

## Self-Care Bingo for Staff Begins in August

Need time for self-care? Get started today. The self-care subcommittee including the 2021 Circulation Forum Workgroup, Staff Association and Stephany Dowd from HUM have teamed up to create a Self-Care Bingo for staff to help combat stress.

The bingo will be available on the intranet and will include a card with 25 squares, each with a tip or challenge related to your personal self-care. There will be two different prize levels. If you complete a single bingo, you will be entered into a drawing for two \$20 cash prizes and two MLS swag bags. A bingo blackout will include two MLS swag bags and a \$30 cash prize.

"As life starts to normalize in the aftermath of the pandemic, be sure to make self-care a top priority," Benefits Manager Stephany Dowd said.

It's not always easy to find time for self-care in our everyday life, but self-care practices can reduce anxiety and depression and improve concentration, physical health, happiness and more.

"Not only has the pandemic been stressful for staff, but it has been stressful for customers as well," said Brandon Beckham, Almonte Library manager. "Staff naturally absorb some of that stress, so we are finding ways to help staff cope with that through self-care practices."

According to a December 2020 article in "American Libraries," vicarious traumatization (VT) affects library workers in libraries of all types and in all regions. VT is defined as the transfer of traumatic stories from customer to librarian.

The self-care bingo program is much more than a temporary program; it's a way of combatting everyday stressors on a consistent basis and making

self-care practices a habit. Even a few minutes of a mindful activity each day can help form micro habits to manage stressors and maintain balance.

"It's one thing to talk about supporting one another and to say that self-care is important, but this event demonstrates something more tangible," said Jana Tenbrook, staff association president and Midwest City Library access specialist. Giving staff examples of self-care incorporated into our everyday work lives provides space to admit that life is rarely as simple as we would like it to be, and encourages us to be honest about how we're doing.

## Helpful Links

- [Greater Good in Action](#)
- [Poem A Day](#)
- [Calm](#)
- [Positivity Blog](#)
- [Develop Good Habits](#)
- [Pick The Brain](#)
- [Live Bold And Bloom](#)
- [Office Exercises](#)
- [Desk Exercises](#)
- [Psychology Today](#)

# Fine Free Program

By: Kim Terry

July 1, we began a one-year pilot program of no overdue or late fines on adult and young adult materials. In July 2022, we'll assess the pilot program for continuation based on program outcomes. Overdue fines on all children's materials were permanently removed in 2020.

"The elimination of late fines from the Metropolitan Library System is a change that will reduce community disparities and increase access to the library and its resources for those who need it most," Larry White said. "The mission of the library is to share information – not generate revenue." Revenue from overdue fines currently accounts for less than 1% of the library's annual operating budget.

Ending overdue fines for library materials does not mean library materials are free to keep. Customers will continue to be responsible for the replacement cost of unreturned or lost items, and for damaged materials. If an item is not returned within 60 days of when it is due, it is considered lost and will be billed to the customer. Also, while there will be no late fees on MLS-owned books and materials, the Experience Passes, interlibrary loan (ILL) materials (items borrowed from other libraries for an MLS customer) and technology items such as Wi-Fi hotspots and Chromebooks that can be checked out will still accrue overdue fines.

In addition to its one year fine-free pilot program, MLS has provided a one-time waiving of existing overdue MLS fines to all customers, totaling over \$400,000 effective July 1, 2021. This waiver applies to overdue fines only; it does not apply to charges for lost or damaged items on customer accounts. It is expected that between 40,000 - 50,000 customers will benefit from this waiver of overdue fines.

"Our goal is to give our customers access to the library again," White said. "If you've been staying away from the library because of overdue fines, we want you back."

According to Ebsco.com, many libraries find that fines are a barrier to access, especially for low-income families, and can create adversarial relationships between customers and library staff members. Even worse, customers who are ashamed of their overdue fines or financially unable to pay them may stop using the library entirely.

"This is something we have been thinking about for years as more and more libraries have been going fine free," said Chris Kennedy, MLS deputy director of Public Service. "This ensures that we provide equal access to books and materials to every one of our customers."

## Customer Story

*A customer called and asked if her account was cleared of fines — she read about it in the news and hadn't been to the library in five years because she was too embarrassed of her balance. She was also delaying getting cards for her kids because she was afraid her balance would prevent them from qualifying. I explained that her fines were all clear and she was so happy to visit the new Bethany Library!*

*– Katherine Hickey, children's librarian*

# Cache-ing in on Fun at the Library

By: Katherine Hickey

Belle Isle Library has been running a geocaching program this summer that has garnered some great customer interactions and attention on social media.

Belle Isle librarians hid nine geocaches, each named after a book, in our service area. Also, during the month of June, they distributed 25 geocaching starter kits. Each kit included a Metro Library-branded drawstring bag containing a flashlight, pens, work gloves, tweezers, swag and a handout explaining the basic principles of geocaching.

Since the geocaches were launched in May, they have been found 69 individual times, with the most popular cache being "If You Give a Mouse a Burger," located under the skirt of a lamp in the parking lot of the Sonic on

North May Avenue. The program allowed us to partner with local businesses that granted permission to hide caches on their property. Participating local businesses included Sonic, Clark Crew BBQ, Korber Eye Care, Grand Dental Studio, A Date with Iris and the Bradford House.

The caches sparked meaningful interactions with customers, who left touching notes in the caches' digital logs. Fellow geocache enthusiasts swapped stories and shared in the glory of finding ground zero simultaneously.

"We took some much-needed time to visit and catch up on what we had all been doing since we had seen each other last time," the Gator family said. "We shared more hugs and smiles as we parted company."

## Customer Geocache Experiences

I love these little "library" caches. Having worked in a bookstore for 6 years and teaching preschool for years. I appreciate children's books. This was a quick find and you would have thought it was titled Along Came A Spider. The last cacher placed the swag juuuust so. I jumped and my feet actually lifted off the ground. Little turkey! Love this series and look forward to more.

On a visit back home for family, stopped in to drop off a TB heading out west from the East coast to CA or to Canada, before making our journey back to Knoxville, TN. I have some of the best childhood memories at Belle Isle library, so this cache was pretty special to me. As for a favorite book with my own children, that would have to be "Goodnight Sweet Butterflies" by Dawn Bentley. Such beautiful illustrations. Thank you for the quick and easy park and grab cache this morning. I was delighted to see a container different than a pill bottle or film canister, to drop the TB into. Super fun!

WOOHOO! Placed on Mrs. Gator's birthday so we just had to go and make an attempt at FTF. We arrived pretty soon after it published and made the find very quickly since the coords were spot on. Thank you for placing this fun series! Mr. Gator's favorite book is The Stand by Stephen King and Mrs. Gator's favorite book is Travels with Charley by John Steinbeck. Cache in Good shape. Thanks for the fun!! Chomp from your friends the Gators

Visited the library, filled my tummy, and found a cache!

Woohoo! I'm so happy this cache was still unfound as I was passing by! I had it pulled up on the map and kept checking it to see if it had been logged yet. As I neared the exit I would need to take, it still showed as waiting so I veered off and headed over. Beautiful and quiet morning here at the park with nobody around, just perfect. I found the cache quickly and smiled large when I saw the logbook was glistening in all its blank glory. On

# Couples Who Read Together... Get Married at the Library

July 1, the Downtown Library hosted a wedding! The bride, Kellie Monroe, has been an avid reader and library user since childhood. Naturally, she chose the library as the venue for her wedding.

"Many of my very best childhood memories involve the library," Monroe said.

Monroe said after the death of her father, her mom had to be frugal. However, financial hardship never stopped them from having fun and making the most of their time together.

"We would pack a lunch and have a little "picnic" in the park outside the Bethany Library, play on the playground, and then my brother and I would check out as many books as our library cards would allow," Monroe said.

When Monroe grew up and went to college, the library remained a special haven for her. She came to a Metro Library to write papers on the library computers.

"The Metropolitan libraries always felt like home," she said.

## HELLO!

**Guadalupe "Lupita" Gonzalez**  
*CH Engagement Specialist II – FT*

**Kinsey Johnson**  
*DC Access Specialist – HT*

**Mary "Kate" King**  
*CP Collection Processing Specialist I – PT*

**Sara Knox**  
*MC Library Aide PT*

**Samantha Austin-West**  
*BE Library Aide PT*

**Emily Bird**  
*SO Library Aide PT*

**Dwight Maney**  
*SO Library Aide PT*

**Samantha Bush**  
*BE Library Aide PT*

**Bailey Ramer**  
*CL Library Aide PT*

## GOODBYE

**William Betts**  
*6 mos, DN Engagement Specialist I HT*

**Megan Guy**  
*2 yrs, HR Access Specialist FT*

**Dawn Gehling**  
*8 yrs, BE Library Aide PT*

**Ashley Smith**  
*Engagement Specialist II FT*

**Londyn Rouse**  
*1 yr, NW Library Aide PT*

**Sara Bruce**  
*4 yrs, CSD Collection Development Librarian FT*

**Lyle Schwemely**  
*1 yr, DN Library Aide PT*

**Craig Wolf**  
*4 yrs, DN Virtual Engagement Specialist II FT*

**Kathy Marquis**  
*5 yrs, WA Engagement Specialist II HT*

**Kresta Jayne**  
*1 yr, VI Library Aide*

**Daniel Dunlap**  
9 mos, RE Library Aide

**Roland Herwig**  
13 yrs, DN Surveillance Systems Technician

## RETIREMENTS

**Mark Marshall**  
22 yrs, VI Access Specialist FT

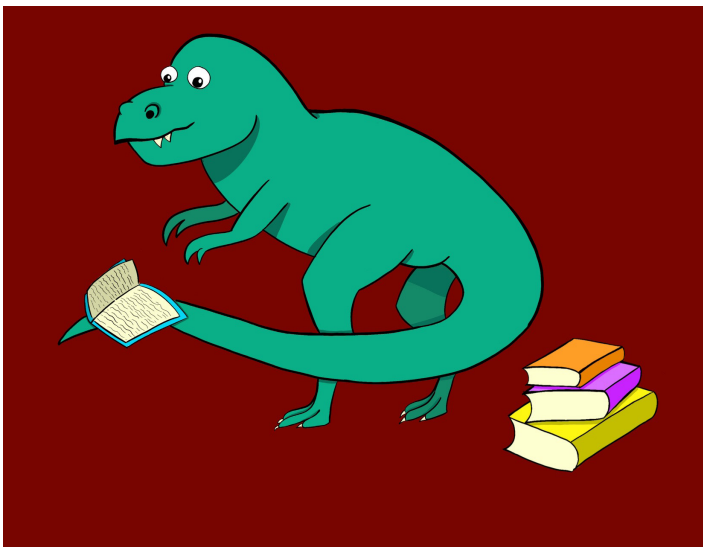
**Susan Stinson**  
41 yrs, SO Access Specialist FT

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# 2021 Summer Reading Update

We are six weeks into our annual Summer Reading program, Tails & Tales! With over 5 million points logged, we're 65% of the way to our goal of 8 million points.

Our summer volunteers have been hard at work creating art, which includes T-shirt designs and coloring and activity sheets, as well as book reviews.



Above: Winning T-shirt design for volunteer shirts by Ashna Antony.

## COMING UP

**July 15**

Metro Library Commission Meeting

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## DIY Development Sleep Is Your Superpower

34(m) Sleep is mandatory. You can't outsource it, you can't negotiate it and it has a powerful impact on everything you do while you're awake. So why not build habits to optimize your sleep and live your best life? Learn how to make sleep a priority and take steps to achieve sleep wellness. The Sleep Ambassador®, Nancy Rothstein, shares tips for optimizing sleep and performing at your best in work and life. Learn how to prioritize sleep, assess your sleep, create the right sleep environment and adopt strategies to fall asleep and stay asleep. Nancy offers concrete, practical advice based on research and science, so you can master sleep as your superpower.

>>Begin Course in [Edubrite](#)

# Self-Care Coloring

