**Librarian as Verb: Activate Your Rural Community**

**Learner Guide**

<https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/librarian-as-verb.html>

**Event Description**: Making connections and being an active part of the community you serve is especially important in small and rural libraries. It makes your library more visible and also enhances the quality of life in the community. Learn how a rural library director transformed library services over one summer, by getting out and growing awareness in the community. With the help of two enthusiastic staff, one simple idea grew into so much more. We will explore different ways to engage your community, spark young readers, and build relationships with families. Hear tips, tools, and personal stories about how the library implemented outreach services and created ways to positively impact the entire community! Learn how to make "librarian" not only your job title, but what you actively do.

A webinar presented in collaboration with the [Association for Rural & Small Libraries](https://arsl.info).

**Presented by:** **Lori Juhlin**, Director of the Hawarden Public Library (IA), and Chair, ARSL Marketing & Communication Committee

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| **What are your goals for viewing this webinar?** |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **Assessing Where We Are** |
| Lori shared details about the kinds of existing programming and outreach that were already in place before shifting to a more active community engagement approach. Assess your current suite of library outreach programs, and consider how you could enhance them, perhaps by saying “YES” more often. |

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| **Library Pop-Ups** |
| The Hawarden team has had great success with Library Pop-Ups, as a simple way to reach the community where they are. Brainstorm four potential Pop-Up opportunities, identifying supplies needed, marketing ideas and potential community partners.1.
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| **Community Engagement in Action** |
| Make time to get out into the community, visit businesses, stores, anyone who might be a partner later. Look for events you, or members of your team, can attend, especially ones where it is not expected that you would attend. Brainstorm community organizations or locations to connect with, identify staff member who can make the connection and set a realistic timeframe for action. Consider those you may have been connected to in the past, that could benefit from a refresh. Don’t feel you need to tackle them all at once!1.
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| **Diving Deeper with Community Discovery** |
| As you develop new or renewed community connections, consider taking a deeper dive to understand community interests and needs, using a community discovery process. In the webinar, [Getting to the Heart of the Community Through Discovery](https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/community-through-discovery.html), explore tools and strategies that bring the community more deliberately into the engagement process, to start meaningful conversations and foster collaborative engagement on everything from strategic and space planning to programming.**Remember:*** There is an intuitive side to community discovery. Be open to everything; make no judgement at this point—this is all fodder for the ideation process that begins in the next phase.
* Don’t discard any input from the community right off the bat because it’s “not what the library does.”
* Discovery is not a “majority rules” situation, and that the outcomes of your discovery may not necessarily indicate the best direction for the library. Let your instincts guide you.
* Think beyond the obvious conclusion.
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| **Action Plan:** (include some simple next steps, along with who, when, etc.) |
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