



The Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services Quarterly Newsletter

Issue Highlights

- *New Mobile Library Vehicles*
- *“Haunted” Bookmobile!*
- *New Column! BOIR Project Bytes*
- *Books Delivered on Foot*

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Happy New Year everyone and welcome to our 2nd issue of *Out & About*. It is an honor to serve as the ABOS president for 2019. My fellow officers and Board members will work hard this year and help show how ABOS can make a difference in your professional work lives. I look forward to all of us working together to promote library outreach by collaboration and networking with each other. Our success relies on your involvement. If you would like to know more about how you can help but aren't ready to make a commitment to serving on the board, join one of our many committees. Many hands makes light work, and you bring a lot of ideas to the group even if you are new to your outreach job. Watch for information on the listserv and website about the various committees. We had an amazing year last year. Our membership grew to over 300 and our 2018 ABOS Conference in Raleigh, NC was the highest attended conference to date. Events to look forward to this year are National Bookmobile Day on April 10th, ALA 2019 National Conference held in Washington D.C. on June 20-25, ARSL (Association of Rural and Small Libraries) held in Burlington, VT on Sept. 4-7, and our ABOS conference held in Omaha, NE on Oct. 23-25. All of this is in addition to the wonderful things you are doing in your libraries for outreach. If you are not currently a member of ABOS, please consider joining. Your membership helps to support our annual conference, allows you voting privileges, and gives you access to more information and resources on our website as well as offering you a voice in the organization. I am looking forward to a great year ahead and welcome the opportunity to serve ABOS as President this year. Thank you,

Susan L. Parkins, ABOS President 2019



Susan Parkins, ABOS President

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ON THE ROAD (ALONE) AGAIN

By Willow Gale

Never having been on the vehicle, I took over the Bookmobile Supervisor position in June 2003. There had been several months between the last guy's retirement and my starting, so it was a sloooow beginning. The flyer for the Great American Bookmobile Conference came in the mail; I was very excited and my Director was happy to send me. I drove myself out to Columbus, OH, got checked into the hotel, and was wheeling my suitcase down the hallway when I overheard a conversation. "When we do our evening and weekend Bookmobile hours..." I stopped in my tracks and interrupted. "Evenings and weekends, that's great! But how do you do that all by yourself?" "Um, I have a staff of 2 full timers and 4 part timers." "You have a staff!??!" My mind was officially blown.

I came back from that conference, as from all conferences since, full of wonderful ideas and ways to expand services. Unfortunately, I have not yet learned how to clone myself. To be fair, I have had a part-time helper for a while now. They tend to come and go and some have been better than others. My part-timer tends to do mostly office work, alone, while I'm out on the road, alone. There are obvious downsides to being a one-person operation. There's no one to whom you can call in sick. You're not at a desk all day checking emails, making phone calls, writing reports,

you still have to do these things somehow). While you're out on the bus, receiving returns and checking out new materials, you have to give directions like "Two more steps, on your left at shoulder height, you'll find Debbie Macomber, Ms. Johnson." You have to deal with the not-so-nice patrons as well as the great ones. And, of course, it's hard (if not impossible) to expand service when you're the one taking the bookmobile out every day.

There are also many up sides to being out there alone. You're not at a desk all day checking emails, making phone calls, writing reports, participating in committee meetings. You get to listen to many audiobooks while you're driving around or you

can just choose quiet for a while. You get to chat with all the patrons. You're outdoors, mostly. You can sing along with the radio at the top of your voice. You decide on your own if you need to stay a little later here or leave a little early from there. And, for better or for worse, you become the face of your library's Outreach Service. "Hey, aren't you the bookmobile lady?" will be shouted at the most interesting times. Having not known any other way, I feel incredibly lucky to have been out there on my own for all these years. I also feel disappointed that I've had to give up my dream of creating a department. Life's a balance, isn't it?

Willow Gale is the Bookmobile Supervisor at Jefferson-Madison Regional Library in Charlottesville, VA.



Willow's bookmobile at JMRL.

OUT & ABOUT

NEW MOBILE LIBRARY VEHICLE AT BURLINGTON COUNTY LIBRARY

By Kathleen Gruver

In 2018, the Burlington County Library System introduced its new Mobile Library vehicle as a replacement for our old bookmobile. The previous bookmobile was more than a decade old and had been experiencing more and more frequent and expensive mechanical failures. When the decision was made to retire the old vehicle, we felt that we wanted a smaller, more maneuverable vehicle which would also be more fuel efficient. We ultimately opted to get a Mercedes Sprinter with custom features added by Summit Bodyworks, including removable book carts so we could customize materials for different audiences. Our new vehicle is 20 feet long, half the size of our previous vehicle, and does not require a driver to have a CDL (Commercial Driver's Li-

cense), as was the case with the older bookmobile. This has meant greater flexibility in scheduling, as we now have more staffers who can drive the vehicle. Because of the smaller sized vehicle, we are also able to visit some locations with limited parking space where we could not have gone previously. The lower steps and wheelchair lift on the back make it easier for customers with accessibility issues to come onto the vehicle. The new vehicle has also made it possible for us to offer some different types of services. Because we now have removable carts which allow us to switch out different types of materials, we have added Friday school visits to our regular Monday-Thursday schedule of stops which are primarily at retirement communities and assisted living facilities. For the school visits, we can easily swap out our collec-

tion of large print books for a selection of children's and teen's materials. Our long-time customers are happy that they can come onto the vehicle and browse the shelves, but we have also been able to offer lobby stop services at locations where having customers come onto the vehicle isn't practical. We are also adding more outreach appearances at community events to publicize mobile library services

and the library in general, and we have received very positive comments from customers and other people in the community who are pleased to see our attractive new vehicle out and about. We are looking forward to exploring additional new services with our new Mobile Library!

Kathleen Gruver is the Project Manager of Mobile Library Service at Burlington County Library System in Westampton, New Jersey.



BOOKMOBILE PARTNERS UP WITH FAITH LUTHERAN TO HOST A HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR!

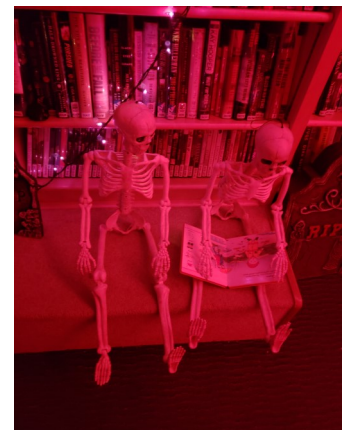
By Cathy Zimmerman

HAPPY BOOOOOKMOBILE!!!
As a continuation of our partnership with Faith Lutheran Church of Eldridge, the Scott County Bookmobile "got its haunt on" for the church's confirmation class project of Trunk or Treat. Halloween was a chil-

ly, dark night but the children of Eldridge quickly warmed up to the idea that their bookmobile just might be haunted. Ghosts were flying, skeletons held story time, spiders crawled through the books and many spooky items begged to be touched! The haunted jack-in-the-box was the hit of the

night. Over 300 patrons dressed as dinosaurs, princesses, pirates and the like took the "Come in if you DARE" challenge from Miss Cathy and Miss Emily.

Cathy Zimmerman is a Bookmobile Associate from the Scott County Library System in Eldridge, Iowa.



BOIR PROJECT BYTES—WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THIS PROJECT?

By Cathy Zimmerman

As many of you are aware, the BOIR (Bookmobile and Outreach Information Repository) project is a huge undertaking for ABOS. In an effort to collect data from all areas of outreach, the committee and our partners have constructed a thorough data based survey. This has been a lengthy process which is in its final stages of completion.

Soon more than 50 libraries will take part in the BETA testing process. This will allow the committee to see where final changes need to be made. Once completed, the database will be opened to our ABOS membership for

use. It is our vision that the entire ABOS membership and those not yet members will take advantage of this tool to record vital information concerning outreach programs worldwide.

As you wait for the opening, there is something you can do to help the project. As you may be aware, we are in need of funds to continue this much needed project. You can help in several ways:

GIVING ASSISTANT – open an account and shop with over 300 stores with funds being returned to ABOS.

AMAZON SMILES – open an account and with qualifying purchases monies will be

donated to ABOS.

FACEBOOK GIVES – on a birthday, anniversary or any day you deem worthy, start a Facebook fund raiser for the BOIR project. It is easy to do.

The committee is in the beginning stages of building partnerships with vendors, corporations and higher education institutions for corporate sponsorship. If you would like to join our committee, please contact committee chairman, Michael Swendrowski at board3@abos-outreach.com.



BOIR Project Bytes is a new column featuring updates on the data repository project from ABOS.



OUT & ABOUT

WALKING BOOKS LIBRARY

By Kelly Founder

How do you do get people reading in the hills and valleys of western Maine when not everyone desires a library card or even a ride to the library? Or when neighbors may have work and family reasons for not finishing high school? Or when there is so much real life going on that sticking your nose in a book honestly seems a little silly? You forget the library part and just deliver free books door-to-door each month along dirt roads in a village of cabins, mobile homes and farmhouses. If no one's home you leave the books in a plastic bag on the doorknob. Sometimes, you leave school supplies and paper to make your own books. You get used to saying "hi" to all sorts of people, and become immune to barking dogs. You realize it's wonderful to belong to an all-volunteer organization with no paycheck coming your way when it dawns on you it's perfectly lovely to accept that offer of moonshine. After all you're a volunteer, not on the clock (see *photo at right*).

Kelly Founder is a Walking Books volunteer in East Dixfield, ME.



Deb Barbioni and Leslie Mitchell hitch a ride on a skidder. They don't always walk!

Fun Facts about the Walking Books Library

- Most popular books: *Lion Guard Defend!*, *Street Art Sketchbook* and board books by Helen Oxenbury.
- Biggest surprise: A great grandmother who schooled us about the TV show "I Am Jazz", then picked the book by the transgender teen as a gift for her great granddaughter.
- How the books usually get around: By foot, beach cart, sled, and pick-up.
- Typical walk: 3 miles round trip.
- Longest walk: 30 miles round-trip. (Ouch)

"People have often told me that one of their strongest childhood memories is the scent of their grandmother's house. I never knew my grandmothers, but I could always count on the bookmobile."

~Adriana Trigiani, author

CONFERENCE RECAP AND LOOKING AHEAD

The 2018 Annual Conference in Raleigh was a success, with attendance at an all-time high. We learned a lot, but also found some time for fun!

The year's five Carol Hole Award Winners were Oscar Gittemeier, Lina Correa, Kim Falkowski, Laura O'Neil, and Resa Mai. The year's Bernard Vavrek Award Winner was Lisa Puchot. And the John Philip Excellence in Outreach Award went to Susy Gonzalez Pueschner. Congrats to all!

Our elections have been held, and the 2019 board has started the year strong. Congratulations to our new board members Wendy Ramsey, Katrina Ford, and Zach Roberts—as well as to those returning for service.

Here are a few photos from the 2018 conference held in Raleigh, NC. Enjoy!



OUT & ABOUT

SALINA READS: PLANNING A COMMUNITY-WIDE READ

By Lori Berezovsky

This year my library will host its seventh community-wide read. As the outreach librarian, I am tasked with pulling this program together, from beginning to end. Because this is a community-wide program it's important that Salinans select the book, rather than library staff. I start by gathering a group of community members together to select the book. Luckily, there are avid readers at the library every day, so finding 8-12 people willing to read even more is fairly easy. Beginning in January, the readers get together for an hour each month, usually through May or June. We find a mutually acceptable meeting time, usually around 5:30 p.m. to accommodate work schedules. I prepare a list of approximately 20 books for the group to consider, and allow the group members to add no more than two titles per person; I've learned that setting a limit is necessary with this group. We look for books that have universal appeal, programming potential, are discussable, and are available in paperback. Otherwise, anything goes! We've read non-fiction, fiction, and YA books looking for the perfect fit. One year we ended up selecting two books because we loved them both; each revolved around the theme of immigration. The meetings are lively, to say the least, as we discuss the books and brainstorm programming ideas. Once we've reduced the book list down to four, we have a showdown



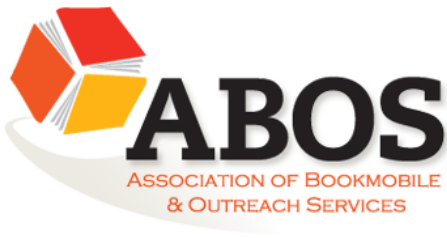
pitching two of the titles against each other, judging them by our criteria. At this point, we all have a book we're rooting for! I do not vote for the books myself, but let the group members take full ownership of choosing our Salina Reads book.

I take their suggestions on programming and run their ideas past library staff to refine them and make them happen. My favorite programs in the past have been showing free movies related to the book's theme at our local art cinema and having a popular Wichita TV meteorologist talk about weather and how it can (or can't) be predicted. We hold our Salina Reads program in September and October, and have started selecting books a year ahead to allow more time to plan programming, find presenters, and create partnerships with other organizations in town.

The members of the Salina Reads

group are considered library volunteers and we acknowledge them along with our more traditional volunteers each year. Salina Reads has allowed us to extend our reach into the community and get buy-in from those selecting the book, as well as those we partner with, and people who look forward to reading the book each year.

Lori Berezovsky is the Outreach Librarian at Salina Public Library, Salina, KS.



THIS AND THAT

Get involved! Join a committee today!

- Advocacy—board1@abos-outreach.com
- Awards—board5@abos-outreach.com/awards@abos-outreach.com
- By-Laws—pastpresident@abos-outreach.com
- Bookmobile/Outreach Information Repository (BOIR) - board3@abos.outreach.com
- Conference Planning—president@abos-outreach.com
- Finance—treasurer@abos-outreach.com
- Long Range Planning—vicepresident@abos-outreach.com
- Marketing—secretary@abos-outreach.com
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- Technology—board5@abos-outreach.com/technology@abos-outreach.com

ABOS LISTSERV

Not on the listserv? Be a part of the conversation! Communicate your ideas and issues with your colleagues by joining the ABOS Listserv. To join, email webmaster@abos-outreach.com. More information can be viewed at <https://abos-outreach.com/listserv>.

Mark your Calendars!

*ABOS Annual Conference
October 23-25, 2019
Omaha, Nebraska*

On the Road | Out of the Box

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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For submissions to Out and About, contact the marketing committee chair via email: secretary@abos-outreach.com or look for postings on Facebook and the ABOS listserv calling for submissions.

The Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services is comprised of libraries of all types and sizes. Library administrators, support staff, library staff, governmental officials, trustees, friends of libraries, and professionals from other fields comprise this movement.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental values of ABOS and its members.

The Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.