



2023 Library Visit Interview Form

Library Name: Monona Public Library

Certification Grade: 1

Date of visit: 9/21/23

Library staff present at the visit: Ryan Claringbole

SCLS staff present: Brinnan Shaffer

Amount of time spent at visit: 45 minutes

[Please limit this section to the answers to the specific questions, and include as much detail as possible. Report other information or observations in the “other information” section below.]

1. What’s new and/or innovative at your library?

1) The Book Bicycle! It was sitting right there in Ryan’s office during our meeting. The idea will be to use it at local parks and community events – a “pop-up” library. With their hot spot, they can do check-outs right from the bike. They are still figuring out the process. The bike can be a bit hard to ride, but Ryan himself has done it for one community gathering already, and a Pride story time. They got it from someone in Denver who built it, then disassembled it and brought it to Madison himself. They’d been wanting to do this for a while and the price has really come down on electric bikes so it felt like the right time. 2) They’ve added a board game collection that is circulating well. 3) They are adding video game capabilities in the teen space. (Will have to work with teens to keep it from getting too loud and/or causing arguments.)

2. What are the next projects (big or small) on your library’s to-do list in the coming year?

1) One of the capital projects will be a change to the children’s room play space. They want to have something similar to what new Pinney has now. 2) “Face out” shelving for pictures books. They heard this worked well for another library and are trying to improve their circulation numbers in any way they can. 3) They will be wrapping up their Embracing Equity project which will assess how the library is doing and the library will assess how the community is doing. Ryan is very proud of his community in Monona – how open and accepting they are. 4) They are still REALLY hoping for a tool library someday. There remain some barriers to this. (For example, if they lend extension cord, does the patron have to sign a waiver in the event that the cord starts a fire in the patron’s home?) 5) Possible partnership with American Players Theatre whereby patrons can check out free “vouchers” for tickets to shows. Monona will be part of a committee exploring this possible pilot program.

3. What challenges or concerns is your library facing now and in the near future?

1) Funding. The whole city of Monona is in a funding crisis. This city will be having two referendums. If they do not get the money, the library would be forced to cut staff and would likely have to cut two days of service (possibly Sundays and Wednesdays). 2) Trying to

maintain and improve staff morale. This is directly related to funding issues.

4. How might SCLS help your library or staff with your challenges, concerns, or projects?

1) Ryan would appreciate any coordinated SCLS effort with banned books. He feels like SCLS can/should be the platform to 'collect stories.' SCLS could find out what libraries are doing and the outcomes and then other libraries could look at that information to get ideas about what they should do. (He would appreciate this for activism and advocacy around many different social issues as well, as he mentioned in his 2022 library visit.) 2) Could SCLS act like a "lobbyist" with companies like Demco to advocate for lower prices?

5. What would you like to see SCLS focus on or prioritize in the coming year?

1) He appreciates any/all data he can get. 2) Ryan said that Delivery does an outstanding job. He is still willing to perhaps "lease" a red cart to help offset the huge cost of purchasing them.

6. Is there anything else you'd like to share or discuss?

1) I asked Ryan about some things covered in the 2022 visit. He said that they still have a few curbside pick-ups each week and he actually thinks that they might promote curbside again as Covid numbers rise. I also asked about the lockers that SCLS helped coordinate. Ryan noted that due to problems with the lockers (they are not working!), they are sitting unused. He knows they need to contact the manufacturer/installer. 2) Some members of the Monona community (not library staff) will be visiting Delivery on 9/28 for a "Behind the Scenes" tour with Brinnan. (This was organized by Jenna at the library in coordination with Brinnan.) They will be coming at 5:00pm as things are winding down so as not to disrupt workflow, etc. 3) Monona is *considering* dropping to 1x day service. This is just a consideration for now. 4) Ryan really wanted me to express that he is still very against the local hold changes. He knows that it was voted on and that he is likely alone on this, but he really feels like the whole thing is antithetical to being a part of a library system.

Other information gathered at the visit (interesting tidbits, general impressions of the library, or alternative topics): Ryan and I talked about his resignation from Monona PL and then subsequent re-hiring. He had been feeling burnt out and he thought he'd need to take a long time off from the library to "recover," but he feels reinvigorated now and he didn't need as much time off as he thought he might!