

OCTOBER 2021 | VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

OUT & ABOUT

Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services
Quarterly Newsletter



That's a Wrap! 2021 ABOS Virtual Conference Sets Record Attendance

With over 1,000 attendees the 2021 ABOS Virtual Conference, "Jazz Up Your Outreach!", was a resounding success!

This would not have been possible without all of our amazing sponsors, vendors, featured speakers, program presenters, and, of course, our dedicated ABOS Conference Committee members. Thank you for helping us to learn, get inspired, connect with one another, and further our library outreach work.

ABOS looks forward to seeing everyone in person at next year's Annual Conference, "Rising Up and Reaching Out," in sunny Scottsdale, Arizona, from October 5-7, 2022.

Did you miss an intriguing session or want to tour the bookmobiles again? All program sessions recordings, poster presentations, and vendor videos will be available to attendees on the Whova app from November 1, 2021 to April 1, 2022.



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A Word From the President

Greetings to my ABOS Family,

What a year it has been for ABOS! We have doubled our membership size since the New Year and have reached a membership milestone of over 700 members. This is "Outreach-tastic!" Membership engagement, membership value, and membership benefits are the new key focus of ABOS in 2021 and beyond.

Thank you to everyone that joined us for the 2021 ABOS Virtual Conference. I hope that you found the conference meaningful and inspirational, and that you came away with new ideas to expand, enrich, and strengthen your library's outreach program. We had a record attendance of almost 1,100 attendees - the largest conference in our organization's history.

Join ABOS for StoryWalk® Week, November 15-19. We will be showcasing how StoryWalks® promote health, literacy, and movement from across the United States and around the world. Follow StoryWalk® Week on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Also, join ABOS for the Twelve Days of Membership, December 1-12. We will be raffling off prizes to our current members and promoting the value of ABOS membership. Not an official member of ABOS? Join us today!

Thank you to the ABOS Board of Directors, Committees, and the organization as a whole for your dedication and commitment in moving ABOS forward in 2021. It has been a true honor and a privilege serving as your 2021 ABOS President. I truly hope that you can feel the energy, excitement, and enthusiasm surrounding ABOS right now.

Here we come...1,000 ABOS members!

Yours in outreach,

David Kelsey
2021 ABOS President



David Kelsey, ABOS President



Connect with David at
president@abos-outreach.com

ABOS Merchandise Available Through ALA

In January 2022, ABOS will begin its second year of offering merchandise through the ALA Graphics Gift Shop. Thank you to everyone who made a purchase this year to support ABOS. Because ABOS is an ALA affiliate, most of your merchandise sales dollars come right back to ABOS. It's a great way to support your favorite library organization! In the next couple of months we will be swapping out designs, so stay on the lookout for more information as those items are added to the store. The good news is that you can shop the ALA Graphics Gift Shop all year long. Outfit your department by buying shirts in a variety of colors, or get yourself a new cup for your caffeine.



The ABOS Marketing Committee is charged with merchandise management, so if you are interested in design, creating graphics, and more, whether it be for t-shirts or social media, plan to join the committee in January. Look for the call to action for all committees via the ABOS listserv early in 2022.

 Shop here:
<https://bit.ly/3Dz6A7H>

Major Membership Milestone



ABOS has officially **doubled** in size since the beginning of 2021! With more than 700 members, this marks over 100% growth in membership in just nine short months.

To all of our new members: A hearty welcome to the ABOS family! We look forward to learning from and inspiring one another.

 Learn how to maximize your membership benefits here:
<https://bit.ly/3nbf26A>

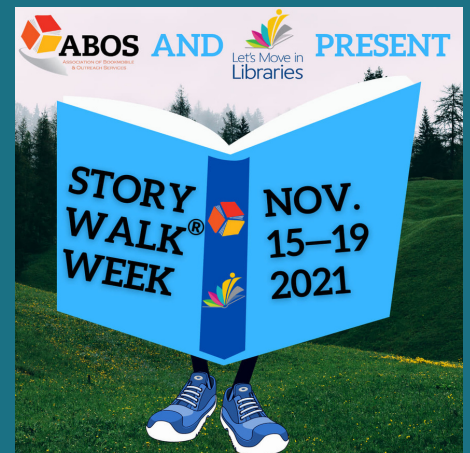
Save the Date

StoryWalk® Week

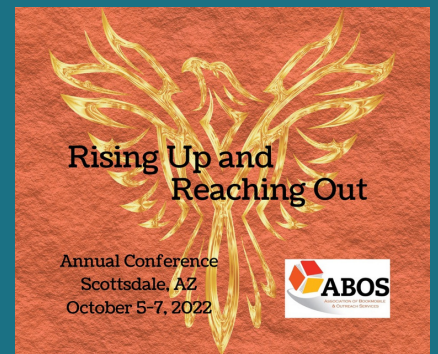
NOVEMBER 15-19, 2021

ABOS is excited to partner with Let's Move in Libraries for the first annual StoryWalk® Week.

"The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. StoryWalk® is a registered service mark owned by Ms. Ferguson."



Upcoming ABOS Annual Conferences



Scottsdale, Arizona
OCTOBER 5-7, 2022

Knoxville, Tennessee
OCTOBER 18-20, 2023

Indianapolis, Indiana
OCTOBER 16-18, 2024

2021 ABOS Award Winners

John Philip Excellence in Outreach Award

Susan Parkins, Senior Outreach Specialist at Laramie County (WY) Public Library System and 2019 ABOS President

Carey D. Hartmann, Executive Director of the Laramie County Library System, shares that “Susan is a person of integrity who takes her responsibilities seriously. She builds on past successes and makes improvements for the future in every challenge and project she takes on. Susan brought those skills to her work with ABOS as Vice President, President, and Past President. The work she did to provide excellent conferences and to mentor those creating conferences afterwards was driven by all she has learned and by the lasting connections she has made in the wonderful ABOS organization. Susan wants every person providing outreach in libraries to have the same opportunities ... outreach has been her life’s work and passion. Ensuring, through ABOS, that others have the knowledge and network they need to succeed in this unique field has been her mission.”



Karen Hake Outstanding Bookmobile Librarian Award

Amytha Willard, Supervising Librarian, Bookmobile Services at Santa Clara (CA) Library District

Marlene Iwamoto, Library Services Manager, Organizational Development & Partnerships at the Santa Clara County Library District, shares that, “Amytha has a passion and commitment to library service with a highly people-focused approach to leadership and a record of leading through staff engagement. Amytha is always willing to step in and step up. Her collaborative spirit, caring attitude, commitment to patrons and desire to make things better at all levels is to be commended.”



Rising Stars Award

Hana Zittel, Community Engagement & Outreach Coordinator at Denver (CO) Public Library

Dodie Ownes, Adult Services Librarian at the Denver Public Library, mentions that “It’s hard to point to a single program or moment that would epitomize Hana Zittel as a Rising Star; it is really her ongoing commitment to making sure that the areas of Denver which are underserved by physical facilities can count on mobile services to bring the library to them!”



Pattie Johnston Outreach Award

Abbie Wilson, Bookmobile and Outreach Associate at Medina County (OH) District Library

Ann Plazek, Outreach Services Manager at the Medina County District Library and the 2017 ABOS President, describes that Abbie's "commitment and unwavering support ... has made a difference in the lives of countless bookmobile patrons. Her passion for the world of library outreach makes Abbie Wilson the ideal candidate to honor Pattie Johnston's enduring legacy."

Senior Services Super Star Award

Wendy Pender, Older Adult Services Specialist at King County (WA) Library System

Audrey Barbakoff, Community Engagement and Economic Development Manager at the King County Library System, shares that, "Wendy is a true super star of senior services. While she has pioneered many standout, award-worthy programs, even more telling is that she consistently provides a steady stream of meaningful, fun, and important services for seniors day after day, year after year. And with her inspiring mix of enthusiasm and deep knowledge, she helps everyone around her become more committed to combatting ageism and serving older adults."

Book Bike Community Impact Award

Winter Park (FL) Public Library

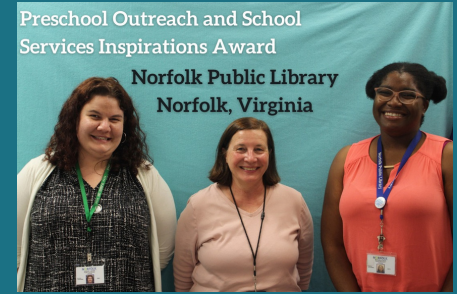
Emily Smith, Volunteer and Program Manager at the Mead Botanical Garden, describes that, "Our partnership with the book bike services has led to a fruitful partnership. During the pandemic, when library services were curtailed, we invited the library to lead story classes in our Garden. The popular monthly program continues to grow and draw in new people for both the library and our Garden. The library has also installed many storybook walks along the Garden paths. The books selected often have a nature theme and are a great way for our families to discover an underused part of our park. The library has even transported the storybook walks using the book bike. The Winter Park Public Library's book bike provides an outstanding service to the community and has generated new interest in library activities and services."



Preschool Outreach and School Services Inspirations Award

Norfolk (VA) Public Library

Tracie Kunkel, Preschool Coordinator for the Norfolk Public Schools, highlights that, “Norfolk Public Library has always been a crucial link between families and the school system, particularly for young children not yet in school and for those just starting school. Their innovative ways in programming and boosting early literacy reflects their drive to uphold their mission regardless of the impediments that may come their way.”



Innovation in Outreach Programming Award

“Library Memory Project”, Bridges (WI) Library System

Since 2015, the Library Memory Project (LMP) has hosted 158 memory cafes (13 virtual and 145 in person), with 2,083 attendees from 46 different zip codes. During the pandemic, LMP facilitators distributed 66 Take & Make craft kits to persons living with memory loss, while 125 caregivers participated in the Caregiver Bag distribution event.



Bernard Vavrek Scholarship

Thomas Dean, Emporia State University

Dr. Jody K. Howard, National Regional Professor for the School of Library and Information Management (SLIM) at Emporia State University, shares that as a student of her class on GLBTIQ Resources and Services for Librarians, “Thomas exhibited a desire to work with members of the learning community through outreach services. The website he designed for this class included numerous resources that are appropriate for those having HIV/AIDS and how current literature can provide assistance with this specific condition. Thomas desires to work with those who are faced with possible inequities that can be mitigated through programs provided by bookmobiles and other outreach services.”



Learn more about ABOS Award Winners and their inspiring work at: <https://bit.ly/3ITiQu3>

How Connections and Partnerships Can Reach Beyond Outreach



HIPPY Home Visitors, Family Connects staff, and Outreach Librarian, Christina Hernandez.

A key measure of a valuable partnership is when all the agencies involved see an improvement in serving their priority community members. In an ongoing effort that originated from conversations in 2013, both the High Plains Library District (HPLD) and the Family Connects program of North Range Behavioral Health can show that our partnership has directly improved and continues to improve how we support literacy skills in families who are primarily from non-English speaking countries.

Our original efforts began when Family Connects was seeking to grow the literacy component of their Home Instruction of Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program. This aligned very well with HPLD's interest in building connections with families who do not recognize the library as a service available to them. Conversations kick-started into action thanks to receiving funding through the Supporting Parents in Early Literacy through Libraries (SPELL) grant, which focuses on funding partnerships that support literacy efforts.

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After participating in HIPPY, 84% of families report reading 11 or more minutes per day; this represents a 15-point increase from what was reported pre-survey. For more programs results visit: <https://bit.ly/3pef1Bz>

(continued) Our project focused on helping parents develop literacy skills and on introducing libraries as resources for them and their families. Library staff took responsibility for teaching HIPPY mentors ways to share literacy skills with parents, creating and providing literacy activity kits to loan to families, and providing books to help start home libraries. HIPPY mentors, in addition to teaching literacy and other skills to parents, brought families to library locations to introduce them to our spaces, and helped present storytime programs in languages which, to date, have included Burmese, French, Karenni, Rohingya, Somali, Spanish, and Swahili.

While funding for building kits and books was greatly reduced after the grant concluded, HPLD's and HIPPY's partnership has continued. As a home visitation program, HIPPY mentors have direct connections with over 150 families a year and have helped communicate to families what the library has to offer in the family's home language. The home visitors give us feedback and suggestions on how to improve our services and programming to the community and what the community would like from us.

Meanwhile, HPLD continues to provide annual literacy skill trainings for HIPPY mentors, supports maintaining literacy kits, and participates in the annual HIPPY graduation ceremony, celebrating the families who now have children prepared to succeed in kindergarten. Both agencies continue to partner to build new relationships in the community, such as by partnering with the Immigrant & Refugee Center of Northern Colorado to host community events both indoors and outdoors, especially during these times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As long as Weld County continues to have a need for introducing new families with young children to our communities and to our education system, we anticipate that our partnership will continue to mature and grow to meet the ongoing needs.

Christina Hernandez is an Outreach Librarian at High Plains Library District in Greeley, Colorado.

Juanita Puga is a HIPPY Coordinator at Family Connects/North Range Behavioral Health in Greeley, Colorado.

Literacy and Equal Access: The Story of a StoryWalk®

During the summer of 2020, the Goshen County Library had to reinvent the ways in which it was reaching patrons. Like many rural libraries, our reach was limited by resources and location. Goshen County is one of the most poverty-stricken areas in our state and includes a high percentage of children without access to the internet and reading materials. The necessary restrictions around the Covid pandemic left the children of Goshen County without access to the tools that are needed to continue to grow as readers.

In the past, the library had talked about creating a StoryWalk®, but the interest and resources were not there. In July of 2020, the conversation started again at a board meeting and moved quickly from there to the mayor's office. The community recognized the need for a literacy project that would provide access to books to all kids within the community. Within two weeks, Goshen County had a permanent steel StoryWalk® on the walking path that cuts through the middle of Torrington. Community members donated all the materials and labor for the first set of structures.



Torrington, Wyoming Mayor Randy Adams reads for the inaugural StoryWalk®.

The first program was a “Walk with the Mayor”. The mayor walked the path and read to the children of Goshen County. This jump-started the bilingual “Walk with the Librarian” program to encourage participation. The library provides grab-and-go activity bags that are themed around the current book in the StoryWalk®. The StoryWalk® has become a favorite activity for all generations in Torrington and the surrounding area.

The library is currently working to establish StoryWalks® in all the municipalities in Goshen County. The second was placed near the Oregon Trail in Lingle, Wyoming. The other four are in process. These new structures are grant-funded and are being welded by high school students in Goshen County. The StoryWalks® will be unveiled in November 2021 in conjunction with our 99th birthday. The library is looking forward to reaching another group of children in Goshen County and providing access to wonderful children’s literature.

Cristine Braddy is the Director at Goshen Public Library in Torrington, Wyoming.



Has your library created or supported a community StoryWalk®? Snap a picture and participate in ABOS' and Let's Move in Libraries' StoryWalk® Week Celebration! Submit your StoryWalk® by November 8, using this form: <https://bit.ly/3FXncrU>

Alamance County Public Libraries Announces Arrival of New Mobile Library



The Alamance County Public Libraries (ACPL) is happy to announce the arrival of their new Mobile Library. The Mobile Library will visit more than 40 sites across the county in a three-week rotation, including schools, retirement communities, parks, community centers and rural and urban neighborhoods. The Mobile Library also will be available at community events. Routes will begin in October, and the library will continue to look for great sites for the Mobile Library to visit.

The Mobile Library will provide full library services for residents of Alamance County who are not able to make it to one of the library's branches. Patrons can sign up for a library card, check out materials, place and pick up holds, use computers and even attend programs at select stops of the Mobile Library.

"The Mobile Library allows us to reach into the community and provide services for patrons who have not been regular library users," said Mary Beth Adams, Outreach Coordinator of Alamance County Public Libraries. "By going to our users where they live, work and go to school, we hope to encourage reading, connect people to resumé and career resources, and provide story times and other programming for children and adults."

The Mobile Library is handicapped accessible, with a lift in the back of the vehicle for wheelchairs. Spanish language materials for children and adults will be offered as well. Anyone who doesn't have a library card can apply for one at a Mobile Library stop.

For more information, call the Mobile Library at (336) 513-9331 or visit <https://bit.ly/3iZ5TwO>.

Mary Beth Adams is the Outreach Coordinator at Alamance County Public Libraries in Burlington, North Carolina.

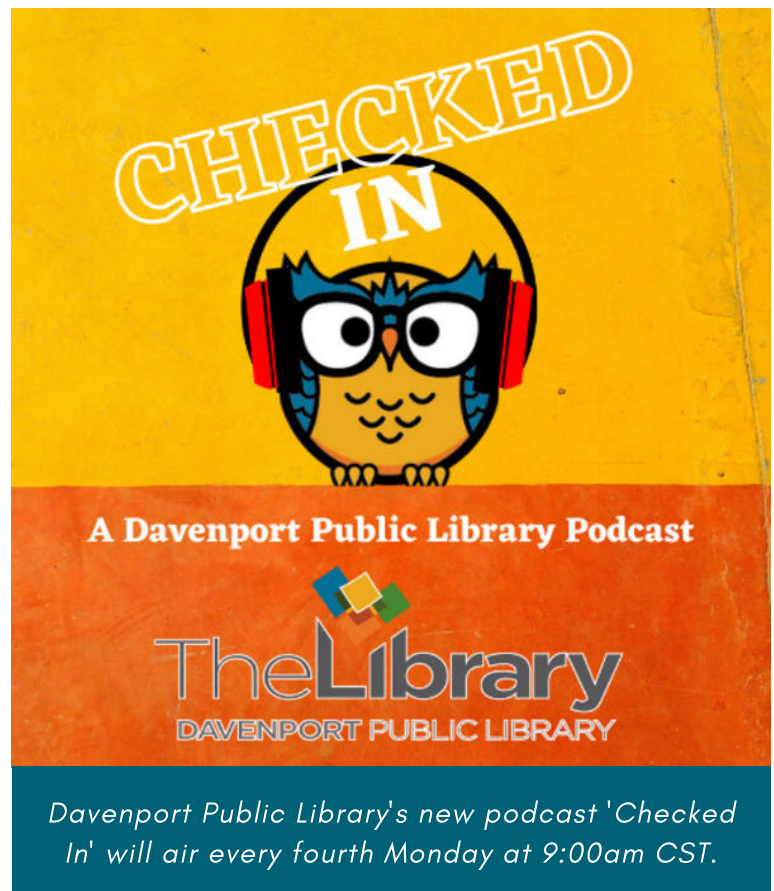
Davenport Public Library Reaches Out Through Their Brand New Podcast

Each month, librarians from the Davenport Public Library will dive into a variety of topics and connect listeners to the many great resources the Library and City of Davenport have to offer. Listen in for book suggestions, interviews, and more.

The Davenport Public Library's first episode of *Checked In: A Davenport Public Library Podcast* dropped Monday, September 27. In the first episode, the librarians discussed all things music and connected it to the many resources and materials found within the Davenport Library.

Not a Davenport Library Cardholder? Never fear, we have resources for outside listeners as well. After all, that is what libraries are here for!

New episodes will drop each month on the fourth Monday at 9:00am CST. In October, the librarians will be discussing new horror titles on the shelf and will be talking to staff experts on all things spooky. Be sure to tune in!



Brittany Peacock is the Community Outreach Supervisor at Davenport Public Library in Davenport, Iowa.

Plarn Bed Rolls: A Successful Collaboration Between Makerspace and Outreach Efforts

Waukesha Public Library's (WPL) Summer Library Program had three goals: read, create and engage. One of our most successful summer programs was our Plarn Bed Roll program which satisfied two of these goals: creating and engaging!

Plarn is an easy to make "yarn" created from strips of plastic bags. The word "plarn" itself is a joining of the words plastic and yarn. Patrons and staff used the plarn to create bed rolls that can be used as a barrier between an individual and the ground when they are sitting or sleeping and provide a bit of comfort. They are primarily used by those in our community who are experiencing homelessness.

The program was the brainchild of Waukesha Librarian and Makerspace Coordinator, Amy Welch. The Library is currently undergoing a first-floor renovation and Amy used this project to generate excitement for the future Makerspace and as an opportunity to work with some of our partners who provide outreach to those in our community who could use the bed rolls. Colleague and Outreach Team Lead, Kelly Davis, reached out to several local nonprofits and learned that several of these organizations were already giving out bedrolls, but many more of these useful mats were needed.



Amy Welch (right) from Waukesha Public Library delivers plarn bed rolls to Jackie Smith (left) from the Housing Action Coalition of Waukesha County, Inc. to be shared with neighbors experiencing homelessness.

On July 1, thirty-nine attendees joined a virtual class and received step-by-step instructions teaching them how to create the plarn and crochet it into bed rolls. In order to encourage participation, the first 20 registrants were given a crochet hook. Plastic bags were solicited from local grocery stores, gas stations, and library staff - all told 8,000 bags were donated. They were then bundled in rolls of 50 for participants to pick up to help them get started!

There is no deadline on when a bedroll needs to be turned in - since the need is always there and completing a bedroll takes time (each bedroll takes between 500-700 bags). The Library partnered with NAMI, The Housing Action Coalition for Waukesha County and the Salvation Army to get the mats into the hands of those that need them.

Several bed rolls were turned in over the summer, and two were already given to Jackie Smith at The Housing Action Coalition for Waukesha County. "It's amazing!" she said upon receiving the first batch of bed rolls. When looking back on the success of the program Amy said, "I'm so thrilled to see the community embrace this unique program. Our patrons are learning about the new Makerspace, we are helping those in need in our community, and strengthening relationships with our partners!"

Amy Welch is the Makerspace Coordinator at Waukesha Public Library in Waukesha, Wisconsin. If you want to learn more about the Plarn Bed Roll program, please reach out to Amy at awelch@waukesha-wi.gov.

Peddling Our Way to Literacy!

The spring, summer and fall presented wonderful outreach opportunities. Here at the Rochester Hills Public Library, the warmer days allowed us to take our Book Peddler out into the community where we are able to engage with the public to provide a fun way to promote literacy. Our library services the cities of Rochester, Rochester Hills and Oakland Township, three communities that are located about 30 miles from Downtown Detroit, Michigan.

The bike was a generous donation from the Friends of the Rochester Public Library and was manufactured by Main-Street Pedicabs in Broomfield, Colorado and given to the library in 2016. It's actually a custom-built tricycle that offers an option for battery assisted power via a portable battery. The large box on the back of the bike can hold a few hundred books, but we generally travel with a customized collection of 50 books or so, depending on the audience we will be engaging with. We also travel with a laptop computer, an Internet hotspot and some other miscellaneous supplies. We are especially grateful for the battery-assisted power as we are riding through the hilly areas of town carrying the cargo! Having the laptop and hotspot allows us to be able to connect to our library's ILS, so that we can check books out, place books on hold and register new patrons for library cards.

Most of the events we attend with the Book Peddler are within three or four miles of the library. In June each year, a staff member has used the bike to lead a group of cyclists as we participated in the Pedal the Past Tour of Historic Rochester which is presented in partnership with the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. This is a very popular event that attracts all age groups and participating in the event is used mainly to provide promotional exposure.

In July, the staff at the Van Hoosen Farm invited us to join them each Wednesday afternoon for Wet N' Wild, a fun afternoon of entertainment for children which includes the Rochester Hills Fire Department bringing a fire truck and some hoses to create two huge water slides for the little ones to enjoy. The Book Peddler is also a big hit with adults and children at Wet N' Wild and we've been pretty successful in circulating a good number of books as well as registering new patrons at this event.

Continued on page 14



Rochester Hills Public Library's Book Peddler features drop-down shelving for collection and space for a laptop workspace.

(continued) In September, the Book Peddler joined the City of Rochester and another popular local attraction, Dinosaur Hill, as a stop on the Roll in Rochester event. The bike was parked at nearby Rotary Gateway Park and community members were invited to check out the bike, grab a take-and-make bicycle craft and check out a book or two from the array that we brought along. Our local farmer's market and our very popular Downtown Rochester area where unique shopping and well-known dining establishments attract hundreds of people each day are two other destinations that have proven to be great outreach opportunities for us with the Book Peddler.



2021 Pedal the Past Bike Tour of Historic Rochester event.

When not in use, the Book Peddler is on display in the main lobby of the library, where it attracts a lot of positive attention. During the Christmas holidays, we have decorated the bike with lights and people visiting the library love it!

For staff members, working with the Book Peddler provides a unique and exceptional way to bring books into the community, to interact with people who may not normally come into the library, help the library fulfill our mission to empower people to explore and create with resources that enlighten, educate, entertain, and inform. It's an awesome way to get some exercise too!

Connie Firestine is an Outreach Librarian at Rochester Hills Public Library in Rochester, Michigan.

Bookmobile Hits the Road in Athens County



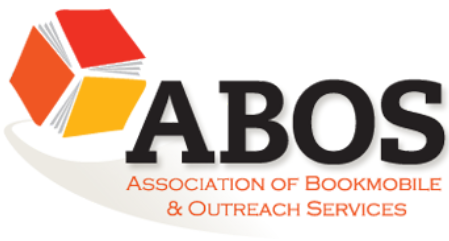
Athens County Public Libraries bookmobile invites patrons to come on board at a community event.



Bookmobile interior features shelving from floor to ceiling with forward-facing bins for picture books at lower levels.

We are so excited to present our newest “location,” the Athens County Public Libraries bookmobile! The ACPL bookmobile provides many of the amenities of our seven other locations: internet access; friendly staff; handicap accessibility; and of course, plenty of materials for checkout. We received the truck from Farber Specialty Vehicles in February 2021 and spent the summer tagging along with our local community action agency, visiting elementary schools in Athens County. This fall we’ll be making regular appearances at local businesses, community centers, and special events.

Laura O’Neil is the Outreach Services Manager at Athens County Public Libraries in Nelsonville, Ohio.



Out & About Newsletter

Brought to you by the ABOS Marketing Committee:

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Calls for article submissions are requested via social media and the ABOS listserv throughout the year.



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