



Celebrating National Library Week: Sharing “Library Joy” in Every Community

By State Librarian Mary Soucie

National Library Week is our annual reminder of the magic, meaning, and momentum that libraries bring to the communities they serve. This year, the American Library Association invites us to celebrate under a theme that feels especially fitting: *Library Joy*.



Library Joy is the spark that happens when someone discovers a book that speaks to them, attends a program that opens new possibilities, or simply feels welcomed the moment they step through the door. It's found in the quiet triumph of a new reader, the excitement of a child choosing a first library card, the relief of someone getting help with a job application, or the simple comfort of a familiar space and a friendly face.



And at the heart of that joy is you.

Librarians and library staff create these joyful moments every day through exceptional customer service, thoughtful listening, and connections that extend far beyond the stacks. You transform everyday interactions into meaningful experiences.

Librarians and staff bring joy to patrons in so many ways. You bring joy to someone when you help them find the information they need, even when they aren't sure how to ask for it. You bring joy when you build collections and programs that reflect the community's stories, identities, and interests. You bring joy by being a steady, trusted presence in times of change.

One of the most powerful aspects of *Library Joy* is that it looks a little different in every community—and that is exactly what makes it so vital. Whether you serve a rural town, a city, a tribal community, a K-12 school or academic campus, a correctional facility, or anything in between, your work matters. You help shape communities that are informed, connected, curious, and resilient.

As we celebrate National Library Week, take a moment to recognize the joy you create. Your dedication fuels the role of libraries as centers of connection and creativity. Your commitment ensures that people of all ages and backgrounds feel the library is a place for them.

Thank you for continuing to bring *Library Joy* into your work and your community, one patron at a time. This week is for you—your service, your heart, and the joyful impact you make every single day.

Today's Skills for Tomorrow's Libraries Virtual Conference

Registration is now open for the Today's Skills for Tomorrow's Libraries Virtual Conference (April 29-30, 2026)



Topics include cybersecurity, AI awareness, information literacy, news media literacy, and future-focused library services that will impact our students, patrons, and communities as well as presentations on programming that you can host at your library. There are also opportunities to network with fellow librarians at various roundtables.

Looking for CE credit? Receive one credit through Valley City State University for attending the conference! Sessions will be recorded and uploaded to Niche Academy for easy viewing between May 5 and June 3. The assignment is to watch each of the sessions and reflect upon them before June 17. Contact Tammy at tlkruger@nd.gov before April 29.

Register

Reminder School Librarians!

Submitted by Kathy Cline

Please assist the State Library in establishing a strong foundation of statewide school library data by completing the [2026 School Library Survey](#). The information gathered will be used to develop advocacy talking points for school libraries and school librarians, as well as to create infographic materials that highlight the impact of school library programs.



The survey consists of multiple-choice questions in a Microsoft form and **closes** at the end of the school day on **Monday, May 4**. Please help NDSL gather useable information from all North Dakota school libraries by completing one form for each school library where you work. While we realize this requires more of your time, it will greatly improve the accuracy of the data collected.

[Take The Survey](#)

Library of Congress Card Catalog Looking for a Home!

Submitted by Tammy Kruger

The Library of Congress has gifted each state a card catalog. This is a cool artifact, however, NDSL has one problem: we don't have a great place to display it at the State Library! As such, we are looking for a library that will give it a good home, where patrons and library staff can truly enjoy this piece of literary history. All types of libraries are encouraged to apply!



Details

Measurements

The card catalog is 15.5 inches tall, approximately 33.5 inches in length, and approximately 17.5 inches in width.

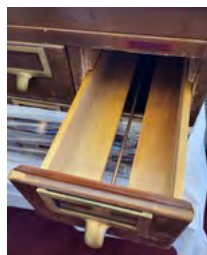


This card catalog does not possess legs. So, if you are interested in having this relic in your library, you will need to have a base – or tabletop – for it.

There's More!

The card catalog also comes with information from the Library of Congress, including:

- 15 cards with QR codes about Library of Congress collections and programs,
- 1 Library of Congress "A Library for All" display sign,
- 1 sign explaining a little history of physical card catalogs and the Library of Congress



Approximately every two years, the Library of Congress will send new information to be displayed with the card catalog.

How Can Your Library Get This Card Catalog?

If you are interested in obtaining the card catalog for your library, fill out this [survey](#). The survey will be open from April 23rd through May 14th. A site will be picked by way of lottery.

[Apply Today](#)

Preventing Summer Slide Flyers are Available for ALL Libraries!

Submitted by Kathy Cline

In the April 2 *Flickertale* article, [School and Public Libraries Collaborate to Prevent Summer Slide](#), I mentioned that NDSL was creating flyers to bring awareness to the summer slide and help prevent it. BreAnne and I have completed several flyers, with more to come throughout the summer. I encourage you to check back from time to time to see what's been added.

You can find the summer slide flyers in the [Promotional Flyers](#) LibGuide under the subjects: *Children & Young Adults*, *Public Libraries*, and *School Libraries*.

Upcoming pages in the Promotional Flyers LibGuide include:

- School Library Advocacy
- Promoting Reading
- Reading Statistics
- Graphic Novels



If you have a topic you would like to see developed into a flyer, please e-mail me at kjcline@nd.gov. I'll work with BreAnne to create a resource that meets your needs.

NDSL LibGuides

ADA Accessibility Deadline Extended

The U.S. Department of Justice has issued an interim rule extending the compliance deadlines for ADA website accessibility requirements for state and local governments.

Libraries that serve populations of 50,000 or more will now have until **April 26, 2027**, to be compliant, while libraries serving populations of less than 50,000 will have until **April 26, 2028**, to comply.

This extension provides additional time to address any issues you've run into. NDSL encourages you to continue your efforts in making your websites accessible for all patrons.



Culper Spy Ring

America 250: Steps to Building a Nation is a series that highlights historical happenings that have helped shape our country! This twelve-part series will highlight events, symbols, and people. This month's topic is the Culper Spy Ring.

What was the Culper Spy Ring?

The Culper Spy Ring was a secret weapon for the undermanned, undersupplied, and undertrained American Patriots! It began in August 1778, a few years into the Revolutionary War. George Washington used tactics he had learned during the French Indian War to spy on British soldiers and Loyalists. These spies used code names, invisible ink, and various secret symbols to pass valuable information along to Patriots and mislead British supporters. The name "Culper" came from the pseudonym – Samuel Culper Sr. – used by one of the members (Kross, 2003, and White, n.d.).

Important Figures of the Culper Spy Ring

Abraham Woodhull

Abraham Woodhull is credited with being the leader of the Culper Spy Ring! (He went by the pseudonym Samuel Culper Sr.) During the Revolutionary War, Woodhull lived a double life, moving among the British and British supporters as a farmer looking to sell his produce, all the while taking down information to relay to Patriot leadership. He worked with Anna Smith Strong to get these messages back to George Washington (American, n.d., and Schellhammer, 2014).

Continue Reading

Digital Dimension

By Trevor Martinson

Alderman Library Graffiti Collection

One of the most unique digital collections I've ever come across is the [Alderman Library Graffiti Collection](#). The collection contains 3,458 images of, you guessed it, graffiti. Bored or rebellious college students left their mark and/or art on 80 study carrels within the Alderman Library at the University of Virginia.

The graffiti was documented in 2019 by students of an anthropology course at the university. The library was about to be renovated, and the study carrels were set to be replaced. Before this was done, the anthropology students documented and preserved this collection of vandalism.

What does the graffiti include? Anything and everything. Such as: [students voting](#) if a fox was more like a cat or a dog; a [reference](#) to *The Office*; a short, but disappointed, [comment](#) about *Toy Story 2*; [motivational expressions](#); the [initials](#) of the "artists" and the date they left their mark; [confessions of love](#), either real or fake; and of course, there is the immature, lewd, and inappropriate.

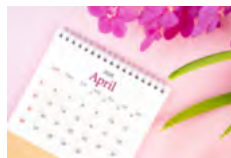
This digital collection is one of several that the University of Virginia has [available online via JSTOR](#).

[View The Collection](#)

State Aid For Public Libraries

Submitted by Allie Suko

Spring is in the air, and you know what that means: The State Aid application process is open! State Aid applications must be submitted through the Counting Opinions website by April 30, 2026, for your library to be considered for State Aid funds. There have been no changes to the application from last year. For a refresher on the State Aid process and how to fill out the application form, visit the North Dakota State Library YouTube channel and view the [State Aid to Public Libraries Walk-Through](#), or refer to the [State Aid LibGuide](#). If you have any questions regarding your application, or issues with the Counting Opinions website, please contact Allie Suko at ndsl-fiscal@nd.gov or 701-328-2492.



[State Aid LibGuide](#)

Dewey's 24-Hour Readathon

Submitted by Monica Struck

Have you ever felt the urge to shut out the world and see how many books you can plow through in a 24-hour period? I used to think it was just me, but then I heard about Dewey's 24-Hour Readathon. This extravaganza was started by blogger Dewey from [The Hidden Side of a Leaf](#). Though Dewey passed away shortly after instituting this daylong book party, others took up the task of organizing bibliophiles of the world for communal binge reading.



Dewey's 24-Hour Readathon is held twice a year (in April and October) with occasional Reverse Readathons held in summer. The traditional Readathon begins at 8:00 AM ET on a Saturday and ends at 8:00 AM ET the following day. Reverse Readathons run from 8:00 PM ET Saturday to 8:00 PM Sunday. Participants are encouraged to read as much as they can in that period and post about their reading on their favorite social media platform. There is an active presence on [Facebook](#), and you can find the group on other social media platforms ([Goodreads](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#)).

[Continue Reading](#)

North Dakota Battle of the Books

Submitted by Tammy Kruger

What is North Dakota Battle of the Books?

North Dakota Battle of the Books is a competition where students read pre-determined books and answer questions about them. Currently, students in grades 4 through 8 can participate. Each team is made up of 4 to 6 teammates and a coach.

Numbers from North Dakota Battle of the Books 2025-2026

During the 2025-2026 year, 15 middle schools and 8 elementary schools participated in North Dakota Battle of the Books. This was the first year with elementary, as well as the first year introducing a state competition.



Regional Winners

Elementary

BCN Blue (Barnes Co. North)
The Herd (Hazen)
The Plot Twisters (Stanley)
Marauders (Williston)

Middle School

Erik Ramstad's Happy Little Dinos (Minot's Erik Ramstad)
Blue Jays (Jamestown)
Hold Up! We're Reading (Bismarck's Simle)
Hazen Green (Hazen)



State Champions

Middle School

Happy Little Dinos (Minot's Erik Ramstad)

Elementary

Marauders (Williston's Bakken Ridge)

Titles for 2026-2027

Elementary

1. *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry
2. *Some Places More than Others* by Renee Watson
3. *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio
4. *Holes* by Louis Sachar
5. *Jake Drake, Know-It-All* by Andrew Clements
6. *Pax* by Sara Pennypacker
7. *Octopus Moon* by Bobbie Pyron
8. *I Survived the Japanese Tsunami, 2011* by Lauren Tarshis
9. *The City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau
10. *Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins
11. *Football Nightmare* by Matt Christopher
12. *Losing the Plot* by Annaleise Byrd

Middle School

1. *When Stars Are Scattered* by Omar Mohamed and Victoria Jamieson
2. *City of Ghosts* by Victoria Schwab
3. *I Survived the Attacks of Sept. 11, 2001* by Lauren Tarshis
4. *Found* by Margaret Haddix
5. *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan
6. *Drums, Girls, and Dangerous Pie* by Jordan Sonnenblick
7. *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson
8. *Allies* by Alan Gratz
9. *Merci Suarez Changes Gears* by Meg Medina
10. *Starfish* by Lisa Fipps
11. *A Tale Dark & Grimm* by Adam Gadwitz
12. *The In-Between* by Katie Van Heidrich

Interested in your school participating in Battle of the Books for 2026-2027?

Be on the lookout for more information coming September 2026!

[More Information](#)

In Other News

- Rob-See-Co, an independent see company located in Elkhorn, Nebraska, has announced their [Rural Library Grant Program](#). Rob-See-Co will award ten \$500 grants for a total of \$5,000 to selected rural libraries. Funds may be used for core educational, preservation and interpretive purposes, including collection development, facility improvements, traveling exhibits, guest speakers, staff training, programming, and publications. Applications are due by June 30.
- Patrons can check out "Familia" by Lauren E. Rico with no waitlists or holds until May 7 through the [Libby Reads US program](#).



NDLA News

Send us your Good Stuff!

Submission deadline for the June issue of *The Good Stuff* newsletter is Friday, May 1, 2026!

View previous issues of *The Good Stuff*, including the most recent issue (March 2026), at <https://ndla.info/the-good-stuff-newsletter>

Submit your Good Stuff by sending an e-mail to Tori Lee at good.stuff@ndla.info or by filling out the form at https://bit.ly/NDLA_GoodStuffForm.

WebJunction Highlight

By Al Peterson

LiFT: Introduction to the Library Catalog

In this month's WebJunction Highlight, we'll introduce you to another Library Fundamental Training (LiFT) course, Introduction to the Library Catalog. You will learn what a library catalog is, the purpose of a catalog, and how a library's catalog is essential for providing core library services, such as reliable access to collections. You'll also be introduced to basic terminology related to a library's catalog and learn about the most important elements in a bibliographic record. By the end of this course, you'll learn why libraries catalog their collections, recognize basic terms related to library catalogs, learn searching strategies for basic and advanced searches, and how to use your library's catalog for readers advisory.

To register for this course, go to <https://learn.webjunction.org/enrol/index.php?id=838>

These LiFT courses were created by the Idaho Commission for Libraries and WebJunction to meet the needs of non-degreed librarians, particularly those library workers who are new to the profession or never worked in a library before. With a focus on small and medium libraries, these courses were designed to introduce learners to various aspects of the practice, values, and mission of library work. While your library, along with every other library in the country, has their own policies, procedures, and ways of doing things, these LiFT courses can give a newbie a solid grounding in working in a library.

LIFT Courses

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Any mention of services or products in this newsletter does not constitute any endorsement or recommendation. The use of any services or products should be evaluated on an individual basis.

www.library.nd.gov

To submit content ideas/articles for a future issue of the Flickertale, please contact BreAnne at ndsipa@nd.gov.

Times referenced are Central Time.

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