



Courier/ILL Newsletter | November 22, 2019

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UPCOMING MALA/Courier Holidays (No courier service)

**Thanksgiving Day
& Friday, Nov. 28 & 29**

Christmas Eve & Day

Dec. 24 & 25

New Year's Eve & Day

Dec. 31 & Jan. 1

**SUBMIT
November
Courier Stats**

MALA Update

First of all, Happy Thanksgiving to everyone! I hope your time off next week is spent in the joyful company of your loved ones. **MALA will be closed Thanksgiving, November 28, and Friday, November 29. There is no courier service on those days.**

Today, MALA submitted the first (of three) reports for the State Library on this year's statewide courier service. Part of that report was a survey almost all of you participated in, providing details of how you use the service, and your thoughts on how well it is working. I'd like to share the feedback we received in this newsletter.

119 libraries (93.7%) responded to the survey. Of these respondents, 29.9% serve a population of under 5,000; 43.3% a population of 5,000 to 24,999, and 26.7% a population of 25,000 or more. 78% of the respondents said they have participated in courier delivery for more than 5 years. Only 11% said that they charge a fee to patrons for ILL; 89% said they do not charge any fees. 87.3% said that their ILL numbers had either stayed the same or increased since last year.

Missouri Evergreen libraries accounted for the majority (54%) of total courier volume this period, and the project continues to grow with new libraries being added regularly. About one-third of the survey respondents exclusively use Evergreen for resource sharing.

37.7% of respondents use the MOBIUS connection to academic libraries 'Often' or 'Occasionally'; 33% use the Amigos (TAE) connection to libraries in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arkansas libraries 'Often' or 'Occasionally'; and the same percentage use the COKAMO connector to libraries in Colorado and Wyoming.

82.5% of respondents say that courier delivery time is 'Satisfactory' or 'OK'; 12.5% call it 'Fast,' and 4.7% call it 'Slow.'

98% of respondents rated their satisfaction with the MALA statewide courier delivery service 'Good' or 'Excellent.' 99% say the communication coming from MALA about courier issues is 'Good' or 'Excellent.' 44% say the reliability of the service is 'Excellent'; 55% say it is 'Good' or 'Fair.' Responsiveness of MALA to your courier concerns: 59% say 'Excellent,' 35% say 'Good,' 5% say 'Fair,' and 1% say 'Poor.'

This is a sampling of comments from survey respondents. Responses included have been anonymized, but are otherwise verbatim except for minor spelling and grammar fixes.

- Without the courier service, we would be unable to send out as many books as we do due to budget limitations.
- For our size library and participating in Missouri Evergreen, we send and receive a lot of books
- Because Missouri Evergreen continues to grow in the membership libraries. More resources available, more patrons, more ILLs generated.
- We're promoting the service more often.
- Traditional OCLC ILL has dropped dramatically as Evergreen continues to expand.
- We stopped limiting the number of ILL requests our patrons could have at once, and our number of requests has increased substantially.
- We are servicing additional book clubs and local teachers. In addition, we have streamlined the request process in-house, so it is easier for patrons to make requests.
- At first we received very fast service and then apparently hit a big bottleneck. That has resolved and we are receiving good service.
- We're very happy the courier arrival time is much more consistent than previously. He's always here before in the morning and the previous courier sometimes arrived right before closing. Sometimes this courier is very early, but can deal with that.
- Since implementing the 3 day a week courier service 2-3 years ago, this has been much improved for our patron base and their satisfaction.
- You could almost set your clock by our courier driver. He is always on time and has never misses a delivery. We usually have our books in a week after our request.
- There are times where it can take a package several weeks to get even though it is coming from a relatively close library.
- Every once in a while we get an item in a few days usually it is 1-2 weeks and sometimes 1-2 months.
- Our internal reports indicate that the average delivery time between Evergreen libraries is 11 days.
- Occasionally they arrive very quickly; normally it is 2-4 (or more) weeks to receive items.
- We have noticed that a few items have taken a month, or even two months before they are being received. It's rare, but it has been happening. Otherwise it has been just fine.
- After an initial adjustment period, I have noticed that materials have been arriving much faster (within the past two months) than they have in the past.
- Door-to-door time has improved since the change of courier service to Henry service.
- We do have very quick turnaround times with the exception of items coming from/going to Oklahoma or the St. Louis area. For some reason, those two areas seem to experience lag times.
- Within Missouri it is good, to COKAMO satisfactory. But we have quit using Amigos due to items being delayed from them (both requested items and returns) for six months to a year. We now send items to this area using USPS instead and only if the borrowing items agrees to send them back via USPS.
- Sometimes the drivers speak very limited English, and a communication barrier is a hurdle to work around. Other than that, the service has been working very well.
- Dirty bags are becoming very problematic.
- Service has improved dramatically since we had the previous courier. We can absolutely set our watches by this new service to be here when they are supposed to. We are thrilled for our patrons to have the materials that they want in a speedy and timely basis.
- We may be the only library that had absolutely no problem with the old company. We have had more issues with the courier either not showing up or showing up on non-delivery days than we had in all the years before.
- We appreciate that MALA has been very responsive to issues and problems. While Henry Industries is usually responsive to initial communication about problems, they are not consistent with resolution and follow-up. Efficient service is difficult to achieve with high courier turnover; we are on our 4th delivery driver.
- We have never had any problem with courier service or with MALA.
- Since moving to a new courier provider under MALA's purview, we have had to increase the days of our delivery, due to the size of the courier's vehicle and the under calculating of our volume. They are still unable to drop off and retrieve all of our items, causing our patrons to have to wait longer for their items and increasing the workload for staff. It has also cost us thousands of dollars more to have to increase the number of days for our deliveries and the problems still exist.
- The new courier service has been very good. We really appreciate our driver and the service to meet the needs of the patrons of our library.
- Communications between MALA & individual libraries is also much better. You guys always respond quickly to any questions we have. MALA staff is much more approachable. The two of us involved with ILL used to try to avoid being the one to contact MALA by using the excuse "I did it last time," or "They never answer my emails." Thank you!!
- I appreciate everyone's help in the beginning of the transition with getting all groups on the same page. I feel like the courier service continues to improve.
- We are a very small library with limited resources for books. Being able to borrow from other libraries gives my patrons an added source.
- Because of the courier service, the libraries outreach services have benefited. Several area school teachers use the Missouri Evergreen catalog to place holds on multiple copies of a titles from many different libraries for their classrooms. Without the courier service, this service would not be possible.
- Our patrons continue to be amazed that we're able to borrow "hard to find" items from across the

state/county. By participating in the courier system, we're able to stretch our budget by not having to purchase those rare items that will only get checked out once. This service, in essence, expands our library collection.

- It is very nice having this service, as we are a small library and being able to get books through ILL and not having to buy them for just possibly one person to read is such a tremendous help!!
- Our revenue has dropped this past couple of years due to a tax protest from a local company. This courier service has helped us financially and we are still able to fill the request for our library patrons.
- Our patrons are so grateful for ILL service, and we are grateful that the courier system makes it affordable to participate in!
- The big benefit for courier service is the cost. We pay the one fee and use it as much as we can. Our per-item cost for courier is 79 cents. For items we mail via USPS the per-item cost is \$2.97. This cost does not include packaging for mailed items which would increase the per item cost. With the courier bags that does not need to be factored in.
- Yes, we are a small county with a lot of lower income folks and it helps our patrons.
- We have used this service since it became available to us in 2009. It is wonderful, it saves the library time and on our postage budget. We utilize this twice a week and have NEVER experienced an issue that wasn't resolved immediately.
- We have had several patrons come into our library saying their daughter, friend, etc. has recommended a series for them to read only to find out that our library may not have that series or may not have the first part of the series. We then recommend ILL for their needs. They are extremely happy with that solution.
- We love this service! Couldn't possibly supply our patrons with ILL without it.
- The statewide courier service, particularly the extended service through Amigos and COKAMO, allow our patrons to receive materials they would not otherwise be able to access.
- Patrons love the new service. They are slowly finding out it is available and I expect the use to pick up in the near future
- We have several patrons that comment about how thankful they are that we can offer this service to them.
- This is a great service when managed properly.
- We are very thankful to be a part of the courier service.
- Our patrons value this service highly!
- We love having access to books we do not have in our library. Being a very poor area, we are limited to what we can purchase and borrowing helps our patrons so much.
- We would never be able to accommodate the needs of our patrons without the amazing courier service and book sharing ability. Our budget is too small. However, to get high demand books or books that we don't have in a series, or books on topics that we don't have, it is awesome!!! Thank you.
- One of our local teachers has been utilizing our interlibrary loan services this past year heavily. She has advised us that we have saved her hundreds of her own dollars. She is so grateful for the service, which wouldn't be possible without our statewide courier service.
- Before the courier, we were doing 2-3 ILLs a month. We now do 150-200 a month. Great service. Our patrons love the access.
- We have promoted this program so much that our patrons know to ask for it! We love that they know this service is available for them!
- They are so excited and grateful when their book(s) come in. We are so thankful to have this service for our small town library! They have been very nice and on time.
- I appreciate the wonderful response time to any and all issues we have faced. We receive prompt replies and quick resolutions each time. Thank you!
- This is a great service for our patrons. It requires a small amount of staff training and adaption. We love it.

The survey indicates to me that we can make some improvements in reliability of service delivery and in responsiveness to your concerns. Those will be the focus of MALA's activities in the coming months. Thanks to all of you who took the time to give us such valuable feedback.

Missouri is one of a handful of states in the U.S. with a interlibrary statewide courier service. If not for the courier, individual libraries would be responsible for organizing their own courier networks, or paying postage to mail items back and forth. Under Robin Westphal's leadership, the State Library of Missouri has continued its commitment to serving communities of all sizes with its generous subsidy of the library courier. We are very fortunate.

MALA Professional Development Training 2.020

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT ENDING TODAY

Join MALA as we kick off our new workshop and professional training calendar for 2020 with “What Do Your Policies Say About Your Library?” presented by Tiffany Hentschel.

And don't miss this opportunity to experience the gorgeous new Indian Creek Library facility.

What Do Your Policies Say About Your Library?

Learn to write policies that reflect your library's mission

with Tiffany Hentschel, M.A., SPHR, SHRM-SCP

Friday, December 13, 2019

9 AM to Noon

8:30 AM check-in

Olathe Indian Creek Library

16100 W. 135th St., Olathe, KS 66062

This fast-paced, half-day workshop will help you spot the weakness in your current policies and write new ones that are legally sound, fair and enforceable.

[Register Here](#)

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Missouri Secretary of State
State Library