In August 2008, BDL was the first public library in Michigan to adopt the Evergreen Integrated Library System (ILS). We partnered with a handful of other libraries in the state, including Grand Rapids Public Library (GRPL) and Traverse Area District Library (TADL), to create Michigan Evergreen to spread out the cost hosting and support of the system.

For about four years Michigan Evergreen operated well and had no major issues. In 2012, the two biggest partners—GRPL and TADL—decided to exit Michigan Evergreen and to each run Evergreen alone. Their principle reasons for doing this were to reduce errors and increase efficiency and quality of service to their patrons by having only their own libraries in their Evergreen installation. Now in 2017, BDL is feeling that same pain and looking to the same solution.

Michigan Evergreen is a shared system, but we are not operating as a consortium with the same rules, policies, and procedures in place. Rather, we are a loose confederation, and each of our constituent library systems has their own settings, rules, policies, etc. There is no way in Evergreen to hide these myriad of features customized for one library from the other partner libraries, so there is always a danger of library staff choosing the wrong thing while going about day to day business. For example, a staff member registering a BDL patron could choose a Niles District Library patron type, and suddenly we're losing statistics due to a mistake. We employ a variety of quality control procedures to combat this—and we find most mistakes—but doubtlessly some things slip by.

A more serious example can be found in our catalog. All Michigan Evergreen libraries share the same cataloging records, and all partner libraries can edit them. Unfortunately 1) as a confederation there are no binding rules to ensure that we all catalog items the same way and up to standards, and 2) any partner library can edit any other library's existing cataloging records, whether or not they are trained catalogers. Many of our Michigan Evergreen partners are smaller libraries who may not have trained librarians and catalogers on staff. Our BDL cataloging staff, who are well trained, have identified and corrected numerous instances of partner libraries editing our records in such a way that makes them harder to find by our patrons or in ways that may even affect checkouts to our patrons.

Going solo, then, is a way to limit errors by having only BDL settings and policies in place in the system, and to ensure that no one else is changing the quality of our cataloging records.

We requested a quote from our current host, Equinox Software Inc. (ESI), to go solo with them as described above. ESI is the creator of Evergreen and leads the international open-source project to maintain and improve it; there is no one

better to host us. Hosting by ourselves with ESI would increase our charges from approximately $10,000/year to $20,000/year. The switch to a solo installation would also have about $7,000 in migration charges to remove all other libraries' data and policies. The migration fees and first year's cost could be paid out of our future automation fund, which was set up for this purpose. If the Board approves this change, we would inform our Michigan Evergreen partners immediately, submit contracts and notices by January, and implement in the summer of 2018.

We have enjoyed nine years of features and cost savings with Michigan Evergreen, but we feel that having our own installation of Evergreen is the way now to provide the best library services. And even with a higher cost to be on our own, we will still be paying $5,000 *less* than what we were paying for our previous commercial ILS before we switched to Evergreen.

In conclusion, we are requesting to spend a total of $27,250 from the Future Automation fund in 2018 to host our library system as a standalone Evergreen installation.

Submitted by John Rucker

With this year's tax receipts in, it's time to purchase some IT hardware. This year we are seeking to replace our usual ~1/5 of the computers, plus add some gear tailored toward the youngest patrons.

Up this year is replacing public computers at Algansee, Quincy, Sherwood, and Union Twp., along with some public and staff machines at the Coldwater branch, replacing machines from 2012. In addition, we would like to get tablet computers for use in our children's areas. These tablets would be secured in something called a Krayon Kiosk, which also provides power and stability. The tablet computers will be preloaded with selected age-appropriate titles and not be for general Internet use. All branches have determined that space is available for these kiosks.

With pricing in from three vendors for the computers, we are recommending PCMall Government for the computer and tablets. PCMG pricing for 32 desktop computers, 1 staff laptop, 1 server, and 15 iPads comes to $33,386.66, including shipping. The Krayon Kiosks are available only from Aridan Books and comes to $6,248.

That brings the total to $39,634.66. We would like to request an even $40,000 from the Capital IT account in case there is any fluctuation in pricing before we order. We currently have $42,093 available in this account.

Submitted by John Rucker