

VII. OPERATIONS REPORT

A. Management Team members' reports – information item

Report from State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White

- Stephanie has been working on two presentation for the annual (virtual) Idaho Library Association (ILA) Conference:

How the ICfL supports the role of Idaho libraries now and post-pandemic.

2020 has thrown the ICfL and Idaho library community some crazy curveballs. Learn how the ICfL has focused on priority areas to help keep students learning and adults earning. There will also be time for attendees to discuss topics of importance to their local library and community and provide input for the ICfL staff.

ICfL and ILA: Who Does What and How They Can Help You

ICfL and ILA are acronyms that get thrown around a lot, but what exactly does Idaho Commission for Libraries and Idaho Library Association do? And, more importantly, how can they help you and your library?

- She will also present two Osher Institute* classes for up to 200 people on November 6 and 13. The topic is Beyond Books: The Role of Idaho Libraries Today. This is a good opportunity to spend some more in-depth time talking about the role of Idaho libraries. [*The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Boise State University is one of 124 nationwide, and the only one in Idaho, providing lifelong learning programs for community members age 50 and older. The local membership is well over 1,900 and our lectures and presentations typically draw enrollments of 200 in each section.]
- While our application to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) for \$475,000 to support statewide access to e-books was not approved, it was ranked high and reviewers talked about the merit of funding it. The IMLS received 1,701 applications from museums and libraries and were only able to fund 68. The search for other partners continues.

Report from Deputy State Librarian Tammy Hawley-House

- ICfL's My First Books program is celebrating its 25th Anniversary this year! The outreach program establishes home libraries for children who have limited access to books of their own. Since 1997, the program has served almost 50,000 children ages birth – six. Approximately 450,000 books have been distributed by staff at 87 different libraries throughout Idaho. This year 38 libraries will be participating in the program.
- Planning for November's Family Reading Week is underway. Like most of our services, this year's program has been re-tooled to accommodate a wide range of library service models. Project Coordinator Kristina Taylor convened a library advisory committee to help with planning this year.

- As mentioned at our last meeting, we have been working closely with Idaho's tribal libraries this past year, so we were pleased to learn that the Shoshone Bannock tribe received a second IMLS grant. This one for \$150,000 to rebuild library services and infrastructure that was destroyed with a roof collapse on the Fort Hall reservation in 2019.
- This year's Make It training will begin in late fall and be done fully online. A team lead by Emerging Trends Consultant Deana Brown is contracting with trainers to develop curriculum to be used in Niche Academy, our new learning platform.
- Field Consultant Kevin Tomlinson has recently updated the Public Library Directors' section of the Survival Guide for Idaho Librarians. This guide is shared with new library directors in a welcome letter sent by ICfL Area Field Consultants and during consultations. The guide can be found at https://guides.lili.org/survival_guide/home.
- We have rolled out a new Adult Services website in response to customer interest. A monthly blog post will help populate some of the website content and add to the resources' website. You can check it out at <https://libraries.idaho.gov/library-programs/adults/>
- To increase the reach of the Best Practices tool developed and piloted last year, we are offering a Best Practices Improvement Plan grant opportunity for Idaho public libraries. The Improvement Plan will provide financial support for libraries that choose to implement two new Best Practices through a customized plan. This grant program, coordinated by Emily Sitz, will open on October 1, 2020. Details can be found at <https://libraries.idaho.gov/best-practices/>
- Youth Services Consultant Staci Shaw continues to represent the ICfL and libraries on a committee implementing a statewide preschool development grant project. She is also serving on the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council.
- We have ramped up services to teens this past year. Between mid-September and mid-October, Youth Services Consultant Jennifer Redford is presenting teen-related content at six different virtual venues. This, in addition to online teen learning courses that are happening this fall.
- The Bucks for Books grant, which is funded by the Idaho Lottery, is open to schools through October 15, 2020. This program, in its second year, is coordinated by School Library Consultant Jeannie Standal. It provides grants to school libraries for the purchase books. More info can be found at <https://libraries.idaho.gov/school-libraries/bucks-for-books/>

Report from Administrative Services Manager Roger Dubois

FUNDING:

- Through the first quarter, state revenue is above projections. The COVID crisis has had a profound impact on program expenses.
- FY 2022 budgets have changes multiple times and funding increases for maintenance was restored.

HR: The HR function is fully engaged with COVID protocols and supporting our employees. The ever-changing landscape makes it challenging and in order to negotiate our way through and daily communication is a must.

Report from Talking Book Services Program Supervisor LeAnn Gelskey

- I completed the Supervisory Academy offered through the Idaho Division of Human Resources and received a certificate of completion.
- The TBS Advisory Committee met virtually in early September. Much of the discussion centered around the pandemic and how each organization is meeting the needs of its customers. Our next meeting is scheduled for December.
- I was asked to fill a vacancy for the National Library Service (NLS) Reading Technology Advisory Group (RTAG). The group was formed to advise and inform NLS on products, strategy, and developments, as well as engage patrons, network library staff, hardware repair volunteers, related professional organizational representatives, and subject matter experts. RTAG's mission is to bring together and engage a mix of perspectives and competencies to share and discuss NLS strategic objectives and developments. My interest is with the Braille eReader working group as I find this technology fascinating.
- The pandemic has slowed down the recording of locally recorded magazines, but we are on point with magazines that other network libraries send to us. Once a magazine is recorded, it is uploaded into an eDoc format that is then utilized by the new Scribe system. It has been a process, but Idaho continues to be a leader as we were the first to successfully complete the process with the new technology. As we continue to catch up with the recordings, our patrons will benefit from the advancements that have been made.
- Most of our outreach will be virtual in the coming months. Our first project is to reach out to all the public libraries in the state by mailing a packet of information to them. We want to share our services and supply them with the information they need to best assist their patrons. The second project is to build a database of nursing homes and activity directors so that we can mail information to them as well.
- We are creating an Idaho TBS Patron Book Club to increase patron engagement, community engagement, and offer offsite volunteer opportunities. ICfL staff will choose the first title and then participants will choose the titles going forward. It will be facilitated by ICfL staff and volunteers.

Report from E-Services Program Supervisor Dylan Baker

- ICfL was awarded two \$1 million grants in mid-August through the Idaho Department of Commerce's Public Broadband Grant opportunity for "Rural Libraries Connecting Idahoans via Wi-Fi Hotspots." These grants provide new network equipment, including indoor and outdoor wireless access points, as well as six years of licensing (including content filtering and malware protection) and five years of support for public libraries serving communities of fewer than 10,000 people. Of the 119 eligible public library buildings, 51 applied and were awarded. Two subsequently dropped out, resulting in 49 public library buildings that will benefit from all new network equipment and support. All work on

these grants must be completed by the end of November, but our contracted vendor for this project has been exemplary, with a realistic project schedule to have everything completed in time.

- LiLI Librarian Allison Floyd has launched a new series of webinars to help users become familiar with the vast resources available through our LiLI service. This coincides with the start of the new school year. To coincide with the cancellation of My Heritage genealogy database, she has created a LibGuide to help identify freely available genealogical information and sites. The guide can be found at <https://guides.lili.org/c.php?g=1055131>
- Graphic/Web Designer Ben Bibikov, with the assistance of other staff, launched a new online Idaho Library Directory in September. This modernizes and replaces our previous online Idaho Library Directory, including features such as a dynamic map and much more robust searching and filtering options. The new Idaho Library Directory can be found at <https://libraries.idaho.gov/idaho-library-directory/>
- With the assistance of Human Resources Specialist Pete Nelson, we have posted the Broadband Consultant position left vacant by my promotion to E-Service Program Supervisor. Interviews are planned for October 22 and 23.

Final words from Partnerships Program Supervisor Randy Kemp

Programs

- Summer Internship grant. Five of seven grantees wrapped up the internship opportunity. The remaining two are working with their intern in the fall. Interns either had a good first impression of library work or are very interested in pursuing library work in the future.
- Idaho Learning Partnership. The team facilitated two training webinars with grantees, one each in August and September.

Partnerships

Census 2020. The US Census Bureau moved its deadline three times, adjusting for COVID-19, so libraries are still awareness-raising around completing the Census questionnaire by the end of October. Ten libraries have flexible computer kiosks to use for future programs and customer needs.

Organizational Learning

- Supervisory Transition: E-Resources & New Partnerships Program Supervisor. Two of the staff reporting to the Partnerships Program Supervisor are now reporting to the E-Resources Program Supervisor. As of this writing, intending to transition the OSIs and the Technical Records Specialist on an interim basis to Roger until the new Partnerships Program Supervisor is on board.
- Modifying Support in a Pandemic: Phones, walk-ins, teleworking. Since the initial COVID-19 lockdown, the ICfL has modified organizational practices to meet the needs of customers in creative ways. The ICfL team continues to answer phones and greet in-person

visitors through modified processes, even with a smaller staff onsite each given day. The support staff has been creative and covering for each other.

Closing Words

As I transition out of the ICfL, the Idaho library community continues in its own season of (constant) change and transition in a pandemic. The ICfL's mission remains vital and valid, as the creative team that is the ICfL hears the calls from library customers to ground resources and services in the needs of communities seeking a solid footing. I partnered with the ICfL team for slightly more than two years, during which time I grew professionally and witnessed the fine work of both the ICfL staff and Idaho librarians. May the stories Idaho communities tell of the ICfL's impact embody values of service, human engagement, and the long view. Farewell.