

THE Envoy

Vol. 4, No. 1, Winter 2012



A Trustee's Tale: Idaho Library Association Trustee of the Year 2011

by Barry Myers, Nampa Public Library Trustee

Maybe you're like me, or maybe not. I have to confess that for many years, in fact, most of my life, I never gave a second thought to the role of library trustee; I took them for granted. You see, I love libraries and have spent many hours in them in various capacities. I know the vital and irreplaceable value they provide to communities, schools, universities, and other institutions. But then I noticed that our local library building was old, small, and cramped yet always bustling with activity, thanks to the hard work of the outstanding director and staff. I wondered if something could be done and talked with the

mayor about it. He suggested that I consider making myself available as a library trustee (much arm-twisting ensued!). Eventually I agreed and soon thereafter, I was appointed.

Wow! What did I get myself into? I thought I knew libraries pretty well, but was so naïve! After much reading, many meetings, and some online tutorials, I attempted to prepare myself for this awesome responsibility. I helped develop updated policies, attended strategic planning sessions, assisted with the development of building plans, collected community comments, worked my way through a book challenge, and tried to be a good advocate for the library with decisionmakers and the public. I believed I was doing an okay job until I met John Held, trustee for the Payette Public Library. John was appointed trustee in 1995 and served as its chairman from 2001-2010. He and his fellow trustees wrote a five-year strategic



John Held
ILA's 2011 Trustee of the Year

plan in 2008 that included the goal of library expansion. He worked with the city council to approve a feasibility study of architectural alternatives. That study, presented to the Council in January 2010, recommended an expansion plan for the library facility with an estimated cost of \$1.5 million. The Council suggested that the library board explore grant opportunities. Within three weeks of that suggestion, the USDA announced a grant program for the expansion of rural libraries. They applied and received the news that if a local bond was passed to fund the plan,

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**Idaho Commission
for Libraries**

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Mission:

The Idaho Commission for Libraries assists libraries to build the capacity to better serve their clientele.

Commissioners:

John Held, Dave Mecham,
Bruce Noble, Sara Staub,
and Larry Weeks

State Librarian

Ann Joslin

Commission Contacts:

- Danna Angevine, state publications, cataloging, and acquisitions librarian
- Dian Scott, office services supervisor
- Erica Compton, reading programs coordinator
- Frank Nelson, southeastern Idaho library consultant
- Gina Persichini, networking consultant
- Glynda Pflieger, school library consultant
- Jan Wall, northern Idaho library consultant
- Kevin Tomlinson, southwest/south central Idaho library consultant
- Marjorie Hooper, associate state librarian
- Pam Bradshaw, program supervisor
- Roger Dubois, administrative services manager
- Shirley Biladeau, continuing education consultant
- Sonja Hudson, grants/contracts officer
- Staci Shaw, reading programs coordinator
- Stephanie Bailey-White, reading programs coordinator
- Sue Walker, Talking Book Service consultant
- Teresa Lipus, public information specialist

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they would receive up to \$400,000 from the grant. Now the really hard work began!

As you may be aware, very few bond elections have been successful in Idaho recently. The bar to pass is set quite high: a two-thirds super-majority must vote yes. The election was scheduled for August 3, 2010, leaving only a few months to drum up support. Under John's leadership, the library board worked hard using many tactics to help foster support for the library bond, including yard signs, phone calls, fliers, postcards, and word-of-mouth. Incredibly, the bond passed with 76% voting yes: The only library bond election to pass in Idaho in 2010!

After breaking ground in May 2011, the library expansion is due to be completed in January 2012, more than doubling the size of the library from 5,881 to 14,441 square feet. The facility includes a public meeting room, dedicated children's reading and program area, and expands public access computers from 9 to 20. No doubt these new and improved library amenities will be used by the outstanding director and staff to provide even better service to the citizens and guests of Payette, Idaho.

But, that's not the end of John's outstanding volunteer service to library users: since February 2009, John has served on the Idaho Board of Library Commissioners. He was elected to and has served the last two years as the Chair of the Trustee and Friends Division

of the Idaho Library Association (ILA). He delivered a presentation to the 2010 ILA Annual Conference describing how to run a successful library bond campaign. He also presented "A Prescription for Trustee Troubles" at the SWILA conference in April 2010.

Not only does John walk the walk, he also talks the talk, passing on to others what he has learned and providing an excellent example of what a truly involved library trustee can accomplish. Learning about John's work and seeing his accomplishments encourages me to be an even better trustee. Thank you John for your service and example. You deserve the recognition of being voted Idaho's Trustee of the Year!

Reprinted with permission from Barry Myers. This article originally appeared in the Fall 2011, v. 61, no. 2 edition of *The Idaho Librarian*, a publication of the Idaho Library Association (<http://theidaholiberalian.wordpress.com/>).

The Idaho Library Association has over 500 members representing libraries of all sizes in all areas of the state: academic, public, and school librarians as well as trustees and friends. ILA advocates for and promotes Idaho's libraries, promotes intellectual freedom for all Idaho residents, provides opportunities for continuing education for ILA members and the Idaho library community, and supports collective activities to improve library services and resources in Idaho. Learn more about ILA or become a member at www.idaholiberalian.org/.



Complying with Idaho Code 33-2741 regarding Internet Use Policies

by Kevin Tomlinson, ICfL library consultant

Why do public libraries need an Internet Use Policy?

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, "Twenty-five states have Internet filtering laws that apply to publicly funded schools or libraries. The majority of these states require school boards or public libraries to adopt Internet use policies to prevent minors from gaining access to sexually explicit, obscene or harmful materials. However, some states also require publicly funded institutions to install filtering software on library terminals or school computers." For more information, see www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=13491.

Idaho Code

Beginning October 1, 2012, all public libraries in Idaho receiving public money and governed by the provisions of Chapter 26 (city libraries) or Chapter 27 (district libraries) of Title 33, Idaho Code, will need to comply with Idaho Code 33-2741 regarding Internet Use Policies. **In addition to having a policy in place, this new law requires that filters must be in place** to protect against visual depictions that are child pornography, obscenity, or harmful to minors. See I.C. 33-2741(7) for a definition of terms. The filters *must* be in place on computer workstations provided by the library and used by minors. Computers used by adults, but not by minors, *may* be filtered, but it is not required. The library *must* also have in place a policy that addresses Internet safety. Policies

and filters (where required) *must* be in place by October 1, 2012.

Internet Use Policies

If your library does not have an Internet Use Policy in place, there are two templates available at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/InternetUsePolicies>. Library boards are encouraged to develop comprehensive policies that meet local needs while complying with 33-2741. When writing or revising your policy, remember that the new law allows filters to be disabled for adults and minors for lawful purposes. Filtering is required only for "publicly accessible computers," so patrons who are connecting their own computers to the library's Wi-Fi are not required to filter.

Librarians and trustees are encouraged to use LibIdaho listserv to discuss with other public libraries their experiences with particular filters. If you are not subscribed to LibIdaho, you can sign up at www.idaholibraries.org/libidaho.

Procedures

The law states that procedures may be developed:

- *For library staff to follow in enforcing the policy*
- *For patrons and staff to use to handle complaints about the policy or its enforcement or observed patron behavior*
- *For disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measure (if applicable)*

Filtering best practices

Libraries should take care to use filters in accordance with the library's mission. Infopeople provides some excellent guidelines, which are summarized on page 4. See more at <http://infopeople.org/resources/filtering/bestpractices>.

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Choosing filtering software

When asked which filtering software is best for libraries, Gina Persichini, networking consultant at the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) responded, "The answer will vary by community. Library directors and trustees will need to work together to find a tool that best fits the needs of the community they serve."

Since Internet filters have been around for some time, there are a lot of resources available to identify which ones work well. ICfL staff posted links to online articles with comparisons and reviews on the website. "We can't recommend any particular software for a library," says Persichini. "That is a decision unique to library and local community needs; it would be like telling someone what kind of shoes will fit their feet. It's something you need to try on. That's why it is so important to get started early." Many filtering software providers will offer a free trial so library staff can see how it works, look at features, and determine if they have the staff and financial resources to sustain the operation of it.

Persichini adds, "Free software is available for download, but free doesn't mean it is the best solution. You need to remember the old adage that you get what you pay for."

Internet Use Policies, filtering, and best practices cont'd from page 3

Protect Patron Privacy

Understand all the features associated with the filter you are using and turn off the unwanted features. Library administrators should also ensure that only authorized filter administrators have access to the filter server.

Minimize Blocking

By default, most filters will block far more content than is appropriate in a library setting. Tweak and tune your filter configuration before determining that your filter is set to block as little content as necessary to comply with your Internet Use Policy.

Monitor Blocking Accuracy

Ensure that someone is assigned

to monitor blocked sites in your library and that they adjust the filter as needed when sites that should be allowed are being blocked.

Make Unblocking Easy and Quick

Many filters provide features that enable adult patrons to turn off blocking for the duration of their session. Use these auto-selection features as much as possible to accommodate all patrons.

Some filters will require the patron to locate staff to unblock the site by entering a password or changing a setting on the server. Be sure your library has established a policy for handling unblocking requests swiftly and that the process is easy for both patrons and staff.

Keep Patrons Informed

Regardless of what your filter policy is, which filter you use, or how you handle unblocking sites, keep your patrons informed of the underlying reasons for filtering the Internet and all the procedures associated with implementing that policy. The Internet Use Policy should be readily available for all users accessing the Internet on library computers. Handouts about the filter and how to turn off filtering or request that a page be unblocked should also be readily available to patrons. If multiple filter profiles are available to choose from, make sure that guidance is provided so that patrons can make the choices that suit them.

E-Rate filing deadlines

DATE	ACTIVITY
February 14, 2012	Paper Filing: Form 470 (Description of Services Requested and Certification Form) must be received by USAC.
February 21, 2012	Electronic Filing: Form 470 (Description of Services Requested and Certification Form) must be posted to the USAC website.
Noon EDT January 9, 2012 to 11:59 PM EDT March 20, 2012	Form 471 (Services Ordered and Certification Form) The filing window will be open for 72 days.

Idaho at 150

March 4, 2013 is the official day of the Idaho Territorial Sesquicentennial. On that day in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln signed the bill creating the Idaho Territory. The sesquicentennial, *Idaho at 150*, will illuminate our state's future by helping people of all ages explore the territorial roots and history of Idaho. The Idaho



State Historical Society (ISHS) is tapping interested agencies and organizations for ideas to celebrate this event economically with existing resources. ICfL will help promote the celebration on our website, through social networking, with our newsletters, and through upcoming events and programs. We will also point to Idaho historical information available through LiLI.org and

other websites as well as books on Idaho history.

As part of the commemoration, ISHS is developing an exhibit on the 150 things that make Idaho the great place it is and invites people to nominate the people, places, things, and events that have made us who we are. See more about the project at <http://history.idaho.gov/>.



Funding public libraries by Kevin Tomlinson, ICfL library consultant

Public libraries are free. Everybody knows that, right?

Well, actually, no. One way or another, there is a cost to everything. The public library is housed in a building that requires heat, air conditioning, electricity, and running water. And there is the staff that runs the library, including purchasing, processing, cataloging, and shelving the materials that they also help you find and then check out to you. And the modern public library requires an Internet connection that patrons and staff need in order to do their work, not to mention the Internet filtering software required by Idaho Code 33-2741.

Where does the money come from? Title 33 of Idaho Code provides for two methods of forming a public library: City Libraries (Chapter 26) and District Libraries (Chapter 27). The majority of public libraries in Idaho are city libraries, funded through a city library tax levy or out of allocations from the city's general fund. This method of funding works well enough for most cities in Idaho, as long as you live within the city limits and as long as the economy is healthy. But most of Idaho is rural. And, unfortunately, times are not always good. When money is tight, cities look for ways of cutting the budget, and one of the first things that cities tend to cut is what they classify as nonessential services.

But, as you and I already know, the public library is absolutely essential, especially when times are hard. In fact, libraries are

central to the healthy functioning of a community and uniquely positioned to partner with community managers to build prosperous communities. Public libraries are a crucial part of the infrastructure for economic development because they provide valuable services to people of all ages and backgrounds and serve as a beacon of community literacy and vitality. So, when a city decides to cut funding to its public library on the grounds that it is a nonessential service, the city is doing its residents and itself a great disservice. After all, the library is one of the first things that businesses and families look at when they are considering moving into a community.

What alternatives do we have? Idaho Code provides for the formation of district libraries. These are self-governing entities, independent of city governments. There are several possible reasons why communities decide to form a district.

1. More equitably distributed, more stable funding. A district library has its own revenue stream, so its funds are not subject to repurposing when a city needs a short-term fix for economic woes.

2. A more accurate reflection of its true service area. A city library extends prepaid (not free) service only to those who reside within the city limits. Any citizen who lives outside the city limits usually must pay an annual library card fee in order to enjoy the services of the

city library. A district library is able to extend prepaid service to a much wider geographical area, while enjoying much greater economies of scale.

3. Taxation with representation. Each resident of the library district is entitled to prepaid library service, whether or not he or she resides within the boundaries of a city or town. A library district is often set up to match the boundaries of a county or school district. This larger geographical area means a larger tax base, which allows the library to provide more prepaid services to a wider audience than a city library could. Even if you live just outside the city limits, or 50 miles from the nearest town, if you live within a library district, you still have access to prepaid library service.

4. Local funding comes from just one source. Each year, a city library's annual budget is prepared by the library's board of trustees in the hope that the city council will approve the budget. The library's actual funding may be reduced with no recourse for the library. Conversely, a district library receives its own tax revenues, and so is able to provide library service of consistently high quality to its residents without reliance on another agency. District library law even provides for the addition of new territory to an existing library district so that residents who do not currently have access to library service may choose to join and participate in an existing library district nearby, allowing for even greater economies of scale.

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the Institute of Museum and Library Services**

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In summary, the taxpayers of Idaho can choose the level of prepaid library service they would like to receive:

- Prepaid library service from a city library that is available exclusively to city residents, funded by a more limited tax base, and receiving whatever

funds the city decides to allocate for a given year.

OR

- Prepaid library service from a district library funded by a much wider tax base, governed locally, and available for the benefit of all residents of the library district.

No, libraries are not free. But they can be one of the greatest prepaid bargains we have left if we make informed choices.

Next Envoy issue: Look for information on the process of forming a district library.

Credible Connections—An Outreach Opportunity

by Shirley Biladeau, ICfL continuing education consultant

What are the burning issues in your community? Economic development? Jobs? Education? The Idaho Commission for Libraries, through its “online @ your library” grant project and in collaboration with the Idaho Department of Labor, will be hosting a two-hour networking session in a community near you to allow you to connect with individuals who have resources to

address those issues. Join in the conversation and get connected with resources that will make a difference for your library and your community.

This event is open to all library staff and trustees. Bring with you local leaders who are working to enhance the development of your community. This will be a great opportunity to learn, connect, and

develop your next action step.

There will be refreshments and door prize drawings for an iPod Nano or USB WiFi Card at all sites.

Go to <http://libraries.idaho.gov/credibleconnections> for more information, locations, dates, and registration. Space is limited—**REGISTER TODAY**