SimplyE @ Amigos: An Overview and Demonstration January 19 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- EAD3: the Basics January 19 – 28, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Introduction to Scholarly Metrics January 20, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Media Literacy in Libraries January 21, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Introduction to Archival Practice January 26 – February 4, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 am
- Introduction of Library Services to Teens January 27, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Library Management: Managing from the Middle February 2, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 pm
- Ready, Set, Reference! February 3, 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 pm
- Discover how Amigos Library Services can help your library! February 10, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 pm
- RDA for Audio Recordings February 16 - 18, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/15
- PDA: Collection Love through Patron Driven Acquisition February 17, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/26
- The Usable and Accessible Library Space February 17 - 18, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/26
- RDA for Video Recordings February 23- 25, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/1
- Library Research: Tips for Starting a Research Project at Your Library February 24, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/2
- SimplyE @ Amigos: An Overview and Demonstration February 24, 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 pm
- Basic SQL March 1-5, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/7
- Introduction to Preservation March 2-11, 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/8
- Guided Genealogy: Following in Your Ancestor's Footsteps March 4, 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/10
- Cataloging with RDA March 9-18, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/15
- Library Management: Everyday Negotiations March 10, 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 2/16
- Authority Control: Creating and Maintaining Consistency March 23, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Early bird registration ends 3/1
Daniel Boone Regional Library

Library Launches Free Online Tutoring Service

Now students of all ages can get free help from a live online tutor through Brainfuse, a new service of the Daniel Boone Regional Library (DBRL). There are three modules - HelpNow for elementary through college students, Adult Learning for adults, and JobNow for job seekers. Live tutors are available daily from 2-11 p.m. and other services can be accessed 24/7 through the library’s website (www.dbrl.org/brainfuse) or the Brainfuse app available for iOS and Android.

“We wanted a way to offer more support to our communities during the pandemic,” said Margaret Conroy, DBRL executive director. “With so many students taking online classes, we thought that many families would benefit from additional help with school work. After researching and evaluating different options, we felt that Brainfuse was the best way the library could help now and in the future.” The cost of the library’s subscription to Brainfuse is being funded in part by the DBRL Foundation’s fall fundraising campaign.

The Brainfuse tutors offer assistance with core subjects like math, reading, science, and writing as well as more advanced topics. All tutors are trained and certified by Brainfuse, have a four-year degree, and have prior teaching/tutoring experience.

In addition to online live tutoring, students can form study groups and get help with a paper. “Students can use Brainfuse’s extensive library of lessons, video tutorials, and practice tests,” said Kirk Henley, Collection Manager at DBRL. “They can also send questions to tutors through the 24/7 Help Center and submit papers for review and comment through the Writing Lab.”

The third Brainfuse module JobNow offers expert resume assistance, interview tips, career coaching, and more. “With so many people losing their jobs right now, we also felt it was important to help those looking for work,” said Conroy. “If they want to practice their interview skills or if they are trying to figure what types of jobs best fit their interests and skill set, Brainfuse can help.”

People interested in using Brainfuse need to have a free DBRL library card that they can apply for online, www.dbrl.org/librarycard. After setting up the Brainfuse registration, students and job seekers can explore and use the free service.

Daniel Boone Regional Library serves Boone and Callaway Counties.

Eric Schmeck Named New Manager of Library

Beginning November 2, Eric Schmeck took over as the manager of the Southern Boone County Public Library in Ashland. He brings a lot of library experience with him. He began working for Daniel Boone Regional Library 22 years ago, first as a library associate at the Columbia Public Library and then as the bookmobile driver for 11 years. After completing his Master’s in Library Sciences, he became a reference librarian at the Columbia Public Library in 2017. Recently, he helped plan library programs and spearheaded DBRL’s efforts to support a complete count for the 2020 Census. He replaced Ronda Mitchell who retired at the end of September.

Joplin Public Library

New Vision and Mission Statements Focus Library’s Path Forward

On Thursday, Nov. 19, a team from Joplin Public Library, including department heads, administrative staff, and the Board of Trustees, gathered (with social distancing requirements observed) for a strategic planning retreat with the goal of jumpstarting the strategic planning process. The consultant leading the event was Terri Tucker, of Tucker Resources, whose clients have included the likes of Silver Dollar City and Andy’s Frozen Custard.

The theme of the daylong retreat, titled “A Day to Button Up and Connect,” centered on buttons and their power to connect two things.

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Over a series of imaginative exercises and brainstorming sessions, the group attempted to identify the library’s purpose and culture: both what it is currently, and what it could be in an ideal state for the future.

The main questions of the day were:

1. How can we connect JPL’s resources and services with the true needs of the community?
2. WHY do we do what we do here each day?
3. In what ways are we not communicating or connecting our strengths to our public?

From the thoughts, feelings, and perceptions shared based on these questions, the team extracted our trajectory. The result of this day of collaboration and creativity saw the previous multiple-paragraph mission statement of the library, an imposing 196 words, revised into two heartfelt and concise one-sentence declarations.

**Vision Statement:** Our Library is a welcoming community where learning and connection grow and lives are enriched.

**Mission Statement:** Our Library opens tomorrow’s doors today through diverse opportunities to learn, create, explore, and have fun.

These two statements are now at the heart of the library’s new path forward. They, combined with newly crafted core values and strategic initiatives, will allow the staff to create objectives and tactics to focus on during 2021.

**Library Offers Event for Homeschool Families**

In partnership with Families for Home Education (FHE), the library hosted a Homeschool 101 webinar for families new to homeschooling on Dec. 18. The live Zoom webinar was part of the library’s “Schooling at Home” initiative, a library-wide effort to increase access to helpful resources and programs for families currently learning at home.

Initiative offerings have included a dedicated “Schooling at Home” webpage, a Halloween-themed Storywalk, several take home craft/steam kits, a pumpkin decorating challenge, and monthly online book club programs.

During the recent introductory webinar, Cari Rogers, FHE regional director, led a discussion on the first steps for families interested in homeschooling, including legal concerns, using the library as a homeschool supplement, and finding your homeschool community. Children’s Librarian Christina Matekel-Gibson and Teen Librarian Beth Snow shared online resources, library materials, programs, and services that homeschool families might find useful.

**A Cozy Challenge**

Who doesn’t love to cuddle up and read when the weather outside is frightful? Joplin Public Library endeavors to answer this question while seeking to engage our community by partnering with Beanstack and Simon & Schuster for our first ever Winter Reading Challenge! #WinterRead2021 #BooksLikeUs

This fun and self-guided program will run from Jan. 1 through Jan. 31, 2021. A library card is not required, and all ages are invited to participate. The theme of the challenge is “Books Like Us”, a celebration of diversity, harnessing the transformative power of seeing oneself reflected in a book.

Individual reading goals are **two hours total hours read for children up to 12** and **four hours for teens and adults ages 13 and up**. Participants who complete their goal are eligible to be entered to win prizes through Beanstack and Simon and Schuster and will also receive a small prize from the library.

One exciting feature of Beanstack is that it will track the progress of our community as a whole. The library has set a community-wide goal of 80,000 minutes read by Jan. 31. Did you know there are an estimated 80,000 narwhals in the world? We are planning to read a minute for each one!
Mid-America Library Alliance has new Executive Director

Mid-America Library Alliance (MALA) is pleased to announce that Jane Mulvihill-Jones is the organization’s new Executive Director beginning Jan. 6, 2021.

Jane assumes management of the courier service business that MALA provides to 152 libraries in Missouri and Kansas and will lead the expansion of MALAPro, the training and professional development arm of the organization, building on the improvements that retiring Executive Director Mickey Coalwell began in 2018.

Jane has broad professional experience – a real “librarian’s librarian.” She comes to MALA from the Mid-Continent Public Library, where she was Raytown Branch Manager, supervising a staff of 26. She has also managed the South Independence branch of Mid-Continent. Previous to that, Jane managed the Pleasant Hill Branch of the Cass County Library. She was the St. Elizabeth’s School Librarian and has provided research services and instruction to students and faculty at Rockhurst University and Metropolitan Community College. Jane was a materials selector at Kansas City Public Library and Collection Development Librarian at Brodart.

Mulvihill-Jones has an MLS from Indiana University, a Teacher Certification from Ottawa University and a Bachelor’s in History from the University of Kansas.

MALAPro Upcoming Webinars

Fostering Digital Citizenship in Your Library and Community
with Lauren Hays, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Instructional Technology at the University of Central Missouri
Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Digital Citizenship is the ability to use technology in safe, ethical and appropriate ways. What happens to all the things you post online? What practices endanger your online privacy? What is a positive digital footprint? Lauren Hays will explain how librarians, as facilitators of digital knowledge consumption and creation, have a unique role to play in fostering digital citizenship among their users. This webinar will target those serving K-12 youth, but will cover positive online behavior for people of any age.

For more information click here.

Upcoming MALAPro Training

Self-care Webinar – Feb. 24, 2021
Business & Entrepreneurship Webinar - March 17, 2021
Customer Service Webinar - March 31, 2021

MALAPro’s new Professional Development Series has been devised to answer your training needs. Core topics include Youth Services, Academic Track, Management & Supervision, Human Resources & Personnel, Readers’ Advisory, and Customer Service.

Katherine Glenn
Training & Professional Development Coordinator
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Mid-Continent Public Library

Mid-Continent Public Library Installs StoryWalks®

In November, Mid-Continent Public Library installed StoryWalks® at its East Lee’s Summit Branch and Woodneath Library Center. Made up of 15 yard-sized panels that resemble book pages, the installations allowed families to read a story as they took a walk outside. Both StoryWalks® featured the Library’s signature book, Grow a Reader: An Interplanetary Tale, written by Bridget Heos and illustrated by Dan Regan.

The StoryWalks®, which were free and open to the public (no reservation required), were available through the end of the year. In 2021 they will rotate to other MCPL branches. The StoryWalk® at the East Lee’s Summit Branch was located on the northwest side of the building along the sidewalk. At the Woodneath Library Center, the walk was located along the trail north of the building, near Shoal Creek Elementary School. Customers were encouraged to wear face masks and maintain social distancing while walking through the story.

Grow a Reader was published in 2015 by MCPL’s in-house publishing division, Woodneath Press. The book, which tells the story of MCPL mascot Marty the Martian’s visit to the Mid-Continent Public Library–Space Branch, was developed simultaneously with the launch of the Library’s Grow a Reader early literacy initiative. More information about the Grow A Reader program can be found at mymcpl.org/Kids.

Note: The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT, and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Montpelier, VT. The StoryWalk® concept has been used in all 50 states and at least 12 other countries.

Missouri State Library

The Missouri State Library provides a number of training opportunities and forums. Here are some of the upcoming topics:

- **Children and Teen Services Forums (CTSF)**: generally the first Friday of the month. When you register for one CTSF, you are registered for them all. We anticipate the following topics will be covered in the upcoming months: Reader Award Nominee Programs in January 2021, Summer Feeding Program Partnerships in February 2021, Money Smart Week in March 2021, Engaging Tweens in April 2021 and StoryWalks in May 2021. Have a question? Contact Lysha Thompson at Lysha.Thompson@sos.mo.gov.

- **Adult Services Forums (ASF)**: generally the first and third Thursdays with topics TBD. Have a suggestion? Contact Merideth Johnson at Merideth.Johnson@sos.mo.gov. Again, when you register for one ASF, you are registered for them all.

- **Assistive Technology for Libraries**: Jan. 14 at 10:00
  Differently-abled patrons exist in every community. What can public libraries do to be more welcoming to these patrons? Incorporate assistive technologies! Ranging from low-tech braille signage to specialized software and devices, assistive technologies help to increase the independence of these patrons. Registration is required and can be completed at Assistive Technology for Libraries. For further information, contact Janet Caruthers at Janet.Caruthers@sos.mo.gov.

And don’t forget to sign up for our discussion lists, where trainings are also announced: Missouri Adult Community Engagement (MOACE), Missouri Youth and Children (MOYAC) and Missouri Library Training (MOLibTrain).
New Library Branch Named for Dr. Gus T. Ridgel

Poplar Bluff Municipal Library trustees have named the new Kanell Boulevard branch library in honor of Dr. Gus T. Ridgel, a Poplar Bluff native who made history as the first African-American admitted to the Graduate School at the University of Missouri in 1950.

Renovation work is scheduled to begin immediately on the building at 3398 Kanell Blvd., which will be known as the Gus T. Ridgel Branch Library. The Board of Trustees chose the name in a unanimous vote at a regular meeting on Nov. 2.

Dr. Ridgel had a distinctive career in education and served as a role model for perseverance and work ethic. Throughout his career he served students and the public, ensuring that people could pursue their educational dreams. Library Trustee Kathern Harris, chair of the board’s Naming Committee, said, “Dr. Ridgel was keenly aware of activists’ impact on altering oppressive customs and stated in an interview that ‘anything that affects the bottom line is going to get the attention of the leaders.’ It is noted that his success at the University of Missouri paved the way for all students seeking the advantages of education.

The library’s minute’s show that from 1921 to the 1940s Poplar Bluff Municipal Library operated a branch library at Wheatley School, according to Library Director Sue Crites Szostak. “With the knowledge that Dr. Ridgel graduated with distinction from Wheatley, we can assume that the Poplar Bluff Municipal Library provided resources for his education,” Mrs. Szostak said. “The library has a long history of serving diverse populations and it has always been a part of the library’s mission to provide reading, information, cultural and intellectual resources. The new branch with its location near many schools is poised in a similar fashion to give students access to resources following the footsteps of Dr. Ridgel.”

“Naming the Kanell Boulevard library branch for Dr. Ridgel was the outstanding idea of Mrs. Szostak,” said John Stanard, president of the Board of Trustees. “I speak for our unanimous board in praising Sue’s idea. We all are proud of the legacy of the library serving the students of Wheatley School as far back as 100 years ago. Dr. Ridgel no doubt took advantage of the books and other materials supplied to Wheatley during his time as a student there. With that background, he went on to earn multiple college degrees and impact thousands of students’ lives over his own distinguished career as a university professor and administrator.”

Naming the facility after Dr. Ridgel pays homage to his educational success. Dr. Ridgel received many honors from his alma mater. The University of Missouri has an honorary degree and a fellowship in his name, plus the atrium at Lucile Bluford Hall is named after Dr. Ridgel. Most recently, he was inducted posthumously into the 2020 Mizzou Hall of Fame. At his induction into the Mizzou Alumni Hall of fame the Alumni Association recognized Dr. Ridgel as “a trailblazer and civil rights icon.” Director Szostak stated that naming the branch library after Dr. Ridgel celebrates another milestone in the library’s success in serving its community.

Gus. T. Ridgel passed away Saturday, August 1, 2020. He was born July 1, 1926, to Herford “Gus” and Emma Smith Ridgel in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. He graduated as class valedictorian from Wheatley High School at age 16. After graduation, he moved to Chicago, Illinois. Shortly after moving to Chicago, he enlisted in the United States Army, serving in World War II. Upon discharge, he enrolled at Lincoln University in Jefferson City on the G.I. Bill. In 1950 he graduated Magna Cum Laude in three years. While at Lincoln, he became a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. After graduation, Dr. Ridgel then became a test case with the NAACP as they challenged various universities' segregation policies. He was admitted to the University of Missouri (Columbia), under court order, to pursue a M.A. degree in Economics. Unable to afford the two years of tuition/costs to receive this degree, he completed the two-year program in one year, becoming the first African-American to receive a M.A. in Business (Economics) from that institution. He later received a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Wisconsin in 1957.
The Dr. Gus T. Ridgel Branch is currently closed for renovation. When it opens in February, the branch services will include a collection of library materials for checkout, lockers for item pickup, full access to online Missouri Evergreen resources, computers, WiFi, programming space and group study rooms.

Plans for a formal ceremony to name the branch will be announced at a later date. For more information, contact Sue Crites Szostak, Director, Poplar Bluff Municipal Library, 573-686-8639 or email library@poplarbluff.org.

Springfield-Greene County Library District

Virtual Weaving Program a Hit with Viewers

When librarians can’t provide an in-person crafting program, they simple go virtual, as they did with Make a Woven Wall Hanging. Seven people watched it live during its YouTube premiere in October, and was viewed 71 times by the end of the weekend. Patrons expressed their appreciation for the instructional program and shared photos of their projects on Instagram and Facebook.

Calming Kits Offer Peaceful Library Visits

The Springfield-Greene County Libraries are often busy buildings filled with noise, lights, and many people. Visiting a library can be difficult for children with sensory issues, including those with autistic spectrum disorder and developmental disabilities. The 10 Library branches have introduced Calming Kits to help make their visits more successful. Families with children who may feel anxious or overwhelmed when visiting a library can check out one or more of the items in the Calming Kit. The Kits include noise-canceling headphones, wiggle cushions, weighted lap pads and other items designed to calm, assure and channel energy.

Make Mine To Go: Drive-up, Pick-up Service Thrills Kids

Library Center Youth Services Manager Sarah Bean Thompson won fans with the first Racing to Read to Go event. Patrons were invited to drive up and pick up activity kits for their kids and a selection of books that were handpicked by Library staff. Families responded by posting their kits on Facebook, and ask when the next one would be offered. “It was a chance for them to bring their littles to the library without having to come in, have a chance to wave and say hi to staff, and take storytime home with them,” Sarah said.

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“Lovecraft Country” Author Talk Goes Virtual

Fans of horror and the HBO series Lovecraft Country were treated to a virtual author talk and Q&A with Matt Ruff and library staffer Konrad Stump. Ruff discussed the challenges of keeping history accurate while blending it with elements of horror, specifically Ruff’s bold decision to take pieces of the Lovecraft mythos and integrate them into a Jim Crow-era cast of characters.

We Need to Talk Series Addresses Difficult Issues

Some 56 people attended a Zoom discussion exploring the concept of white privilege in the first of a series called We Need to Talk. Justyn Pippins, Southwest SCORE Diversity Chair; Sean Nevills, director of Health and Physical Education for DESE; and Tamarr Maclin, assistant director of programs at Drew Lewis Foundation, engaged participants to explore how one’s upbringing shapes understanding of white privilege, how school curriculum is changing to include non-white perspectives, and how to be an ally to the black community. Both the live conversation and chat box were buzzing.

New Notary Service Responds to Pre-Election Demand

The two notaries on staff at the Library Center and Library Station saw up to 127 patrons on many days during absentee and mail-in voting before the November general election. Tammy Flippen and Laura Loffler underwent certification and the service launched in late summer in anticipation of the demand. The notary service continues to be offered for non-ballot documents.

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New Digital Archive Highlights Black Community

Years after Kansas City Monarchs’ Herman “Doc” Brown graduated from all-Black Lincoln School in Springfield, he reminisced, “Lincoln High School was the cornerstone for every African-American that hit this town.” Now images of the people and stories of the Black lives that flourished there are together in a digital collection hosted on the thelibrary.org/lochist. It’s called “The Lincoln School Collection.” Materials in the collection were contributed by private individuals and a variety of area schools, archives and museums. The Local History staff continues to add material provided by the public.

Virtual Reading Pals: A Boy, a Book and a Dog

Proving that children often adapt to change better than adults, young readers had a great time sharing stories with Lucy the dog during a November session of Virtual Reading Pals. Gracie Harris read to Kody, while Hudson Wheeler and his little brother Cade read to Lucy.

Holiday Store for Kids Goes Online

The Holiday Store for Kids, where kids shop for others at “stores” in multiple library branches, scaled back and went online this year due to COVID-19. Children could shop for items from display cases at the Library Center and Library Station, and online at thelibrary.org/holidaystore through Dec. 20.
STLCC Libraries and Campus Life Presents the Schedule of Film Discussions for Spring 2021’s Racial Justice Film Series:

- Wednesday, January 27 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.: Selma
- Tuesday, February 16 from 2:00 to 3:15 p.m.: Accidental Courtesy
- Tuesday, March 23 from 2:00 to 3:15 p.m.: Say Her Name: The Life and Death of Sandra Bland
- Thursday, April 15 from 2:00 to 3:15 p.m.: Baltimore Rising

Visit libcal.stlcc.edu/calendar/online-events for additional information about the STLCC Libraries’ Speaker Series and the Racial Justice Film Series and register for each virtual event. All events are free and open to the public.
Trails Regional Library Uses CARES Act Grant to Expand Digital Inclusion through Partnership

Trails Regional Library begin the next phase of its Hotspot Lending Program on December 1. 30 Internet-ready WiFi Hotspots were made available for patrons to check out for up to 2 weeks. These Hotspots are part of a Missouri State Library’s CARES Act Grant awarded to Trails. The funding is meant to address digital inclusion, broadband availability, and to respond to the challenges of COVID-19 in its communities.

The first phase of the Hotspot Lending Program began by partnering with local service agencies to use hotspots in their services. Agencies include: Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Johnson County, WILS, Missouri Valley Community Action Agency, and Migrant Farmworkers Assistance Fund. Agencies were able to provide direct support to individuals without internet, including parents working from home while facilitating distance learning for their children.

In line with the Hotspot Program, Trails Regional Library created two new Public Technology Assistant positions and established a Tech Help Hotline to assist patrons with Hotspots and any other technology questions. These staff members provide dedicated assistance with the program and are on hand to answer patron questions as digital resource use skyrockets during the pandemic.

“We are so excited for the opportunity to bridge the digital divide in our communities through this grant program,” said Library Director Tanya Shelton-Council.

According to the most recent American Community Survey (2019), within Trails Regional Library’s service areas of Johnson and Lafayette counties:

- 10% of households include people aged 65+ living alone
- 15% of households have no internet access at all
- 10% of households have no kind of computer or internet-connected device

This project is supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Missouri State Library, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State.
Wolfner Library

Wolfner Library has some exciting programs and events for you to share with our shared patrons and library staff statewide.

**Wolfner Library 2021 Adult Winter Reading Program**

This year’s program will feature a reading challenge based on the “Missouri 2021: Past. Present. Future.” theme. The program started on January 2 and runs through March 8. The last day to register is February 23. The deadline for submitting the number of books read will be March 16. To qualify for prizes, you must complete six goals and you can chose the books to fulfill those goals. You can track your progress on Beanstack or report the goals and titles to your reader advisor.

For a list of suggested titles, contact your reader advisor or visit the online version at [www.sos.mo.gov/wolfner/programming/awrp/2021](http://www.sos.mo.gov/wolfner/programming/awrp/2021).

Two Drop-In Book Clubs to discuss Adult Winter Reading Program titles are scheduled for:

- Jan. 21, 2021 at 2 p.m.
- Feb. 23, 2021 at 2 p.m.

**Wolfner Patron Book Club Schedule:**

- February 9 at 7 p.m. Evenings with Wolfner (New in 2021!): Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn
- February 11 at 2 p.m. Novel Reads: I Am Mrs. Jesse James by Pat Wahler
- February 18 at 2 p.m. Good Books (mild reads): A Mother’s Love by Charlotte Hubbard The author, Charlotte Hubbard, will be joining this discussion!
- February 25 at 2 p.m. Big Ideas: The Accidental President: Harry S. Truman and the Four Months that Changed the World by A.J. Baime
- March 3 at 2 p.m. African American Literature: Rising from the Rails: Pullman Porters and the Making of the Black Middle Class by Larry Tye
- March 9 at 7 p.m. Evenings with Wolfner: Nothing to See Here by Kevin Wilson
- March 11 at 2 p.m. Novel Reads: The All-Girl Filling Station's Last Reunion by Fannie Flagg DB077825
- March 18 at 2 p.m. Good Books: Marley and Me: Life and Love with the World’s Worst Dog by John Grogan
- March 25 at 2 p.m. Big Ideas: What’s so Funny?: My Hilarious Life by Tim Conway

**Workshops:**

To participate in one of the following Zoom workshops, please call (800) 392-2614 or email wolfner@sos.mo.gov to register.

**New Patron Workshop**

February 9 at 2 p.m.: Wolfner staff will host a workshop featuring overviews of Braille Audio Recording Download (BARD) and Wolfner’s catalog, WolfPAC. This workshop is also open to interested library staff!

**Identifying Fake News Workshop**

March 16 at 7 p.m.: Wolfner staff will host a workshop that looks at how to analyze information sources and best search for reliable information.
The Missouri Library Association, Columbia, MO, est. 1900, is the Missouri State Chapter of the American Library Association, Chicago, IL.

MO INFO
Newsletter of the Missouri Library Association

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The newsletter is put together by MO INFO Subcommittee of the MLA Media and Publications Committee:
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