

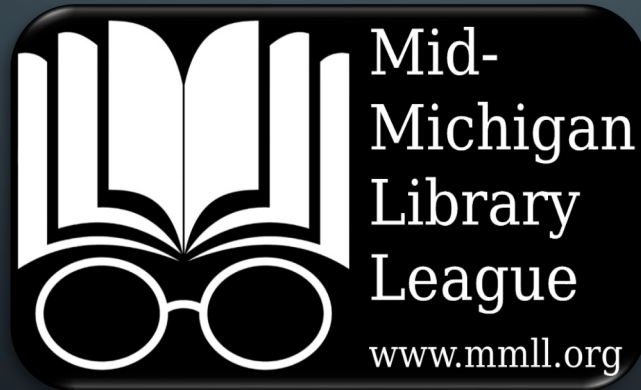
Annual Meeting

# WHY I LOVE PUBLIC LIBRARIES



Sheryl Mase

MMLL ANNUAL LUNCHEON MEETING SEPTEMBER 15, 2022





Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #10

They **ADD VALUE** to the **COMMUNITY**

- Local businesses and non-profit organizations find resources and possible collaborations via the library
- Property values are higher in areas with public libraries
- 94% of Americans say that “having a public library improves the quality of life in a community.” (Pew 2013)

Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #9

They provide **ACCESS** to **GOVERNMENT**

- So much government information is now “born digital,” making public libraries essential for access
- Government support, programs, grants, knowledge, job resources - all accessed via your public library
- Public libraries support an informed citizenry

Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #8

They are places of **COMMUNITY CONNECTION**

- The public library is often where people new to the community come to learn about local resources
- Programs, lectures, craft events, cultural sharing, etc. bring people together and celebrate diversity
- Maker spaces, content creation, hands-on learning

Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #7

They are **VIRTUAL** as well as **PHYSICAL**

- As evidenced during Covid, libraries are **ONLINE** and provide virtual resources and programming
- Library websites connect people with both virtual and in-person resources, accommodating any needs for access to achieve equitable service
- Synchronous and asynchronous; Face2Face optional



Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #6

They support **LIFELONG LEARNING**

- Public libraries provide a launchpad for anyone seeking information and desiring to learn
- Libraries SHARE (inter-library loan) to benefit those who want resources not locally available
- Homework help for ALL AGES!

Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #5

They have **PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTERS**

- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funded public access computers for libraries during the 90s
- Today, this is an expected service at public libraries, leveling the “playing field” for those without access
- Digital literacy skills @ your library!





Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #4

They have **THINGS** you can **BORROW**

- **BOOKS!** Fiction, non-fiction - For all ages and preferences!
- **Other formats** - CDs, DVDs, Downloadable eBooks and audiobooks, Magazines, Music, Games, Puzzles, Kits, Wi-Fi hotspots, Computers ...
- ***THINGS*** of all sort!!!

Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #3

They provide **EARLY LITERACY EXPERIENCES**

- Studies prove that children benefit greatly from early childhood activities at the library – enabling success in learning for a lifetime
- Early childhood (0-5) is a critical time for language acquisition – read to them!

Why I love public libraries

# TOP TEN LIST - #2

They have **AMAZING** dedicated, helpful **STAFF**

- Library staff cultivate relationships and strive to serve individuals and groups effectively and with kindness
- Needs and attributes of the community are translated into well-curated, diverse collections and services





# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

**DEI + JUSTICE, ACCESSIBILITY = DEIJA**

- Recognize and welcome differences; it is how we gain knowledge
- Identity wheel, diversity bingo, etc.
- Not all differences are easy to perceive; equal  $\neq$  equitable
- Bring RESPECT and curiosity, listen to understand, invite in opinion





# BECAUSE PUBLIC LIBRARIES ARE FOR EVERYONE...

Every individual has the right to make their own decisions about what they read and believe, regardless of the content or viewpoint.

The library's collection development policy underlines that libraries are one of the core champions of the First Amendment and provides a detailed procedure for a patron challenging a book. Make sure your policy is well-constructed.

Quote at board meeting: **“Our job is not to support one group’s rights over another. Our job is not to support one idea or another. Our job is to support all ideas. We are a public service. Our service is to provide public information.”**



# INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM



<https://www.mirighttoread.com>



**CENSORSHIP DIVIDES US**

ALA American Library Association  
ala.org/bbooks