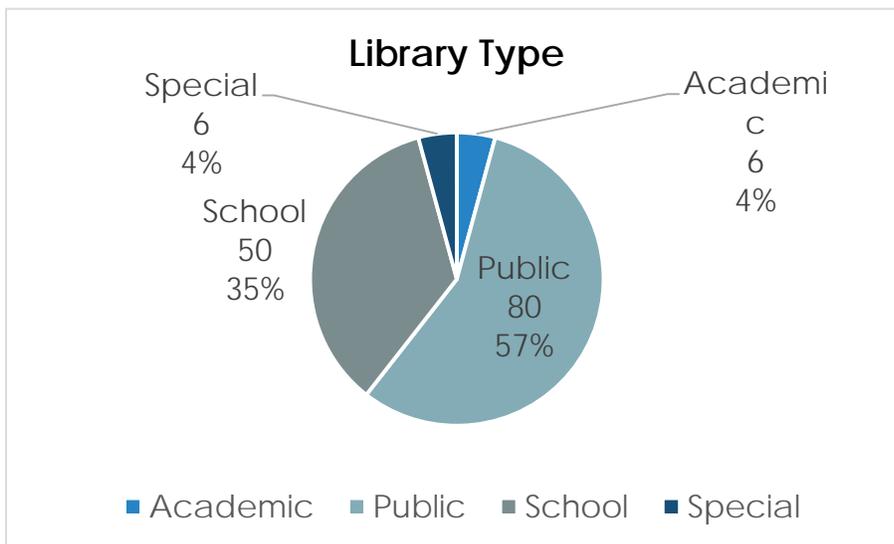


LONG RANGE PLANNING SURVEY RESULTS

This report is an overview of the results of the member survey that went out in February 2014 seeking input from the IHLS member libraries on their concerns and goals. While this report gives a snapshot of the results, it highlights the majority responses and we encourage you to be cognizant of the complete survey results.

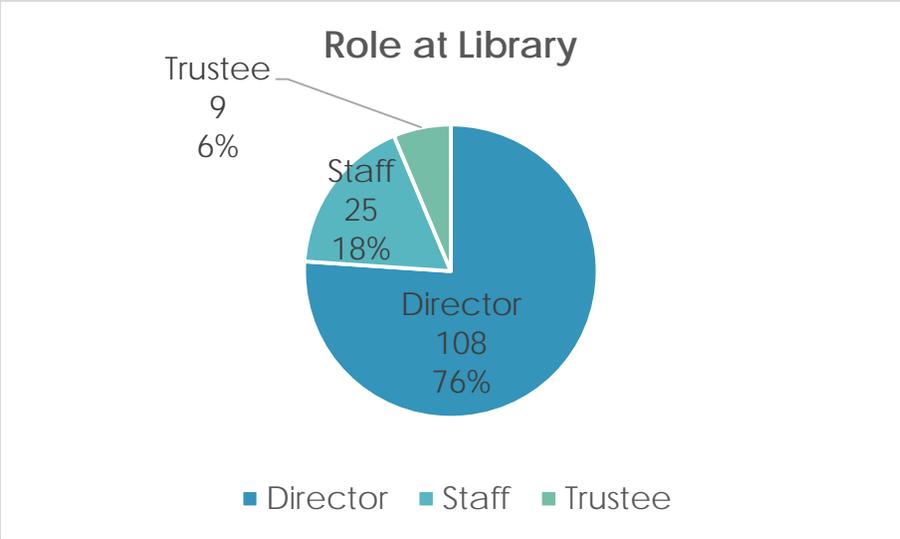
The report was created to assist the IHLS Board of Directors on completing a new Long Range Plan. Several comments/suggestions/concerns may be addressed by IHLS staff prior to completion of the plan.

What library type do you represent?



142 answered the survey with the majority (57%) being from public libraries.

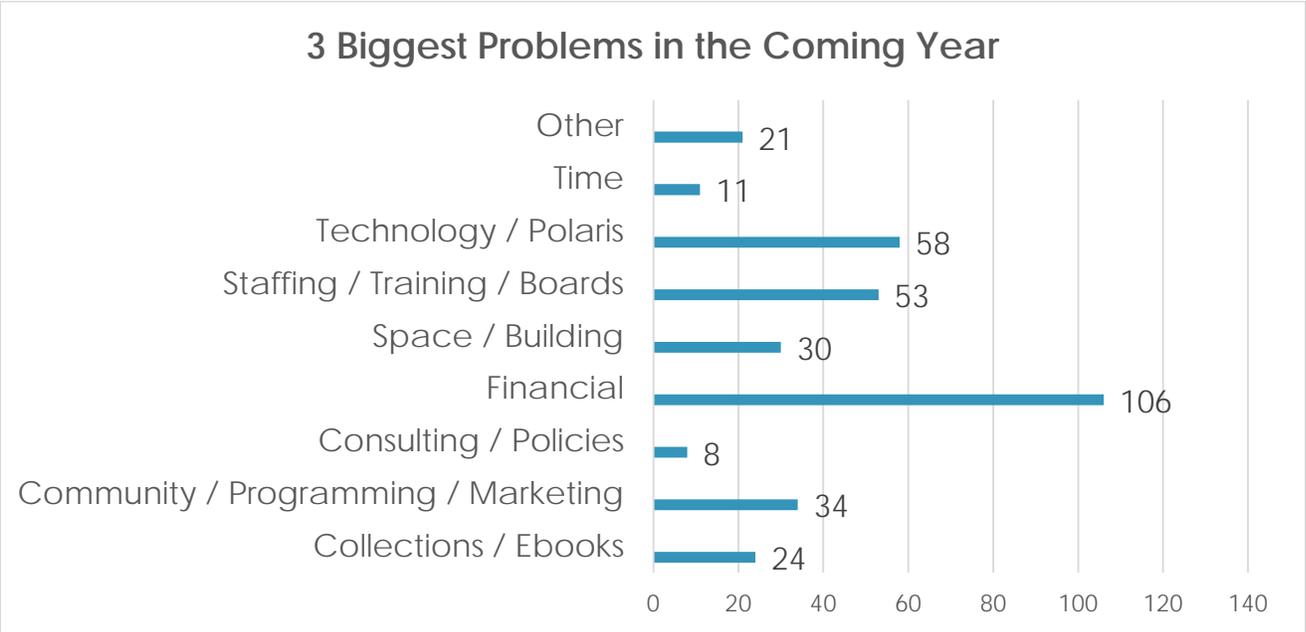
What is your role at your library?



76% answered 'Director' for this question.

One respondent indicated the survey choices did not fit her/his job title.

What are the three biggest problems facing your library during the coming year?



This was an open ended question with three responses. Responses were manually put into categories. In reviewing the results, Finances had the highest number of responses. Several responses fit into more than one category, i.e., "building issues - affording

repairs, upkeep” was marked as both Financial and Space/Building. The next two highest problems are Technology/Polaris and Staffing/Training/Boards.

More than one school mentioned Common Core being an issue and the possibility of closing libraries.

Financial Responses

106 (74%) of the responses alluded to Financial difficulties. A sampling of responses include:

- Equitable pay for staff for lower turnover
- The economy
- Money to purchase reading materials
- Money to purchase more materials for Summer Reading Program, Story Hour, etc.
- Rising costs
- Budget/Money to operate
- Health insurance costs
- Insufficient funding
- Proposed raise in the minimum wage
- Escalating costs of building maintenance
- Budget cuts versus fixed costs
- Financial Issues. money, money, money
- Paying qualified staff (appropriate wage scale)
- Possible downsizing of staff

Technology/Polaris Responses

58 responses alluded to Technology and/or Polaris.

- Handling all of the details of Polaris
- Choosing the best equipment to serve our community
- Lack of computer technology expertise
- Technology advancing quickly, computers aging
- Internet speed
- Keeping up with New Technology
- Adequate bandwidth for online operations/public wi-fi
- Support staff trained in eBook technologies and devices
- Technology crowding out traditional libraries
- Technology updates-- , keeping up with e books, computers (Learning Polaris) , money to pay for it all
- Flaws in Polaris' item request module. This needs to be remedied immediately because of the negative effects it has on all phases of IHLS services. Why should local staff have extra work because the program has a major flaw?

- Maintaining and expanding Internet presence
- Transitioning to Polaris
- Teaching students Polaris
- Moving two of my libraries into Polaris
- Utilizing Polaris to its fullest and keeping part-time staff aware of developments
- Finishing bar coding the one elementary library that has moved into Polaris

Staffing/Training/Board Responses

53 responses fit into this category.

- Aligning Board, Director, and other staff goals and expectations
- Support staff trained in eBook technologies and devices
- Lack of computer technology expertise
- Cont. Education for staff & Trustees
- Getting people to serve on the board and actually do something
- Training for my elementary aide
- Not enough staff to accomplish tasks and provide essential services or explore new growth areas
- Insufficient support staff
- Additional responsibilities without additional staff
- Library board lack of involvement
- Deficit of staff skills, especially regarding technology

Additional Comments of Interest

- Knowing how to put ourselves out there in the community (not really my specific job but I think it's a growing problem with us)
- Common Core and reading for pleasure
- Common Core requirements
- Need to move toward learning commons
- Lack of communication from IHLS to the staff at member libraries. How in the world are Share's catalogers supposed to know about training sessions, when notifications to ALL catalogers is not initiated from IHLS?
- Too much top down control from system headquarters. Little concern from IHLS staff about meeting local needs.
- State requirements a library our size cannot maintain
- Lack of support from IHLS

What are three goals you hope to achieve for your library by the end of 2015?

This question resulted in a variety of responses from adding to their collections, new programs, weeding, training, raising money and applying for grants, and building repairs. Several libraries would like to focus on marketing their library to their communities. School librarians are dealing with the new Common Core.

Marketing / Community

- Improve advocacy at building level
- Conduct community survey
- Having students coming to library to do research for a school project.
- Community outreach - life-long learning for adults
- Increase the number of people using the library & its services
- Maintaining the library as a viable part of the community
- Increase the Library's visibility and place in the community.
- Encouraging the community to see the library as 'go to Place"
- To offer more than one computer for public use, and truly establish our library as a community technology center.
- Realizing ways to best utilize our new library addition to best serve our community.
- Marketing and branding campaign for library

Collections

- Increased nonfiction ebook collection
- Choose one of the 2 ebook delivery options
- Do an inventory and weed (Hasn't been done in years)
- Purchasing books for a young adult section
- A weeded and inventoried collection
- Weeding out damaged and outdated material
- Increase circulation

Financial

- Keeping the library running on a sound budget
- Write a grant
- Receive more grants
- Find a way to raise \$3000 through fundraising
- More money appropriated to the library materials budget
- Lower health insurance premiums for staff members
- Budgeting on target

Management / Staffing

- Increase staff by one
- Library District Status
- One year-round schedule (no winter/summer hours)
- Provide the materials for my patrons in a timely fashion
- Better communication with administration
- Defined roles for Board Members
- Make myself indispensable to administration
- Maintain at least two certified librarians
- Keep the library open and operating

CE / Training

- All staff will be trained in simple aspects of functioning libraries.
- Expansion of information literacy instruction
- I would like to see all our staff receive training and become confident using our e-book/audio/magazine services AND common devices.
- Find more sources for staff development to help my staff to provide better public service.
- Become proficient in Polaris cataloging
- To be fully automated as members of SHARE and eRead Illinois.
- More CE for staff

Building / Space

- Redesigning young adult area
- Fixing the repairs needed on the building
- Expansion of library facilities
- Complete remodel of 2nd and 3rd floor
- Completion of building improvement projects
- Begin a construction project--building addition
- Keep up with maintaining the building
- Tuck pointing

Technology / Polaris

- Better assistance for patrons with electronic resources
- Becoming automated
- Begin circulating on Polaris
- Joining Polaris

- Be merged completely with IHLS and use Polaris
- Clean up misaligned data in our local holdings records as a result of dumping the 4 legacy databases into Share. What a time-consuming mess!! This is additional work on top of our daily work we are paid to do and I don't think it can be completed in 2 years, but at the same time system staff are concerned whether the catalogers are deleting a certain tag or whether "full set" is on the volume line prior to saving an item record. Locally we just want our patrons to have the holdings information so they can find the item they need.
- Increase in ability to provide better computer services

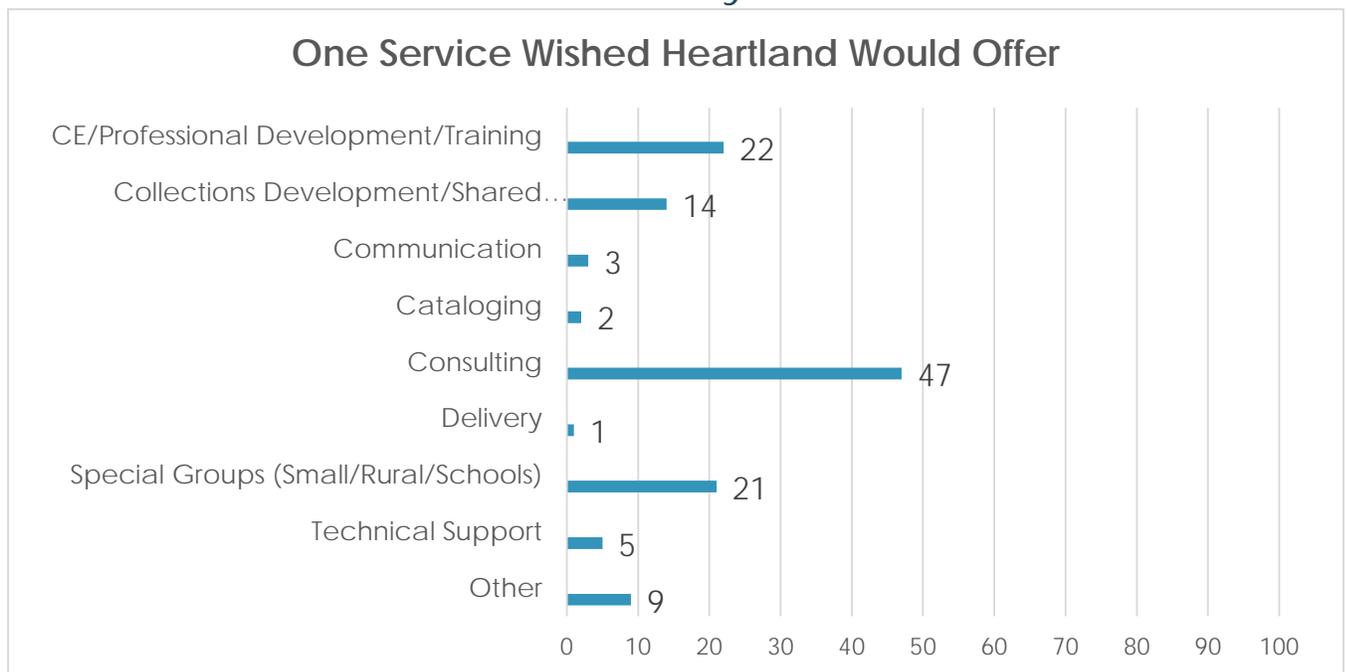
Common Core

- Curriculum more aligned with Common Core.
- Infusing the Common Core into the library curriculum
- Adding titles to address Common Core standards

Other

- Permission to use Z39.50 in cataloging. It never should have been disallowed. A mistake that should be remedied immediately.
- Earlier Delivery with limited lost and damaged items

What is one service that you wished Heartland would offer that it does not offer today?



Only 104 members completed this section. It is not surprising that of the 104 entries, 47 members or 45% of the members wish Heartland would offer Consulting again. CE/Professional Development/Training and Special Groups (Small/Rural/Schools) shared the next spot with both receiving 21%. Several responses tagged both Consulting and CE (i.e., "Consulting - mainly grant writing workshops" or Consulting and Special Groups (i.e., "Liaison for the school libraries at the elementary level").

Consulting

- Direct consulting-- like the bat phone when I need a quick question answered regarding library law for example.
- Consulting/legal advice
- Consultant for HR issues
- One designated person to talk to if having a problem or need an answer to a question
- Consultation services/ in-person training at individual libraries
- Increased Consulting on Days and Dates/grant info/technology help
- A consultant or someone to help guide our board of trustees.
- Consulting / Advocacy
- Someone who knows the laws-labor, osha, state, etc.
- Consulting assistance on grant applications

CE/Professional Development/Training

Several members responded that they would like training at their library or closer to them.

- CE classes
- More online training....
- More relative workshops and convenient locations for hands on learning
- Workshops for school libraries
- School library professional development
- Face to face professional development for school librarians
- Consulting - mainly grant writing workshops
- Erate workshop
- In depth training on site
- Maybe IHLS already offers this and I don't hear about it, but I guess I would love to be able to schedule someone come and do a conference just for our staff on some technology we need help with.
- Staff development, not just training (as on how to use aspects of Polaris). I mean offerings to help develop staff and offer opportunities to grow in our job areas.
- Online training for resources (i.e. media mall, etc.)

Special Groups (Small/Rural/Schools)

- Further development of school library outreach
- Increased and dedicated support for school libraries
- I would like to see help given to smaller libraries maybe someone could just go work with them for a day see their troubles.
- Making it possible for the small rural library with limited resources to once again easily be able to acquire resources from other libraries
- It would be great to have a school specialist who was knowledgeable about curriculum and common core.
- Advocacy for school libraries -- the 15 hour standard is not enough
- Please bring back the school liaisons.
- Workshops for school libraries
- It would be great to have a school specialist who was knowledgeable about curriculum and common core.
- Free eRead Illinois access to small libraries who can't afford it

Other Responses

- I would like IHLS to focus on its primary service of Delivery.
- Collection development tools such as uploading bibs to services like Follett Titlewave or BTOL.
- Assistance with computer problems, including viruses.

- An easier way to tell which system staff member handles what issue. Clear demarcation of duties of the staff
- Better communication for changes or updates on policies, route changes, etc.
- Strict membership requirements and adherence to SHARE rules
- Tech support for Patrons - answer questions
- Free original cataloging for up to 10 items other than the current offer for local history items.
- Request cataloging--I am not a cataloger and have sat on books all year because no one has them
- ILL for schools without being a full member

Please provide any comments on the answers above?

39 members provided comments. All of them are listed here. They include praise, concerns, wishes, and suggestions.

- We have been very pleased with all aspects of Heartland. We appreciate everything that is done for our small community. Our library is one of our most valuable assets.
- IHLS needs to improve delivery. ILL is the main reason for IHLS's existence. SHARE membership helps IHLS coordinate delivery. If IHLS does not support SHARE they will see membership drop which will make delivery more difficult.
- I worry about the percentage of system funding that goes towards staffing. After the Share meeting in which they shared the price of Share and the 78% of the budget that goes to wages, benefits, and taxes seems quite high.
- Send out a once a month communication that tells us briefly what is occurring at IHLS. Current grants available. Deadlines that should be met. Do this in straight forward language. Also do better preparation for your webinars i.e. equipment
- The inter-library loan system is starting to fail. Some libraries are not sending out materials when it has been requested. Heartland needs to jump on this issue before it becomes a crisis.
- Looking from the outside, it seems like Heartland is under a lot of turmoil. There is a lot of staff changes, and we are starting to wonder about the management of IHLS. I am saddened that the administration of IHLS would even consider bringing an unbalanced budget to its board or membership. I hope that IHLS can get its act together.
- The ListServe can be very overwhelming at times. I can have 26 emails on a damaged book or scotch tape. It's hard to keep straight what's important and what I can filter out.
- IHLS staff appear to be so far removed from the actual, day-to-day needs and workings of public and school libraries, yet they impose all kinds of stringent rules

onto local staff followed by threats of denying services. Headquarter staff should take a few weeks, shadow real frontline school and public librarians to see what they must accomplish for their taxpayers. IHLS needs a listserv for ALL catalogers, so information is sought by IHLS about our needs, rather than the current procedure of force-feeding to the few attending staff a lot of cataloging information that is irrelevant to local needs. IHLS needs to take advantage of local professional group meetings to train and seek input rather than scheduling additional meetings = the need for consultant services. Who can drop everything to attend a virtual meeting? No one except, apparently, system staff. More emphasis on local needs and less emphasis on what the system needs are; after all, frontline staff must serve their taxpayers first. If only 1 person attends the chat sessions, if only 55 catalogers (and some of these are from system offices) attend a Tuesday training, the system staff should question why local staffs are not attending in greater numbers and figure out what the local staff needs are and how to meet those needs. This survey is the first time any input has been sought from local library staff. Thank you for seeking input about local concerns. Now what is going to happen with our comments? Suggestion - compile and share these responses with all local staff at all of the member libraries; seek comments on the concerns raised; then take action to meet member needs.

- I have been so please with Illinois Heartland. They have been so kind, patient and hardworking while our library made the conversion to Polaris. Thank you!
- I feel that school libraries could and should further strengthen the Heartland membership. However, this will never happen unless the unique needs of school libraries are recognized, addressed, and welcomed. I fully understand that school libraries are not the driving force of the system, nor are they the main financial supporters. That said, schools are where most children are developing their understanding of libraries and what they do. IL school libraries, if they even exist in a school at all, are in a sad state of affairs. If this generation of children is not taught what libraries are worth to them, why they should support them, and why they have a right to them, what kind of patronage will public libraries see in the future?
- By consulting, I mean that I miss being able to call someone (who I know) able to make suggestions and talk through an issue (not just automation). The exchange lists are very helpful and very much appreciated, but sometimes the library needs advice that I really don't want posted on a forum, or Facebook, or sent as a mass email.
- Our library recently had viruses on two of its computers. It is difficult for us to afford to pay for a computer technology person.
- I wish when we searched for patrons in Polaris that we only saw our patrons. It is a BIG head-ache that we can see all patrons from everywhere. Since we are logging in twice - we should not have to see all patrons from IHLS.
- I would like to see Heartland respect school libraries. As question 2 on this survey demonstrates, PUBLIC libraries are the focus, and school libraries are a bother. The check box for other does not accept a response. I am neither a director,

staff, or trustee. I am a Teacher-librarian managing three libraries, teaching 26 classes a week, all while being marginalized by the library system.

- The consultant services are sorely missed. Much of the communication issues that seem to plague the system now did not exist in the days of consultants.
- We are getting more and more questions from patrons about how to use their devices for the Overdrive and 3M Ebook programs.
- Question 3. Insufficient Funding: Our tax levy of \$18,692.43 this FY and per capita grant of \$1225.99 will just barely cover the costs of 2 part time employees (whose hours total 27 per week); an internet based catalog service (not yours, it's too expensive for us); the OCLC fee, treasurer's bonding, and a few other recurrent expenses. We've supplemented our tax income with about \$7,000 from fines, earnings, fundraising, non-tax payer memberships, and donations. And, our budget will only get worse next year with the expected loss of about \$2000 in fundraising income. If it weren't for the Village of Homer paying our utilities, telephone, and insurance costs, we would be up the proverbial creek without a paddle. As it is, we have very little money left that can be used to add to our collection or expand programming. Our underpaid librarians haven't received an increase in two years, but absolutely deserve one. Of course, this later situation may HAVE to change should the \$10 minimum wage become law. But I'm not sure where we'll get the money. As a community library, we can only tax property within the Village limits of Homer, an area of just ONE square mile. However, because we are the ONLY library within Heritage School District, our service area, by law, encompasses all of that District, an area of 133 square miles! Currently, a serviced, but non-tax paying household, must pay the Homer Library \$35 for the privilege of using our library—an amount equal to the average tax collected from Village households. This membership is voluntary—a choice that is not available to Village residents. Promoting memberships, and marketing to families that require them, is costly. It's an expense our budget simply cannot support. Furthermore, the solution to our income shortcomings is NOT expanding our taxing authority into the other towns and townships in our service area via referendum. These are struggling villages and rural farm areas. The farmers would fight a referendum tooth and nail and the villages are poor enough that they could foreseeably reject a referendum too. Even our Board of Trustees does not fully support an expansion of our taxing authority; some own farm ground, some are ultra-conservative, while others feel the negative publicity would adversely impact our effectiveness. Equally of concern is that, although we have a facility that's large enough to support the area we serve, it is owned by the Village of Homer. A successful referendum would very likely result in a loss of financial support from the Village (see above) and undoubtedly prompt a requirement that we pay to lease the property from them. However, there is a way these problems could be solved: The State of Illinois could pass a law requiring those households that are within the service area of a small library, but who are not being taxed for the use of that library, to pay a tax equal to the average tax levied on the households that are being taxed. With IHLS support, this is an idea

that would alleviate much of the financial burden on some of the small libraries that populate downstate Illinois and are members of the IHLS family. With additional funding, small libraries could afford full access to IHLS services, increasing YOUR income as well as ours!

- We have been on Polaris almost a year and went thru an upgrade yet many of the old problems are still there. This is very frustrating for my staff that have to deal with or work around the numerous quirks that are still in the system and won't be "fixed" for who knows how long. While it is a better database than dynix it does not work as well as we were led to believe and when you use it on a daily basis it is very frustrating. We are still dealing with a mass mess of records that did not transfer properly, no name attached to a lost item etc.
- Allow schools to only request books. Being under-staffed makes it hard enough to just request what my students need. I would have to live here to field requests from other libraries.
- I have repeatedly stated each time I am asked that the state library system is defeating the purpose for which it was originally created. I recognize that budget constraints, the financial condition of the state of Illinois have caused many if not all of the problems, but in the end the doors will slam shut on the small rural library and we will once again be isolated. The clock is going backward.
- I'm not a director, I'm a cataloger, but I end up spending a lot of my time troubleshooting at the front desk for staff that is doing their best but doesn't have a lot of tech savvy, plus many are only part-time and don't run into things like putting Zinio apps on tablets, or advanced item searching in Polaris, often enough to get comfortable with the processes. I understand that some classes are offered at Edwardsville, but that's almost a 45 minute drive for us and we can't all take the classes together, bouncing ideas off each other or jogging each other's memories about issues that have come up at our location. My director and I are on the same page about staff needing more training but I honestly feel like an all-day in-house seminar by a couple of IHLS staff (morning spent on e-resources like Overdrive, Zinio, 3M, afternoon on more advanced Polaris issues) would be invaluable. If this were even an option, I would love to know about it and I think all our staff would be interested.
- Since the Decatur office closed, it seems that there are less opportunities for those libraries in the former RPLS. I hope that our voices are still heard. Thank you for your openness to hear our concerns.
- More on-site training and/or online tutorials would also be great.
- I miss someone being there to answer my questions, big or small. I miss someone knowing the issues a small library faces, and offering assistance. I miss training and information sessions on current practices, programs, and information I need, like LCLS used to do before. We need training on new stuff, and refresher courses on old stuff.
- For #5 to allow people to talk to one another with an eye towards problem solving issues that affect schools, discussing trends, etc.

- While the Heartland and ISL staff have been very helpful and the resources offered have been great, I see a need for more resources to guide trustees in their role. The ones available through ISL/Administrative Ready Reference are very helpful, yet there are situations where having someone come speak to your board might be more effective than expecting each trustee to read a bunch of material. A trustee training session for new trustees would be a helpful addition.
- Many grants are matching and we have a small budget. Finding the time to do the grants is also tough. We have a small community that have so many things to do that the library is not on their top of the list of things to do. They do help donate towards events but would like to get more interest going as time permits.
- Our old system provided outstanding support services, from consulting to staff development. Our library literally would not exist without the help and guidance provided by staff from the old RPLS.
- I have been in this business for 40+ years and if I had started out in a small public library believe me I would have dug ditches for a living. As it is this will be my last library and thank heavens I have some good memories from here but not like the wonderful memories from being at the state library, STL University, St. Louis Pub. and LCLS
- Small libraries are great places to be-- not just the huge libraries -- we are important too, plus you have to remember to think like a smaller place when referring to smaller communities,, less budget, less staff but we still have big accomplishments as well.
- Consultants used to keep us apprised of upcoming events and about political situations facing libraries that we could become involved in I miss that.
- So far there are too many committees--I don't know who does what. I also have no one to call with very basic questions.
- Biggest problem is budget and no chance of it changing at all.
- We really appreciated the assistance of consultants like Charm when writing grants. So often just the word selection and phrasing makes a big difference in whether or not a grant is awarded. It really helped to have their input.
- #5: I know limited online (basic) training is being offered, but not much. I don't have the ability to drive to a lot of trainings and meetings. When the Decatur hub was closed, it became even more prohibitive. When the Decatur hub was closed, we were told a lot of trainings would be offered online, but I've yet to see that be the case.
- I hate to be redundant but funding is at the root of most of the issues that our library has right now.
- Our situation is unique but I believe all libraries in the system could benefit from consulting availability, even if it's one or two people who consult by phone. I feel more on my own than I ever have.