



# OUT & ABOUT



The Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services Quarterly Newsletter

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 3

APRIL 2020

## FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Outreach Colleagues,

As I pen this letter, we are all trying to navigate these challenging and changing times. As outreach people, we are having to not “reach out.” I am sure I am not alone in feeling that we are somehow abandoning those that need us most, those that depend on our services and that we have taken on as “family.” This is temporary and we will be back servicing those patrons soon.

As I have said in earlier communications, ABOS is moving forward with our plans for the 2020 Annual Conference. I feel it is even more important, now than ever before that we come together to celebrate our 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We will have so many victories to celebrate and applaud in October – so many Outreach Hero stories to tell.

Your ABOS Board would like to urge you to start advocating for yourself to attend conference once you are back in the workplace. There are travel grants to be had, not only from ABOS, but from other entities as well. Do some research now while you are at home.

We are planning a conference full of educational and trending topics. We have a 5-Star author lined up to speak and an interactive luncheon on the topic of “Kitting” with examples from around the world. This conference will be of value to everyone that attends. Our amazing vendors will be there supporting us as they always have.

Stay safe! Keep “Out-Doing Outreach” the best way you know how. Share your stories on the listserv, our social media platforms and any other way you can. I am so proud of all of you! You are INDOMITABLE !! (from my favorite movie, The House With A Clock In Its Walls)

Proudly Your President,  
Cathy Zimmerman



Cathy Zimmerman

## IN THIS ISSUE:

Retirement Announcements	2-3
BOIR Fundraising	4
Fashion for the Pandemic	4
Book A Librarians to Newcomer Population	5
Outreach in a Time of Crisis	6
Lobby Stop Carts are “On Brand”	6
Montgomery County Books Go Round Program Receives Celebrate Literacy Award	7
St. Charles Public Library Spearheads Fidget Quilt Program	8
Bookmobile Webinars Available	9

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### ABOS Executive Board

President: Cathy Zimmerman  
Vice President/President Elect:  
David Kelsey  
Treasurer: Brooke Bahnsen  
Secretary: Lori Berezovsky  
Past President: Susan Parkins

### Board Members '20

Katrina Ford  
Wendy Ramsey  
Zach Roberts

### Board Members '21

Kevin Kammeraad  
Liana Morales  
Robin Rousu

## Retirement announcements: Celebrating Careers in Outreach



**Marianne Thompson** retired from the Fountaindale Public Library at the end of December 2019. She was a librarian for 42 years, beginning her career at La Crosse Public Library (WI) in 1978, working as a librarian on their Gerstenlager Bookmobile, which provided service to public & school libraries in a 6-county system.

She joined the Davenport Public Library (IA) in 1981 as an outreach librarian for Southeastern Regional Libraries, which served 60 libraries of all types, including prison libraries.

Marianne joined the Fountaindale Public Library in 1989, serving as the information services manager for 17 years. For the last 13.5 years, she served as the outreach services manager, providing expanded library service to the community from a 32' bookmobile. As outreach grew, she welcomed a new 24' Sprinter Van, in September 2017 to enhance home delivery & service to schools & senior facilities. A new bookmobile was approved by the Fountaindale library board in summer 2019, and should arrive fall 2020. Marianne was honored at the December 2019 library board meeting with a proclamation for her work at Fountaindale.

Marianne joined the ABOS Board in 2012, and was elected vice president/president in 2015. Marianne served as president in 2016, when the conference was held at Covington, KY. She was awarded the John Philip Excellence in Outreach award that year. ABOS is the most important professional organization to join, where one can learn everything and anything about outreach!

Marianne has taken on babysitting for her three grandsons, and continues to work as the music director for her church. She will continue to be a member of ABOS and the Past Presidents Committee.

**M Courtney** retired from the Boise Public Library as a library services specialist on March 1, 2020. She started in outreach in 2002, where the service grew from a few individuals and 15 lobby stops of large print books only to a service of up to 490 patrons at its highest. Service today includes 32 facilities, individuals, and activity kits for facilities. The operation comprises a staff of two, a group of volunteers, and a van. Before she was in outreach, Courtney worked at a public library branch and in circulation at the main library in Boise, where she began as a page. Her work at the Boise Public Library spanned 25 years and she is a former board member of ABOS. In the future, she will be volunteering with the Alzheimer's Association, and hopes to start up a memory café.

Congratulations on your retirement, Courtney!





## ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS AND WHAT CAME IN-BETWEEN

It's been strange, that's all, just different and new. And evolving.

I've been talking with my patrons (preparing them) for a while that I'll be retiring at the end of January. Folks have been asking "What are you going to do?" and I have a long list of possibilities that I've been rattling off. Some of you heard that list when I saw you at the conference - looking at RV's, want to travel, learn to bake bread, start exercising more, volunteer, read, nap, get a dog and on and on. I have never had a fear of being bored! Yet as the time got closer, I started answering with "I'm going to sit around the house in my sweatpants for a month."

There really are boxes piled in my bedroom that are full of photographs that need to be put into albums. And that will be project #1 - to be done indoors, over the winter, in my sweatpants. But there's more to it than that.

A year ago, I felt nothing but excitement about retiring. I still feel that excitement but lately a few other things, too, like sadness and anxiety. There are so many people I'm going to miss seeing. And I can't imagine an October rolling around without my being able to gather with you all. There will be days when I don't drive anywhere. No more setting an alarm. I'll have to choose which library branch I want as my home base now and pick up my holds within 7 days. It's going to be different - and I've realized I don't have a clue how very different it will be!

On the phone with a long-standing friend the other evening, I expressed some of these feelings and she pointed out how much else has changed in my life in the 20 years I've been at the library. My daughter has graduated high school, moved out, finished college and established her own adult life (and done a good job of it, I must point out). I had a marriage dissolve and get very ugly for a few years. We bought a house, I sold a house, I bought another house. I held down two jobs for a long stretch. My father died and then my mother, too. My siblings and I grew closer. I gained some weight, lost some weight, then gained some back. My hair went from long to short to long again but was always gray/white. And through it all, consistently, I got up in the morning and went to work. I can't imagine what life will be now.

These last few weeks have been a whirlwind! Of course, there was the process of posting the job and all that went with it - I didn't sleep well at all during the time of the interviews. Then the library treated all the branch and department heads to lunch for my official send-off. We had a great retirement party last week - which I organized and to which I invited my patrons. There have been numerous visits to the City HR Dept and the Social Security office. Since this has been mostly a fifth week in the month, I've spent these days clearing out file cabinets, deleting computer files, and throwing away piles of paper. And I stuck to my decision to not get sentimental and carry it all home! The new person - who worked for me as a part-timer twice - starts on Monday, so even though I'll officially be retired as of tomorrow, I'll work for the next few weeks to do the training. So tomorrow I have to go downtown to fill out an application to work as a substitute, bringing two forms of ID! Some parts have come full circle and some parts are branching out into worlds unknown.

It's always an adventure!

*with affection,*

*Willow Gale*

*January 30, 2020*

## BOIR FUNDRAISING

By Zachary Roberts, Board Member at Large

Support BOIR and ABOS on AmazonSmile and Giving Assistant.

Did you know that the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services is a registered charitable organization on AmazonSmile and Giving Assistant? AmazonSmile has the same prices, large selection and easy shopping experience as Amazon.com with the bonus of donating part of your purchase to your favorite charitable organization, like us!

**To support charity, always shop at smile.amazon.com**  
Try these 2 easy ways to start with a smile. [Learn about AmazonSmile](#)

- 1. Create a bookmark**  
Drag this box to your bookmarks or favorites bar to create a shortcut to smile.amazon.com.
- 2. Install the Amazon Assistant**  
Get easy access to Product Comparisons, Deal of the Day, and time-saving shortcuts, which all link to smile.amazon.com. [Learn more](#)

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

Giving Assistant will give the Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services money for all the shopping its members do using the browser extension. Giving Assistant shoppers can earn cashback and find the latest coupon codes from over three thousand trusted brands and have the option to choose ABOS from a list of over 1.2 million charitable organizations to receive a portion of their cashback earnings.

Use the link below or go to Giving Assistant and choose Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services as your charity of choice!

<https://tinyurl.com/ycxggaat>

## FASHION FOR THE PANDEMIC

By Kelly Sterns, Director, Walking Books Library in East Dixfield, Maine.

When the virus hit our state, a Walking Books Library reader sewed a handful of masks from colorful materials and offered me my choice. When even the New York Times said this was becoming a thing, I became fashion forward for the first time in my life. I considered it my talisman as we made deliveries for kids home from school as well as those who regularly homeschooled. United Way recently made a video about us, so it was a strange to feel WBL was both expanding and contracting at once.

We took the school closings as an opportunity to give freely and lend out as many books as possible. We also talked up eBooks with readers in case there came a day when it no longer felt safe to meet anyone in person. We spread the word that the internet company was offering free services for two months as well as free hookup to make it easier for kids to study at home. Through First Book we were able to offer Open eBook codes to many as well. All of these options would be a change for a lot of people as not everyone has a smartphone, much less a computer or internet.

We'd never really had many takers before on the idea of eBooks as it's a little more old-fashioned area. However, lots of people are now interested. We provided eBook codes to the teen homeless shelter, another rural library and our Laundromat Library League locations in Maine and Louisiana as well as a reading project run by a Kentucky barber. It will be an interesting side note to history if this becomes the first time many tried an eBook.



*One of the face masks crafted by a Walking Books Library reader*

## BOOK A LIBRARIAN (BAL) PROGRAM SERVES NEWCOMER POPULATION

By Tim Ruth, Outreach Librarian from High Plains Library District, Greeley, Colorado

Book-a-Librarian (BAL) services provide patrons at public libraries across the country the ability to reserve a time with a librarian for assistance with a variety of reference questions including computer and device instruction, homework tutoring, job searching and resume building, and a myriad of other assistance by request. At the High Plains Library District (HPLD) we provide patrons appointments up to 90 minutes and assist with requests like those listed above as well as with naturalization and language learning assistance for our newcomer (immigrant and refugee) populations. As a Newcomer librarian, my focus is working with refugees, immigrants, legal permanent residents, naturalized citizens, and non-English speakers. In partnership with the Immigrant and Refugee Center of Northern Colorado (IRCNOCO), HPLD established a small lending library of around 300 items inside of IRCNOCO's lobby. In addition to the collection, there is desk space for staff to conduct circulation and reference help and some lounge space for patrons and students of the IRCNOCO to enjoy. For HPLD Outreach, the majority of our BALs are done in the lending library, although we have met newcomer patrons in coffee shops as well. While we provide some technology help, most of the help we provide surrounds the 100 civics and history questions for the naturalization test, the part 12 of N400 application, and reading and writing practice. This service has grown substantially since September and we have averaged 32 BALs a month, with our high month being February with 52 BALs provided. I am by no means the only librarian that does these BALs—we have at least six librarians that share the load.

### BALs and COVID-19

It is important to note that this is how the BAL service to Newcomer populations operate in normal times, but as we are all acutely aware, these are not normal times. The Covid-19 pandemic has limited our ability to serve patrons and up until recently, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) continued service, without cancellations or suspending interviews. As of last week, USCIS postponed all public-facing services until April 1. Despite self-quarantines and social distancing being encouraged, our patrons still have questions, need to prepare for their citizenship interview, and want to practice their English. This challenged our outreach department to consider alternative methods of patron engagement in relation to BALs. After a full week of libraries being closed, I am happy to report our newcomer BAL services have largely continued over the phone and mobile apps, however, this is only a temporary fix as there are technology limitations and privacy concerns when using a third-party app. A possible solution is using GoToMeetings and Zoom meetings to have students be able to see share a screen with the librarian for reading/writing help, but with this too, we have noticed, there are technological barriers (i.e. licenses, bandwidth, tech literacy, etc.) that may make this not viable as an option. Another way HPLD is attempting to engage newcomer patrons during the pandemic is through sharing audio and video recordings resources. Although USCIS provides many audio and video resources on their website, there are sections that remain uncovered, for example, part 12 of the N400 (known as the “Have You Ever” section). To fill this gap, I recorded an audio resource covering the part 12 section questions and have been distributing this to patrons however we can. In the recording, I read each question, and then read over the predefined definitions IRCNOCO instructors teach students. This resource is especially helpful when English language learners must consider the meaning behind definitions of concepts such as “order of nobility” or the difference between “arrested”, “cited”, “detained”, and “convicted”. There is great value in what is already out there for our patrons and those seeking naturalization or English language learning. This work is ongoing, yet we hope to find innovative and effective methods to continue engaging our patrons through BALs, even in a pandemic.

## OUTREACH IN A TIME OF CRISIS

By Kayla Kuni, Associate Director of Libraries at Pasco-Hernando State College in New Port Richey, Florida

In times of crisis, libraries have been known to be a source of comfort for communities. Sometimes, libraries have to close for the safety of library staff and for the greater community. How does outreach continue when bookmobiles stop and when programming is put on pause?

If anything, we have seen the value in, and need for, online platforms like Overdrive and Hoopla. We have also seen the importance of being active in social media

accounts. Some librarians have started doing virtual storytimes through Facebook. These efforts should be considered outreach and may result in an increase in in-house programming as well as overall library use. Maybe, just maybe, we have the chance to reintroduce ourselves to our communities from their comfort of their own living rooms.

At a time of crisis, libraries offer something resembling comfort. Residents look to libraries for resources as well as suggestions. With so many young people being educated at home by parents that are not entirely sure where to turn, libraries can be the conduit for resources ranging from the Internet Archive to state electronic libraries to New York Public Library's Digital Collections. These resources will be around long after things adjust back to where they were once upon a time. Our communities will continue to use our online resources, explore other open access digital content, and help libraries lead with innovation in education.



*Expanding online outreach support and resources*

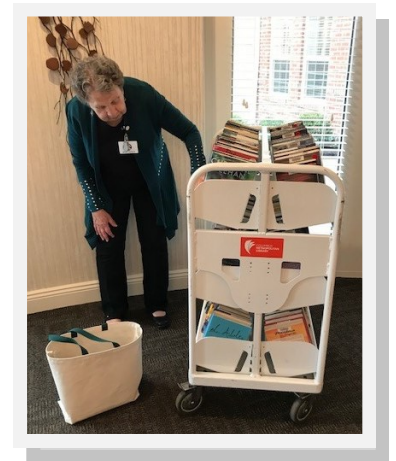
## LOBBY STOP CARTS ARE "ON BRAND"!

By Wendy Ramsey, School Delivery and Senior Services Manager at Columbus Metropolitan Library in Columbus, Ohio



The Senior Services team at the Columbus (OH) Metropolitan Library recently worked with our marketing department to create labels for our Lobby Stop carts. We do not wear CML branded apparel or carry official CML bags when we visit our 73 sites so a team member suggested that we look into a label for our newly purchased Acore carts. Just days after we received the labels we had a chance to take the newly branded carts to three of our sites. At the third site, a potential resident

was being taken on a tour. She saw the carts and asked, "Does the library come to this site?" The staff member giving the tour was very proud to say that their residents receive regular visits from the library!



*The labeled carts from Columbus Metropolitan Library are easily identifiable*

# MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S BOOKS GO ROUND PROGRAM RECEIVES CELEBRATE LITERACY AWARD

By Thomas Fluharty, Department Head of Bookmobile and Outreach Services at Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library in Norristown, Pennsylvania

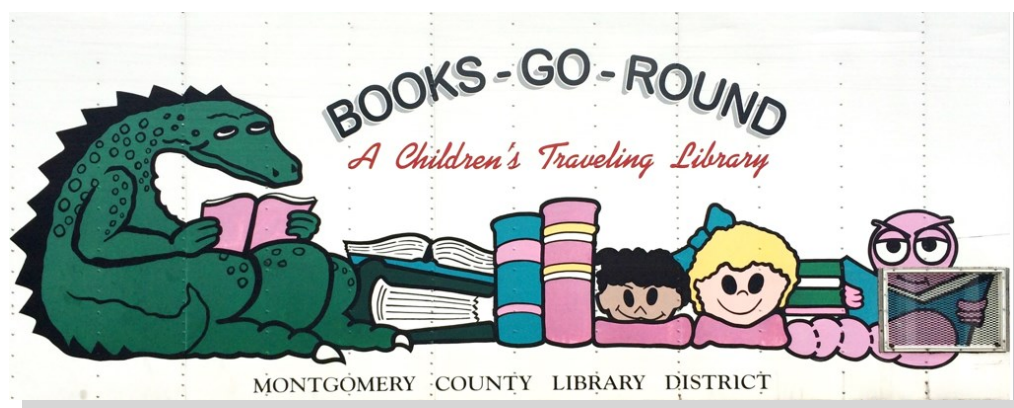
At their January 9, 2020 meeting, the Brandywine Valley Forge Council of the Keystone State Literacy Association presented the Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library with their Celebrate Literacy Award to highlight the impact of the library's Books Go Round preschool outreach bookmobile program. The Celebrate Literacy Award recognizes organizations, institutions, and individuals that have made significant literacy contributions at the local, state, or provincial level.

Twenty-eight years ago, the Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library created the Books Go Round bookmobile program to serve preschool-age children throughout Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. In 1992, with the help of a start-up grant provided by the William Penn Foundation, the library purchased a custom-built bookmobile that could also host classrooms on the vehicle for programming. In 2020, the second-generation Books Go Round bookmobile continues to support this mission with a priority on outreach to underserved populations. The program is sustained via funding from a County Coordination Aid Grant via the Pennsylvania State Bureau of Library Development.

The Books Go Round (BGR) bookmobile presently visits up to 120 preschool classrooms every month throughout Montgomery County, especially Head Start and PA Pre-K Counts classrooms. The BGR is a full-service branch library stocked exclusively with children's books and curriculum support materials. The mission focus is on fostering early emergent literacy, providing positive first public library experiences, and helping children develop the agency to select and read their own library books. At each scheduled site, classrooms of children and their teachers board the bookmobile to attend programming presented by library staff specializing in children's services. Programming always includes a staff led read-aloud themed story time and often includes interactive activities such as puppetry, rhymes, roleplay, music, crafts, and dance that complement the theme. At the conclusion of the programming, BGR staff assists each child to select library books. The selected books stay on site in the children's classrooms for both teacher-led read-aloud programming and self-directed reading by the children. Books are returned and new books circulated during the next BGR visit.

The Books Go Round program is managed by the Bookmobile and Outreach Services Department of the Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library. The department operates a fleet of four bookmobiles and five cargo vans. Every four weeks, the department performs:

- 500 courier van deliveries to district libraries
- 50 Extension bookmobile stops among thirteen municipalities
- 120 Books Go Round bookmobile stops at preschool classrooms
- 90 Words On Wheels bookmobile stops for seniors
- Books by Mail service for temporarily and permanently homebound patrons



# ST. CHARLES PUBLIC LIBRARY SPEARHEADS FIDGET QUILT PROJECT

By David Kelsey, ABOS President-Elect and Outreach Services Librarian at St. Charles Public Library in St. Charles, IL



During December 2019 and January 2020, the St. Charles (IL) Public Library's (SCPL) Outreach Services team (David Kelsey, Dana Hintz, Lynda Spraner, Christine Steck) delivered more than 50 fidget quilts to local skilled care and memory care facilities. The library partnered with local churches, area sewing groups, and community volunteers who crafted the fidget quilts. Fidget quilts feature bells, buttons, zippers, and other manipulative items to relieve

the stress and nervous tension of individuals living with Alzheimer's disease, as well as engage fine motor skills. The team was honored to have its 2017 fidget quilt project be featured in the March/April 2018 edition of American Libraries magazine.



## Upcoming ABOS Conferences

2020 Dallas, TX

2021 St. Louis, MO

2022 Scottsdale, AZ

2023 Knoxville, TN





## BOOKMOBILE WEBINARS AVAILABLE!

By Bev Schwartzberg, Library Programs Consultant from California State Library in Sacramento, California

Infopeople recently produced three webinars about bookmobiles for California public libraries, and it's our pleasure to share the recordings with a national audience.

Find them archived at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/6709534>.

Support comes from the State of California and the Shared Vision/Bringing the Library to You funding programs.



“Libraries store the energy that fuels the imagination. They open up windows to the world and inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life.”

- Sidney Sheldon

1. Library Mobile Outreach (Part One): A practical guide for selecting the correct vehicle for your library with Michael Swendrowski, Specialty Vehicle Services, LLC. If you're planning to start or expand a mobile outreach program, choosing the proper vehicle for the job can be daunting. In this webinar, you will learn pros and cons of today's most popular choices. Hear how selecting the correct van, truck, bus or trailer can improve your service efficiencies, provide reliable services, and keep your budget intact.
2. Library Mobile Outreach (Part Two): A guide to selecting the correct options and features with Michael Swendrowski. Learn about popular conversion options, systems and features being built into the latest outreach vehicles. Choosing appropriate features can improve your service, offer staff efficiency and reduce your operating costs.
3. Bringing the Library to You: If only I had known... Purchasing a mobile library is a complex, lengthy process, during which you'll probably work with another city/county department to select, award, and monitor the build out of a unit. There are perils and pitfalls along the way, and being prepared can make life a lot easier! Library consultant Karen Bosch-Cobb and librarian Dana Vinke outline the steps involved, your likely partners, and tell what you can control--and what you cannot.

### Announcements

Send announcements such as retirement, new job titles, new vehicles, program news, and other updates to board I [@abos-outreach.com](mailto:@abos-outreach.com) or secretary [@abos-outreach.com](mailto:@abos-outreach.com).



Get involved! Join a committee today! Contact the committee chair to express your interest or ask questions.

- Advocacy—board1@abos-outreach.com
- Awards—vicepresident@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—board7@abos-outreach.com
- Marketing—secretary@abos-outreach.com
- Membership—board6@abos-outreach.com
- Nominations—pastpresident@abos-outreach.com
- Technology—board5@abos-outreach.com

## ABOS MARKETING COMMITTEE

**This newsletter is brought to you by the ABOS Marketing Committee**

Lori Berezovsky

Glenna Godinsky

Rachel Hadidi

Barbra Krueger

Liana Morales

Michelle Parrish

Heather Sturm

### **Newsletter Subcommittee**

Lori Berezovsky

Glenna Godinsky

Rachel Hadidi

Liana Morales

Michelle Parrish

### **For submissions to *Out & About*,**

contact the marketing committee chair via email: board1@abos-outreach.com or secretary@abos-outreach.com. Also, look for postings on Facebook and the ABOS listserv calling for submissions. *Out & About* is published quarterly.

## 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>.

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.