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PrairieCat Engagement Committee Minutes April 17, 2025

The Committee met from 10:00 am to 11:00 am via Zoom. Registration link: <https://prairiecat-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrceGsQjMtG9PqAnYOA3sUB9l5GTuXmzyB>

Charge: The Engagement Committee works to actively engage members at all levels, to create connections and advance the organization through activities like PrairieCat's annual conference PUG Day, peer networking opportunities, and more.

Meeting Frequency: Bi-monthly meetings in even-numbered months. August, October, February, April, June. 3rd Thursdays at 10 am via Zoom.

1. Welcome and introductions

Present: Elizabeth Smith (PrairieCat), Dana Fine (PR), Melissa Landis (PrairieCat), Shelby O'Hara (PrairieCat), Kathy Peschang (RD), Karrah Kuykendall (RP), Brianna Rodgers (MX), Victoria Blackmer (CV), Chelsey Knippel (PrairieCat), Austin Nord (WO),

Absent: Katelynn Clark (FR), Amy Fry (SL), Magda Bonny (PrairieCat)

2. Website Forums

Smith (PrairieCat) stated that the website forums are up and functioning properly. We will continue to promote the forums at the upcoming Delegates Assembly meeting, Member Updates, and PUG Day.

3. PrairieCat Passport Program

Smith (PrairieCat) gave an update on the PrairieCat Passport Program, which will conclude after the April 30, 2025, Delegates Assembly meeting due to declining interest and potential changes to the way Delegates Assembly is designed.

4. Traveling Scrapbook Program

Smith (PrairieCat) explained the next project for engagement is the Traveling Scrapbook Program. O'Hara (PrairieCat) came up with this idea and we will be launching it in a couple of weeks. This is a fun and interactive way for PrairieCat members to connect with one another. There are 35 libraries signed up to participate. We have a traditional scrapbook that will travel among the libraries that sign up and we will have supplies sent with the scrapbook. Some ideas for your page are successful patron interactions, cool programs or displays, or fun things going on at the library. The scrapbook will be displayed at PUG Day.

5. PUG Day 2025

5.1. Day of Schedule Options

Smith (PrairieCat) shared the proposed schedule for PUG Day 2025 with the day starting at 9 am with registration and the last session ending at 3 pm. After the last in person PUG Day 2023, it was agreed to not have a true keynote speaker. Instead, we have asked RAILS to speak at the beginning to give an update on libraries in Illinois. The Committee decided to include two rounds of 30-minute mini sessions and to end the event at 3:30 pm.

5.2. Scheduled Speakers

Smith (PrairieCat) discussed the schedule speakers to date. Julie Jurgens will be leading two sessions, the Reader's Advisory for Children and Teens and Collection Development for Children and Teens. Atticus Garrison, a reference librarian at Black Hawk College, will be conducting a session on navigating AI. Smith has reached out to NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and they would be happy to do a session around mental health first aide. RAILS has also agreed to do a session, likely focused around Find More Illinois. In 2023 IMRF did a couple of sessions. Knippel (PrairieCat) will reach out to see if they are willing to do a couple sessions this year. We are hoping to also have sessions from our lawyers at Klein Thorpe Jenkins and Innovative.

5.3. Program Proposal Results

Smith (PrairieCat) stated that PrairieCat has received one program proposal from the membership. Laura Youngstrom has proposed a program on work-life balance for public

librarians. She encouraged the Committee to consider submitting program proposals or reach out to others who might be interested in presenting. Landis (PrairieCat) offered to present, if needed, on something around Create Lists and Excel. Blackmer (CV) would be interested in hearing a panel discussion on collection diversity audit. She would be willing to be part of the panel as a library who is at the beginning stages of implementing a diversity audit of their collection. Kuykendall (RP) stated that Rock Island has a committee on staff called the Idea Committee that works on diversity of their collection. Smith said that last year at our virtual PUG Day we had a Book Hospital session presented by Woodstock that was very popular. Nord (WO) will reach out to his co-workers who presented last year to see if they are interested in presenting the Book Hospital session in person this year.

5.4. Lunch Menu / Registration Fee

Smith (PrairieCat) discussed the lunch menu options for PUG Dau, considering both a buffet and a box lunch. The Committee expressed no strong preferences, with members suggesting the inclusion of vegetarian and gluten-free options. Smith will consult with the catering vendor to finalize the menu and pricing. The registration fee will be determined by the cost of lunch.

5.5. Promotional Materials

Smith (PrairieCat) presented options for promotional give-away items: notebook with pen, a coloring bundle or a tech bundle. The committee agreed on the coloring bundle.

5.6. Timeline and Next Steps

Smith (PrairieCat) explained that due to a scheduling conflict, the next Engagement Committee meeting will be held on June 24, 2025 at 10:00am.

Next meeting - Tuesday, June 24, 2025 10:00 am via Zoom