



It's Summer Reading Time! Jessica's work on coordinating programming and especially for setting up our new platform for tracking progress—Beanstack—is especially appreciated. We have seen a rapid increase in attendance as the pandemic wanes, and some large outdoor programs at multiple branches. Branch managers are conducting a mix of outdoor programming and resuming some indoor programming. It's so good to see more patrons at the library!

For the past 6 weeks or so, Kimberly, Jessica, and I have all attended an intensive workshop put on by the Michigan Library Association, titled "Surviving and Thriving as a Director", which I reported on last month. We are finished now, as we have reflected together on what insights we learned, a couple (of the many good ideas!) have risen to the top: always ask where can the library fit in with whatever is going on in the community; and the fact that we should hire for potential—library-specific skills can always be taught, provided the candidate has the potential to learn in the first place. That's just the tip of the iceberg, and I'd be happy to discuss this course more with any of you in a personal meeting.

The end of May saw this year's Evergreen Conference. It was virtual again, using a software platform called Hopin to approximate the in-person conference experience. There were multiple conference "rooms", a "lobby", a vendor area, and social and gaming rooms. The execution was impressive, if not quite as nice as a real in-person event.

There were two tracks this year, so Kimberly and I attended to make sure we could take in both. The keynote, and overall theme, this year focused on data privacy and protecting patron's personally identifying information. The keynote also touched on the "neutrality" controversy I mentioned above. I attended sessions on how holds work behind the scenes, creating custom reports, Evergreen interface protocols that vendors can use, customizations that can be made to the catalog, best practices for handling unexpected library closures, permissions restrictions to safeguard privacy, creating test instances, and updates on new features coming with our next upgrade. Kimberly took sessions covering, among others, circulation procedures, cataloging, materials acquisitions, and more.

The emphasis on privacy was timely, feeding directly into the work we have been doing on policy reviews, including creating a draft comprehensive privacy policy that will be reviewed by the Public Services Committee. We also were able to adjust our procedures to immediately purge some personally identifying information from our patron database that is no longer needed.

Kimberly and I visited the virtual vendor booths to get information about "e-cards"—that is, library cards we can issue to patrons remotely to use our digital services without their needing to ever visit the library. The vendor we chatted with usually works with much larger systems (like the entire state of Georgia, and King County [Seattle] Washington). Not surprisingly, the quote was more than our budget would allow, but we got some great advice from other Evergreen libraries who have implemented something like this purely in-house, and we feel we can implement e-cards here at BDL.

I attended a webinar sponsored by U of M on the topic of neutrality in libraries. At its core is the idea that while libraries formerly espoused neutrality, in practice libraries aren't neutral and possibly shouldn't even have that as a goal. For example, pro-Nazi literature is legal in the US,

but a public library would rarely opt to spend tax money on such materials, and few would argue that we should go out of our way to do so. Our 1998 Materials Selection Policy includes use of the word "neutral", but our recommended forthcoming updates do remove this term.

At the most recent Coldwater DDA meeting, we had a presentation on the new Coldwater "Social District", which allows open carry consumption of alcoholic beverages sold from participating licensed retailers in a district that encompasses the library. Any business may allow patrons in their premises with alcohol in specially-marked Social District cups, or not as they prefer. Since our [Code of Conduct Policy](#) does permit beverages with lids on them, we will be asking the Public Services Committee to weigh in on the topic of alcohol in the library, keeping in mind that from time to time organizations like the Literacy Council have conducted licensed fundraisers involving wine tasting.

Save the date! At the Union Twp. Friends of the Library meeting, they announced that they will be sponsoring an open house at the library on Saturday, September 25, from 5-7, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the building of the Lucille E. Dearth branch! This open house is during the Union City Farm to Fork celebration, so plan on attending and staying for a good meal and entertainment at the amphitheater next to the library!

We had our building and liability insurance review with Vested Risk Strategies. Rates are increasing modestly, but at least are locked in for another 3 years. I also met with Ashley to go over her draft of the new Universal Chart of Accounts codes for the library, and I met with Cheryl Lawrence for an update on bookmobile research and planning. Both projects are proceeding well.

Other meetings this past month: Bronson Friends, Bronson Twp., Union Twp., Branch County COVID Response meeting, Branch County Commissioners.

In Coldwater Branch building maintenance news, I attended a meeting of the city partners for our HVAC controls system. We are migrating our computer controls from the public safety building to a cloud-based solution. This has been in the works for a couple months now, and should be done in a few more weeks. CBPU was in the building working more on the new fiber connection and on their new 4-Corners Camera. CBPU also worked on the transformer to the building to repair damage from someone backing into it. Finally, the threshold on the west public entrance had deteriorated and had to be replaced so that the door could properly shut. The RFP for the Coldwater Painting Project was re-issued and ads placed again.

I'm appreciative that the Board authorized a little financial buffer for the computer purchasing at the May meeting. As feared, stock was not available by the next morning. Ultimately, we ended up needing to switch brands and had to get two different models of desktop computer to make it all work. The final tally was \$4 less than the authorized amount, and the last of the hardware was delivered yesterday. Curtis and I are working to prepare the new machines now.

In other IT news, I swapped out a server at the Coldwater Branch that had been delayed by the pandemic, which then allowed me to update the WiFi antennas at all branch locations. The new WiFi access is faster, has better coverage, and can be centrally managed to troubleshoot and track statistics and performance. The 5 new branch servers for public access and data backups are next on the to-do list.

Finally, we conducted interviews this week for the Children's Services Coordinator. We hope to be able to announce a successful candidate next week. We are also posting for a half-time clerk at the Coldwater Branch to cover an open position.

Thank you,

John Rucker



What a busy busy month! First up was the Evergreen conference. It was held virtually on a platform called Hopin. It was great and interaction in the sessions, networking groups, and with vendors was easily done. I did miss conference snack time but it was great to learn more about our library system, Evergreen. I focused more on the tracks that pertained to circulation and cataloging at the library. One of my favorite things that I learned was how to create custom reading lists from our catalog. The reading lists can be on any topic such as Early Literacy for Summer Reading to the celebration of Juneteenth. These lists can be easily shared with our patrons through our website or social media.

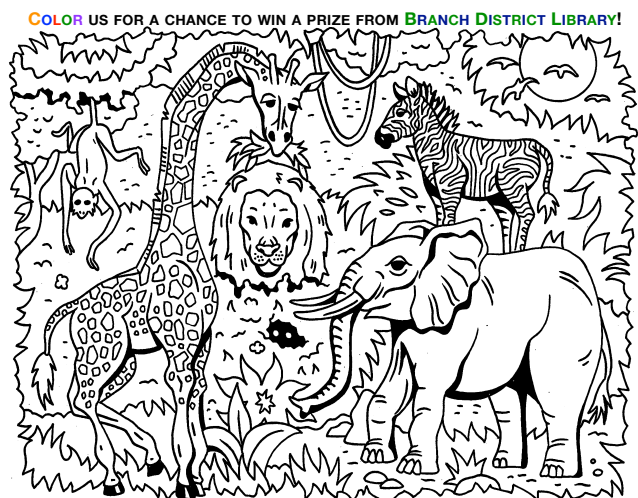
I attended a virtual conversation from the University of Michigan. The topic was Neutrality and Libraries. Small groups were conducted to discuss this often passionate topic in library land. This will be an ongoing discussion both in the library community and at BDL. I also attended the regular meetings for the Branch County Community Network and the Branch County Partner Meeting. I also wrapped up the "Surviving and Thriving as a Library Director" workshop.

The recent MIOSHA changes on May 24 promoted changes at BDL. Under the new order, we are now required to keep the last six months of employees' health screenings. This change promoted a massive amount of shredding of the older health screenings. I have talked to all staff and most of our volunteers about the current masking requirements for employees. Staff are still required to complete a daily health screening, regardless of their vaccination status. The Michigan Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity hosted a MIOSHA Emergency Rules Q&A that I attended virtually. This was helpful to make sure that BDL was following the guidelines and we are.

We have passed our RFID competition deadline of June 1. Alganssee, Bronson, Quincy, Sherwood, and Union are done with tagging items. Coldwater is approximately 75% complete. We have borrowed the Sherwood clerk, Maria, for the Coldwater Branch two days a week to help out. As the Coldwater branch is picking up with patrons, it is harder to focus on tagging and Maria has been great in keeping the project moving. I had two meetings with our vendor Tech Logic, in using their Shelf Management Tool. This device will help us locate items in our collection that are missing, lost, or another status other than available. We will also use it for a traditional inventory and to clean up our catalog of items.

The Administrative duties were heavy this month with meetings with the management team to work on several BDL policies. We also worked on the posting of the district-wide Children's Services Coordinator.

Lastly, BDL is hosting a district-wide coloring contest! This idea was from my 8-year-old daughter who suggested that the library should have a coloring contest. It goes along with the Summer Reading Program. Library staff member Ben Lyon created the jungle theme coloring sheet. The coloring sheets were handed out at the local schools, at our branches, and online. There will be a winner at every branch and 2 district-wide winners. The district-wide winners will get one of



two giant animal sprinklers that fit with the Summer Reading theme "Tails and Tales".

Below: Coloring contest sheets displayed at the Quincy and Sherwood Branch!



Submitted,
Kimberly Feltner



- The 2021 Summer Reading Program has launched! On June 7, we kicked off our Summer Reading Program with fun swag bags as a registration prize. We are already well beyond our 2020 registration numbers with adults having 88 registered, teens having 34 registered and 254 children registered.
- Our SRP programs are in full swing! We've had such a wonderful outpouring of patrons with our recent programs and are so grateful for our community returning to the library for their entertainment and educational programming needs. This last month our Teen Services Coordinator has held writing workshops in the cemetery and held nature walks on trails in a local park. Our Kid's Place staff is holding programs at Heritage Park.
- Last week I interviewed candidates for the Children's Service Coordinator position with the Director and Coldwater Branch Manager.
- The past month has been filled with hours of policy work with the Director and Assistant Director.
- Completed the "Surviving & Thriving as a Library Director" course with both the Director and Assistant Director.
- BDL is registered for a booth at the Fair and we are looking forward to a great week with lots of giveaways!

Submitted,

Jessica Tefft