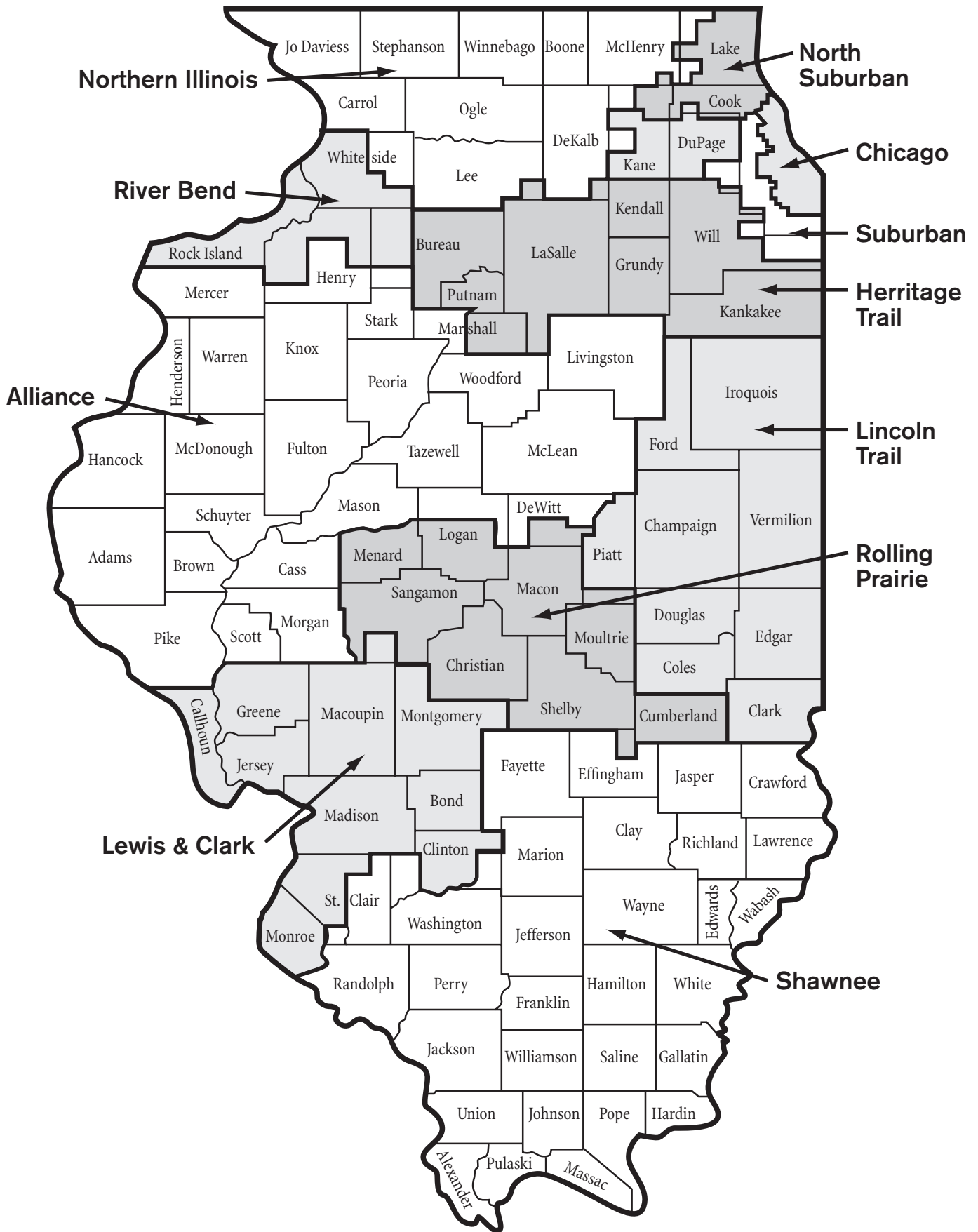


Appendix 2: System Histories

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Illinois Library Systems



Illinois Library Systems Fact Sheet

Library Systems in Illinois have 2,338 member library agencies:

- 186 Academic Libraries
- 643 Public Libraries
- 941 School Districts
- 568 Special Libraries

Library Systems are funded by grants from the Secretary of State's office through funds appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly.

Library Systems support shared computerized catalogs of over 34.5 million resources for 1,076 libraries.

Library Systems provide physical delivery of over 13 million materials annually.

Library System members shared more than 3 million resources with other members.

Library Systems offered 1,609 continuing education and training events to over 21,000 participants in FY99.

Library System professional staff advise local librarians and governing officials on topics such as telecommunications, expansion of library service, management, Internet access, marketing, technology resource sharing, universal service discounts (E-Rate), and many others.

Library Systems support information access to the resources in all member Illinois libraries for the citizens of Illinois.

Library Systems support online public access catalogs for 564 libraries and 3.2 million citizens of Illinois.

Library Systems support telecommunications networks that link local libraries and provide Internet and dial access to information in shared catalogs.

Library System members share over 5.5 million resources through reciprocal borrowing annually.

Library Systems provide Internet access to over 1,000 member libraries.

Library Systems help save tax money by supporting cooperative library service that improves services to the citizens of Illinois.

10-99

Alliance Library System (ALS)

Alliance Library System
Pekin Business Center (See Web site for other service centers)
845 Brenkman Drive
Pekin, IL 61554
www.alliancelibrarysystem.com
Reprinted from Alliance Library System's Basics Manual
FY2002 – FY2003

The Alliance Library System (ALS) is a partnership of nearly 300 academic, public, school district, and special/corporate library members, working together to strengthen resource sharing, library development and to provide continuing education/training. On July 1, 1994, the Alliance Library System was established, the result of a merger of the Corn Belt, Great River, Illinois Valley and Western Illinois Library Systems, each of which was founded in 1966. The planning for the “birth” of the Alliance Library System occurred during 1992 and 1993 under the leadership of first a Transition Board and then an Interim Board of Directors, elected by the membership of the four founding systems.

The Alliance Library System is an organization based on the principle of participatory governance, with maximum participation of the membership an expectation and a reality. ALS is governed by a fifteen member Board of Directors elected from the membership, a thirty-two member Advisory Council, comprised of representatives from the various membership constituencies, and a number of standing committees and task forces.

The Alliance Library System delivers a broad program of member library services through four service centers (Bloomington, Galesburg, Pekin, and Quincy), located throughout the 14,008 square mile regional service area with a population of 958,448.

In the Spring of 1996, the Alliance Library System began a year long strategic planning process. Working with consultant Sharon Wiseman, the Alliance Strategic Planning Design Team, comprised of representatives of the Board of Directors, Advisory Council, membership, staff and the Director, developed a strategic planning process and implementation strategies.

The Alliance Strategic Long Range Planning Futures Search Conference was held on May 30, 1996 at Eureka College with over one hundred members engaged in determining the most desirable future for our system. Participants identified and considered those issues, opportunities and challenges that are shaping the current situation in member libraries and that are most likely to influence the future. The concept of a Search Conference, a relatively new method being utilized by organizations engaged in long range planning, was selected because it is grounded in the belief that members of an organization can more effectively determine their future in a large, highly interactive session with ideas exchanged in a structured but rapid-fire, synergistic method. Written comments were also solicited from the Alliance members who were unable to attend the Search Conference.

The Design Team analyzed the results of these initiatives to formulate the mission, vision, values, and the future strategic pathways of the Alliance Library System. In September 1996, six focus groups were held throughout the Alliance Library System with fifty members commenting on and confirming the Alliance roles and “Our Desired Future” statements. Upon further refinements, the Strategic Pathway to Excellence was presented to and approved by the Alliance Library System Executive Board at their September 19, 1996 meeting.

In 2001, the Alliance embarked on the second strategic planning process to determine membership needs and

priorities for both the Alliance Library System and its LLSAP, the Resource Sharing Alliance, FY2002 through FY2006. Facilitated by Consultants Sharon Wiseman and Jimmy Thomas, a series of search conferences were held. The Alliance Design Team reviewed the outcomes of these membership “speak-out/speak up” sessions revised the ALS mission, vision and values statements and determined the future strategic pathways for the Alliance. The new Alliance Strategic Plan was implemented in the design of the FY2003 ALS Plan of Member Library Services.

On an annual basis, with the input of the Alliance Advisory Council and Executive Board, the staff updates the Operational Plans and designs the Alliance Program of Member Library Services including performance initiatives. A majority of these initiatives are developed in response to the Alliance Strategic Pathways and are designated in the Program of Service. At the Completion of each fiscal year, an evaluation of the Program of Service is conducted. The results of this process are then utilized in the development of the membership services program for the next year.

MISSION

The Primary mission of the Alliance Library System is to encourage and facilitate interlibrary communication, education, and resource sharing within its diverse multitype library membership.

The Alliance Library System through innovative professional leadership promotes creative service approaches, cooperation, and problem solving among its members. This professional partnership fosters pride, determination, and a sense of ownership between its constituent libraries and system staff. (2002)

Chicago Library System (CLS)

Chicago Library System
224 S. Michigan, Suite 400
Chicago, IL 60604
www.chilibsys.org

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CLS VISION STATEMENT

CLS is the catalyst for the innovative, the creative, and the cutting edge to transform service for the Chicago library community. 7/2001

CLS PURPOSE

CLS improves and develops libraries and library services through innovative and high quality service that results in libraries enriching lives. 7/2001

CLS MISSION

The mission of the Chicago Library System is to provide cooperative system services for the large and diverse community of libraries in Chicago; to facilitate the sharing of resources among libraries for the benefit of all; and, to develop library services beyond the scope of the individual member libraries. 1991

CLS CORE VALUES

- Libraries enrich lives
- Our strength is in diversity of types of libraries we serve and in people who work in them and use them
- Staff committed to enrichment; growth of libraries
- Education and individual development
- Excellence (integrity, honesty, consistency, fairness)
- Best service for customers/customized service 3/2001

OUR STRATEGIES INCLUDE:

EDUCATE – CLS will utilize its Strategic Learning Center to teach, explore, model, recruit, and mentor librarians for the future.

ADVOCATE – The collective voice of the membership, the Board, and staff is the unified voice for Chicago's libraries. CLS will help our members amplify their individual voices.

LEAD – CLS will innovate, be creative, and cutting edge to transform services offered for the Chicago library community.

EMPOWER – Create robust libraries and library services by supplying critical services, making CLS viewed as indispensable to the membership.

MARKET: tell the CLS story – Tell the story of libraries and create effective change strategies for their organizations. Tell the story of Chicago's libraries to recruit librarians to work in the city.

DuPage Library System (DLS)

DuPage Library System
127 S. First Street
Geneva, IL 60134
www.dupagels.lib.il.us
Submitted by Pam Kramer

The DuPage Library System was organized in June 1966 under the provisions of the 1965 Illinois Library System Act. Called the DuPage County Library System, it consisted of the public libraries of Addison, Bensenville, Glen Ellyn, Itasca, Lombard, Nichols (Naperville), Roselle, Villa Park, West Chicago, Wheaton and Wood Dale. In 1967, Alice E. McKinley became its first director. When several Kane County libraries joined the system in 1968, the word “county” was dropped from its name.

Through a Library Resources Enrichment Grant, in 1972, DLS began collecting multimedia, including 8mm films and cassette tapes. It was at this time the circulating collection of framed art prints and original art was started.

In 1973, DLS moved from the Wheaton Public Library to 127 S. First Street in Geneva. In the mid-1970s, library systems began to admit academic, special and school libraries as affiliate members and in DLS all system members agreed to participate in a multitype interlibrary loan network known as ILLINET. In 1979, DLS contracted with CLSI to begin building an automated union catalog of members’ holdings. Six public libraries joined the effort at that time.

In 1980, the Illinois Library Delivery Service (ILDS) was organized which provided the first statewide van delivery service and enhanced the resource-sharing capabilities of DLS. By the mid-1980s, Interlibrary Loan services were moved to the DLS headquarters and back-up reference was contracted for with the Suburban Library System. An addition to the Geneva headquarters was built in 1987-88. Also in 1988, the DuPage Library System converted to a multitype library system thus providing academic, special and school members governance rights and seats on the Board along with public library representatives. In 1989, Betty McKinley retired and Alice Calabrese became the second executive director of the system.

In 1991, MAGIC (Multitype Automated Group in Consortium) was established. The database is the DuPage Library System-sponsored automation program that represents the holdings of eleven public library sites, one academic library, six school libraries, and the DuPage Library System. In 1991, when Alice Calabrese moved to the Chicago Library System, Pamela Feather became the executive director. In 1992, then Secretary of State/State Librarian George Ryan announced a 33% cut in system funding. DLS, like all of the systems, began to review the core services which it offered and significant staff and program cuts occurred. But on the positive side, 1992 saw the establishment of Voices of Vision, the regional Talking Book Center at DLS. In 1993, Live and Learn funding from the Illinois State Library helped to relieve some of the austerity being experienced by the system. MAGIC transitioned to LIBS 100+ software in 1993, as CLSI merged with GEAC. In 1993, DLS held its first Internet workshop and early in 1994, 35 libraries contracted with DLS for Internet access through netIllinois. Also in 1994, in anticipation of a new century of services, DLS created the Millennium Service Award given to a library that developed new and creative ways to meet the challenges of the future. To date, eight different libraries have received the award. In 1995, several library automation systems were interconnected through a wide area network, and dial-up access was also provided (LANDL project). In 1997 the MAGIC database migrated to Dynix. The DLS Web site was also created in 1997. The late-1990s saw a second building project that renovated meeting space and created a technology-training lab which houses computers and videoconferencing equipment. In addition, DLS began delivering training and professional development using video-conferencing and satellite technology. DLS collaborated with College of DuPage

to begin offering the Virtual LTA program using these technologies.

At the end of the year 2000, Pamela Feather retired and Shirley May Byrnes became the fourth Executive Director of DLS. In 2001, DLS switched its Internet access to the Illinois Century Network (ICN) and helped many of its members make the transition as well. Because of the ICN, DLS discontinued providing dedicated Internet access to its members; however, it continues to provide dial-up access, e-mail accounts, and Web site hosting.

As DLS enters the 21st century, new emphasis has been placed on continuing education and training, enabling networking, and facilitating resource sharing in a multitype library environment. All of the special collections such as the business videos, costumes and Bi-fokal kits were distributed to member libraries and the extensive art collection was sold. The revenue from the sale of the art collection is the foundation of a scholarship fund created by the Board. In 2000, DLS partnered with area schools to promote students' interest in reading in TeamRead, a project funded by an LSTA grant. In 2001, like the other regional library systems, DLS received Lighting the Fire grant money, also LSTA funding, which the system granted to members for unique projects emphasizing community partnerships to enhance services in the areas served by the recipient libraries.

In 2002, the DLS Board adopted a new mission statement developed by a committee representative of system members. The mission of the DuPage Library System now states: "The DuPage Library System, the leader of a diverse member-driven organization, acts as the catalyst for connecting and developing members, facilitating change, advocating excellence and enhancing local services." As we move into the 21st century, the DuPage Library System under its latest long range plan continues to work to facilitate enhanced services for the patrons of member libraries through advocacy, support and consulting services and a wide array of learning opportunities for librarians and trustees.

—Compiled, May 2002

Heritage Trail Library System (HTLS)

Heritage Trail Library System
405 Earl Road
Shorewood, IL 60431
www.htls.lib.il.us
Submitted by Mary Spevacek

The Heritage Trail Library System is a multitype library system formed in 1993 when the Burr Oak and Starved Rock Library Systems merged. Library systems were established and organized in 1967 under the authority of the Illinois Library System Act. The Heritage Trail Library System serves the libraries in Grundy, Kankakee, Kendall, LaSalle, Putnam, and portions of Bureau, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Kane, Lee, Marshall and Will counties. The System presently serves 189 libraries, including 54 public libraries, 6 academic libraries, 21 special libraries and 108 school libraries. Heritage Trail is funded by an annual area and per capita grant and grants for special projects as appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly. The System is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of 15 voting members chosen by the library members in accordance with System Bylaws. System Headquarters employs a staff of 28, including 4 full-time professional librarians.

Services provided by the System and available to member libraries include:

INTERLIBRARY LOAN of books and periodical articles through the Heritage Trail database, neighboring system databases and ILLINET, the Illinois Library and Information Network, linking the libraries of the 12 Illinois library systems.

ONLINE CATALOGING AND CIRCULATION SERVICES 701,000 titles and over 2.2 million items, fully cataloged in standard MARC format. Twenty- six libraries using 170 terminals access the database via dedicated data lines. Offline libraries access the database via 800 number toll-free dial access and place interlibrary loan requests directly online. Direct connection to the Internet via database terminals is also available. The System provides extensive training in the use of its database services and consulting in all areas of library automation.

CONSULTING SERVICES AND CONTINUING EDUCATION for library staff in library administration and planning, library automation, cataloging, reference services and youth services.

NEWS of meetings, workshops and activities of interest to librarians through monthly newsletters and other announcements.

DELIVERY SERVICE of library materials to libraries throughout the ten-county area.

RECIPROCAL BORROWING agreements which enable public library borrowers to check out materials from all public libraries in the Heritage Trail Library System, and most public libraries throughout Illinois.

Lincoln Trail Libraries System (LTLS)

Lincoln Trail Libraries System

1704 W. Interstate Drive

Champaign, IL 61822

www.ltls.org

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Our Mission

Lincoln Trail Libraries System advocates, collaborates, and facilitates education and cooperation to empower information agencies to improve and expand access to and delivery of information resources.

Our Vision

Lincoln Trail Libraries System is committed to excellence in library service through empowerment of library information partners and citizens.

Values

...that guide the work of member library staff and staff of Lincoln Trail Libraries System are:

- Responsibility for information service.
- Individual Contributions of well-trained staff.
- Customer Service provided by all staff.
- Confidentiality and Privacy of all individuals.
- Intellectual Freedom for all individuals.
- Innovation for enhancing information access.

North Suburban Library System (NSLS)

North Suburban Library System
200 W. Dundee Road
Wheeling, IL 60090
www.nsls.info
Submitted by Allison Gruber

NSLS is a consortium of over 650 academic, public, school and special libraries serving north suburban Cook, Kane, Lake, and McHenry counties. It is one of 12 systems funded by yearly grants from the Illinois General Assembly and the Office of the Secretary of State.

NSLS began in 1966, after Illinois enacted the Illinois Library System Act. Immediately after being established, NSLS initiated services: a Union Catalog, Interlibrary Loan, and delivery services. Reciprocal borrowing among public libraries and Infopass access to academic, school and special libraries soon followed.

NSLS' beginnings were as a public library system but in the early 1970s, discussions began over the importance of making library systems multitype. Soon, the Illinois Library System Act was amended to accommodate the need for multitype systems. NSLS began including nonpublic libraries as affiliates; first academic libraries, then school libraries in 1973, and special libraries in 1977. In the late-80s, nonpublic libraries became official members of NSLS.

After becoming multitype, the NSLS universe enlarged from one of 22 public libraries (the founders) with holdings of 1,500,000 volumes to a cooperative of more than 300 members and affiliates with total holdings of over 11,000,000 volumes.

In 1995, NSLS embarked upon the journey toward becoming a Learning Organization. The Learning Organization culture has allowed NSLS to better serve members and to increase innovation. An LSTA grant was received in the late 1990s that allowed several NSLS member libraries to also undergo the work redesign involved in becoming a Learning Organization.

Over the years, NSLS has become increasingly "E" or "Electronic." In 1994, NSLS listservs began to change the way members communicated with one another. In 1995, NorthStarNet (NSN) a community information network and FirstSearch became part of the services offered through NSLS. In 1998, Digital Past began digitizing collections of historical documents held by NSLS member libraries. "What's New in Libraries?" the Tele Award winning cable access program highlighting NSLS member libraries and their services launched in 1999. One of NSLS' most recent "E-projects" is Answers Unlimited, a 24-hour virtual reference desk where users can ask a librarian live online any time, day or night.

Last year alone, NSLS served 83 communities, delivering over one million items to member libraries and offering nearly 200 continuing education opportunities to member librarians and library staff. Each year, NSLS continues to build upon continuing education opportunities, expand and develop its services, and grow to meet the changing needs of member libraries and their constituents.

Northern Illinois Library System (NILS)

Northern Illinois Library System
421 Morsay Drive
Rockford, IL 61107-4871
www.nils.lib.il.us
Submitted by Jane Lenser

The Northern Illinois Library System was accepted as an Illinois System in January, 1966 and held its first meeting on January 18, 1966. There were twenty-three public libraries in eight counties as original members. The System was housed in space leased from the Rockford Public Library.

By 1968, the System had 27 public library members and provided bookmobile and van delivery service, materials processing as well as the traditional services of interlibrary loan, reference, centralized purchasing, continuing education, consulting, and automation. The audiovisual service was newly introduced at this time.

Jack Chitwood, Director of the Rockford Public Library, also served as the first Director of the System. He remained Director until Lila Brady was hired in August, 1976. The System moved to its present location at 4021 Morsay Drive in Rockford in September, 1977.

Many other changes occurred as membership grew and technology began to significantly impact how the services were delivered to members. One of the most visible changes occurred in July, 1985 when NILS became a multitype system with the implementation of the multitype by-laws.

Lila Brady retired in 1991, and Dr. Patricia Lund began as Executive Director in May, 1992. Pat Lund and the Board responded to the 1992 financial crisis and restructured the System. As a result, the System and its members set delivery, resource sharing, automation, and continuing education as the services needed most.

Pat Lund resigned in early 1994, and in August of that year, Marlene Deuel assumed the directorship of the System. Marlene's contribution to the System's development included the original planning and preparation for renovation of the System headquarters in 1996. The first phase of this plan was to build an automation and equipment room to house the ever-expanding development of new technologies and this was completed in 1998.

Following Marlene Deuel's unexpected death in August, 1999, Jan Eakins Jones took over as Director in 2000. With the assistance of construction grant funding from the Illinois State Library, the System headquarters was completely remodeled. Two computer training labs, a video-teleconference room, and two small meeting rooms were added to the Education Center portion of the building. A grand opening was held in October, 2001.

The System's membership currently includes 147 members who serve approximately 675,000 citizens in eleven counties in northwest Illinois.

River Bend Library System (RBLs)

River Bend Library System

PO Box 125

Coal Valley, IL 61240

www.rbls.lib.il.us

Submitted by Judy Hutchinson

The River Bend Library System (RBLs) was established as a cooperative public library system in 1966 and became a multitype library system in 1987. The RBLs headquarters is located in Coal Valley, near the Quad-Cities, a bi-state metropolitan area on the Mississippi River in western Illinois. RBLs serves parts of Bureau, Henry, Rock Island, and Whiteside counties. In addition, RBLs affiliates Iowa libraries located primarily in the Iowa Quad-Cities and nearby communities. RBLs has all types of member libraries located in Illinois, special and academic affiliate member libraries in Iowa, and cooperating public libraries located in Iowa. RBLs staff manages the local library system automation project, Quad-LINC, Quad-Cities Libraries in Cooperation, which is a shared, bi-state, multi-type circulation system and online union catalog which has been in operation since 1984. Quad-LINC includes the holdings of 31 online member libraries and 29 union list members, representing 98% of all the library collections in the RBLs service area.

Rolling Prairie Library System (RPLS)

Rolling Prairie Library System
345 W. Eldorado Street
Decatur, IL 62522
www.rpls.ws
Submitted by Bev Obert

Rolling Prairie Library System began serving public libraries in central Illinois in July of 1966 as a full member of the state network of library systems under the 1965 Illinois Library Development Act. Rolling Prairie's birth, however, began in October of 1964 as a pilot project using Federal Library Services and Construction Act funds and other state grant monies. Under the name Rolling Prairie Libraries, it was incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation in 1965. The first members of the System were the Decatur Public Library, the Friend's Creek Township Library in Argenta, the Illiopolis Public Library, the Marrowbone Township Library at Bethany, and the Vespasian Warner Public Library in Clinton. Among the first services were a rotating book collection, record collection, framed print collection, central book purchasing, reciprocal card agreement, interlibrary loans, and advisory services from Decatur Public Library staff. Mrs. Mary T. Howe served as director and an Advisory Council governed the baby system.

The System grew rapidly. Elizabeth Edwards became the Executive Director in February of 1966. Moving quickly, the Board purchased the old Eisner food store located at the corner of Eldorado and Edwards Streets as its headquarters in March. The first edition of the Prairie Schooner newsletter was issued, and a new bookmobile was purchased in July. By December of that year, membership had grown to 18 members.

From the beginning, System services were based on member needs. Over time, these services have changed. A rotating collection of materials and framed art prints and a central book ordering and processing/cataloging departments were services of the new system in 1966. By 1980, the ordering and processing services were phased out. The framed art collection was dispersed to member libraries in October of 1984. Large print books for the circulating book collection were not purchased after 1985. The circulating book collection continued until 1989 when it was dispersed to the membership. Books-By-Mail was a pilot project that began in 1972, but was discontinued in 1980.

Bookmobile service, with stops to many small towns, was key to the creation and development of tax-supported libraries in RPLS. System staff held children's programs during these stops as well as loaning books. Over time, libraries were asked to pay for this service and many used this opportunity to establish a library tax and create full service libraries. The first bookmobile of the System was borrowed from the State Library and returned in 1966 when a new vehicle was purchased. The bookmobile traveled between many towns in central Illinois, but as towns obtained their own libraries, the bookmobile visits stopped. In June of 1979, any town with an established building no longer received a bookmobile service. By June 30, 1982, the number of libraries using the bookmobile had dwindled to so few that this service was dropped. Twenty years later people still talk about the Rolling Prairie Bookmobile and how they enjoyed using it in their various communities.

The new System immediately added an 8mm and 16mm films collection to its services. The Corn Belt and Rolling Prairie Library Systems created a cooperative film service in February 1968 that continued for many years. The AV department duties grew over the years with the addition of equipment to clean and check tapes, staff to give advice on what type of AV equipment to purchase, and the adding of videocassettes to the collection in the 1980s. A shift in the ratio of loans for 16mm films verses that of videocassettes was seen by the department in the mid-80s. This service was eliminated during the statewide System funding cuts in 1992.

Interlibrary Loan has been a service from the beginning, but it has also changed over the years. At first, all ILL was

handled by System staff and done by hand. In July of 1969, a teletypewriter exchange service (TWX) was installed beginning the first small step in automating a tedious process. Shortly after, the Public Library ILL network was opened up to academic libraries. A U of I Library Circulation System terminal arrived at RPLS in November of 1979, the first to be installed in the 18 systems. Requests for books from the U of I were now made through this terminal and a telephone line. Now that books could be borrowed from outside the System, how were libraries to receive them? The local delivery of items through the RPLS delivery system was augmented in August of 1980 when the statewide ILDS service began. With the advent and growth of the LLSAP, libraries were able to borrow materials directly from one another. In more recent years, libraries have begun using Illinet and OCLC as direct sources of ILL. Because of these advances, Rolling Prairie ceased to do ILL for its member libraries as of January 2002. The RPLS ILL staff now train member librarians on how to conduct their own direct ILL searches and loans.

October 1969 saw the beginning of the Talking Books program with a depository collection of 160 items. This service continued until October 1983 when it was moved to Corn Belt Library System in Normal. The Mid-Illinois Talking Book Service located in Pekin now handles this service.

Continuing education of librarians was always a part of System services. Reference classes were offered in 1967 from a classroom on wheels that traveled from Springfield. It looked like a bookmobile, but inside was a chalkboard, shelves of reference books, and desks for the students. One ageless, popular topic, "Weeding," has been presented often. Information on creation of a public library district was given as early as September of 1974. Planning in the library, community analysis, and learning how to use library standards were other important topics presented many times in workshops as new processes of planning were developed or new library standards adopted. During the early years of the System, mini-workshops on a variety of topics were held around the System in member libraries. These served a two-fold purpose of education and networking. You name it—collection development, puppetry, PR, grant writing, genealogy, problem patrons, working with volunteers, developing cooperative projects and more—a workshop or training session was probably held at RPLS. Face-to-face instruction in workshops has been expanded to include satellite teleconferences and two-way videoconferencing. The System headquarters has been remodeled to facilitate continuing education and training to include a computer training lab and a distance learning room.

Helping librarians to answer the questions asked by their patrons was the job of the RPLS Reference Department. They moved from RPLS headquarters to the Decatur Public Library in April of 1981 to take advantage of the resources of that library in answering the many questions that came in. In 1998, Reference service was phased out as more libraries became better trained in answering reference questions and with a reliance on reference referral to the larger libraries when the resources were not in the local library.

The computer age arrived in September 1976, when the first computer circulation control system was installed. The LLSAP began July 1977 with the signing of an agreement for a CLSI Automated circulation program between Decatur Public and Rolling Prairie. This LLSAP has grown and changed over the years with one change being the vendor when in 1995 the DRA system replaced GEAC. Membership in the automated program, which began with just public libraries, has expanded to include school, special, and academic libraries. As of January 2002 there were over 1,649,000 bibliographic records and over 2,657,000 items in a database made up of 133 libraries serving 466,788 patrons.

By 1980, a Consulting Services Department was developed with staff dedicated and focused on consulting with member libraries. Before, consulting was just one of many staff duties. Consulting has focused on library development, and the improvement of staffing, collections, programming, facilities, and boards of member libraries. In the mid-1980s consultants focused on the creation of library districts. RPLS went from no library districts to the current 26 districts as of January 2002.

Technology in the early years meant telephones and typewriters. Today every staff member has a computer and an

e-mail address. All newsletters and notices for continuing education and training programs are sent to the membership by e-mail and mounted on the system Web site. The need for technology expertise on staff led to the creation in 1999 of the position Technology Consultant

The System has always been involved in grants. Grants that helped to begin the System, provided equipment for the LLSAP, and improvement to the headquarters facility have been important, but there are others that have filled vital needs within the System. The System staff have written grants to developed Project READ, the Macon County Literacy organization, and BabyTALK, a program that 15 years later is still providing new parents with the knowledge and skills to begin reading to their babies. There have been grants to create new libraries and even one to participate in the Farm Progress Show, the largest agricultural show in the U.S. System staff has also helped members in writing grants that have helped libraries to increase tax funding, develop collections, purchase equipment, develop programs and much more.

That old Eisner store had changed over the years. Some of the remodeling has been small—new tile floors or paint—while others have been more extensive. Two major remodeling projects have been undertaken. In 1982, the entrance was moved 18 feet, a new meeting room was created, and the computer that needed a cool space was moved upstairs to an enclosed area. This allowed other space to be partitioned, providing office space for staff. The second major project was in 1998. New rooms were added: a small meeting room, computer-training lab, distance learning room, new staff room, and expanded delivery area. New paint, carpet, and lighting in the downstairs area completed the project. The most recent remodeling project was in 2001. These many projects have allowed the function of the building to change thus meeting the changing needs of the membership.

The most significant event in the System was when it became a multitype system. The process of moving from a public library system to a multitype library system took over five years and began in 1980 when the RPLS Board endorsed the concept of a multitype library system. In July, the System changed its name from Rolling Prairie Libraries to Rolling Prairie Library System. The System staff worked diligently to distribute various drafts of amendments to the statutes and rules and regulations governing systems. At least two meetings were held to discuss the amendments and the “Prairie Schooner” newsletter contained articles which informed the members about how the COMLOS (Committee on Multitype Library Organization/Systems) would affect them. Governor Thompson signed the COMLOS bill in September of 1983 and by October 1983 RPLS had a committee appointed to consider how the System would convert to multitype status. In April of 1984, a plan was approved, and in November the Board adopted a resolution to submit an application for conversion to a multitype library system to the State Librarian. The final act was the seating of a multitype board of trustees in October of 1985. This was the first time since 1965 that all members shared in the governance of the System.

The Rolling Prairie Library System has had just three Executive Directors in its thirty-five plus years of service to its members. Ray Ewick followed Elizabeth Edwards, the first Executive Director of the System, in February of 1972. Current Director Robert Plotzke assumed the position in October 1978. They have guided the System from its infancy, by first providing direct library services to residents through the development of strong libraries that could provide library services, to its present focus as a supporter and facilitator of library services. From five public library members in 1966 to 136 school, public, special and academic members in 2002, Rolling Prairie has always prided itself on providing the services needed by the membership to develop strong, vital Illinois libraries.

Shawnee Library System (SHAWLS)

Shawnee Library System
607 S. Greenbriar Road
Carterville, IL 62918-1602
www.shawls.lib.il.us
Submitted by Ellen Popit

Founded in 1965, the Shawnee Library System has seen tremendous change and growth throughout its 37-year history.

The organizational meeting held in January of 1966 recognized 26 public libraries as members. James A. Ubel was hired as the first System director in 1966 and served in that position until his retirement in the fall of 2000. Jeanette Halldorson was the second employee of the System and retired from the position of assistant director in the fall of 2001. The System (originally designated as System 21) was named Shawnee in April of 1966.

The first System offices were in Morris Library at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. In 1967, the System moved to a former monument company building in Marion, until a fire destroyed the building in September of that year. Offices were then established at a former Herrin, Illinois bank building until the current facility was completed in November of 1968.

School Libraries began affiliating with the System in 1975 and in 1988, the System Board moved to adopt a multi-type governance structure.

The System's greatest changes came in 1992-1993. In 1992, Shawnee merged with the Cumberland Trail Library System. In 1993, the Kaskaskia Library System dissolved and those libraries divided their new memberships between the Lewis and Clark Library System and Shawnee.

Automation was first introduced at the System level in 1979 and has continued to be a dynamic factor of System service ever since.

The Shawnee Library System currently covers 12,719 square miles in 32 counties in southern Illinois with a population base of approximately 645,000 people. Comprised of 77 public libraries, 123 school districts, 14 academic and 18 special libraries, this diverse membership brings a rich and full body of experience from which all members benefit.

Suburban Library System (SLS)

Suburban Library System

124 Tower Road

Burr Ridge, IL 60527

www.sls.lib.il.us

Submitted by Lori Pulliam

The Suburban Library System:

- Began operating as a public library system in January, 1967; became multitype in July 1985
- One of 12 systems in the State of Illinois
- Member figures: 86 Public Library Members, 12 Academic Members, 35 Special Library
- Members: 20 Public High School District Members, 15 Private High School Members, 80 Elementary School District Members, 6 Public Unit School District Members, 8 Private Elementary School and one Private Unit School District Member in Cook, DuPage and Will Counties
- Covers approximately 600 square miles and a population of 1,606,080 including areas with no tax-supported public library service
- Governed by a 9-member Board of Directors elected by member libraries' representatives
- Operated by an Executive Director and a staff of over 55 people
- Funded through the office of the Secretary of State, State Librarian, by the legislature from the general fund of the State of Illinois on a formula basis