

# OUT & ABOUT

Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services  
Quarterly Newsletter



## Learn With ABOS From the Comfort of Home

"Jazz Up Your Outreach!" at the 2021 ABOS Virtual Conference, which will be held October 11-15, 2021. It will be an entire week of learning, networking, exploring, and touring with vendors and colleagues alike.

Registration will open on Wednesday, June 16, and run through Thursday, September 30. Registration is capped at 1,200 attendees, so mark your calendars and reserve your spot.

Virtual registration will include full access to all aspects of the Whova app - chat rooms, networking, attendee profile info, vendors, virtual exhibit hall, as well as recorded session access for six (6) months post conference until April 1, 2022.



Learn more:  
<https://bit.ly/3cSRL5v>



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## A Word From the President

ABOS is definitely on the move this year! We just reached 400 official members on March 25, 2021. This is a major accomplishment for our organization. Thank you to our current and past Board Members for their hard work and dedication as well as our loyal sponsors and partners for their continued support. Please continue to advocate to your colleagues and outreach friends to join ABOS and become a part of our ABOS family. As we continue to expand our “reach” nationally and internationally, the Board is committed that our organization will remain a close knit community and keep our family feel. Next stop, 500 members!

The 2021 ABOS Conference will be virtual! After surveying our membership and holding conversations with our Board and other library associations, we feel that a virtual conference in 2021 will help assure the health and safety of our ABOS Conference family. What’s in store for the 2021 ABOS Virtual Conference? Over 40+ presentations, a virtual vendor hall and poster session, daily featured speakers, “Meet Ups,” and numerous prizes and drawings. You will not want to miss this exciting conference experience! Conference registration will open on June 16, 2021.

The 2021 ABOS Board is making membership engagement our key focus. Continuing education will be launched in the coming months, in addition to the learning opportunities at the 2021 ABOS Virtual Conference. Featured events throughout the year will highlight the different fields of library outreach include Virtual Bookmobile Parade, Little Free Library Week, Book Bike Week, and StoryWalk® Week. “All Aboard” Membership Week will celebrate our members, showcase member stories, and spotlight how ABOS has supported our members during their career. Our goal as a Board is to engage our ABOS family the entire year-long.

As always, I love hearing from my ABOS family. Reach out to me at any time to say “hello,” to share your outreach story, or to suggest new ideas to make the ABOS organization stronger. ABOS is your organization and we are here to ride with you along your outreach journey.

Yours in outreach,

David Kelsey  
2021 ABOS President



David Kelsey, ABOS President



Connect with David at  
[president@abos-outreach.com](mailto:president@abos-outreach.com)

## Stock Up On ABOS Merchandise

Head over to the American Library Association (ALA) Graphics Gift Shop to snag your very own ABOS gear. Represent your favorite library outreach organization with a selection of coffee cups, travel mugs, tote bags, face masks, and t-shirts.

A special thank you to Kansas Wesleyan University student, **Samantha Chesser**, for creating the new ABOS swag design.



Shop here:  
<https://bit.ly/3faDZg5>



## Save the Date

### Little Free Library Week

MAY 3-7, 2021

Win a free Little Free Library box for a first-time Little Free Library Steward or Owner, or a Read in Color book bundle.

A partnership between ABOS and Little Free Library®.

### Book Bike Week

AUGUST 2-6, 2021

Celebrating library book bike programs around the world.

Win a free ABOS membership by tuning into Book Bike Week via ABOS social media.

### 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

"Jazz Up Your Outreach!"

Virtual Conference

OCTOBER 11-15, 2021

Scottsdale, Arizona

OCTOBER 4-6, 2022

Knoxville, Tennessee

OCTOBER 18-20, 2023

San Antonio, Texas

OCTOBER 16-18, 2024

## Support the "All Aboard!" Campaign

### Win free ABOS 2021 conference registration and swag!

The Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services is excited to launch our new "All Aboard!" Membership Campaign! The goal of this campaign is to increase awareness of ABOS and our active membership. From February 15 through August 31, every time a new member registers they will have the opportunity to input who referred them. When you renew your membership you will automatically be entered in the drawing.



The winner will be awarded a 2021 conference registration and some ABOS swag. After August 31, five (5) total winners will be randomly selected from the referrals and those who renew.



Membership information  
and contest rules:  
<https://bit.ly/3c5ofsN>



# Kenosha Public Library Utilizes Two LDV-Built Bookmobiles

Kenosha, Wisconsin is a Midwestern city set along Lake Michigan with an interesting assortment of attractions. In the warmer months, visitors can browse the fresh produce, baked goods, and crafts at the Harbor Market or visit the Southport Light Station Museum to get a view from the top of an actual lighthouse. Ride through downtown Kenosha and take in the sights on one of the historic trolley cars. Is fishing more your speed? With the highest catch-per-hour rate in the entire state of Wisconsin, maybe you'd prefer to find a spot to cast a line. With numerous other stops such as the Civil War Museum, nationally-known Frank's Diner, and the historic Kemper Center, there is no shortage of activities to draw interested tourists and locals to the Kenosha lakefront.



For the last 100 years, another esteemed establishment has been piquing the interest of the local population, the Kenosha Public Library. One of the services Kenosha Public Library prides itself on is providing a robust outreach program to their patrons. With two LDV-built bookmobiles as part of their program, each vehicle brings a different set of strengths to the library and its staff while at various stops and events.

Their first LDV-built vehicle, delivered in early 2019, is a Ford F59 step van with a wheelchair lift, Acore shelving, and four book carts. Their second, picked up in April 2020, is a Ford Transit with a 1,300 lb. liftgate, four singled-sided bookcarts, and Acore modular aluminum bookshelves .

## Must Haves

Marcia Siehr, Head of Outreach Services at Kenosha Public Library, was quick to point out the advantages of each vehicle. Their step van, which is dubbed "the Book Truck," has allowed the library to add stops their coach bus was too large for. This has increased the amount of people they can serve.

Siehr highlighted the cart system LDV engineered to maximize how many they could have on board. With a desire to store four carts but only enough room for two, LDV engineers designed a way to accommodate Kenosha Public Library's needs. These carts are an invaluable component to the bookmobile, as it allows them to prep materials for stops a day or two in advance and swap out the carts as needed depending on who they are visiting that day.

On their Ford Transit, the library made sure a special lift was included to accommodate their "Charlie Cart." A Charlie Cart is a mobile kitchen with a sink, convection oven, and the tools needed to provide health literacy and cooking demonstrations. Because of the weight of this piece of equipment, integrating a lift was a must.





“LDV is a really great partner, asking the questions and figuring out how to get what we need into the vehicle. I would definitely recommend them to other libraries because of the attention to detail. LDV is a partner in making sure that the final vehicle is exactly what we needed,” said Siehr.



## Change Up

The library has been easing back into more traditional bookmobile stops since September with COVID guidelines in place. While they can only have one person or one family unit on board at a time, the Book Truck has proven to be a great resource and has worked out well for the school stops they have been able to attend. With some lobby stops still closed, the library has transitioned those patrons into home delivery which the van now carries out three days a week.

When the pandemic ramped up in the spring, the library was off the road except for a few outdoor events. One of these was “Book Truck Boogie” which was an outdoor dance party that got people out and moving while socially distanced. Another event the vehicle was able to participate in involved teaming up with the local barbershop. Kids were able to choose a donated book to read to the barber in exchange for a free haircut. Afterwards, the children were able to keep their book.

“The wrap is beautiful and makes the library so visible to patrons out in the community. We love using the book truck especially when we go to parks or anywhere there may have been parking constraints for our larger coach,” explained Siehr.



## Versatile Vehicles

If the last year has taught us anything, it's that adaptability and versatility are invaluable traits to have. That's why Kenosha Public Library is so thankful to have two vehicles that can easily adapt to suit rapidly changing needs.

Kenosha Public Library took delivery of their Transit van while the library was only operating curbside service. This extra time without patrons gave their staff ample time to get their WiFi service started.

The library used community data to determine which areas had the least access to broadband internet. The Transit van became a WiFi hotspot for these areas, making three stops a day Monday through Friday at different locations such as the Salvation Army, Boys & Girls Club, and schools for a total of 15 two-hour stops. Once at the stop, the library put out a sign letting people know free WiFi was available and that they also accept returns.

“I love how versatile both of our vehicles are. We have used them in ways we didn't necessarily anticipate because of how 2020 was, but they were built so well that we could reestablish our priorities and use the vehicles in new and inventive ways. I'm so thrilled and excited about what we can do in the future,” said Siehr.

*Jason France is the Marketing Manager at LDV Custom Specialty Vehicles in Burlington, Wisconsin.*

# Community Collaboration Brings Joy to Seniors in Quarantine

Dementia Friendly Elgin and the Gail Borden Public Library District have kept Illinois volunteers busy during the quarantine. Hundreds of cards, bookmarks, hand-knit fidget mitts for those living with dementia, and posters have been created and shared for the 24 senior/developmental care communities in our district.

Social isolation can have the same negative health effects as smoking 15 cigarettes per day, according to the Human Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). Here is an article that was published prior to the pandemic to expound upon this health claim: <https://bit.ly/2PbWKom>.

By keeping volunteers connected and boosting the morale of staff and residents in senior/developmental care communities, Community Engagement Library Staff have been continually delivering monthly activity kits containing word searches, fact sheets, calendars, pen and paper sets, dream catchers, donated mittens and gloves, and more since March 2020.

Check out some of the thoughtful projects volunteers shared across our district during the past year of COVID-19.



**Glenna Godinsky** (right) is the Manager of Life Enrichment Services at Gail Borden Public Library District in Elgin, Illinois.



## Literature Spotlight

### *Library Dementia Services: How to Meet the Needs of the Alzheimer's Community*

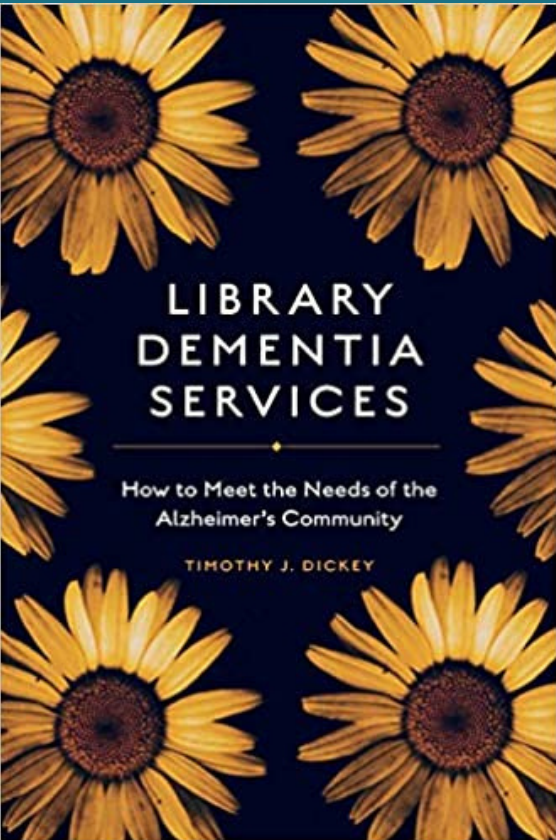
There are 50 million people globally living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and tens of millions further who are their caregivers. As a public service, it is important that library and information professionals learn to serve and assist those with dementia.

Designed for seasoned professionals and library science students alike, this book first presents a complete overview of the spectrum disease known as Alzheimer's dementia, as well as a basic understanding of the information needs of dementia caregivers. It then explores best practices, guidelines, and concrete ideas for serving those with dementia and their caregivers, including:

- Customer service and communication, with evidence-based suggestions for working with this population;
- Information resources to best meet the reference needs of the community, as grounded in user studies and health informatics;
- Collection development for mental and social stimulation of those experiencing cognitive decline; and
- Programming ideas for both communities, with a wide variety of focus and content.

Lifelong learning, mental stimulation, and social connections are central to libraries' core mission. Readers, both from library and information science and in related social services and social sciences disciplines, will gain a comprehensive toolkit for service both to those in cognitive decline and their caregivers, meeting the needs of both communities with thoughtful and innovative practices.

**Timothy J. Dickey** is a librarian and library science educator. He is currently an Adult Services Librarian with the Columbus Metropolitan Library, and teaches on the faculties of Kent State University, San José State University, and the Catholic University of America. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Association for Information Science & Technology (ASIS&T). His research interest in dementia services stems in part from his personal experience of Alzheimer's caregiving.



Dickey, T. J. (2020). *Library Dementia Services: How to Meet the Needs of the Alzheimer's Community*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing. ISBN 978-1-83867-694-0



More information:  
<https://bit.ly/31etfW5>

# Let's Create Something at Morton Mandan Public Library!

## THE MMPL "LET'S CREATE" PROGRAM

Each monthly kit includes:

### Move & Groove

Ventures that will get you and your family up off your feet!



### Art Discovery



- 3-4 Art Activities
- Directions
- Needed Supplies
- Access to video demos

### S.T.E.A.M. Missions

Get your brain buzzing with these puzzling pursuits!



### LEGO Challenges



Building tasks to keep you hopping!

### MMPL Virtual Kids Access

<https://tinyurl.com/MMPLVirtualKids>

Your one stop shop for all of our pre-recorded storytimes, art demos, and more!

### Kitchen Capers

It's family food creativity time! Try these recipes...

-or-  
make your own!



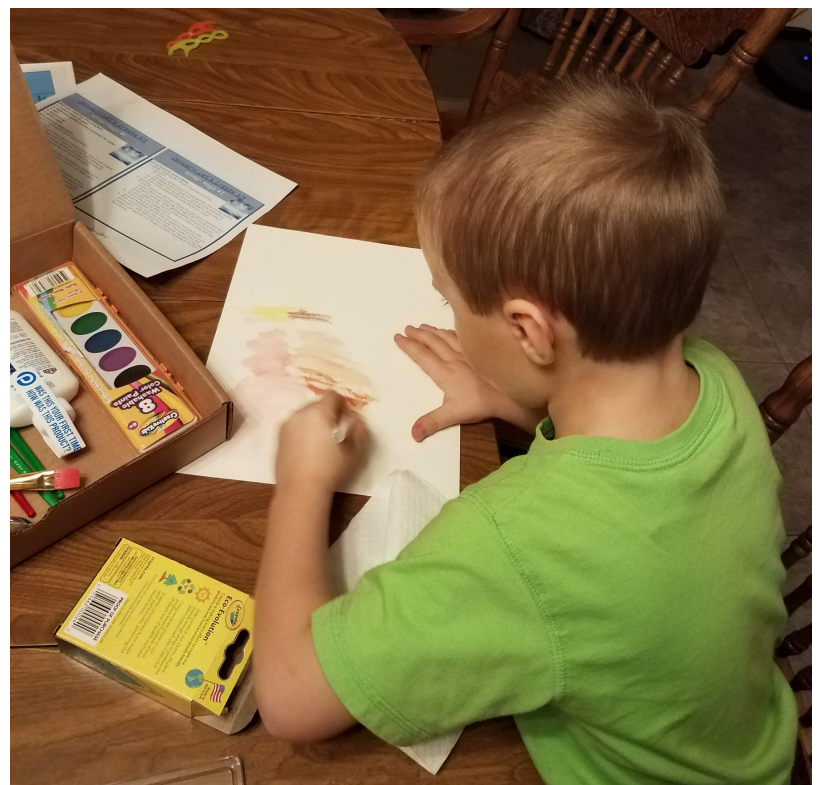
**TO SIGN UP FOR  
YOUR FREE KIT:**  
Contact Barb  
at the library  
(701) 667-5365

This year, Morton Mandan Public Library has been excited to start a new "Let's Create" program, which has become far more popular than we anticipated, much to our delight! This program started as a children's take and make program, and included a monthly kit full of art supplies and activity ideas and/or instructions given for free to any family in town. Families can register to pick up their monthly kit at any of our bookmobile stops.

Along with the physical art kits, we have been producing a steady stream of virtual programming, including pre-recorded storytimes, LEGO® challenges, STEAM challenges, family activities, and much more, so that all our patrons can participate, no matter their location.

The program quickly gained so much popularity that it became the "flagship" of our multigenerational "Let's Create" program. We now offer take and make projects tailored to both teens and adults, as well as several "whole family" projects designed to engage and interest every level of development and get families creating something together.

*Michaela Schaff is the Youth Services Assistant and Marketing Coordinator at Morton Mandan Public Library in Mandan, North Dakota.*







## “What’s New?” Returning to 'Normal' in Chaos

2020 was everything but normal; there is not much more to say about how much our world and outreach service has changed over the past year. We continuously take on new roles or seek out opportunities to ensure we are connecting with our community despite challenges the pandemic has wrought on our social lives. As more of the country becomes vaccinated and more of our communities return to “normal” we will likely consider how to shift, pivot, and maneuver our efforts to meet the needs of our patrons. Remember, however, that although growth and finding new opportunities is important, everybody has experienced so much tumult recently that a return to normal is what is needed most.

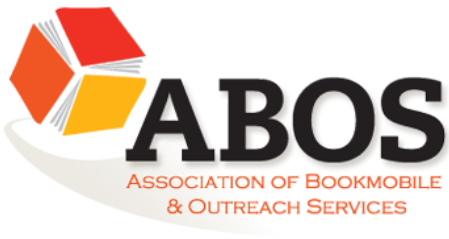
That is not to say forego pandemic safety or open the floodgates. As we begin to consider how to serve our communities in a “post-COVID” world, consider how old services and routines can be adopted to meet the challenges and needs of today rather than recreate the wheel again... and again... and again. In outreach, we are often some of the most nimble and flexible of departments in our organizations. For some of us in the field, the pandemic madness and shifting of plans wasn’t all that uncommon—unprecedented in scope, perhaps, but not unheard of.

I have the opportunity—and luxury—of working in a very large department; High Plains Library District (HPLD) has many people who can sub in and help our team keep on moving with little disruption. I know that is not the case for many in the ABOS family. Many departments only have perhaps a handful of people (or one person!) responsible for all outreach services for their organizations. Even though my team is large, I notice my colleagues running up against how to adapt to yet another situation that has cropped up or yet another community partner reaching out to plan a strategy to resume services that have been on hold for a year. We must recognize the struggle and do what we can to continue to keep our communities safe and healthy. We must also understand we cannot do it all—certainly not in a wholly experimental fashion.

Burnout is real—virtual and social distanced fatigue is real. We cannot pour out water for someone else if our own cup is empty. Consider what was “normal” pre-pandemic and adapt those procedures, policies, or plans to the new environment. Reach out and utilize your networks! ABOS is a fantastic community and we all understand the importance of our work as well as the challenges our brand of librarianship presents. Utilize the listserv to start a conversation with others who have had the opportunity to work out the kinks of a proposed idea rather than jumping in with both feet and going from there. Keep up the innovation and growth but give yourself—and your colleagues—the grace and patience necessary to keep on trucking. You’re doing great, keep up the good work.

**Rick Medrano** is an Outreach Librarian at High Plains Library District in Weld County, Colorado.





## Out & About Newsletter

*Brought to you by the ABOS Marketing Committee:*

Editor-in-chief: Carly Sanft

Content editors: Mary Beth Adams, Rachel Alexander, Lori Berezovsky, Greta Caldwell, Glenna Godinsky, Brittany Schaaf, Heather Sturm, Claire Williams

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

 Questions or comments?  
Email [outandabout@abos-outreach.com](mailto:outandabout@abos-outreach.com)

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