



# Illinois Heartland Library System



**JANUARY 2026**

**DIRECTOR & STAFF ACTIVITY REPORT**



# Illinois Heartland Library System

IMAGINING TOMORROW - DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY

## FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Submitted by Rhonda Johnisee, Finance Director

*Report Months*

*October – December 2025*

Prepared by submitter.

## Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objv(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
3.1B	Three-year payroll analysis	The finance team developed a three-year payroll analysis using OpenGov software to ensure the highest level of accuracy. This analysis will support future budget forecasting and is scheduled to be presented to the board at the January meeting.
3.1B	FY2026 General and iLEAD LTT budget amendments	The FY2026 General and iLEAD LTT budget amendments were prepared and presented to the IHLS Board of Directors at the October meeting. These amendments reflect updated FY2026 SAPG funding based on a corrected population figure, as well as an adjusted administration fee for the iLEAD LTT to account for the allowable increase to 15%. The IHLS Board approved the amended budgets.
3.1B	Assisted in the renewal of insurance benefits	The finance team supported the HR department with the renewal of insurance benefits, ensuring alignment with FY2026 budget amounts. They also entered the elected deduction and benefit amounts into the payroll software for each staff member.
3.1C	Completed FY2026 first-quarter grant reports	The finance team completed the first-quarter OCLC grant report and finalized the financial sections of the CMC and iLEAD Library Trustee Training grant reports, successfully meeting the requirements for these grants with the Illinois State Library.
3.1B	Accurately recorded accounting transactions and provided reports to the IHLS board and SHARE committee members	The finance team ensured the accurate recording of financial transactions, enabling the preparation of monthly financial reports for the IHLS board, SHARE committees, and the Illinois State Library. These reports promote transparency and support informed decision-making.

**2nd Quarter Statistics for Accounting Transactions**

Transaction Type	Items Count	Total Value
Accounts Receivable Cash Receipts	459	\$5,250,828.69
Accounts Receivable Invoices Generated	515	\$416,152.17
Accounts Payable Invoices Received	238	\$818,264.08
Accounts Payable Payments Disbursed	228	\$1,928,830.08



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## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Submitted by Troy Brown

*Report Months:*  
*Oct-Dec 2025*

Prepared by submitter

## Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objv(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
1.2B	Continued enhancement of graphs and reports for members using data from all our IHLS sources.	The IHLS and SHARE membership has continued to show appreciation for the graphs and reports created by the data analyst in IT. She continues to improve the data and make it more reliable and up-to-date.
3.1c	Assist the Illinois State Library with new questions for the annual report as it relates to broadband internet access.	The previous questions had been used for nearly 20 years. It was time to update the available speeds and the language of the questions.
3.2I	Upgrade the IHLS Champaign office with new Zoom Room capabilities and add support for CARLI video meeting support.	The video equipment we inherited from CARLI when they moved into the building needed to be upgraded to ensure future compatibility with modern video conferencing solutions. IHLS staff took over that support and now maintain the hardware for CARLI.
2.2B	Create an online calculator for non-resident fees for libraries.	Libraries now have the ability to use the calculator on the IHLS website to calculate exactly what their non-resident fee should be based on the ISL formula.



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## SHARE BIBLIOGRAPHIC SERVICES

Submitted by Jennifer Baugh, Assistant Director

*Report Months*

October-December 2025

Prepared by submitter.

## Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objv(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
2.1B	Provided high-quality cataloging services to SHARE member libraries through copy and original cataloging.	Cataloged 1,085 items and imported 1,335 bibliographic records through the Express Cataloging Program for SHARE member libraries.
2.1G	Provided continuing education opportunities related to barcoding and cataloging for our member libraries.	SHARE Bibliographic Services staff provided three sessions of SHARE Your Cataloging Questions, which had 50 live attendees. One Cataloger's Training Session was held with 33 participants.
2.1G	Provided continuing education opportunities related to barcoding and cataloging for our member libraries.	Barcoding Refresher Training is now officially on a rolling basis. Thus far, this fiscal year, 228 individuals have completed the training. Certification reminder emails are sent monthly as barcoders enter their certification window.
2.1G	Provided continuing education opportunities related to barcoding and cataloging for our member libraries.	Reviewed 157 records for catalogers-in-training at 9 member libraries. 82 of these bibliographic records were imported into the SHARE catalog.
SHARE2.2A	Coordinated with RAILS and other Illinois library staff on the iCAMP program.	The recruitment, selection, and matching process was completed for the second iCAMP cohort. Program participants began meeting in November.
2.2E	Supported member libraries through an external opportunity.	Participated in the PLA Webinar Proposal Review process for Spring/Summer 2026 by reviewing and grading 16 webinar proposals.
2.2E	Supported member libraries through an external opportunity.	Was invited by the Public Library Association to be part of the team that reviews scholarship applications for the PLA 2026 conference. Reviewers were sent approximately 25 applications to review and grade.



**Illinois Heartland Library System**  
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## CATALOGING MAINTENANCE CENTER

Submitted by Dr. Pamela Thomas, Bibliographic Grant Manager

*Report Months:*  
*October-December 2025*

Prepared by submitter.

## Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objv(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
2.1C	<p>Cataloged 1,113 items (including 400 originally cataloged and 713 records enhanced) and created 33 authority records. One authority record was reviewed. Forty braille books were cataloged.</p> <p>The PrairieCat database cleanup project continues, where 359 bibliographic records were created, enhanced, or merged.</p> <p>The Alma cleanup project for the Consortia of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) continues, where 2,472 bibliographic records were deduped/merged (1,887), deleted (49), or edited (536).</p> <p>The Indian Prairie Community Unit School #204 cleanup project continues, where 378 brief records were enhanced in Destiny or OCLC, and 439 records were merged in Destiny.</p> <p>The CCS Deduplication project continued, where 1,834 records were merged.</p> <p>Bibliographic records in world languages were in Arabic, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, French, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Kurdish, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Pulaar, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Swiss-German, Telugu, and Turkish.</p>	Through cataloging new items and providing database cleanup, CMC staff improve user access to bibliographic records.
2.2A	iCAMP (Illinois Cataloging Mentorship Program) began its second year. Separate orientation meetings were held for the mentors and mentees.	iCAMP is sponsored by IHLS and RAILS. We match mentees with mentors and suggest topics for monthly meetings, while also providing support to both mentors and mentees.
	The October Online with the CMC: AI and the Library World, Part 3 had 40 attendees (13 IHLS, 8 SHARE, 19 RAILS). The November Online with the CMC: Still Searching: Databases and Search	Online with the CMC webinars focus on a cataloging-related topic and educating attendees. The cataloging training courses offer library staff

**Note:** Strategic plan goals have been abbreviated in places.

**CATALOGING MAINTENANCE CENTER REPORT & STAFF ACTIVITIES**

	Tools for Subject Headings had 37 attendees (10 IHLS, 12 SHARE, 14 RAILS, 1 unknown). The December Online with the CMC: So, You Want to Start a Digitization Project had 32 attendees (11 IHLS, 13 SHARE, 7 RAILS, 1 unknown). Focus on Serials Cataloging had 11 completers (7 RAILS, 2 IHLS, 2 SHARE). The Cataloging Basics class had 21 completers.	the opportunity to acquire new skills, enhance existing ones, and expand their knowledge.
	Staff presented at the AISLE Conference, Reconnecting Libraries to Their Collections: Cataloging Special Collections at the CMC, with 4 attendees. Staff presented at the ILA Annual Conference: Fields of Change: New MARC Fields, pt. 2, with 43 attendees, and Peek Behind the Technical Services Curtain: Cataloging for Non-catalogers, with 75 attendees. A CMC update/overview was presented at the HSLI Conference.	Attending conferences allows us to share the CMC's free services.
	Uploaded six compound objects to CONTENTdm, transcribed eight documents, and one oral history. Assigned Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) to 647 files for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.	Continued progress on adding new documents and collections to the Illinois Digital Archives (IDA) website, making these collections globally available and searchable.
	The CMC Chronicles, a bi-monthly e-newsletter, was published in November and featured a quick tip on recording dates in Dublin Core, an article and a photograph about a bookmobile from the early 1940s at Sherman School, as well as announcements, and upcoming continuing education opportunities.	The November issue had an open rate of 35.1% (1,056). A newsletter allows the CMC to promote the free services to a wider audience.





# Illinois Heartland Library System

IMAGINING TOMORROW - DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY

## SHARE

Submitted by Cassandra Thompson and Linda Johnson.

*Report Months*  
Oct. – Dec. 2025

Prepared by submitters, with data provided by the SHARE team.

## Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objv(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
3.2B	One of the largest projects during the reporting period was staff succession planning for reorganization and staff promotions.	This was an excellent time to learn, ask questions, review processes, and discuss the overall transition plan that took effect in December. The response from the team, colleagues, and members has been hugely positive, and shifting workflows has been going well.
2.2G	During this quarter, SHARE sponsored the AISLE conference and exhibited at the Illinois Library Association (ILA) Annual Conference.	These are great opportunities to connect with members, in addition to all of the great presentations provided by our cataloging team.
2.2E	The Mobile Memory Lab conducted and scheduled outreach events at four public libraries.	Seven patrons digitized materials. One patron brought a Purple Heart awarded posthumously to a cousin who was lost during World War II. Another patron shared photographs and documents detailing the history of a local Catlin church. Other patrons contributed family documents, photographs, realia, and written stories.
2.2G	With the implementation of the AMHS, SHARE committees needed to review several policies and procedures.	The most significant was the damaged item procedure, to ensure members' items are evaluated and routed correctly.
1.2D	We had one meeting with a new library director to discuss SHARE membership, and SHARE staff participated in the annual library crawl, having a great time visiting members!	These are excellent opportunities to get to know new library leaders, ensure members have the resources they need, and keep them updated on all things SHARE.
2.1G	The SHARE Circulation Specialist taught 12 sessions.	There were 40 participants, for a total of 79.5 continuing education hours.
1.2D	This quarter, patrons borrowed 76,280 owned items and 6,974 pay-per-use items from CloudLibrary.	The CloudLibrary collection now has 271,147 items available for patron use.
2.2E	The team collaborated with vendors to support members following Baker & Taylor's closure.	Worked with Brodart, Ingram, and The Palace Project to support members making a switch.
2.2G	The SHARE Administrative Services Manager coordinated the Polaris 7.8 upgrade and annual password reset with IT and Polaris.	Our team is committed to innovation, top-notch technology, and database security. After the upgrade, new features include renewal statistics, keyboard shortcuts, and the ability to edit multiple bibliographic records at once.
3.2G	The IHLS Associate Director/SHARE Director participated in a Polaris summit networking event with other Innovative consortia and library directors in Chicago.	The summit was an excellent opportunity to brainstorm with colleagues. It was extremely valuable to learn more from Innovative about their leadership's vision of emerging library technology.

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## Delivery & Facilities

Submitted by Colleen Dettenmeier, Delivery & Facilities Director

*Report Months*

October –December 2025

Prepared by submitter.

## Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objv(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
1.1A	Hosted Board & Member Meet and Greet and Automatic Material Handling System (AMHS) Tour at Carbondale Hub	This event provided a valuable networking opportunity for board members and SHARE member libraries, fostering stronger relationships and open communication. Attendees participated in a guided tour of the Automatic Material Handling System (AMHS) at the Carbondale Hub, gaining insight into how the system streamlines materials processing and improves efficiency. The demonstration supported professional development and enhanced understanding of the technological infrastructure supporting resource sharing among member libraries.
1.2C	Review & Revise Delivery Page(s) on the IHLS website	IHLS Delivery & Facilities Director drafted and submitted communications for SHARE members regarding updates to the Barcode Duplication Project and planning the Member Meeting on January 7, 2026.
2.2F	Provide System Delivery to IHLS Member Libraries	<p>IHLS staff successfully provided contactless delivery of 809,032 items to member libraries across the system. Additionally, the Delivery On the Go (DOGs) same-day, same-route service facilitated the transfer of 9,406 items, supporting efficient and timely resource sharing.</p> <p>IHLS Delivery &amp; Facilities Director traveled to Springfield, IL, for the registration, title, and van wrap process for the four new cargo vans that were ordered. The cargo vans should be wrapped by the end of January to be placed in service.</p> <p>The hiring process was also conducted to fill delivery staff vacancies, ensuring continued service reliability and operational stability.</p>
2.2F	Implementation of Automatic Material Handling System (AMHS)	The IHLS Delivery & Facilities Director prepared for and implemented the Automatic Material Handling System (AMHS) at the Carbondale Hub to improve sorting efficiency and streamline delivery operations. This included site preparation, staff training, and system integration to ensure a smooth rollout. The implementation supports faster processing times and enhances the overall effectiveness of resource sharing across the region.

**Note:** Strategic plan goals have been abbreviated in places.

**DELIVERY & FACILITIES REPORT & STAFF ACTIVITIES**

3.1E	Explore and Support Opportunities for Individual Staff Professional Development in their Roles	IHLS Delivery & Facilities Director attended the Illinois Library Association annual conference in Rosemont, IL, and the Legislative Meet-up in Edwardsville, IL.
3.2A	Annual Meeting Planning	IHLS staff played a key role in executing the Annual Meeting, assisting with logistics, planning, and coordination to support a successful and engaging event for members.



# Illinois Heartland Library System

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## MEMBERSHIP & OUTREACH

Submitted by Leah Gregory, Director of Membership and Outreach

**Report Months:**  
Oct.-Dec. 2025

Prepared by Submitter

## Department Activity & Accomplishment Highlights

Op. Plan Objv(s)	Activity	Description of Purpose & Progress/Results
1.1A	Connected with members through in-person site visits	Membership Staff conducted 26 site visits this quarter. We use these visits to support, educate, encourage, redirect, and connect.
2.1A	Provided many varied CE opportunities	IHLS staff provided 19 continuing education opportunities this quarter in the form of webinars, virtual meetings, and in-person sessions. All are well attended and evaluated.
2.2B	Maintained consistent and ongoing internal and external communication	MarCom Staff Responded to 23 requests for communications and marketing support from all IHLS departments. The new Digital Marketing Specialist has focused on short, frequent social media posts with anecdotal responses from members about the new visibility. Preparation for the IHLS Instagram and TikTok platform and IHLS Scroll School (social media training) began.
2.2B	Project Communication & Marketing Support	MarCom staff provided support for Member Day marketing, communications, and design. Maintained a regular communication schedule regarding the AMHS, including media contact for two news items with WSIU and the <b>Riverbender</b> .
1.3C	Supported members in advocating for their communities	Membership Staff attended board meetings to support library & school members. MarCom Staff continued to provide advocacy tools and support for libraries to share with their community. We began preparation for the Schools + Education Town Hall for school administrators and school board members. A new Freedom to Read design was added to the IHLS store.
1.1D	Maintained large-scale outreach to members	Membership Staff attended five conferences and 11 networking sessions, including meet-ups for IHLS members at larger conferences. The Can't Shelve This podcast reached 10,000 downloads and is continuing to grow. Member Day preparations are well underway.
1.1B	iLead Project outreach and maintenance	The iLead Staff Member made 30 visits to libraries to present information about the portal and facilitated in-person and virtual workshops and presentations. The portal recorded 542 total users as of 12/31/2025, with 542 learning badges issued and 13 trustees having completed all 9 portal journeys.

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# January Staff Activity Update

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## Accounting and Human Resources

- The accounting department issued 2025 1099 tax forms to qualifying vendors and reviewed and distributed 2025 W-2 and 1095-C tax forms to employees.
- The accounting department completed the 2025 Workers' Compensation audit and submitted it prior to the due date.
- The accounting department completed and submitted the FY2026 second quarter OCLC grant and the financial portion of the CMC and iLEAD LTT grants.
- The human resources department developed a clean final draft of the Employee Handbook, along with its change log, and sent it to ISL for the last step in our handbook approval process.
- The human resources department updated the new hire orientation with information about the new Staff Accounts Policy and created a workflow sent to all IHLS Staff to read and officially acknowledge the policy.
- The human resources department partnered with IT to create a new approval workflow for uploading staff photos for internal use, so they are all uniform and professional.
- The human resources department issued the inaugural Semi-Annual Performance Reviews to all staff using Paylocity.

## IT

- There were some lingering issues with the Polaris 7.8 upgrade that the team has been trying to track down. With the assistance from the support team at Innovative, we're trying to put our finger on why the server stops responding to requests randomly. This is an ongoing issue.
- Planning for FY2027 budget and trying to eliminate services that are no longer needed or used to their fullest. However, as the industry moves to more of a subscription based model, this makes cutting services hard.
- Lots of progress on L2 integration, data analytics for drivers, and scripts to make the uploading of OCLC records more efficient.

## Facilities and Operations

- The Delivery & Facilities Director finalized details for the Special Members Matter Meeting, including identifying and preparing AMHS topics to present to members, and developed website articles, printed memos for members, and internal staff communications regarding the transition to eliminating the transit label requirement on SHARE member-to-member materials effective January 1.
- Operations staff coordinated the IHLS Tubs Grant for member libraries, receiving 56 applications that were reviewed and scored by the Tubs Grant Committee with identifiable information removed, resulting in tubs being awarded to 42 member libraries and distribution beginning to grant recipients.
- Staff participated in multiple delivery planning and operational initiatives, including ILDS contract planning for FY27, the statewide delivery quarterly meeting with the Illinois State

Library, review of the internal surplus van process, participation in the Accident Review Board, development of a damaged items process for materials identified during delivery, updates to sorter training documents, and an in-person site visit to Carbondale.

## SHARE

- We are so excited to announce that some of our requested developments in Aspen have been completed, which will enhance the patron user experience! Some of the new features include showing the number of remaining renewals in the patron account, additional list functionality, ability to prioritize CloudLibrary in search results, and a customization option to show the number of available items.
- The team had a great brainstorming meeting in January, with a lot of new ideas as well as great suggestions for process improvements.
- Speaking of process improvements, we have had a few opportunities to work through our downtime procedures as a team after the recent Polaris upgrade, and have identified areas to refine our downtime responses.
- In January members of our team have been working with other consortia like RAILS, MAIN, and CCS, as well as meeting with vendors like Swank, Brodart, OCLC, and Lyris, offering their expertise and working together for shared goals.

## Membership and Outreach

- Scroll School launched with mini on-demand lessons in doing social media outreach
- We hosted 75 school administrators, school board members, and school librarians at 2 Town Hall Meetings, and IHLS was featured in two local news stories
- Partnered with RAILS and ISL to provide IPLAR 2026 update and training