



Director's Report April 2025

1. Children's Library update (from Abby Bussen, Children's Library Supervisor):
In-Person Programs: 32; Total attendance: 1,417
Passive Programs: 6; Total attendance: 1,076

As March brings spring to our state, so did the month bring changes to the Children's Department. We welcomed Children's Librarian Brianna Schwabe-Khateeb on March 3 and were so happy to have her cheerful presence and incredible wealth of knowledge added to our team. Brianna joins us from from Milwaukee Public Library, where she worked in the Central Library Children's Room as a Youth & Young Adult Services Librarian. In addition to the Central Branch, Brianna worked for several MPL branches in various capacities, including time at both the Center Street and Bay View branches. Prior to her time in MPL, Brianna spent many years working as a Library Media Specialist in the Cudahy School District. With a decade spent serving kids, tweens, and teens in school and public libraries in and around Milwaukee, we have been so pleased to see the energy and warmth Brianna brings to the Wauwatosa Public Library.

In response to significant feedback, the Children's Library team has been working diligently to find a more consistent weekly storytime rotation to replace our current storytime rotation, which is mostly every other week, but does have some skips and gaps. We plan to roll out a consistent weekly storytime rotation this summer.

Due to the overwhelming community response, we will be adding just over 100 new individual Tonies, 2 additional Tonieboxes, 2 additional Yoto Players, and a wide range of individual Yoto cards for checkout. We, Anne Marie in Tech Services, and Katie Jentges in Adult Services are so grateful for the fortitude of our young readers & listeners who are patiently awaiting the additions.

Finally, after taking over Wonder Wednesdays in January, we have made a modification to how we are offering this beneficial program. Rather than offering the program every other Wednesday (with snacks and activities at those bi-monthly events), in March we decided that beginning in April, we would move to offering a snack and large activity the first Wednesday of the month, and offering a snack every Wednesday of the month thereafter.

2. Circulation update (from Alanna Maddox, Circulation Supervisor):

Katherine Etta (from HR) and I interviewed Evening Shelver candidates in March and have decided to hire Emma Letke. Emma is currently in Library School and has shelving experience in academic libraries. Her first day will be Monday, April 7.

Adult Librarian Katie Jentges (with help from the Tech Services department) has processed the majority of our new Library of Things collection and patrons are excited about the additions. Board games (purchased and curated by Katie) have been especially successful with about 75% (21 games) of the collection checked out within the first week.

Circulation Attendant Tracie Peksa and her team of helpers had a hugely successful Election Day book sale. The one-day total came to \$1,150. This surpassed the previous record set by the November election day sale by over \$415. Patrons were very happy about the selection and giddy with how much money they were saving.

The election was also a great opportunity for patrons to both create and renew their library cards as they already had their IDs on them.

I virtually attended the Circulation Services meeting on March 20th. I spoke with some other libraries about some best practice ideas for some of our new Library of Things tools.

3. Adult Library update (from Shellie Anderson, Adult Library Supervisor):

Displays:

The atrium is filled with children's art, so we have moved our display shelf into the Adult library. This month we are focusing on financial literacy. We have a large collection of these items in the Business Center. We also are featuring books about libraries for National Library Week.

Programs:

Laurie Fels organized a Job Fair in partnership with Goodwill Industries on April 10th. A dozen employers (including the City) had tables and information set up in the Lower Civic Center. Job applicants had an opportunity to meet, speak, and apply with those companies all in one place.

We also had a genealogy program on April 12th. People were able to meet with an experienced genealogist from the Milwaukee County Genealogical Society one-on-one for an hour. They answered research questions and demonstrated search strategies to help find family history puzzle pieces.

Outreach:

Meagan Parker went to the First Congregational Church and spoke to about 25 people about the library's services. Tracie Peksa made up bags with brochures and swag for each participant. Meagan talked about our collection, as well as our digital items and databases. They were very interested in hearing about the Library of Things items that we have added recently.

4. Federal funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services:

Library systems in Wisconsin created a website (<https://mywisconsinlibrary.org/>) that provides information about the topic and informs individuals about actions that they can take.

From the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction:

As Wisconsin navigates the uncertainty surrounding federal funding and the state biennial budget, State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly today announced the launch of a new effort to help the public better understand how state, federal, and local funding directly impacts the state's K-12 public schools and libraries.

[Funding the Future: How Federal & State Dollars Impact Wisconsin's School & Libraries](#) is designed to offer the public a clearer view of the funding landscape in Wisconsin, and its influence on local public education. Through events scheduled throughout April, Dr. Underly and Department of Public Instruction staff will provide valuable insights into how funding at various levels affects schools and libraries. The sessions will allow attendees to ask questions and engage in discussions about the future of education funding in Wisconsin.

One of these events is being held at the Wauwatosa Public Library on Monday, April 21.

5. State of Wisconsin biennial budget:

Governor Tony Evers delivered his executive budget proposal to a joint session of the legislature on February 18, where it became SB45/AB50 and was immediately assigned to the legislature's powerful Joint Finance Committee (JFC). The JFC consists of 8 senators and 8 assembly representatives (12 Republicans and 4 Democrats, reflecting the majority in both houses). It serves as the principal legislative committee charged with the review of all state appropriations and revenues. JFC co-chairs have announced their intention to use the 2023-2025 budget framework as a starting point rather than the Governor's proposal.

The Wisconsin Library Association (WLA)'s budget documents support a \$2 million increase to public library system aid in the first year of the 2025-2027 biennium and an additional \$4 million in the second year. WLA also supports a modest cost-to-continue increases for core library services including BadgerLink and Newsline for the Blind, as well as state resource

contracts for Auto-Graphics, the Cooperative Children's Book Center, Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library, and inter-library loan access to Milwaukee Public Library and UW-Madison collections.

The [JFC is holding four public budget hearings](#) at which committee members will hear citizen testimony during marathon sessions from 10 AM to 5 PM. I represented WLA and spoke at the April 4 public hearing in West Allis in support of state aid for library systems.

6. April anniversaries:

12 years	Ann Powers, Adult Librarian
9 years	Derick Braun, Circulation Attendant
1 year	Evan Gass, Shelver
1 year	Lisa Desmond, Shelver

7. Upcoming meetings:

Library Board: Wednesday, May 21 at 6:30 PM
Library Board: Wednesday, June 18 at 6:30 PM