CHANGES COMING TO YOUR LIBRARY’S CATALOG

Most library users do not realize all the behind-the-scenes work that makes the online catalog, the scanned check-out of library materials, and e-mailed library notices possible. A skilled staff and several computer servers at the Winnefox Automated Library Services (WALS) offices in Oshkosh make these services and others possible.

There are changes coming to the WALS system. After many years of service, our current hardware and software have reached the end of their useful life. This spring we will be replacing the old computer with a larger, more powerful one and switching to a new software package. This change to a new generation of library automation software sets the stage for enhancements to services over the next few years.

The old system has served us well but is showing its age. We have started experiencing maintenance problems and some of you have noticed occasional difficulties in placing reserves and checking your account on the online catalog. The Fond du Lac Public Library is waiting to join the WALS system but the old computer does not have the capacity to add them.

As this is going on there will, of course, be temporary inconveniences. Even though we’re not physically moving anything, the effort needed will be similar to packing and moving the entire library to a new location.

Starting February 7 libraries will not be able to add newly purchased material to the catalog. During this time the catalog records will be transferred from the old system to the new system.

Starting February 20 the reserve system will shut down. You will not be able to place reserves on items in the catalog and reserve lists will be “frozen” so you will not receive anything you have on reserve. Your reserves will not disappear, however, and you will start getting these items again when we start up the new system.

On March 8 we will shut down the old system and start transferring the circulation and patron record data. The transfer will take until March 17. During that time you will still be able to check items out but any items returned will be unavailable until the startup of the new system; you will however need to have your library

WALS Migration Timeline

Starting 7 February:
No new items added to Library catalog.

Starting 20 February:
Reserve system shut down—you won’t be able to place reserves or receive items you have reserved.

8 March:
Old system shut down. You can check out but nothing returned can be checked in.

16 March:
New system starts up. Some libraries closed to test system & check in a week’s worth of books.

17 March:
Libraries open and using new system.
COLOMA

On October 23 the Library held a demonstration on ways to use your bread machine. It was presented by UW Extension Family Living Educators, Edie Felts-Podoll and Jennifer Caravella. Thirty people attended with several more on a waiting list.

The month of November, we had a Tree of Thanks on our Bulletin Board. Our patrons wrote what they were thankful for on a leaf and added it to our tree.

Our Friends of the Library Group had their annual chili supper on November 6. We also had our book sale that day. With 64 people in attendance, Mary Smith and Rosie Butzen presented a program based on The Quiltmaker’s gift by Jeff Brumbeau. They made beautiful quilts that illustrated different parts of the story. We were fortunate to have a Power Point Presentation (made possible by Winnefox Library System) of the pages of the book that we projected for all to see.

REDGRANITE

An automated library cannot function without a circulation computer, as we learned recently. While it was down it was difficult to run a normal library operation. Materials could be checked out by hand writing information the patron’s name on paper along with material barcodes, to be entered into the system later. But alas, materials could not be checked in. There was no way of knowing who had reserves or which library they should be sent to so the backroom overflowed with “best sellers” and videos hidden from the ogling eyes of patrons. The display shelves were empty by the end of the day. A greatly anticipated PC arrived by Winnefox delivery the next day. We were again able to offer full service and item requests.

The family of William Halfman made a donation for the purchase of two new books in his memory.

This past year saw changes to the Library Board of Trustees. Bonnie Drexler is the new school representative and secretary. Sandy Adamson took the seat vacated by Kathy Mayer and is the board treasurer.

PLAINFIELD

The Plainfield Library is making plans for “Read Across America.” Tuesday March 2 at 3:30 we will have a special story time at the library and at 4:00 we will celebrate the 100th birthday of Ted (Dr. Seuss) Geisel with birthday cake. It should be a great time.

For Valentine’s Day we’ve set up 2 jars with candy; one for adults and one for kids. Take your best guess on how many candies are in the jar. The last day to guess is February 13; winners will be announced on February 14.

The Plainfield Library has a new Library Board President, Kevin Clark.

WILD ROSE

Our library and local businesses have teamed up for our second “Get Down to Business for the Library” campaign. Area business will donate to the library programming fund when library patrons use their businesses. Ask the librarians for a “membership” card for this campaign and you will be helping us continue quality programming for all ages.

Our book discussion group has changed their meeting time to the third Tuesday of the month. Bonesetter’s Daughter by Amy Tan will be discussed on Feb. 17 and Peace Like a River by Leif Enger on Mar. 16. If you would like to join the discussion, contact the library.

The final judging for our first annual Teen Idol contest will be on Friday, Feb. 6. A $50 cash prize will be awarded the winner or winners (if a group). There are a lot of talented teens in the area and the contest gave them a chance to prove it!

Our Venturing Crew went skiing and snowboarding in January. In February they are hosting a fishing challenge between Wild Rose High and Tri County High on Pine Lake. We hope this will be an annual event!

We are looking for interesting collections for our display case for later in the year, so if you have something you’d like to display, please tell us.
PIE RIVER

Was one of your New Year’s resolutions: “Catch up on my Reading”? Well, let the Leon-Saxeville Library in Pine River help you out. We have many best selling novels, and non-fiction books for adults, teens and children. Our Books on CD collection has many new titles, including: Her Father’s House, by Belva Plain, By The Light of the Moon, by Dean Koontz, and Little Women, by Louisa May Alcott.

A 30 minute workshop will be offered Saturday, February 7, at 9:30 am; "Basics of the Online Catalog: at the Library, Home & Work. Please sign up at the circulation desk.

As a teacher, home-schooling parent, or pre-school/daycare provider, our EELLP, Educators Extended Library Loan Program, could be a time-saver for you. Many area educators have been using the program since September, and are very pleased with the great materials that are available for them and their students.

If you haven’t Adopted-A-Magazine yet, there is still time. It’s so easy: Just choose a magazine subscription, and write a check. Then watch the happy faces of your friends, neighbors, and area children as they read the magazine subscription you’ve chosen, every month for the next year. What a wonderful way to help support your library.

If you need more information on any of our programs give the library a call or email Val. Of course, if you’re in the neighborhood please stop in to say hello. Stay warm!

BERLIN

The Berlin Public Library was decorated for Christmas with garlands made by members of our Teen Volunteers. Over a dozen have been helping on a weekly basis for a month now. A beautiful Christmas tree, donated by a local tree farmer, was decorated by members of our preschool story time groups. We also held a Christmas card workshop for preschoolers.

December was a time for staff and administration to look ahead to 2004 and discuss ways to accommodate a 50% cut in our materials budget. We will continue to look for various ways to continue quality service to our users with fewer funds.

HANCOCK

The Hancock Library has been focused on the opening of our second floor which now houses our local history materials. It will be open on Wednesdays 12-5 and Saturdays 10-1, or by appointment. A grand opening will be held this spring. Until then, we will be actively indexing and seeking additional materials to round out our resources. When not open as a research center, this floor will accommodate various library programs.

Our February Crafts-for-Kids program features candle making and Valentine- themed crafts. Our display case will feature some of these creations along with some “vintage valentines” borrowed from Mary Foster of Hancock. Please call for program times and details.

WAUTOMA

2003 was a great year for the Wautoma library—we circulated 113,324 items, an increase of more than 26% over 2002. Internet usage was up 42% over last year, too. Needless to say, we librarians are kept busy! Fox Valley Technical College donated a new computer for Internet use. Through their SeniorNet program, they will be offering training on the computer for seniors at the library, and are hoping to encourage them to use the Internet at the library.

Pre-school story time has been going well, and we are seeing some new faces. We are making some changes in placement of our collections so that it will be more convenient for our patrons to find their favorite materials. Even though it seems early, we are making plans and lining up performers for our summer reading program, “Discover New Trails @ Your Library.” June will be here before we know it!
card with you. Other services you’ve come to expect—such as being able to renew or to place reserves on items, replace your library card, and check your own account online—will also be unavailable. You will still be able to search the online catalog but since it will not reflect items checked out since March 7 it may say that an item is available when it is really checked out. Internet service will not be disrupted during the changeover to the new system.

On March 16 your library may be closed so staff can finish testing the system and check in items returned since March 8.

On March 17 libraries will go live on the new system. You will not notice much change but the staff at your local library will. Staff at all WALS libraries will have received two days of intensive training on the new software during February and March but will still be learning the new system. Initially, it may take a little longer to check items out, record fine payments, and register new users. We will be working hard to give you the same great service that you have come to expect.

(Shhhout! is published bi-monthly by the Winnefox Library System to provide news for and about its member libraries in Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Waushara and Winnebago counties.

Winnefox Library System
Attn: Carla Basiliere
106 Washington Avenue, Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901
920-236-5211 Email: basiliere@mail.winnefox.org

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