

MO INFO

Newsletter of the Missouri Library Association

May 2020

Volume 51, Number 3

President's Message

Greetings MLA Membership,

I hope everyone is adjusting to our new circumstances. If you aren't, that's OK too! Many of you know that I am a pretty strong extrovert who loves chatting and just being with people, so some days are a struggle.

Like many of you, I'm working from home, managing campus priorities while trying to homeschool my three children. Sometimes it's a challenge, but I feel privileged to be home, safe and well. And, of course, there are Zoom meetings and Houseparty chats to break the monotony!

I am so proud to see all the services that Missouri libraries are providing to their quarantined patrons. Libraries are as essential as ever, providing e-books, Wi-Fi, census help, streaming story times, dial-a-story, and virtual reference. We all look forward to the day we can return to our spaces, hug children at story time, appreciate the light as our students reach understanding, or see the smiles of our thankful patrons, but we will make it through until then!

I know my library is doing a lot of policy and process cleanup for "after" our Great Pause, since we have the opportunity to revisit these kinds of projects in the absence of our students.

As always, feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns! Your membership organization is here to support you in all aspects of library life!

Be safe and stay well!

Cynthia Dudenhoffer
MO Library Association President 2020
mlapresident@molib.org



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Legislative Update: CARES Act Grants Available

The Institute of Museum and Library Services has announced [two new funding opportunities](#) for museums, libraries, federally recognized tribes, and organizations that primarily serve Native Hawaiians. The combined \$15 million federal investment will provide direct support to these institutions, equipping them to respond to community needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The CARES Act [allocated funding](#) to IMLS for libraries to expand digital network access, purchase internet accessible devices, and provide technical support services. The deadline for [submitting applications](#) is June 12.



Dan Brower, MLA Legislative Committee Chair

The Amazing Cure to Avoiding Finger Fatigue

MO INFO is produced by the MLA Publications Committee. Can you *imagine* what it would be like to call, email, text, or write every MLA member to keep in touch? Fortunately, the MO INFO Subcommittee protects tired fingers and cramped wrists by collecting, editing, and publishing this newsletter six times each year. All it takes is sharing your news, events, successes, and resources here! (*You’re welcome.*)

Submission Guidelines

MO INFO is published six times each year, on the 15th of January, March, May, July, September, and November. Submission deadlines are the 15th of the preceding months, submitted by email to the committee at moinfonews@gmail.com (include MO INFO in the subject line).

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

Calendar of Events

National, state, regional, and web calendar events from the MLA site, and other sources.

Use the links for webcast or event details, any pricing information, and schedule changes.

| Date | Time (CT) | Event | Sponsor |
|-----------------|------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| May 18 | 1-2 p.m. | HarperCollins Adult Fall Faves! | Booklist |
| | 1:30-2:30 p.m. | Taming LOC.gov | Idaho Commission for Libraries |
| May 18 & 20 | 10:30-12:30 p.m. | Understanding and Using Library Data | Amigos Library Services |
| May 19 | 12-1 p.m. | Ten Actions for Boards Governing in a Crisis | Propel Nonprofits |
| | 12-1 p.m. | Online Survey Tools and Techniques | IdealWare |
| | 2-3 p.m. | Honoring Infancy: Beyond Baby Storytime | ALSC |
| May 19 & 21 | 10-12 p.m. | Programming with Python and PyMARC | Amigos Library Services |
| May 20 | 10-11 a.m. | Reading for Justice: A Database for YA & Youth Literature | Nebraska Library Commission |
| | 10:30-12:00 p.m. | Fundraising Tune-up | Productive Fundraising |
| | 11-12 p.m. | Girls STEAM Ahead with NASA Free Resources | National Girls Collaborative Project |
| | 1-2 p.m. | How to Be a Webinar Superstar! | PLA |
| | 1-2 p.m. | Shifting Your Events Online During COVID-19 | GrantSpace |
| May 21 | 10-11 a.m. | Programming for Adults with Developmental Disabilities: Why and How | Infopeople |
| | 1:30-2:30 p.m. | Tools Every Nonprofit Needs to Simplify Their Life | Firespring |
| May 26 | 11:30-12:45 p.m. | Book Buzz Jr. | Booklist |
| | 1-2 p.m. | Why Futurists Can't Predict the Future, And How You Can | Pattern Research, Inc. |
| May 27 | 10-11 a.m. | Pretty Sweet Tech - How to Make Digital Literacy Less Boring | Nebraska Library Commission |
| | 1-2 p.m. | Research Data Management Librarian Academy | ALCTS |
| | 2-3 p.m. | Online Reference and the Open Web: Boosting Strategies and Sources | WebJunction |
| May 28 | 12-1 p.m. | Preserving and Safeguarding Our Cultural Heritage | EBSCO |
| | 2-3 p.m. | Online Tools for Content Creation and Virtual Meetings | Mid-America Library Alliance |
| | 10-12 p.m. | Library Management for Beginners: Workplace Communication | Amigos Library Services |
| | 1-3 p.m. | Launching and Cultivating your Face to Face and Online Book Discussion Groups | Amigos Library Services |
| May 29 | 1-2:15 p.m. | Book Buzz: Adult Headliners | Booklist |
| June 1 | 1:30-2:30 p.m. | How to Catalog Zines | Amigos Library Services |
| June 1-3 | | MOBIUS Virtual Conference | |
| June 2 | 1-2 p.m. | Equal Access for Every Ability | PLA |
| | 1-2 p.m. | Summertime D.I.Y.: Crafts & Gardening Titles and Tips | Booklist |
| | 2-4 p.m. | Introduction to Dublin Core | Amigos Library Services |
| June 3 | 10-11 a.m. | Using Data to Advocate for the Preservation of Audiovisual Collections | OCLC |
| June 4 | 1-2 p.m. | Building and Managing Instruction Programs: Strategies and Tools | ACRL |
| June 8 | 1:30-2:30 p.m. | Conducting Effective Meetings | Amigos Library Services |
| June 10 | 1-2 p.m. | Sorry....You Just Don't Fit into Our Culture: Unconscious Bias in Hiring Decisions | Colorado State Library |
| June 11 | 1-2 p.m. | Strategies to Increase Adult Books Titles for Teens | YALSA |
| June 15 | 1:30-2:30 p.m. | Documenting Library Work: Lessons We Can Learn from Technical Writers | Amigos Library Services |
| | 1:30-2:30 p.m. | Neurodiversity in the Library | Idaho Commission for Libraries |
| June 16-17 | 2-4 p.m. | Design Thinking in Libraries | Amigos Library Services |
| June 18 | 10-12 p.m. | Introduction to OpenRefine | Amigos Library Services |
| | 1-3 p.m. | Twins in the Library: Services, Programs and Displays to Wow the Tweens | Amigos Library Services |
| | 1:30-2:30 p.m. | Get the Scoop on 5G | Amigos Library Services |
| June 22 | 1:30-2:30 p.m. | Imposter Syndrome: Facing Fears and Support Others Through Mentoring | Amigos Library Services |
| June 24-26 | | ALA Virtual: Community Through Connection | American Library Association |
| Sept. 30-Oct. 2 | | MLA 2020: Envision, Engage, Empower (Springfield, Mo.) | Missouri Library Association |

Featured Library Employee for the Missouri Library Association: *Whitney Gerwitz!*

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



Whitney Gerwitz; St. Charles City-County Library; I am the Government Documents coordinator at the Middendorf-Kredell branch. I work with the Government Publishing Office to deliver current and relevant government information to the public. I teach classes on voter registration, how to research candidates and issues for the election, how to search and find Congressional and local bills, decipher fake news, and many other government-related classes. I love keeping people informed and making sure they have fun while learning!

I also work with another coworker on a series we created in 2017 called Current Conversations where we focus on current and somewhat controversial topics within our community such as racism, immigration, climate change, and prison reform. We bring in local professionals who are experts within a specific field in order to allow open and honest discussion between members of the community. After running it for a year, we contributed a chapter to a recent publication, *Social Justice and Activism in Libraries*, on how other libraries may implement a similar series at their own libraries based on our experiences. This year, we successfully applied for a grant from the Missouri Humanities Council to help fund the series, so that's exciting!

What originally got you interested in working at a library?

I actually ended up at the library completely by accident. I spent most of my college life in a library instead of a sorority house or going to college parties (lame, I know). After I graduated college, I applied to the library near my house in order to work while I was in grad school, but little did I know that twelve years later, I'd still be here. When I started working for the library, it was right around the time the recession hit, and I realized how big of an impact the library has within the community. I never realized the extent to which public libraries go for its patrons and how much of a cornerstone it is to a free society.

What keeps you coming back every day?

Knowing that you are a part of the community and being able to fulfill any need within the community is what keeps me focused on my job. Being in Government Information, patrons approach me frequently regarding government and social services in hopes that I am able to help them enroll in social security, apply for disability, or help with taxes. I may not be able to offer direct assistance, but I guide people on where to go and how to get the information they desire. It also gives me ideas on what our community needs and can help plan programming accordingly, such as Medicare enrollment assistance or legal assistance with a non-profit legal organization, so those people can get help when they need it. It always amazes me the amount of trust people put in libraries and librarians. They will come to us for any and every need they have. Maybe I feel flattered that people put so much trust in me and the wonderful people I work with, but it's a feeling that makes you want to keep coming back.

In light of recent events, it has become even more obvious how important libraries are to the community. Libraries from all over have been able to come together and adapt to the needs of their community whether it's offering virtual programs, providing hotspots, using their buildings as emergency distribution centers, utilizing their 3D printers for face shields, and more. This took us all by surprise but the way libraries and their staff have adapted, it makes me proud to work in this profession. I look forward to being able to walk back into my building and see what the future holds for libraries.

What's challenging about your work?

No two days are alike when you work at a library, so there are always different challenges you face, whether it's dealing with the public, staffing issues, or keeping yourself up to date with technology. I think the biggest challenge, however, is something every library faces and that's trying to be resourceful while continuing to be creative and captivating when you have limited funding. While challenging, this can be done! Government Documents may not be the most exciting topic to some but when you build a photo booth from PVC pipe and equip it with an iPad, you can have people express why certain Amendments are important to them, give them patriotic photo booth props, or have them read famous speeches from history, and it will suddenly spark an interest in that topic.

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Has your work made you either curious, or passionate, or awestruck about something?

It has certainly made me more passionate when it comes to information literacy and making sure people receive credible information. I love that I work in a Special Collection made up of primary sources. When someone asks me to find a book on a certain topic, specifically something they just heard in the news, there may not be a book published on the topic yet but I can almost guarantee I can find a Government Document on it! Being able to find documents that are obscure to spark other's curiosity or documents that are applicable to current events is like Christmas for me. I love being able to share my passion with others!

Who is one of your mentors?

I have so many influencers in my career and personal life that it is really hard for me to pick a mentor. I will have to say we have a great and supportive Government Documents group in the St. Louis area that meets a few times a year to see what everyone is doing in their libraries. They are always available for questions and assistance when you need it and everyone works together so well. Our regional coordinator at the University of Missouri, Marie Concannon, is such a great advocate for open records, and mentor!

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.

I grew up in the 90s and am starting to feel really nostalgic lately so I have been listening to a lot of 90s music. This must be how my parents felt in the 90s when they wanted to listen to 60s music all the time. I don't know how to persuade you on why you should pick this up, but just that listening to a little grunge and hip hop may make your work day a little better.

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!



Missouri State University Collecting COVID-19 Pandemic Information for the Future

Missouri State University's [Special Collections and Archives](#) is asking members of the MSU community to [share their experiences](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic to be saved for future researchers.

This time period will likely be of huge interest to future historians and later generations. The details of individuals' day-to-day lives right now will be important to researchers, just as historians and students today look back at the 1918 influenza pandemic. A century from now, this information may mean the world to someone trying to understand the effects of the pandemic on daily lives.



The University Archives preserves information and artifacts about the history of Missouri State University, and this information will help future researchers better understand the impact the pandemic is having on our community. They are also requesting physical items related to the pandemic (such as a sign displayed at an office, business, or home) be saved to donate to the Archives at a later date.

Community members can use [this form](#) to submit their thoughts and experiences to the University Archives, or they can contact Archives@MissouriState.edu. Comments submitted via the online form can be made anonymously, and the form can be submitted multiple times if community members want to send updates on their situations.

Shannon Mawhiney, smawhiney@missouristate.edu

MOBIUS News

Resource Sharing: How Do We (Temporarily) Stop This Thing?

MOBIUS staff have had a unique experience this spring – rather than focusing on keeping physical resource sharing moving quickly and efficiently as is our usual task, we found ourselves suddenly challenged with the reverse task: stopping resource sharing, first for individual libraries, then altogether as the COVID-19 situation quickly evolved and more communities, then finally the state, were placed under stay-at-home orders and libraries needed to close.

Thanks to timely and constant communication from and among our membership, with one another on the MOBIUS team, and with our courier partners, we were able to successfully suspend resource sharing and focus on supporting staff from our member libraries who suddenly found themselves needing to work from home – all while MOBIUS staff themselves also made the shift to working remotely. Though it's certainly been a bit of a wild ride, it has really highlighted the spirit of teamwork and camaraderie among our membership and staff as we all have worked together to navigate this truly uncharted territory in our history. We have never been more thankful for our MOBIUS family, and we are more committed than ever to our membership's success.

MOBIUS Annual Conference Goes Virtual

The 2020 MOBIUS Annual Conference is still on for June 1-3, but due to uncertainties surrounding the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, we have opted to shift to a virtual event. We may not be able to gather traditionally this year, but there will still be a full range of sessions, training opportunities, chances to network with one another as well as vendors, and a keynote presentation from Lorcan Dempsey, Vice President, Membership and Research, Chief Strategist, OCLC. This will be our first-ever virtual conference and we are excited about the opportunity to keep our membership connected during these challenging times!

For more details, visit the conference website: <https://2020conf.mobiusconsortium.org/>.



Amigos Member Spotlights

In this Amigos Member Spotlight, Executive Director Lisa Wells gives [a look into what the Pioneer Library System \(PLS\)](#) provides. Founded in 1958, PLS was the first public library system established in Oklahoma. Headquartered in Norman, PLS serves Cleveland, McClain, and Pottawatomie counties through twelve branches in 10 communities as well as Information Stations in rural communities.

In this Amigos Member Spotlight, join Webster University's Dean of University Libraries, Eileen Condon, along with Global Leadership Academy's Head of Instruction, Liaison, & Research Services and Co-director, Holly Hubenschmidt, [share some things they've learned](#) about collection building, international library accreditation, building institutional collaborations, as well as some data-driven building changes, adaptations and future plans.

3 Months of Free Access to SimplyE at Amigos

Simplifying your patrons' use of your virtual services is key right now. To help you handle increased access to your virtual resources, [we are offering SimplyE to any public library](#) at no charge for 3 months. The SimplyE app gathers ebooks and audiobooks from major providers into a single display for your patrons - making it easier for them to find, read and listen. Contact us for more information!

What Do I Get for My Amigos Membership Dues?

A common question for this time of year at Amigos is "what are we getting for our membership dues?" This question is more important now when many libraries are having to pivot – focusing on a specific set of existing or new services instead of all.

Amigos was established as a resource sharing organization, helping libraries share bibliographic and library resources in the 1970s. From the beginning, the board members saw Amigos as having a larger impact on libraries than just MARC records and interlibrary loan. View [this article](#) to learn why Continuing Education is a truly standout and valuable benefit of Amigos membership and how you can make use of it.

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FREE RDA Toolkit at Amigos?! Have You Claimed Yours?

Are you interested in subscribing to the [RDA Toolkit](#)? Did you know that Amigos member libraries get access for one user free of charge and a discount on the cost for other users?

Amigos Vendor Partners Offer to Help Libraries During COVID-19 Crisis

Several Amigos vendor partners are offering additional support to libraries during this unprecedented time. We have gathered [a list of these](#) and will continue to add as we are made aware of them.

ICOLC COVID-19 Statement and Vendor Information Spreadsheet

In response to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the International Coalition of Library Consortia released a statement. In support, we are sharing [their message](#) with you.

Save BIG with Docuseek's Spring Specials

These Docuseek [Spring offers](#) will enhance your streaming collection with award-winning films from around the world from leaders in social-issue and independent film distribution.

BioOne Makes 200+ Articles Available

Through a collaboration with ARL and GWLA, BioOne has made 215 articles related to the coronavirus [available on their platform](#). More resources available here.

Infobase Discounts for Amigos Members

Special discounts on Academic Reference Databases are available for Amigos members as a [limited-time offer!](#)

Continuing Education Opportunities

Late last year we introduced our newest Amigos Publication: "Continued" This quarterly newsletter is dedicated to all things related to continuing education within the library field. View the [latest issue!](#)

Know & Go Updates

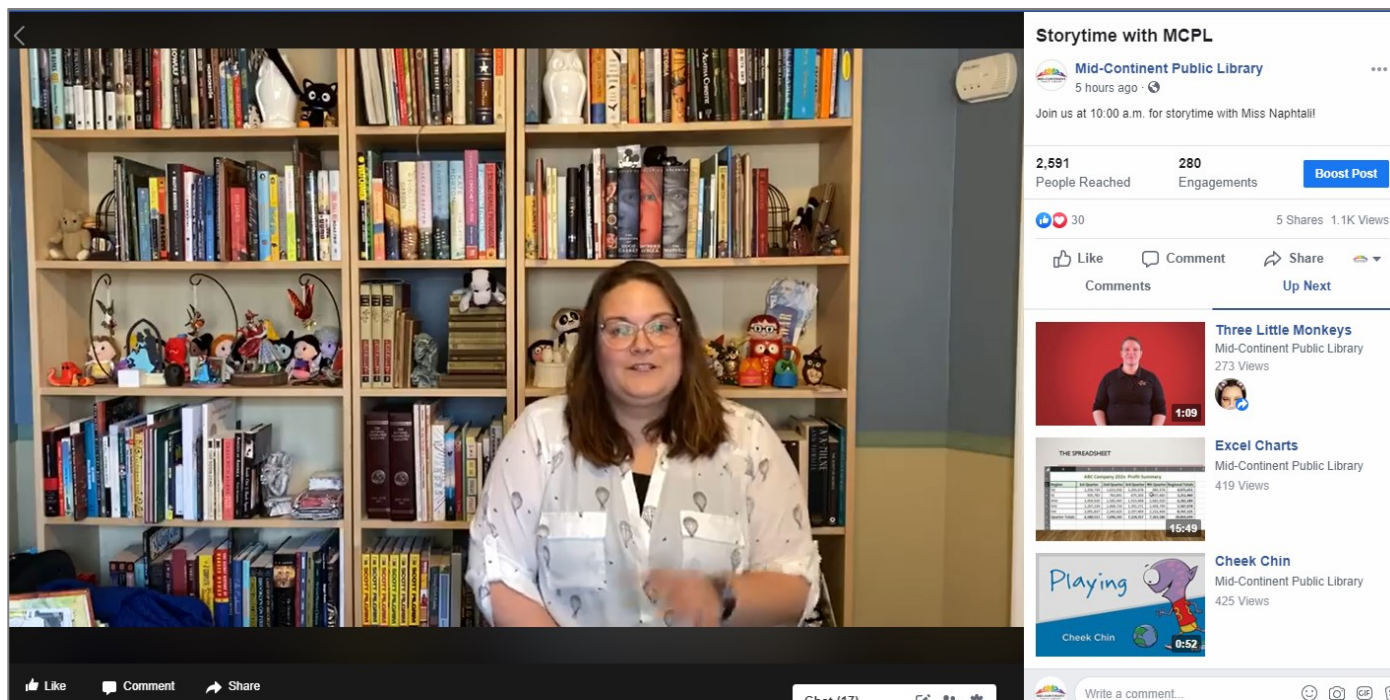
Know & Go's are part of a series of informative web sessions covering topics of current interest. Designed for group participation, FREE for Amigos members and only \$35 for non-members, Know & Go Updates are presented online on Monday afternoons from 1:30-2:30 p.m. CT. [Register today!](#)

- May 18: [Get the Scoop on 5G](#)
- June 1: [How to Catalog Zines](#)
- June 8: [Conducting Effective Meetings](#)
- June 15: [Documenting Library Work: Lessons We Can Learn from Technical Writers](#)
- June 22: [Imposter Syndrome: Facing Fears and Support Others Through Mentoring](#)

Upcoming Live Online Classes

Here's a quick look at upcoming Live Online classes, all CT. Classes are always being added so be sure to check out our full [course schedule!](#)

- *Schedule change* [Understanding and Using Library Data](#) May 18 & 20, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- [Programming with Python and PyMARC](#) May 19 & 21, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- [Library Management for Beginners: Workplace Communication](#) May 28, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- [Launching and Cultivating your Face to Face and Online Book Discussion Groups](#) May 28, 1-3 p.m.
- [Documenting Library Work: Lessons We Can Learn from Technical Writers](#) June 15, 1:30-2:30 p.m.
- [Introduction to Dublin Core](#) June 2, 2-4 p.m.
- [Introduction to MarcEdit](#) June 11, 2-4 p.m. – *Early bird registration ends 5/20*
- [Design Thinking in Libraries](#) June 16-17, 2-4 p.m. – *Early bird registration ends 5/25*
- [Introduction to OpenRefine](#) June 18, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. – *Early bird registration ends 5/27*
- [Twins in the Library: Services, Programs and Displays to Wow the Tweens](#) June 18, 1-3 p.m. – *Early bird registration ends 5/27*



MCPL's Virtual Storytime on Facebook

Mid-Continent Public Library

MCPL Expands Digital Collection, Launches Virtual Classes

After closing to the public on March 16, Mid-Continent Public Library immediately began to explore ways it could continue to support its customers outside its 32 branches. In addition to promoting its more than 230 online resources for all ages and strengthening its Wi-Fi signals to be more accessible from branch parking lots, the Library began to grow its digital collection by adding more eBooks and eAudiobooks, including 5,000 new children's eBook titles. In the first two weeks after it closed, MCPL saw nearly 2,000 new users on OverDrive.

In addition, the Library acquired packages of "simultaneous use," digital books that can be checked out by an unlimited number of customers. So far, 102 classics from Plympton Publishing have been made available for MCPL customers' simultaneous use in eBook format, as well as 4,171 free eBook titles from Duke Classics, and 100 eAudiobook titles from Tantor Audio and Blackstone.

MCPL also started streaming "[virtual events](#)" on its social media pages, so that customers can stay connected while they practice social distancing. These virtual events have included:

- Storytimes on the [MCPL Facebook Page](#)
- Business classes on the [Square One Small Business Services Facebook page](#). Square One is also continuing to offer one-on-one consultations with local entrepreneurs in the digital space; email squareone@mymcpl.org to set up a virtual appointment
- Book discussions on the [MCPL Readers' Lounge Facebook page](#)
- Poetry readings, trivia, author interviews, and other programs from [The Story Center on its Facebook page](#)
- Tech classes on the [MCPL360 Facebook Page](#)



As another way to keep customers engaged, MCPL launched a [Spring into Reading challenge](#) for all ages. The Challenge offers customers the chance to read as well as complete activities at home to earn points toward badges (and bragging rights!). During the first two weeks alone, more than 1,140 customers signed up for the Challenge, logging 5,784 books, 88,706 reading minutes, and 737 completed activities.

The Library is continuing to pursue new methods of serving its customers and is also developing a plan for reopening once it's safe.



Springfield-Greene County Libraries

The Online Branch is Open During COVID-19

The Library continues to promote the rich online resources of OverDrive, Hoopla, RB digital, Tumblebook Library and more through home page blogs and links. Many services have also increased their offerings to library patrons during our closures. Patrons like Michelle Ruckman have taken note. She asked about a language learning site. We steered her to Mango Languages. She wants to be ready for her mission trip in late June and wants to learn a little Spanish.

In addition,

- Youth Services librarians star in a Facebook Live program at 10 a.m. every Tuesday called Storytime and More with the Library. Mr. Joe from the Library Center recently played his guitar and sang “Wish I Was a Mole in the Ground.” Miss Sarah kicked off the series; Miss Phyllis sang/read a book and pulled bees out of a hive. She invited grown-ups to write in chat which little ones were watching, and Miss Phyllis greeted each of them as she saw their names pop up.



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- The Library Station kicked off another online video slideshow series of branch staffers holding up “Hello, we miss you” signs. Training Coordinator Krissy Sinor stitched still shots together [into a video](#), laid down an original ukulele music track of local musician Rick Maxson. (Krissy is also taking care of staff by regularly offering links to staff and self-care trainings, promoting them in the weekly LibeWire staff newsletter.)
- The Library partnered with the CBS affiliate KOLR Channel 10 to present a series “[Tell Me a Story](#).” Station anchors read books by local author/poet David L. Harrison (who got permission from his three publishers!).
- When they’re not watching the Library’s videos and live storytimes, families can pick up tips to get them via regular blogs on the Kids site, written by Early Literacy Specialist Stephanie Smallwood and Youth Services Coordinator Nancee Dahms-Stinson.
- Reference staff members are launching a call-in service, taking turns staffing a single line to respond to voicemails from patrons about service updates and more. They continue to respond to queries through Your Next Read and Ask a Librarian.
- The Social Media Committee continues to post fun and helpful information on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Other staff continues to promote new and expanded online services in the monthly Library Newsletter, targeted emails, website blogs, and a regular column for the local newspaper.



Taking Care of Staff with Weekly Newsletter & Director’s Update

Knowing that communication is more important now than ever, the Library’s weekly staff newsletter LibeWire continues to publish, providing updates on services or databases added each week to serve patrons. It also includes a weekly update from Executive Director Regina Greer Cooper to convey news she learns from virtual meetings with health department, city and county officials, and other community leaders.

Librarian’s Memory Care Project Profiled in “Real Simple”



Tysha Shay, Republic Branch Manager

Republic Branch Manager Tysha Shay’s Stories for Life project was highlighted in the April 2020 issue of *Real Simple* magazine. The article, “15 Efforts That Make Most Libraries Even Cooler Than You Knew,” by Carla Bruce-Eddings features 15 short features of library services and programs. Stories for Life, a project launched several years ago by Tysha when she worked at the Library Station, was featured in a section titled, “Engaging the elderly.” The program provides memory activities, music and stories to long-term care facilities and Alzheimer’s units.



Departments Contribute to Reopening Plan

Each department or branch manager has consulted his or her staff to develop a proposed reopening plan as it affects that unit. Each manager then outlined that plan in a Google spreadsheet shared with all managers and Executive Director Regina Greer Cooper. At weekly Zoom meetings of the Business Continuity Plan task force, administrators are going through the plans to develop a cohesive reopening plan for the whole district. The overarching plan is: Gradual reopening. Any rollout of services will comply with the Springfield-Greene County Health Department, state and national guidelines for maintaining a safe environment for staff and patrons.

Kathleen O’Dell, community relations director, kathleeno@thelibrary.org

Mid-America Library Alliance

Mid-America Library Alliance Offers Free Webinar

MALA is hosting **Online Tools for Content Creation and Virtual Meetings** with Lauren Hays, Assistant Professor of Instructional Technology at the University of Central Missouri, on Thursday, May 28, 2020 from 2-3 p.m.

This free 60-minute webinar will provide resources for librarians to utilize while working remotely, highlighting important tools that no librarian should be without.

For more information click [here](#)



New Professional Development Series Available

2020 marks a reboot of MALA's in-person and online professional development training for library staff and professionals. MALA'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. Find out more at malalibraries.org/professional-development.

St. Louis County Library

Helping Alyxis and the St. Louis Community

Alyxis is a young regular patron of the Lewis & Clark branch, located in North St. Louis County. A big fan of the Cupcake Diaries, Alyxis typically announces her presence by bounding up to the circulation desk and demanding the next installment in the series. At this point, her grandmother usually chides her to come into the meeting room for the After-School Meals Program, but today is different. The branch is closed to the public, and Alyxis is in her grandmother's car, queued up outside for drive-thru food pick-up. Librarians are outside donning masks and gloves, using hand signals to take orders for meal kits. Alyxis calls out to Gina Sheridan, Lewis & Clark branch manager. "Hey! Ms. Gina! I miss you!" she yells.



Thirty minutes before opening, the food distribution line at Lewis & Clark is spilling out of the parking lot. Photo courtesy of Gina Sheridan.

St. Louis County Library (SLCL) is not new to the fight against hunger. Prior to closing on March 16 to help stop the spread of COVID-19, SLCL already offered free after school and summer meals to children in partnership with Operation Food Search (OFS). After branches closed, SLCL and OFS worked quickly to adapt their meal distribution model. Nine branches now offer drive-thru meals on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Each child receives a shelf-stable meal kit, containing two breakfasts and two lunches. In just two-and-a-half weeks, SLCL has distributed over 41,000 drive-thru meals.

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(Left) OFS delivers meals in the morning to the Florissant Valley Branch. (Right) Meals are unpacked and distributed by library staff. K.J. Meyer pictured here. Photo by E King.

Demand is high; Many branches see long car queues snaking their way out of library parking lots, and some branches run out of meals in as little as 30 minutes. If one branch runs out, library staff use a live meal tracker, or a text service run by the reference department to direct patrons to the nearest branch with meals. Pressure is mounting with the sharp economic decline and rise of unemployment. And with some school districts discontinuing meal deliveries to students, SLCL's partnership with OFS is a vital lifeline for St. Louis County residents.

SLCL is working hard to still offer well-rounded support to patrons during the closure. In addition to drive-thru food pick-up, SLCL is offering:

- Emergency diaper distribution in partnership with St. Louis Diaper Bank. Patrons have received 36,000 diapers so far.
- Period supply distribution in partnership with St. Louis Alliance for Period Supplies. Patrons have received 374 period kits so far.
- Virtual storytimes, virtual author events, virtual book clubs, and one-on-one virtual appointments with reference librarians and computer lab trainers.
- Removed barriers to patron access. Patrons can now register online to instantly access online resources. We have also renewed expiring library cards, opened access to accounts sent to collections, extended due dates for all checked out materials.
- Partnering with St. Louis Metro-area schools to offer our remote learning and technology support.
- A virtual branch, which offers easy access to eMedia and database, contacting library staff, and getting an online card. Previously, patrons had to activate their cards inside a branch if they registered online. The one-stop online registration is a new feature in response to COVID-19.
- Wi-Fi access is now available 24/7 in branch parking lots, with wireless access points placed outside in a protective enclosure. Previously, Wi-Fi was not available outside of business hours, and parking lot service was spotty.



(Above) Diaper and period pack distribution at the Natural Bridge branch. (Below) Diaper distribution at the Natural Bridge branch. Photos by Kara Smith.



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MO INFO

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