

THE Envoy

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ICfL Update

As 2015 approaches, the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) is preparing for another year of helping libraries build the capacity to better serve their clientele. The Commission supports Idaho libraries in a variety of ways, by:

- maintaining online resources at LiLI.org available to Idahoans at a huge savings through our statewide contracts.
- providing professional development opportunities, both virtual and in-person, for library staff and trustees.
- developing, piloting, and scaling library programs that serve all age groups and a wide range of needs.
- leveraging national initiatives that support our mission and require only moderate resources on our part.

Recently, the Board of Library Commissioners submitted budget enhancement requests (requests for new funding) for ICfL for the next fiscal year, July 2015–June 2016, that include the following:

Community Development through Public Library Broadband

Access: \$200,000 to reimburse public libraries for a portion of their Internet Service Provider (ISP) costs

- Library service today depends on high-capacity, high-quality, affordable broadband.
- In FY2013, Idahoans logged on to public library computers some 2,011,400 times.
- Only 7.1% of Idaho public libraries have connectivity speeds of greater than 30 Mbps, compared to 15.6% nationally.

Idaho’s public libraries are valuable community resources. A 2014 meta-analysis of 26 community reviews conducted by the Idaho Rural Partnership shows that of 67 characteristics, the quality of the library ranks second highest in importance, only slightly (3.99 vs. 4.01) below fire protection. Providing public access to the

Internet and computing devices is a critical part of the library’s value to its community. Our public libraries need sufficient broadband to meet their growing community demands. According to our recent Public Library Broadband Access Survey, the average connection speed per library-owned device is only .14Mbps. By providing reimbursement for a portion of public libraries’ ISP charges, ICfL will help meet the expanding need for Internet access in the state’s 103 public library jurisdictions, supporting them as partners in community development, education, and employment services.

Read to Me (RTM) Mini-Grants: *\$100,000 permanent increase for more grants for elementary school libraries to increase convenient access to quality, age-appropriate books for young children*

- Research shows that the best way to improve a child’s reading skills is to ensure that s/he has convenient access to reading materials, at school and at home.
- With 50% of Idaho school children

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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.

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and Larry Weeks

State Librarian

Ann Joslin

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- Dian Scott, office services supervisor
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- Jan Wall, northern Idaho library consultant
- Jeannie Standal, school library consultant
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- Kristina Taylor, grants/contracts officer
- Marjorie Hooper, associate state librarian
- Pam Bradshaw, program supervisor
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- Sue Walker, Talking Book Service consultant
- Teresa Lipus, public information specialist

The Envoy is mailed quarterly to all public library directors and trustees listed in the ICfL online library directory. PDFs are available at: libraries.idaho.gov/publications/trustee-news.

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living in poverty, many are not likely to have age-appropriate reading material at home.

- Most Idaho elementary school libraries have insufficient budgets to provide quality, age-appropriate books for their students to either read at school or to take home.

In FY2014, elementary school libraries requested \$242,000 in mini-grants, but ICfL had only \$100,000 to grant. In FY2015, with a one-time total of \$200,000 for mini-grants, 80 elementary school libraries applied for a total of \$314,000, so we could fund only 49 of the requests. With a current count of 264 schools serving grades 1-3, after three years of mini-grants only 92, or 35%, have received RTM funding. The mini-grant program directly supports the goal of ensuring that all Idaho’s young children are reading proficiently and at grade level.

ICfL submitted these enhancement requests in September as part of our FY2016 budget request to the Division of Financial Management (DFM). On January 12, the Governor will give the State of the State and Budget Message, and make recommendations regarding state agency budgets. Following that, ICfL’s Budget Hearing in front of the Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee (JFAC) is scheduled for February 13. We continue, along with the Idaho Library Association and proactive library leaders, to help raise the profile of Idaho libraries and raise awareness among our state policymakers about the valuable role Idaho librarians have in enhancing literacy skills and providing community development resources.

New Technical Records Specialist at the Commission

Baxter Q. Andrews has been hired as Idaho Commission for Libraries’ Technical Records Specialist. She has a bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice, 15 years of experience as a paralegal, and a wide-ranging background in data gathering and record keeping. Baxter will be working closely with Patrick Bodily, Eastern Idaho Field Consultant and State Data Coordinator, in support of the data gathering for the annual public library statistics.

energies into the nonprofit that she established earlier this year, Idaho Dads, Inc. She was also recently selected as one of 50 Idaho Business Review 2015 Women of the Year.

The Commission is delighted to welcome Andrews.



Baxter Q. Andrews

Andrews recognizes the value of statistics and believes the collection of data is the surest way to measure progress and highlight the role of libraries as community places.

In her spare time, Andrews puts her



Idaho Day: March 4, 2015

During the 2014 Legislative Session an official Idaho Day was established, to be observed each year on March 4. Idaho Day 2015 is supported by online resources and activity ideas from a number of state agencies, including the Idaho Commission for Libraries. An Idaho Day portal on the Idaho State Historical Society website includes links to resources for celebrating Idaho. Find ideas at <http://history.idaho.gov/idaho-day>.

Idaho Library Snapshot Day during National Library Week, April 12-18, 2015

Watch for information on the LibIdaho library listserv in the coming weeks on how your library can participate.

See results and videos from previous Idaho Library Snapshot Days at libraries.idaho.gov/IdahoSnapshot.

District Libraries: 2015 Election Calendar

In 2015, district libraries will have, at a minimum, two trustee positions open. If a trustee resigns (or there is a vacancy for any reason), the person who is appointed to that position will have to stand for election in the May election. If elected, they will serve out the term of the trustee whose place they took (Idaho Code 33-2716).

The 2015 election calendar includes deadlines for “special question” elections (i.e. bond, temporary or permanent override levy, or plant facilities levy), which can be run on either the May or November election date.

Below are links to a printable election calendar for 2015 (including statutory dates for the general election in November) and 2015 election FAQs:

• **2015 Calendar:**

libraries.idaho.gov/files/2015_Election_Calendar.pdf

• **2015 Election FAQs:**

libraries.idaho.gov/files/2015_Election_FAQs.pdf

Questions? Contact your regional field consultant, your county clerk, or the Secretary of State.

Date	Activity	Code
March 6 – March 13	- County Clerk publishes notice of petition availability and filing deadline	34-1405
March 20	- Last day candidate nomination petitions accepted with clerk of the district.	34-1404
March 27	- Last day to certify nominees and/or special questions (bond, levy override or plant facilities levy) to the County Clerk	34-1404
March 30	- Last day to certify the wording to the county clerk for a bond, levy, recall or any other ballot question	34-106
April 3	- Last day to file as write-in candidate with clerk of the district. - First day to declare the election of a single candidate and the cancellation of the election	34-1407 33-2717A 34-1407 33-2717
May 7	- First notice of election is published by the County Clerk	34-1406
May 14	- Second notice of election is published by the County Clerk	34-1406
May 12	- Last day to declare the election of a single candidate	33-2717
May 13	- Last day (up until 5:00 PM) to request “non- emergency” absentee ballots at the County Clerk’s office	34-1002
May 19	Trustee Election Day (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM)	34-106
May 29	- Last day for the Board of County Commissioners to meet and canvass the vote - County Clerk to certify election results to political subdivision	34-1410
June 1	- Clerk of the district issues certificate of election	34-1410
September 11	- Last day to certify special questions (recall, bond, levy override or plant facilities levy) to the County Clerk	34-1404
September 14	- Last day for County Clerk to receive ballot language for any question to be placed on the ballot for November 5 election	34-106
October 22	- First notice of election is published by the County Clerk	34-1406
October 29	- Second notice of election is published by the County Clerk	34-1406
October 28	- Last day (up until 5:00 PM) to request “non- emergency” absentee ballots at the County Clerk’s office	34-1002
November 3	Election Day (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM)	34-106
November 13	- Last day for the Board of County Commissioners to meet and canvass the vote - County Clerk to certify election results to political subdivision	34-1410

E-rate Filing

- **E-rate Form 470** for 2015 is now available at sl.universalservice.org/menu.asp. The deadline for filing this form will be in February. Stay tuned to LibIdaho for announcements and updates.
- For **E-rate Program webinars and news** check out www.usac.org/sl/about/outreach/default.aspx.
- Read about **E-rate Modernization and recent E-rate changes**—including increased funding for internal connections—in the Summer 2014 Envoy at <http://libraries.idaho.gov/files/EnvoySummer2014.pdf>.

Community Building in East Bonner County, by Ann Nichols, Director, EBCL

Located in the far northern reaches of the state, the East Bonner County Library District (EBCL) serves a rural community of about 30,000 people. Sandpoint and Clark Fork each have a branch and a bookmobile serves the rest of the population. Both buildings are within easy walking distance of local schools. The influx of students after school gives the district a wonderful opportunity to host programs for enthusiastic students.

Last spring the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) accepted our request to join their Community Building Project. We were already gearing up to work with the ICfL on the “Make It at the Library” program and decided that the Make It program would be a great way to build the community. We are planning to have a Maker Faire next summer to show off the creativity and talent of the youth who participate in our Make It activities throughout the year.

The ICfL provided a two-day workshop in Boise with Pat Wagner, of Pattern Research, to get us started on the project. By just talking to our patrons about the possibility of working with us on a Make It program, we discovered there were a lot of people who wanted to be included. We chose a six-person team, which included the youth librarians from each branch, one of the library’s trustees who works at a high school, two employees from Cygnus (a Sandpoint aerospace company), and myself.

Full of optimism and enthusiasm, we met our first major challenge. Both young adult librarians accepted new jobs in other areas and left our program in early June. At this point we are still searching for replacements. By this time we had five or six permanent volunteers helping students with robotics, soldering, sewing, needlepoint, and other Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) projects. Eager tweens, and several younger children, started filling our meeting rooms to work on their creations.

Our next hurdle was to find a space where we could leave the equipment set up for the weekly youth programs. We have been working out of our public meeting rooms and have to dismantle everything after each event. We originally met twice a week but had to cut back to once a week to avoid volunteer burnout. We explored several rental buildings, but decided that students would not be as likely to attend if they had to find transportation to another site after school. Parents were not anxious to drop their children off or stay and wait for them without access to the rest of the library.

During our building search the property adjacent to the Sandpoint branch became available for purchase. It has a 40’ x 60’ Quonset hut and a two-story house with a finished double garage on the lot. The

District had money left from the sale of a former building and we completed the purchase in late November.

We had not expected such a dramatic result from our Community Building project. It is leading us in new directions and giving us different opportunities to serve our patrons. We had no idea that people involved with car injector clubs, quilters, sheet metal contractors, and retired teachers, some of whom had never darkened our doors, would be volunteering to help the younger segment of the community learn about their areas of interest and expertise. They want to give kids, who often leave our area because they don’t have the skills to go into the businesses we have here, an edge up to stay here and be part of our community long-term.

We have other obstacles to overcome now—including how exactly to use the land for the most benefit to all, whether or not to demolish the buildings on the new lot and raise more money for new structures, or remodel our existing building and use the new property for storage...the list of possibilities seems endless.

If we had the whole project to do over, we might have chosen a different Community Building project. But the way it has blossomed has led to opportunities we had never even dreamed of. Combining both programs helped us to provide new elements of lifelong learning, exploration, and creativity to the whole community.



All About the Surveys, by Gina Persichini, Patrick Bodily, and Shirley Biladeau, ICfL Consultants

Are you suffering from survey confusion? Not sure if that last one was the access survey or the inclusion survey or the Public Library Broadband Digital Inclusion Edge Annual Statistical Survey Initiative? They do seem to run together at times. And, what happens with all that data anyway? The staff at the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) attempts to break down the surveys below.

Public Library Broadband Access Survey—August–October 2014

The Public Library Broadband Access Survey was the result of a shared need between ICfL and the Idaho Library Association (ILA). The two organizations needed more current and detailed information about broadband access in public libraries in order to provide better information to state and national policymakers about the challenges Idaho’s libraries face in getting adequate, affordable broadband to meet community needs.

As a result of the recent survey, ICfL and ILA have examples of how Idahoans are using broadband connectivity in libraries to establish local businesses, to further their education, and to get jobs. These examples, paired with the technical details collected, help tell a story about the value of reliable connectivity in all communities. In addition, the following challenges were highlighted in the survey:

- The speed tests show that many libraries regularly get less bandwidth than they’ve contracted for
- Costs vary widely for the same amount of bandwidth

- Increased bandwidth isn’t affordable for many libraries

Digital Inclusion Survey—November 2014

Funded by the American Library Association (ALA) and the Information Policy and Access Center at the University of Maryland, and in partnership with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the Digital Inclusion Survey focuses on the role of public libraries in building digitally inclusive communities. It is sponsored through a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Documenting the role of public libraries in digital inclusion is critical to communicating the value of public libraries in their communities as key providers of public access technologies, digital illiteracy, and services to support employment/workforce development, education, civic engagement, and health and wellness.

Participating in the survey will enable your library to better understand its community’s needs, challenges, and opportunities through interactive tools and how your library’s services add value to your community. You will also be able to use the data collected to compare libraries at the local, state, and federal levels.

Public Library Annual Statistics—December 2014–January 2015

Each year ICfL collects an annual report from public libraries with information about collections, staffing, budgets, circulation, visits, and more. It would be easy to say public libraries should submit this information because it’s the law (Idaho Code 33-2611 and 33-2726). While that’s true, an even more compelling reason to complete these reports is how the information is used.

Statistical data is used by local, regional, state, and federal decision-makers who are working to make sure our libraries have the resources they need to serve their communities. The public library statistics are also helpful for librarians and trustees who want to track year-to-year activity and growth, draw comparisons to libraries of similar size and structure, support budget requests, and plan for the future.

EDGE Benchmarks—ongoing

The EDGE Assessment tool is an opportunity for libraries to make sure all individuals in their communities have opportunities to enrich and improve their lives through open access to exceptional information, communication, and technology services available in public libraries. It offers the opportunity to focus on technology in the library, to assess current public access technology and how it’s used, to identify ways to strengthen or enhance public access technology, and to engage with key leaders about the value of the public library in strengthening communities.

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Surveys, continued from page 5

Once the assessment is completed, the library has access to a toolkit filled with useful, scalable tools that give libraries a unique line of sight into what's working and where there is room for improvement. These tools help all libraries plan for the future and work directly with local leaders to align on community priorities.

Libraries that have used the EDGE tool report it is an excellent strategic planning tool that is helpful for budgeting and long-range planning and serves as a good conversation starter with stakeholders inside and outside the library. It points out where problems exist and brings diverse groups together. With the data generated by the assessment, ICfL will have a window on continuing education and programming support needs.

Using the Information

Understanding that a lot of data is being collected, one might wonder how it all gets used throughout the year. When asked how she plans to use the data, State Librarian Ann Joslin said, "I use the information to help state and federal policymakers better understand the need that public libraries have for adequate, affordable broadband. The data highlight the importance of library-provided broadband in creating sustainable/resilient communities and supporting education. The information underscores the need for additional support, such as state funding for partial reimbursement and, at the national level, more funding for E-rate." That means the information gets shared with the Governor's Office, the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JFAC), Idaho's education committees, the Federal Communications Commission

(FCC), and individual legislators. She adds, "I also share the data we have with ALA's Washington Office to use in their talks with Congress and the FCC. Our data provide a rural state's example of the need for and challenges of getting adequate, affordable broadband."

Rest assured the answers you provide in the surveys are being used for the benefit of the Idaho library community. Former Hewlett-Packard CEO Carly Fiorina once said, "The goal is to turn data into information, and information into insight." With the data you provide, we strive to discover the information within and share those insights with decision-makers to build a community of library supporters. ICfL and our partners are grateful to the Idaho library community for sharing the data that helps us all share our story.