

# Monday Morning Eye-Opener April 14, 2025

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

## MONDAY MORNING EYE-OPENER

IOWA | State Library of Iowa

April 14, 2025

### State of America's Libraries Report



#### Libraries Take Action

Each year during National Library Week, ALA releases a publication titled The State of America's Libraries Report. With each edition, ALA editors look back on the year past with stories about library funding, programming, partnerships, and more.

The look back at 2024 is best characterized in the publication's subtitle "*Libraries Take Action*," showing library staff, trustees, Friends, and patrons stepping up with innovative services, as well as defending book challenges.

2023-24 ALA president Emily Drabinski writes *"In extraordinary times, libraries take action. As we continue to work together toward the better world we know is possible, let's remember that we are all in this together ... and that the vast majority of people love their libraries for the ordinary and extraordinary work we do each day: connecting people to reading and resources, building communities, expanding literacy across the lifespan, and making for great Saturday afternoons. See you in the stacks!"*

From the full report, here are some statistics and stories that impacted Americans and their libraries in the past year:

- Des Moines Public Library (DMPL) installed fridges at two branches after local data indicated that the Franklin Avenue Branch zip code had one of the highest concentrations of food pantry use in Des Moines from July 2021 to June 2022. *"Our mission is to strengthen our community by connecting people with the ideas and tools they need to enrich their lives,"* said Nikki Hayter, supervising librarian at DMPL's Franklin Avenue branch. *"I don't know what could be much more enriching than food."*
- Last year, University of Iowa's Lichtenberger Engineering Library became a designated Patent and Trademark Resource Center (PTRC) by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. The library now offers multiple ways for students and faculty to

learn more about intellectual property and how to access patent records, including one-on-one assistance, training, and courses covering intellectual property topics as part of its information literacy program

- When Indianapolis' newest library opened in August 2023, it was the first in the state to be a Certified Autism Center
- To help address food insecurity throughout the county, Spartanburg County Public Libraries in South Carolina started a **Bags of Hope** initiative, connecting food and other essential items to those in need. Their **Bags of Hope** program requires little or no library funding, co-administered by community organizations to provide food and other necessities to people facing poverty

The State of America's Libraries Report also includes ALA's tradition of including the Top 10 Most Challenged Books of the past year. The report cites these statistics: in 2023, ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom received a record 4,240 unique book titles challenged in libraries. This represents the highest number since ALA began compiling such data, reflecting a 65% increase over challenges reported in 2022, the previous high.

**The full ALA report is a free PDF download. Read more about our nation's libraries at the button below.**

**Read the State of America's Libraries Report**

## Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day



### Part of the Safe Routes to School Program

Thanks to Maryann Mori for passing along this news from the Iowa Bicycle Coalition. Matt Burkey, coordinator of the Safe Routes to School program, is asking public libraries to get involved in **“Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day”** coming up on **May 7th**. And while May 7 is this year's official date, communities are welcome to celebrate any day in May that best fits local schedules—so there's time to plan with your schools.

Matt Burkey says *“I'd love to work with other libraries across the state and see if we can get more walking school buses like we see in Perry, IA. I need librarians to reach out to*

*their schools and help get the school signed up.” Sounds like a worthy public library-school partnership!*

## About Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day

This event connects with many issues that communities care about: creating safer and more walkable routes to school, building a sense of community and school spirit, and inspiring families to use their feet for the school commute more often. **Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day** is a day to get to school without the car. Walking and biking to school help promote physical activity, community, and time together for the family. It is also an opportunity to reduce the number of vehicles around our schools which contribute to noise and air pollution. **A great way to participate is to meet at a central location—like your local public library!**

This event can help bring a community together linking physical activity, schools, and libraries. In addition, **Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day** helps encourage communities to implement policy or engineering changes that make it safer to walk and bike to school. Take notes during your walk to school and identify any areas that need improvement.

Please respond directly to [Matt Burkey](#) with your interest in this. And if you respond quickly, your library might win some fun swag like stickers and pencils that you can give away to your summer reading kids 😊

To see how an Iowa library gets kids to school safely year round, view the State Library's Kernels episode that features [Perry Public Library's "Walking School Bus."](#) More about how to organize a **Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day** at the button below.

**Walk, Bike, & Roll to School Day**

## Blank Park Zoo Passes

### Free to Public Libraries This Summer

This just in: the State Library has received **Blank Park Zoo Passes** for public libraries to distribute this summer. These passes are free; youth services staff are encouraged to request a quantity for your library youngsters while supplies last.



Thanks to a long-standing partnership with the State Library, the **Blank Park Zoo** in Des Moines has been providing Zoo passes to Iowa's public libraries for many years. The passes provide one free admission for kids ages 3-12. If you would like to have some passes to give away at your library this summer, please contact [Dori Buls](#) (email or call 515-281-5790) to request quantities for your library. **Passes are available only while supplies last.**

In addition to Zoo passes, **Blank Park Zoo** also brings animal conservation and educational programs around the state and has done so since 1990. One such program

is **"Zoo to You"** with visits to libraries, schools, daycares, senior centers, and other community organizations.

From the Zoo's website *"Our mission is to inspire an appreciation of the natural world through conservation, education, research and recreation. **Blank Park Zoo** brings this inspiration to you through **Zoo to You** programs, with our engaging and memorable educational experiences. Our Zoo to You programs include zoo artifacts and sometimes even live Ambassador Animals!"*

Zoo staff offer this **disclaimer**: *"**Blank Park Zoo** can travel to locations up to 3 hours away (6 hours round trip) Ambassador Animals that travel with **Zoo to You** programs are small animals such as small mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates. Exhibit animals, such as big cats and primates, are **NOT** a part of our traveling ambassador program. We do not offer a "petting zoo" nor do we provide programs at private residences. We also do not bring live animals to festival or booth style events."*

**Zoo to You** program options, pricing, and a reservation form at the button below.  
And don't forget to contact Dori to request Zoo passes for your library kids!

**Blank Park Zoo Info**

---

## This Week



### Tomorrow: New Director Meet-Up

Catch up with a **New Director Meet-Up** tomorrow **April 15<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00PM**. Here's the deal: District Consultants team up to build on our initial orientation visits by inviting new directors to join us in ZOOM. This is a great chance to extend our early conversations with new people by meeting online for a chance to talk about library management issues in more detail.

This is very informal; we'll have some questions teed up, but this is really your chance for Q&A with us and with each other. Plus, we also see this as a great way to introduce you new directors to each other, inside and outside of your own District.

And what do we consider "new?" We're thinking people who have been on the job for about 1 year, although that question is really best answered by you. If you've been working abit longer than that, but would like to feel more connection with colleagues, this will be time well spent!

**Join us tomorrow April 15<sup>th</sup> for *New Director Meet-Ups***

No registration necessary, ZOOM link below.

**Meet-Up ZOOM Room**



## Monday Morning Eye-Opener

Editor: [Bonnie McKewon](#)

**IOWA**  
State Library of Iowa

1112 East Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

*The State Library is supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act.*



Stay Connected with the [State Library of Iowa](#):



[Manage Subscriptions](#) [Help](#)



Powered by

