

WINTER 2022

# WISL-ING WINTER

*Official newsletter of Wisconsin Small Libraries*



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## **WELCOME TO 2022!**

Welcome to the first issue of the WISL Newsletter for 2022! The past two years challenged libraries in unexpected ways, but it is clearer now than ever how essential libraries are to the communities they serve. We found new ways to connect with users and provide the resources, WIFI, community, and entertainment we all desperately needed. Wisconsin's libraries continue to offer solace as we seek the relief of normalcy, even if that normalcy comes from losing oneself reading a well-loved paperback, watching a forgotten favorite film, or learning a new hobby through the wealth of library materials and creative librarians ready to share their expansive knowledge.

Your service to the community blows me away, and I am filled with gratitude for all the work Wisconsin Small Libraries have done to bring small communities into another challenging year with kindness and grace. Thank you for sharing all your library love, and cheers to a better year!

Aubrey Huff, WISL Newsletter Editor

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH PODCASTS TO INSPIRE YOU

It can be difficult to know where to start celebrating Black History. One of the biggest challenges many of us face is relying too much on limited perspectives or the same historical figures each year. Dive into some podcasts to inspire your library's Black History celebrations, and don't feel limited to celebrating solely in February. Every month holds an opportunity to celebrate Black History. Check out some fresh perspectives for your library with one of these podcasts. Recommendations and descriptions courtesy of Feedspot's "Best 20 Black History Podcasts."

**Black History for White People:** "The goal of this podcast is simple 'Educate white people on Black History'. #BHforWP is a multiethnic collective dedicated to loving black and brown people by educating, resourcing, and challenging white people to actively participate in racial justice. The highest calling of humanity is to love. Whether you know it or not, the racial disparities in our country hurt us. They train us to protect our advantages rather than love others, and that mentality reduces us." Connect here: <https://bit.ly/3u6t26L>

**New Books in African American Studies:** "New Books in African American Studies is a podcast series featuring author-interview podcasts with Scholars in the field of African American studies and about their New Books. It's part of the New Books Network." Connect here: <https://bit.ly/3r2iaF6>

**Noire Histor:** **Celebrating Black History 366 Days of the Year:** "Get inspired. Get motivated. Get stories of Black history made and in the making. Noire Histor features Black history facts, literature, and motivational stories from across the Black diaspora. Join Natasha McEachron as she celebrates Black pride, excellence, and power all 366 days of the year." Connect here: <https://bit.ly/3G25i6g>

## Celebrate a present-day role model

There are countless people to honor and admire when celebrating Black History. One challenge many of us experience is focusing solely on historical figures rather than people making history now. One person to celebrate this month is Jonah Larson, the 12-year-old crochet prodigy from our very own LaCrosse, Wisconsin. Jonah has been celebrated nationwide for his talent and philanthropic work, including funding the Jonah's Hands Library in the rural Ethiopian village where he was born. Jonah published two books, *Hello, Crochet Friends!* and *Giving Back Crochet*. Jonah also provides instructional crochet videos on his website. Celebrate Jonah with a night of community crocheting, supplementing his work with other crochet books in your library.

Learn more about Jonah on his website <https://jonahhands.com/> or check out his recent interview on CBS Minnesota <https://cbsloc.al/3KNJjna>.

Programming tip: Crochet supplies too pricey? Thrift stores regularly have assorted yarn and crochet hooks for low prices! It's a great way to reduce spending AND your carbon footprint!



Photo source: [jonahhands.com](https://jonahhands.com)

# Winter Craft

## Crystal Snowflakes

Perhaps you had enough of the real thing, but you don't have to freeze to enjoy the beauty of a crystal snowflake. This fun and easy STEM activity can be used for snowflakes, hearts, or any shape your library lovers may desire! Supplies make one snowflake. Adjust accordingly.

Supplies:

6 Tbsp Borax  
2 c Boiling water (you will need an electric kettle or microwave to get the water boiling as well.)  
Dental floss or string  
1 wide mouth mason jar  
1 white (or any color) pipe cleaner  
1 pencil or chopstick  
(Optional) Food coloring to make colored crystals.

Directions

1. Bring water to a boil.
2. Cut pip cleaner into three equal sized pieces. Line them up and twist in the middle to create the snowflake.
3. Tie string/floss to a piece of the pipe cleaner.
4. Tie other end onto chopstick or pencil.
5. Pour 2c boiling water into mason jar and add Borax, stirring until dissolved. Add food coloring if you wish.
6. Place pipe cleaner shape in water, letting it hang from chopstick or pencil.
7. Leave on counter overnight.
8. Enjoy your new crystal snowflake the following morning!



Photo credit: Real Food RN

# LIVING IT UP AT WLA

WISL Scholarship winner Christinna Swearingen shares her WLA experience.

I've said it a million times before but librarians are the absolute best group of people that I have ever met in my life and my first experience at WLA 2021 was no exception! After a year of barely meeting anyone in person but waving at them through screens, being able to meet and network with other librarians was truly an amazing experience. It's so easy to become isolated during this period in our lives and just being with other librarians on a daily basis reinforced that knowledge that no one is alone in this! At first it was a bit overwhelming because I wanted more hours of the day to attend all of the different presentations and events that I was drawn to but that didn't detract from my overall experience at all. After a day of learning, the luncheons and events (such as trivia: go Penguins!) were such a great time to socialize and wind down. I can honestly say that I will remember my first Wisconsin Library Association conference as a time to remember and I am so grateful for the scholarship that enabled me to attend. I will be starting at Rusk County Community Library in December and I can't wait to implement all of the grand new ideas that I learned into practice at my library. Not only did I go away with a great new experience but I left with feelings of excitement and such strong support from all of the wonderful librarians that encouraged me to reach out with anything (see what I mean about librarians being the absolute best?!), even if it's just a rant. Thank you so much WISL for giving me this opportunity and I can say without any doubt that I will be back next year and will be working diligently on all of my obscure trivia facts in the meantime.

# FEATURED PHRASE

**Subject heading:** A specific word or phrase used to find and organize books and articles by topic.

**Used in sentence:** The Library of Congress announced the removal of the offensive and outdated subject headings "aliens" and "illegal aliens" on November 12, 2021. The Policy and Standards Division of the Library of Congress had investigated the pejorative terms since early 2016. The terms will be replaced with the subject headings "noncitizens" and "illegal immigration."

## LIBRARIAN PUPS



Librarian Aubrey's precious pupperoni Jasper the Wonderdog wishes you a Happy Valentines' Day!

**Do you have news or an animal picture to share with the WISL family? E-mail your article or photo to Aubrey Huff at [huffa@uwstout.edu](mailto:huffa@uwstout.edu)**

