

WYLD GOVERNING BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT
2025–2026

The past year has been one of significant transition, steady progress, and continued collaboration across the WYLD Network. As President of the Governing Board, I am pleased to report on the Board’s work from August 2025 through May 2026. Our efforts this year centered on strengthening core systems, responding to statewide changes in resource access and sharing, preparing for anticipated legislative developments, and supporting the ongoing operational needs of libraries in every region of Wyoming.

Systemwide Projects and Technology Improvements

The network, in coordination with the State Library, accomplished several major infrastructure transitions this year. The most substantial was the completion of the interlibrary loan (ILL) migration away from VDX. This multi-month project required extensive training, data review, and close coordination with library staff across the state. By November, all active requests had successfully moved to the new system, and staff were refining workflows based on real-world use. The WYLD Office monitored patron impacts and provided guidance as needed, especially during the period when some libraries experienced routing or hold placement issues.

Aspen Discovery also saw significant milestones. The network transitioned to a new hosting partner, Grove for Libraries, with the goal of improving stability and development capacity. The move was completed in fall 2025. Several staff attended AspenCon virtually, and WYLD Program Manager Desiree Saunders was elected to the new Aspen Governing Board. Late in the year, the content enrichment stream for Aspen shifted to Loral, a lower-cost replacement for Content Café after Baker & Taylor discontinued the service.

Workflows improvements also continued. The WYLD Office completed a major data cleanup, deleting over one million outdated charge history records and beginning a new monthly schedule for maintaining roughly three years of patron history. Additional cleanup is planned to improve performance and manage storage costs. The Symphony ILS was upgraded on June 6, 2026 to version 4.4, which resolves issues with entering dates after 2037, and other minor improvements.

Database Access and Authentication

The Board spent considerable time this year monitoring the statewide impacts of the University of Wyoming’s shift to affirmative-consent authentication for databases provided through GoWYLD. This change required that all users authenticate with individual library cards rather than generic or institutional credentials. Throughout the fall, the WYLD Office worked with school districts, community colleges, and public libraries to assist students in obtaining cards

and understanding access requirements. The Board received regular updates and discussed communication strategies, particularly where patrons expressed confusion about database login requirements.

Interlibrary Loan Cost Redistribution

With the retirement of VDX, the State Library began examining how to redirect cost savings back to member libraries. The Board discussed criteria for a fair and transparent formula and provided feedback on proposed models that combined a base amount per library with additional funds tied to lending activity. (Update: Checks were mailed out to member libraries in early June 2026.)

Governance, Policy, and Legislative Awareness

Anticipated statewide discussions of age verification, library access, and obscenity statutes remained a regular topic at Board meetings. The Board monitored proceedings of the Joint Judiciary Committee and tracked potential legislation that could affect WYLD policies beginning in 2026. Members discussed how a statewide shift to age-restricted cards or other statutory changes might impact circulation, authentication, and ILS configuration. The Board remains committed to preparing proactive responses if needed.

In January, the Board reviewed and adopted a resolution affirming that volunteers should not be granted access to the ILS. This action, completed with legal review from the Attorney General's Office, reinforces data security, patron privacy, and network-wide consistency. The resolution has been distributed to directors and posted publicly.

The Board also began an ongoing discussion about the governance and responsibilities of the Virtual Library of Wyoming (Libby/OverDrive) consortium. While collection development decisions remain with individual libraries, the Board noted that a clear FAQ and public explanation of roles would help alleviate public confusion.

Membership Policies and Network Structure

Recognizing that the WYLD membership application and eligibility guidelines needed review, the Board established a small ad hoc committee in early 2026. This group is examining cost barriers, clarifying which institutions may apply, and developing a more structured application process. This project is expected to be completed by August 2026.

WYLD Annual Meeting and Professional Development

Planning began in late summer 2025, with Sheridan College confirmed as the 2026 host site. Survey results from the previous year strongly supported maintaining the existing format. The Board reviewed a proposed schedule, recruitment of session facilitators, and logistics related to registration, the business meeting, and potential follow-up webinars for staff unable to attend in person.

Recognition and Personnel

The network welcomed several new staff who play key roles in supporting the system, including the new Bibliographic Services Librarian. The Board also received updates on retirements, including the end of contract work from longtime contributor Marc Stratton.

2026 WYLD Governing Board Election Results

Academic Library Representative - Katrina Brown (Casper College)

Large Public Library Representative - Darcy Lipp-Acord (Laramie County)

Small Public Library Representative - Mary Lin Maner (Converse County)

Member-at-Large - Linann McDonald (Natrona County)

Ongoing Issues and Local Reports

Board members shared regular updates from their regions, including school library access concerns, local policy reviews, and collection development discussions occurring at county levels.

Remembering Nathan Bender

We were deeply saddened by the unexpected passing of Nathan Bender in May. Nathan served as the K–12 and Special Libraries Representative with dedication, insight, and a genuine commitment to strengthening library service across Wyoming. His thoughtful contributions and his steady presence on the Board enriched our work and reflected his long-standing devotion to librarianship. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife, Heather, his family, and his colleagues at the McCracken Research Library. Nathan's impact on WYLD and on Wyoming libraries will be remembered with gratitude. (Update: Matt Swift from the Wyoming State Law Library has been appointed to serve the remainder of Nathan's term.)

Conclusion

This year demonstrated the continued strength of the WYLD Network as a statewide collaborative. Through major technical transitions, shifting statewide expectations for digital access, and complex questions about policy and governance, the Board worked together to support consistency, transparency, and excellent library service for all Wyoming residents.

I want to thank each Governing Board member, committee and working group members, the State Library, and the WYLD Office for their dedication and leadership. The work ahead remains significant, but we are well positioned to continue strengthening our systems, our governance structures, and the shared resources that make Wyoming's libraries a model for cooperation.

Respectfully submitted,

Kip Roberson

President, WYLD Governing Board