

THE ENVOY Newsletter

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FOR IDAHO LIBRARY TRUSTEES & DIRECTORS BY THE IDAHO COMMISSION FOR LIBRARIES

How Foundations and Friends Can Help Support Their Libraries during COVID-19

by ICfL Northern Area Field Consultant Emily Sitz

Seattle Public Library Foundation CEO Jonna Ward used the term “the Great Separation” to describe this time of historic uncertainty. Ward encourages foundations to review their purpose, mission, and values. According to Ward, the support a foundation provides to a library can be considered like a three-legged stool: grantmaking, fundraising, and advocacy.



During the Great Separation, foundations need to be more flexible in the processes they use to disburse money. They should keep fundraising, as local causes may be more readily supported during this time. And advocacy is even more critical as budget cuts are likely to be on the horizon. For a refresher on mission and advocacy, see this BoardSource initiative: <https://standforyourmission.org/>.

It is essential that foundations and friends’ groups let donors and funders (including local government and taxpayers) know how nimble and innovative libraries have been in response to the pandemic, such as by providing curbside service (when allowed), conducting online programming, and eliminating late fines and, thus, removing a longstanding barrier to library service.

COVID-19 inspired new fundraising opportunities, such as those by the Slippery Rock Friends Group, which made and sold masks. Will we see annual book sales move to an online environment? Will there be more online friends’ stores?

But with all of the exceptional things library workers across Idaho have been accomplishing for their patrons and communities, one key deficiency has also shone through -- the digital divide. There is a distinctive gap in Idaho between those with affordable and reliable internet access and those without it. This shows that library staff, foundations, friends’ groups, and many others still have work to do when it comes to establishing equitable internet access throughout the Gem State.

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ICfL INFO

Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL)

325 W. State St.
Boise, ID 83702-6055
208-334-2150 / 800-458-3271
Main/Southwestern Field Office

220 E. 5th St., Ste. 307
Moscow, ID 83843
208-882-8882
Northern Field Office

1820 E. 17th St., Suite 130
Idaho Falls, ID 83404
208-525-7211
Eastern Field Office

<https://libraries.idaho.gov>

MISSION

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

ICfL COMMISSIONERS

Dave Mecham, Janet Franklin, John Held, Pat Raffae, and Michael Strickland

ICfL CONTACTS

Administrators

Dian Scott, Office Services Supervisor
Randy Kemp, Program Supervisor
Roger Dubois, Administrative Service Manager
Stephanie Bailey-White, State Librarian
Tammy Hawley-House, Deputy State Librarian

Consultants

Deana Brown, Emerging Trends Consultant
Dylan Baker, Broadband Consultant
Emily Sitz, Northern Idaho Library Consultant
Jeannie Standal, School Library Consultant
Jennifer Redford, Youth Services Consultant
Kevin Tomlinson, Southwest/South Central Idaho Library Consultant
Kristina Taylor, Youth Services Project Coord.
LeAnn Gelskey, Program Supervisor, Idaho Talking Book Service (TBS)
Patrick Bodily, Eastern Idaho Library Consultant
Staci Shaw, Youth Services Consultant

LiLI, Web, Volunteer, Information, & Records Specialists

Allison Floyd, LiLI Librarian
Ben Bibikov, Web Designer
Colleen Clark, Volunteer Coordinator
Donna Eggers, Public Information Officer
Doug Baker, Software Engineer II
Karen LaMotte, Technical Records Specialist

Grants & Contracts

Jamie Mott, Grants/Contracts Officer

Cataloging

Allison Floyd, State Publications, Cataloging, and Acquisitions Librarian

ICfL's Facilities Camp *Postponed*

The ICfL has postponed the Facilities Camp it was planning to hold this year. It is now slated for the fall of 2021.

Free PPE from the State

Publicly funded libraries in Idaho do qualify to get free personal protective equipment (PPE) from the State. For more, visit: <https://supplies.idaho.gov/>.



Changes to your contact info?

If you have changes to the contact information for your library and/or trustees, please let Tina Schilling at the ICfL know.

Email Tina at: tina.schilling@libraries.idaho.gov or call the ICfL at: 208-334-2150 / 800-458-3271.

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How “essential” is the public library to your community? If the Great Recession is an indicator, public library usage should increase just as library budgets could be reduced. During the recession, people flocked to their library for services and assistance related to job seeking, including skill building and résumé writing. Plus, there was a tremendous surge in program attendance and circulation of recreational reading and educational and entertainment materials, such as DVDs and audio books.

According to a recent COVID-19-related survey from the Pew Research Center*, 55 percent of respondents believe it will take a year for the pandemic-ravished economy to improve. Libraries will likely need to do more with less during the recovery time from this crisis. In partnership with the library director, Ward wants foundations and friends’ groups to consider what they can do to be of the most value to the library, including being advocates for the library in their community.

If the members of your foundation and/or friends’ groups don’t already have those quick and easy talking points or “elevator speeches” about what the library has to offer, the director should help to create those. Plus, keep in mind, that requirements and services change. In February, who could have anticipated the need for plexiglass barriers, additional cleaning supplies, and personal protective equipment? Part of the library’s new “pitch” might include information about the steps staff take to ensure the materials and space are clean and safe for patrons to use.

A bright spot resulting from the pandemic is that the International Public Library Fundraising Conference will be a virtual event this year. It will be held June 15 - 17, 2020. For more, visit: <https://iplf-conference.org/>. The event planners said, “There will be an information-packed agenda with sessions that cover important fundraising topics, such as effective direct mail and digital fundraising strategies, proper messaging in today’s political climate, how to turn fundraising challenges into successes, engaging your board, #LibraryGivingDay, and much more.” All three legs of the foundation stool -- grantmaking, fundraising, and advocacy -- are represented for libraries of all sizes, rural and urban.

Members of library foundations and friends’ groups have a role to play in helping their libraries continue to find ways to meet the needs of their patrons and communities during this time of change and in the “new normal” that will come next.

If you are unsure where to begin, start by reaching out to your library’s director. If you all need more guidance, please contact your ICfL field consultant (me for the northern part of the state, Patrick Bodily for eastern Idaho, or Kevin Tomlinson for the southwestern/south central areas of the state).

Pew Research Center: *<https://www.people-press.org/2020/04/21/positive-economic-views-plummet-support-for-government-aid-crosses-party-lines/>

Other resources:

“How Public Libraries Are Responding to the Pandemic”

<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/public-libraries-responding-pandemic/>

Free COVID-19 webinars from United for Libraries:

<http://www.ala.org/united/free-united-libraries-webinars>

Internet Content Filtering Law Takes Effect July 1, 2020

House Bill 194 goes into effect on July 1, 2020, updating Idaho Code section 33-2741 regarding Internet Use Policies to require all public libraries in Idaho receiving public money (including EOR state broadband reimbursement funding) to have internet content filtering in place on publicly accessible wireless internet access. For more information and/or assistance, contact the ICfL's Dylan Baker at 208-639-4167 or dylan.baker@libraries.idaho.gov.

Weird Wi-Fi?

Is your Wi-Fi acting weird? How can you tell? And what can you do about it?

Here's a way to test your Wi-Fi, from a "Washington Post" article. The entire article, which includes a number of tips, may be found here: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/04/29/best-wifi-fix/>.

To test to determine if your Wi-Fi is the problem:

- Get your device close to your router, then on the device, turn the Wi-Fi off and back on.
- Go to a site like <https://fast.com/> to test your internet speed. (This site is very easy to use -- it will determine your internet speed as soon as you bring up the site.)
- Then, take your device to an area where you notice slow internet performance. Turn your device's Wi-Fi off and back on again and visit <https://fast.com/> again.
- If your speed is lower away from your router, you have a Wi-Fi network problem.



(Note: ICfL Broadband Consultant Dylan Baker recommended <https://fast.com/>, rather than the site listed in the "Washington Post" article because of its ease of use.)

Additional Resources on LiLI -- For a Limited Time

Have you visited <https://lili.org> lately? If not, check it out. There are a variety of additional resources that are available for a limited time. Plus, there is an array of offerings that are always just a click away. For example, if you have patrons who need help to create a résumé or sharpen their job interviewing skills, show them the Career Preparation (click on "job search and workplace skills) section of LearningExpress on <https://lili.org>.

Personnel Changes

Reba Puente is the new director of the **Buhl Public Library**.

Catriona Hardy is the new director of the **Lizard Butte Library District** (Marsing).

LeAnn Gelskey is the **ICfL's** new program supervisor for the Talking Book Service. LeAnn formerly served as the director of the Hailey Public Library.

Zoom Meetings -- Best Practices

For many of us, adding Zoom meetings to our workdays has become another byproduct of the COVID-19 crisis. Here are some best practices for getting the most out of your Zoom meeting.

For Everyone: Video and Audio

- Test your video and audio before your meeting begins at <https://zoom.us/test>.
- Turn on your video, unless your background is too distracting.
- Position yourself so the light is coming from in front of you (behind the camera). Otherwise, you will be backlit and difficult for other participants to see.
- Adjust your camera so it is at eye level.
- Look at the camera. This will mimic the in-person feeling of eye contact.
- Use a headset, if possible. Although the built-in microphone and speakers in your device will work fine, you will usually get much better audio quality with a headset.
- Mute yourself when not speaking.

For Meeting Hosts: Do I Need a Licensed (Paid) Account?

- All Zoom accounts can host unlimited meetings. However, meetings hosted on a basic (free) account are limited to 40 minutes when three or more participants are in the meeting. (You could start a new meeting after 40 minutes, if you need more time.)
- To purchase a license from Zoom, visit: <https://zoom.us/pricing>.

For Meeting Hosts: To Designate an Alternate Host and/or a Co-Host

- If you have a licensed (paid) Zoom account, you can designate an alternate host (another person with a licensed account) when scheduling a meeting. The alternate host will be able to start the meeting if you are unable to. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/208220166-Alternative-Host>.
- During a meeting, you can share hosting duties with others in the meeting by making them a co-host. Allowing a co-host to manage the administrative side of the meeting, such as muting/unmuting participants or starting/stopping the recording, frees the main host to concentrate fully on the proceedings. https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206330935-Enabling-and-adding-a-co-host#h_9c3ee7f2-b70c-4061-8dcf-00dd836b2075.

For Meeting Hosts: Managing Meeting Audio

- Hosts are able to mute individual participants and to mute all participants (those currently in the meeting and anyone who joins). Consider using this if a meeting has more than just a few participants. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005759423-Managing-participants-in-a-meeting>.

In a large meeting or one where the host needs more control over the participants' audio, the host can prevent participants from unmuting themselves, which places all audio entirely in the host's control. The host can unmute participants as the need arises.

For Meeting Hosts: To Keep Unwanted Guests and Disruptive Behaviors Out of Meetings

- Don't publicly share your meeting ID, and if you're having a public meeting, don't use your personal meeting ID (PMI). Use a randomly generated meeting ID instead. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XhZW3iyXV9U>

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Zoom Meetings -- Best Practices

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For Meeting Hosts: To Keep Unwanted Guests and Disruptive Behaviors Out of Meetings

- Use the waiting room feature to ensure that only people you know get into the chat. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115000332726-Waiting-Room>
- Prevent attendees from screen sharing without your consent. <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005759423-Managing-participants-in-a-meeting>
- Lock meetings that have already started to prevent new people from joining midstream. (This can also be used to conduct an executive session of a board meeting by also placing all non-board member attendees on hold and pausing any recording for the duration of the executive session.) <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005759423-Managing-Participants-in-a-Meeting>
- If necessary, hosts can mute rogue talkers, and they have the power to kick anyone out of the meeting at any time. (If you have concerns about kicking someone out of a public meeting permanently, consult your library's attorney or ICRMP at <https://www.icrmp.org/>.) <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005759423-Managing-participants-in-a-meeting>
- The Security button in the Zoom meeting controls for hosts and co-hosts aggregates most of these features in one place. <https://blog.zoom.us/wordpress/2020/04/08/zoom-product-updates-new-security-toolbar-icon-for-hosts-meeting-id-hidden/>

Other Sources:

- "How to Zoom" - YouTube -- https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKpRxBfeD1kEM_I1IId3N_XI77fKDzSXe
"8 Tips for How to Use Zoom Like a Pro" -- <https://thewirecutter.com/blog/use-zoom-like-a-pro/>