



What is YOUR Why?

by Tammi Thiem



This must be the latest catchphrase. Maybe it has been around for a while but is just now registering with me. Whatever the case may be, I have heard variations of this many times in the last several weeks. "What is your why?" "Start with why!" "Remember to start each day by reflecting on your why!" "Find your why!" "Define your why!" "Why does your why matter?"

Have you given this any thought? Do you know WHY you are in the career that you are in? Have you identified WHY what you do matters? Your WHY can impact not only yourself, but it can impact people that you are in contact with every day. Take some time to consider your personal WHY.

I am going to share some of my personal history and my fairly recent journey into the library world: Back in 2010, my world turned completely upside down. My husband of 28 years died of cancer; my job of 16 years moved out of the country; my youngest of four children had graduated. These are all dramatic, life-altering changes, and they intersected in my life within a very short period of time. It seems that I wandered aimlessly through life for a few years, as I was a bit numb and lacked any focus.

Then, in June of 2013, the director of the small-town library decided to retire, and it piqued my interest. My daughter and I applied for the job as a team, as we were both already working full-time jobs. By sharing the position, we were able to continue our regular jobs, juggle the care of my granddaughter, and learn all we could about the library together. It was definitely life changing for me!

In August of that year, I started taking classes at the local community college as a very non-traditional student. I never looked back. I received a certificate in Library Science and then an Associate Degree. I went on to the University of Nebraska in Omaha to get my Bachelors Degree, and then I finished with a Masters Degree from the University of Missouri in Columbia in the spring of 2019. I rediscovered the joy of learning. Perhaps I had never truly lost that joy, but it may have been hidden in the mundane activities that accompany a busy life.

The point of my story is that I feel that my WHY has to do with learning. I am so fortunate to be in a job and in a field where I can embrace constantly learning. There is always so much information available, and librarianship is an endless wave of change and evolution. With the Three Rivers Library System, this learning goes far beyond my own growth. Not only am I able to learn and challenge myself every single day, but I get to be in the position to encourage this of others, as well. It is a bonus if I am able to provide the platform for the potential to learn.

I feel that everything is a learning opportunity. If you attend a workshop and obtain some new information or tips, that is fabulous and meaningful. However, if you didn't really learn any new information or tools, you learned that you were already adequately prepared, and that is immensely validating. You can learn from every person, too, in much the same way. Stories matter. Your story may be different from others, and people can learn from your story. If your story is similar to others, that validation is also important. I repeat: Stories matter.

Remember, take some time to consider your WHY. I would love to hear your stories.

As always, if there is anything I can do to help, please feel free to contact me. My email address is tammi.thiem.trls@gmail.com. My phone number is 402-910-7005. I would love to hear from you!



At the TRaiLS Office

Solve and send the name of the author to trls.assistant@gmail.com by 5/31/22 to enter your name in a gift drawing.

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Winner of the previous TRaiLS newsletter puzzle challenge:
 Amy Reznicek from North Bend Public Library!
 Congratulations, Amy!



Here I am in my new awesome shirt. How did I win my new shirt, you ask? Well, it's easy peasy....I just read the Three Rivers Library System newsletter and submitted the word search puzzle as they requested, so my name was put into a drawing for this prize. And, the best part is that it was personally delivered by Tammi Thiem. It made my day. My name is Amy Reznicek from the North Bend Public Library. We have a Cricut machine to loan out to patrons, however, it has not been loaned out yet after two years. I do answer questions about how to use it when needed. Thank you to the Three Rivers Library System for the wonderful shirt!

Basic Skills

*(Required Class)

Readers' Advisory

Registration Dates: 2 May 2022 - 30 May 2022

Class Dates: 6 June 2022 - 17 June 2022

Reference with Christa Porter

Registration Dates: 30 May 2022 - 24 June 2022

Class Dates: 4 July 2022 - 15 July 2022

Library Policy

Registration Dates: 20 June 2022 - 15 July 2022

Class Dates: 25 July 2022 - 5 August 2022

Collection Management* with Denise Harders

Registration Dates: 11 July 2022 - 5 August 2022

Class Dates: 15 August 2022 - 26 August 2022

Programming & Outreach with Christa Porter

Registration: 25 July 2022 - 19 August 2022

Class Dates: 29 August 2022 - 9 September 2022

NCompass Live Shows

Pretty Sweet Tech: Computers in Libraries 2022

Highlights & Trends

Show Date: 25 May 2022 at 10:00am - 11:00am

The Heartland Honors 9/11 Victims and Survivors

Show Date: 1 June 2022 at 10:00am - 11:00am

Policies of Yes

Show Date: 8 June 2022 at 10:00am - 11:00am

CES 2022 and Libraries

Show Date: 15 June 2022 at 10:00am - 11:00am

Retirement: Time to Ease on Down, Ease on Down the Road

Show Date: 22 June 2022 at 10:00am - 11:00am

Pretty Sweet Tech

Show Date: 29 June 2022 at 10:00am - 11:00am

Learning Opportunities and Resources from WebJunction

Show Date: 20 July 2022 at 10:00am - 11:00am

Reinventing Programming Kits

Show Date: 10 August 2022 at 10:00am - 11:00am

Calendar of Events

Childhood STEM in the Library Workshop

Central Community College - Columbus

23 May 2022

9:00am - 4:00pm

SKILLS

Online via Zoom

26 May 2022

11:00am

SKILLS

Online via Zoom

28 June 2022

1:00pm

NLC Book Club Spotlight

Book Club Spotlight:

Bronx Masquerade

Mackenzie Marrow is the new librarian in charge of book clubs at the Nebraska Library Commission and she wants to share with everyone the hidden gems in the [NLC's book club collection](#).

Bronx Masquerade is a fictional pseudo-narrative that hosts a collection of poems and slam poetry by Black and Hispanic high school. Each poem and accompanying chapter gives the reader a short peak into the student's lives. It's a great way for your readers to explore other perspectives, and delve into how you never really know what's going on beneath the surface of your classmates. Some poems are cheesy, and maybe even cringe worthy (especially facing its 20th anniversary), but that makes the story more realistic. Not every 16 year old is going to be the next Ocean Vuong or Rupi Kaur and that's ok! Maybe there are some aspiring poets in your class that can take that to heart.

You can find more information on requesting this book kit for your classroom or find a teaching guide on [Mackenzie's blog post at the NLC](#).

Library News

Snyder Public Library's Breakout Box Day

by Liz Hittle

Hello! My name is Liz Hittle and I am the Director of the Snyder Public Library. I have some kind of Club Night for patrons (Painting Night, BINGO Night, Science Experiment Day, Gym Day, etc) every Wednesday at 4:30pm. I decided to try checking out a Breakout Box from the Three Rivers Library System and making one of my club nights a Breakout Box Day. I got a blank box and set four of the locks using library clues – it was pretty simple, because I had no idea what I was doing! Thankfully, Tammi Thiem came to the club night with her Oceans of Possibilities Breakout Box, which is awesome and full of all kinds of neat ocean-themed puzzles to solve! She set up her box's clues and I set up mine, and we had seven kids attend. They were so excited to take a crack at our Breakout Boxes! They were soooooo smart - they had my box open in about five or so minutes, and had Tammi's open in about 20 after that. I am so happy that Tammi was there, because I would've totally kept giving the kids hints, and she held me back. I had filled her box with candy as their reward for solving both of the boxes, along with Tammi's poster saying that they defeated the evil Dr. Eli Terate! We took a group picture of them holding it. The kids enjoyed themselves so much that they want me to check out another Breakout Box (and Tammi!) again, and I'm going to make Scavenger Hunt and Escape Room clubs for them sometime later on this year. I highly encourage you to try out a Breakout Box event, and to have Tammi come run it with you! It was a lot of fun! Thank you!

Madonna School Media Center's National Library Week Celebration

by Janet Sobczyk

April 3rd to 9th was a normal, busy week. I was in the middle of teaching a small group of Transition students in the Media Center at Madonna School in Omaha. Unexpectedly, the Secondary teacher, Ms. Burch, and her students came in to announce, "It's National Library Week!" They presented a "Connect with your Library" booklet* to me and watched as I paged through it in amazement.

Each student had created a page with artwork or a photograph and text to tell how much they appreciate the library. They expressed gratitude that I add books they like, and that it's kept clean and user-friendly. Words cannot describe how much it meant to me.

In that moment I focused on the pictures and praised their work. When they left with smiles and waves I turned to the older students and continued my lesson with a grin. It made my day!

Later at home I had time to read the written messages... through happy tears. Much of my day is spent with students using electronics. It was gratifying to see that books still mean so much to them.



*Thanks to the American Library Association for promoting National Library Week with a printable coloring page that they used as the cover.

Library News

Bellevue University's April Activities

by Alicia James

April was full of exciting activities here at Bellevue University Library! The month started strong with National Library Week and was followed by a staff-made escape room!

For National Library Week, we highlighted the "Connect With Your Library" theme with two contests and our annual open house celebration. The contests were "Classic Connections" where we asked patrons to match classic book titles with their prevalent literary themes and "Helping Hands" which was a guessing contest. During our open house Joel Hartung, the assistant director, presented this year's "Friend of the Library" award to Scott Kuhns, a dedicated member of the Bellevue University maintenance department, and the "Librarian of the Year" award went to Megan McIntosh, the Technical Services Librarian. Their names were added to the award plaques displayed in the Bellevue University Library.

The BU Library created an Edgar Allan Poe inspired escape room that ran for two weeks where players attempted to solve the mysterious disappearance of the distinguished Mr. Usher. Each group had one hour to locate and try solving all of the clues and puzzles hidden in the room. There were forty-two players across 15 groups made up of Bellevue University students, faculty, and staff. They had a 93% success rate on solving the room, congratulations to everyone that participated!



Columbus Public Library's May Activities

by Kelli Keyes

Lewis & Clark

Join us for a living history presentation of the Lewis & Clark expedition by Bill Hayes.

May 7 • 2PM
Room 127



ALL AGES WELCOME



Yoga

Sign up for monthly yoga at the library with Aude Boucly!

MAY 21 • ROOM 127
9:30-10:30 AM



ALL AGES WELCOME



Food for Fines May 22 - 28

Erase your fines!

Bring in at least three cans per account to erase fines for items that were returned past the due date.

(Does not apply to lost and damaged items.)



Scholarship Experiences

2021 Nebraska Library Association Conference

by Lesa Bargmann & JoDee Flock

JoDee and I represented Bancroft Public Library for the first time at the Nebraska Library Commission Convention, "The World Turned Upside Down," in Omaha this fall. It was quite an experience! We stayed at Homewood Suites by Hilton and it was wonderful. We each had our own room and shared a sitting room and kitchenette. We used the shuttle service to get to the convention.

The convention was held at the Hilton Omaha on Cass Street. (I grew up in Omaha but I have never been in that area! Wow it was quite impressive. Lots of things happen like the College World Series and the tournaments in the CHI Arena, I think it is called.) We highlighted many sessions we wanted to go to in the brochure prior to our going, but, alas some were at the same time! It was a beautiful place and would have been even better had we stayed there also - more convenient. The food was good and great!

The Keynote speaker, Michelle Mras, was very inspiring and funny. She overcame things I can only imagine! My intention was/is to turn over a new leaf and get things done better! So far that hasn't happened but I have the books to inspire me!!

Candace Fleming and Eric Rohmann author and illustrator of the book *Strongheart: Wonder Dog of the Silver Screen* provided some laughs and great information. I will never try to film an animal running toward me - ever! But I would like a German Shepard dog. I sent for their book too. (I am a librarian - I send for books!!) It was a very enjoyable program.

I attended the session about building games and it was fun! Some day I may decide to have a game night for some patrons. What a clever way to use some very weird bits of things: buttons, leftover dice, cards, parts of toys and so on. It had a time limit on game building (my team did not win the prize!) which lends itself to an evening of grown-ups and kids or families.

JoDee and I visited the booths quite a lot. I had such a lovely time visiting Sally (thank you for the books!), and the other vendors. I introduced a friend to Bruce Arant the creator of *Simpson's Sheep Won't Go to Sleep*, a favorite book of mine, and that was fun to do. I learned about a lot of things available to my library and saw a lot of vendors! I have many treasures from them! And the food there was great! Great people - friendly and helpful - work in those booths! I got many ideas on how to do things with the products available to libraries.

JoDee and I attended various other sessions but sadly could not get to all the ones we wanted to attend. Without a doubt the very best part of the convention was connecting with people we had not seen in a while and ones we had only met on line or via email. It is always good to chat with others with like problems and triumphs and find out how it is going for them. I always get helpful tips and hints to save me!

Since it was our first encounter with the convention, we really had no idea exactly how it all worked. We will know more about how to navigate the sessions next time. And comfortable shoes and "scoping out" beforehand will help us do better job of it.

Congratulations to the folks who put it on! Quite a job.

Scholarship Experiences

Libraries Are for Everyone: or Are They?

by Michael Rea

Of all the virtual sessions I viewed during the 2021 Nebraska Library Association Conference on Oct. 13, the one I found most eye-opening was Rebecca McCorkindale's session "Libraries Are For Everyone?"

I have worked in our library for eight years, and I would be hard-pressed to recall a handful of occasions when a patron may have been felt less than welcomed – intentionally or unintentionally. Which is not to say it hasn't happened, but not to the extent where it was obvious to staff members or commented upon by a patron.

We live in interesting times, where it has become normal to "express" oneself with little regard to how it makes another person feel. As the program pointed out, people, in this case librarians, must be non-judgmental and avoid "unnecessary harshness."

I was shocked to hear testimonies of patrons who had negative experiences when dealing to their local libraries or of library employees who for one reason or another had been treated unfairly by their supervisors. Thankfully, as a library employee, I have not had that experience. However, employees who are struggling with a disability of any kind should not to have their place of work become a "living hell" because they requested special accommodations in order to do they job they were hired to do!

Unfortunately, these are angry times in a world where the question of whether we should get a vaccine; wear a mask; or trust the government has people tiptoeing around each other. The world has to do better, and the library is a great place to start.

Librarians need to be welcoming to everyone; not just the people we know. We have to make accommodations for people who might be less fortunate than us. A library should be a safe environment for everyone in our communities. We need to be more empathetic with our co-workers and our patrons.

"Libraries Are For Everyone" is a great slogan and a noble goal, but there's work to be done to make it a reality. Let's work harder to make it happen.

Scholarship Experiences

Conference Connections and Takeaways

by Elisa Cruz

I do not have to explain to anyone reading this why attending in-person events this year was both difficult and necessary. I had planned to attend the annual Nebraska Library Association conference as well as the one for the Association of Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) last year, but one was canceled entirely and the other moved to a virtual platform. While I was happy to be able to attend virtually, we all know that attendance at conference is really about that networking piece, sharing ideas with fellow professionals, and getting ideas to bring home with you for your team and community. I felt that I *needed* this conference.

That is why I became more involved with the ARSL and volunteered to help plan this year's conference in Reno, Nevada. I learned a lot along the way and very much enjoyed being a part of the team to get all the details put together for this event. I am appreciative of Three Rivers Library System for its support of librarians and our need for ongoing education. In part, this funding helped ensure my travel to Reno. I was able to continue being a part of the team, attend conference events, learn, and make new library friends.

I attended a workshop on staff development and training that helped me get ideas about ways to overcome the seemingly constant barriers to this such as turnover, understaffing, and other tasks that demand our energy and attention. I also learned a lot about podcasts for libraries, appreciative inquiry, and increasing the community's input for library programs and services. Some of my favorite sessions were on inclusive staff culture and DEI work in the library profession. These sessions were inspiring and informative. In addition to these topics, I was able to network with other individuals who work in communities that seek to improve outreach to the Latino population. It was a useful to chat with these professionals to share both successes and limitations with this goal. Finally, I helped monitor rooms for sessions including keeping time, handing out documents and writing utensils, and helping the presenters in any way.

I loved attending this conference and felt rejuvenated just by meeting with other librarians from across the country. I hope that I can attend again in the future to keep learning and sharing my passion for library services.

THREE RIVERS LIBRARY SYSTEM PRESENTS:

CHILDHOOD STEM IN THE LIBRARY WORKSHOP

9:00am - 10:00am

Welcome & Registration

10:00am - 10:45am

Intro to STEM

10:45am - 11:00am

Break

11:00am - 11:45am

Adding STEM to Your Library

11:45am - 1:00pm

Lunch will be provided

1:00pm - 2:30pm

Coding with Mouse Maze

2:30pm - 2:45pm

Break

2:45pm - 3:00pm

*Additional STEM
Resources/Ideas/Materials*

3:00pm - 3:45pm

Final Thoughts & Doorprizes

3:45pm - 4:00pm

Farewell



23 May 2022

**at Central Community College in
Columbus**

4 CE Available

Registration Fee: \$10

Sign up: <http://bit.ly/LibSTEM>



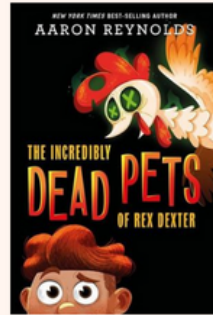
**Presenter: Dr. Jane Stawhecker,
Professor at University of
Nebraska at Kearney.**



**Presenter: Dr. Paula Thompson,
Assistant Professor at University
of Nebraska at Kearney.**



This activity is supported in part with funding from the State of Nebraska and from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provision of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.



Did You Know:

TRaiLS has 22-23 Golden Sower titles for your library to borrow. See our complete list of Golden Sower Nominees at: <https://www.libib.com/u/trails>

