



## [The Bright Side Episode 13: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Libraries](#)

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Library of Michigan

**Trent Smiley** Welcome to The Bright Side, the show that sheds light on the people, places and stories that make Michigan great. Hello, I'm Trent Smiley, Community Relations Officer for the Genessee District Library and today I'm coming to you from the Grand Blanc McFarlen Library, which also houses our Bolo Business Center.

In today's episode we're going to take a behind the scenes tour of libraries that may surprise you. The tour will include 3D printing, live music, business counseling, job hunting and more.

To start off, we'll visit public, academic and school libraries across Michigan to answer the question: What does it mean to be a library in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

---Libraries in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century---

**Bill Harmer** We need to get out of the business of thinking libraries as just repositories for books.

**Jessica Keyser** We're really trying to change that and I think – especially in Ferndale – that notion has pretty much gone by the wayside. We do still occasionally get people who come in who haven't been in for a while and they are surprised.

To give you an idea, we have a Saturday morning yoga series at the library, art shows and art exhibitions, and tonight we have a local band called Soul Explosion performing.

**Rick Scofield** In this county especially there's a real collaborative environment and a really good approach to entrepreneurship and helping entrepreneurs, and the library is a big part of that.

**Stewart Brannen** So I view libraries and the resources that they have, the expertise that they provide, as very, very important – if not critical – to shaping a thriving, growing society. Definitely.

**Bethany Kennedy** This is way beyond Google because Google is just the public information, and this is stuff that is put out there. And librarians, this is what we love, is to dig up that information.

**Joshua Marshall** The games that they have over there, I really like those as well. There's not a lot of places that people can come and play games in public. In like a public environment. It gives you the opportunity to meet new people.

**Marsha Lambert** A strong school library media center is essential to the learning process. What we're able to do is we're able to give the best of the traditional sources, the books, the magazines, the print material, and we're able to help students reach out to what the emerging technologies are.

**Kay Wejrowski** One of the best things about our school library program is that it is a total school and total community program. Everyone gets involved. We have so many connections, so many community connections, and we even have people in the community who will say when we bring authors in, "If you know kids who can't afford to buy the book, I'll buy ten books or I'll buy six books and let them get it signed by the author." So again, evening the playing field. We find a way to make it work for everybody.

**Barbara Parker** Right now we're in negotiations with the Knight Foundation of trying to get our Maker Mobile together, which will be a mobile, maybe an econoline type van, that will go around to the different libraries, different community agencies, different organizations in general where we can offer some of these things on a mobile basis. Take them away from here and take them out to other people.

**Susan Murphy** Many of us are fortunate enough to have internet access and computers at home. For those who do not, libraries are important sources of that kind of access to the information that many of us take for granted.

---Many libraries are critical sources of broadband internet access, especially in rural areas.---

**Bob Pierce** This library has become such an integral part of the mosaic of this town, and to succeed the way they have just indicates to me that in the future they'll even have greater success. Because they are, in fact, part of this community.

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**Trent Smiley** A library is a great place to visit no matter how old you are. In the next video we'll see some unique youth programs that libraries conduct across the state, including 3D printing, ACT test preparation and video producing.

---Youth Programs---

**Maddy** Okay, who needs sports?

**Stephanie** That one goes to...

**Brittney** I'll take it.

**Asher** Brittney takes sports.

**Nicole** If you still have your tennis uniform, please turn it in to the office. Thanks, now to Lauren.

**Lauren** Hey MMS, if you're interested in participating in the volleyball tournament at the assembly, please go sign your name on the form in the cafeteria.

**Maddy** We all have an individual job, but to make this whole team work together, we all have to contribute.

**Asher** Yes.

**Rain** We're all one big... we're all one big, happy family.

**Marsha Lambert** The students run the equipment. We have a student director. The students actually deliver all of the announcements themselves as well. Some of them I've had in News Crew for three and four years and their personal growth in terms of not just using the equipment, but in terms of how they relate to other students, how they communicate, how they communicate with adults, is huge.

**Asher** But I haven't even been here, not even two years, and you really... yeah, you really get a lot more motivated to be more outspoken.

**Nicole** I'm a lot better with technology now.

**Rain** I learned that you can't just push the button.

**Maddy** With a lot of playing around, we were able to learn a lot of things. And we still do.

**Barbara Parker** We are in the HYPE Center of the Detroit Public Library, the main library. And the HYPE Center opened in 2008. The Makerspace opened about a year – actually, it's been a year this year. And the Makerspace basically is all different types of things ranging from graphic design to 3D printing to crafter noons, crafter mornings. We have bike tech and we have sewing and wearables. We have robotics.

**Joshua Marshall** I've been teaching a workshop for game programming. Today we worked with Scratch, which is kind of a drag and drop programming language, and we also worked with the Minecraft Pi.

I'm a huge proponent of learning how to program. It requires logical thinking and unfortunately, I feel it's something we don't get too often in schools. It teaches you how to pick problems apart step-by-step and really solve them systematically.

**Heidi Erlenbeck** Nationwide, freshmen classes have the highest percentage of failure rates, and we were seeing the same thing here. And so we thought if we could get our freshmen set off on a good start with good study habits and organized and learning about the building, that that would set the foundation for their futures.

**Torie Ray** The freshman transition course, they learn first about the library, how to check books out, where things are, and then they obviously continue to check out books as they're reading throughout that course.

**Lynda Thayer** The students take high school more seriously from the very beginning, and we have fewer and fewer kids that look back and say, "Oh, if only I would have done this. If I would have known that, I could've done something differently." And so I've noticed a lot of growth in there.

**Mat McRae** Our Library Media Specialist works hand-in-hand the entire twelve weeks with the freshmen transition teachers to guarantee the success of that course, and the same is said of the MME course.

**Kay Wejrowski** The ACT/MME program, it doesn't matter where a student is, even if they are the bottom scoring student. They find the tools to improve and feel good about themselves.

**JoAnn Schneider** The ACT is where our focus was for the creation of this class. And of course, the ACT is what's going to be used for scholarships, college admission.

**Mike Quellet** mel.org was a huge resource for us. It had many different practice tests. It had test taking strategies, many different things. So we used the Michigan Electronic Library. I was very surprised at how many students that say would score a 28, which is very good, and they were not happy. They wanted to go back, and I just never saw that as much in past years. Now with this class, they're thinking to themselves, "I put this much work in. I'm going to try this."

**Jim Murphy** In the math portion that I track, the average scores went up three points.

**Kevin Moore** We've seen ACT scores skyrocket, we've seen MME scores go up, and also really just helping 9<sup>th</sup> graders acclimate to high school.

**Kay Wejrowski** I think our graduation rate is like 98 or 99%, and we have over 90% of our students going on to college.

**Marsha Lambert** They will be adults who never stop learning new things, who are trying to make the world better in any way that they can.

**Joshua Marshall** I'm really happy to be teaching a workshop. It's really kind of resparked the fuel in me. Now I have my own game ideas that I might want to work on.

**Maddy** This is the MMS News Crew, signing off.

**MMS Group** Thanks and have a great day!

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Marshall Middle School Media Center  
marshall.k12.mi.us

Detroit Public Library HYPE Teen Center  
detroitpubliclibrary.org/hype

Swan Valley High School Media Center  
swanvalleyschools.com

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**Trent Smiley** Have you thought about starting a business? Or perhaps you have a business that you want to make better? Our next video shows you how Michigan libraries can help you do just that.

---Business Development---

**Donna Olson** When I started here I worked up in adult services, where I still am. And most of our questions were, "What is this," and, "What is that?"

Then 2008 happened. The economy tanked, all of our customer base just changed overnight. And people started asking us, "I'm still off of work, but I've got this hobby, and maybe I could make some money on the side. Maybe I can start my own business. Can you help me?"

**Bethany Kennedy** It sounds so simple, but it was actually a really ground breaking thing for our area, which was: what if we made libraries the portal for economic development?

**Donna Olson** Howell, Chelsea, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, all of us got together and we're just... we're all having the same problem. We're all experiencing the same thing and that one meeting in 2009 turned into Library Biz Connect.

**Bethany Kennedy** We're just a network of libraries, of business service organizations, that are really just trying to get the information out to business owners so that they can find the resources that they need to be successful. That's really all it is.

**Donna Olson** The first thing that we did was take the SCORE counselor, and said, "Can you come to Howell?"

**Rick Scofield** SCORE stands for Service Corps of Retired Executives. We're not all retired, and we really like the R and the E to stand for real experience because what you get with a SCORE mentor is someone that has extensive business experience. And we volunteer our time to try to help anybody that wants to start a business take a step on that path. We have the experience, the library has the space, we can then offer the service, and it's worked quite well.

**Kathleen Zaenger** One of the people that I know that came and worked with a SCORE counselor and knows our staff fairly well was just amazed at what he learned. He had already started a small business and he said we was able to really put it together and make it much more effective and grow it because of putting all those things together. And it really happened here in the library.

**Donna Olson** And we set up the counseling and then we hooked in with SBTDC, of course.

**Nancy Johnson** Well the Michigan SBTDC has business resource centers. The services that we offer with the SBTDC are counseling, business education programs, and we also offer some research capabilities.

**Pat Convery** We're really collaborating in the area of business and economic development. It's just been a fantastic opportunity for us to send our members, potential members, potential businesses over to the library to get all the details they need before starting their business.

**Kathleen Zaenger** We were already working with the Chamber of Commerce and as things progressed, we were connected to Cleary University in ways and it just came together very well.

**Stewart Brannen** The community put together a program called LEG UP!, the Livingston Entrepreneurial Group United for Prosperity, and the Howell library – in particular with Donna Olson – really is our go-to person. It's been a marvelous experience.

So every month we have these great entrepreneurial meetings, people come, and they're exposed to resources in the community that they probably wouldn't have known of if they hadn't come to the meetings. So, for example, if you talk about the library here, they've got a marvelous business resource center.

**Donna Olson** All libraries could do this, regardless of the size of the library. Small libraries or large libraries, because what we've discovered... the reason why this works is because we're working together with other libraries and other business nonprofits. That's the only way it works.

**Bethany Kennedy** Now looking back on it, it's like, well yeah, of course that makes sense. But it is a really big leap to want to get into economic development in your community.

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Howell Carnegie District Library  
howelllibrary.org

Washtenaw Community College Biz Resource Center  
wccnet.edu/brc

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**Trent Smiley** Another area that libraries are involved in is career development. In the next video we'll see some creative ways libraries are helping people find employment and learn new job skills.

---Career Development---

**Eunice Borrelli** I started spending time here attending what was then weekly career networking group meetings. So I would come and explain what resources the library has that might assist job seekers, and eventually it actually was Michigan Works, one of the staff people, who said, "Can you come here on a regular basis? Sit in the front lobby."

This is prime real estate. You can see how busy it is. Everybody walks past this desk. I can issue library cards. I can sign people up for classes and this way we're coming to the point of service.

We could have a library and just warehouse books, fill the shelves, and create programs, but if people don't know about what we have to offer, they can't take advantage. So we need to be visible.

We offer computer classes that might include Wordpress, genealogy, email basics, computer basics. This summer we are offering presentations by a company that specializes in helping job seekers prepare online video resumes. Very exciting, and it's very new. It's an East Lansing company, and it's free, so they come in and explain how that works.

Then, our LinkedIn classes: we're very proud of this. We have a community volunteer that for the last two years has taught two classes for us every month. He teaches a basic and an advanced. And with all of these there is no charge, you do not have to have a library card. You can repeat; you can take them as many times as you want until you're comfortable.

**Susan Murphy** Lansing Community College plays a big role in the workforce in our community in certain areas. 75% of allied health care professionals in the area are LCC trained. 70% of the firefighters in the region have come through our programs. The library is a critical part of those programs because we're teaching those information literacy skills and they're also critical to the ongoing accreditation and excellence of those programs.

In terms of more general career development, we have a number of resources in terms of career assessment, books, databases, ways that people can improve their skills. For example, computer tutorials, practice tests in areas of need and a number of really basic things, like how to do a resume, how to write a cover letter and all those sort of basic job hunting skills.

Fundamentally our role as a community college library is to help our students succeed, be that academically, in their careers, in their personal lifelong learning.

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Capital Area District Library  
cadl.org

Lansing Community College Library  
lcc.edu/library

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**Trent Smiley** For centuries, literacy has been central to an individual's success, but what happens when reading and writing no longer requires a pen and paper, and

information is everywhere? In our next video we'll find out about a new type of literacy and how libraries are teaching it to people of all ages.

---Digital Literacy---

**Marsha Lambert** Helping students identify what is meaningful information and what is accurate and relevant information I think is one of the most important things we can do for students.

**Susan Murphy** And why is information literacy important? I'm going to give you one big answer.

It's very important in the workforce. A recent study by Project Information Literacy indicates that employers consider it among the top four skills they want in new employees. Employers are interested in people who can obtain and process information, and that includes choosing information that's appropriate for the need and using information sources that go beyond Google.

**Marsha Lambert** When we think of literacy, traditionally it's literacy as in being able to read books and gather information from them. Digital literacy is when students look at information that is available online and they're able to gather the information, manipulate it, and make something meaningful happen with what they've learned.

**Susan Murphy** As there's more and more information out there, then it becomes all the more important that people be able to evaluate it.

**Marsha Lambert** I can't imagine in four or five years from now being able to function in the work world without having a good concept of digital literacy. It isn't just the academic world. At this point in time, finding the most effective way to communicate really is the means to success in every field that I can possibly imagine.

**Susan Murphy** It's estimated that 80% of published information is not available for free on the open web.

**Marsha Lambert** We want students to know that while books and magazines are still important resources, there are so many other things out there. And what we're also teaching are skills that are not just about the technology they're using today. We're trying to teach them the process they're going to use as new things continue to emerge.

**Parker** Yeah, this is the microphone. You use a program on the computer called Audacity to record, and you can edit through there.

**Natalie** And you can do different types of things. Instead of hand writing a paper, you can do a podcast.

**Maddy** So we use this place for just daily announcements and extra projects. We also use this place for our history project, the inventions one.

**Asher** About inventions during the industrial revolution.

**Marsha Lambert** They researched using the Library of Congress images, the images available through MeL, and they took original primary source images and they are then using Photo Story to narrate what they've learned.

**Susan Murphy** The library is really active in educating students in the area of information literacy. It's a lot of what librarians do. 84% of our writing classes come in for library instruction. 79% of our reading and student development classes come in for instruction. All of our nursing students come in. All of our fire science students come in.

Every librarian here has had a student come back and say, "I got a 4.0 on that paper because you helped me."

**Marsha Lambert** And being able to find the correct digital media, being able to identify whether it's accurate, whether it's pertinent, and then figuring out how to communicate it in the most effective way possible can do nothing but make our students stronger contributors to society overall.

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Marshall Middle School Media Center  
Marshall.k12.mi.us

Lansing Community College Library  
lcc.edu/library

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**Trent Smiley** A library is more than a physical space. Next we'll see how libraries are going beyond their borders and out into the community.

---Community Collaboration---

**Sara Wedell** When they say best small library in America, you think small library. And it's not. I mean, we've got a lot of space and we're big in terms of ideas and community.

**Bill Harmer** People think it's funny when I say this, but materials are really secondary to the work that we do. The important work is building relationships.

**Bob Pierce** We think about the library as really the person we go to whenever we have an idea on how we can improve or better impact our community, especially economically.

**Aubrey Martinson** We want to open our space and help the library see this as a space that they can create programming in, and they have. It's been very successful. We do a trivia night with them, and we do a book club. You know, when we do the trivia nights here, it's packed. So there's definitely an economic impact for us as business owners.

When you see the library partnering with the River Gallery, with the Ale House, just makes it kind of cool.

**Debra Greer** The library hosts the Literary Walk that was begun – I believe it was five years ago. Yeah, this was our fifth year in 2013. What we have done is each year hosted a group of writers that we invite in and they are reading and speaking and selling their books and reading their work all throughout spots in town. And then all the guests that come to hear the writers walk all over historic downtown Chelsea from venue to venue. They listen to great poetry and they meet their favorite authors, and then at the end of the day we have a reception at the River Gallery.

**Bill Harmer** The beautiful thing about collaborating is by working together, we can achieve things that we normally couldn't do on our own. And one of them that's unique is our comedy showcase. We partner there with the Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase in Ann Arbor. And essentially what they do is they provide their weekend talent to us a night ahead of time. And it's not unheard of for us to bring in 150, 200 people that will come, bring a blanket or a lawn chair and sit on our front lawn and listen to professional standup comedy right at the library.

**Robin Linkowski** Authors in Chelsea, we bring in three nationally known authors and work with the schools, and they go from classroom to classroom working with classrooms individually so the kids have some really one-on-one time with these authors learning about writing, learning about publishing. And then we have the author come to the library at the end. So it's just a really big festival about these different authors that these kids get to meet.

**Sara Wedell** The library has embarked on a community history project. It's called Stories of Chelsea. So we have a website called Stories of Chelsea where you can view documentaries we've made, interviews featuring WWII veterans, Korean war veterans. We're working on Vietnam veterans. Focusing on farmers in the area, and the history that we have in agriculture in this community. So yeah, content creation is a huge opportunity for libraries to really be treasuring their community and to really be building collections that can't be replicated anywhere else.

**Bill Harmer** We have 800 people that come through our door every day in a community of 15,000 people. And so the library is kind of a gateway into the

downtown, and we have a very vibrant downtown here with restaurants and small businesses, art galleries. And so the library really serves as an anchor, as a way to transition people from the library into the downtown and the community.

**Bob Pierce** You know, what we're doing here is creating a community that we enjoy living in. We like to be part of this community. We have fun here.

**Jessica Keyser** What's special about the Ferndale public library is it really, truly reflects how the Ferndale community thinks of itself. So there's always fun, interesting, different things happening here. And we really like to think of ourselves as a place where people can go, even if they don't know what's going on on any certain day, and find something fun to do.

**Soul Explosion Band** [singing] She's alright. She's alright! That girl's alright with me.

**Greg King** Oh, soul. Soul is everywhere. Soul coming in here, ain't no different. Soul is everywhere.

**Soul Explosion Band** [singing] Hey, hey hey hey!

**Kelly Bennett** In this community in particular we have a lot of musicians who live here, and so showing them that we support that kind of art in our library by giving them a place to play brings more and more people in. And then we also collect their music, which increases their audience. New fans come to see bands they've never heard of and give them a chance.

**Jessica Keyser** We just had a big music festival here last month which was part of a larger festival, but people were really surprised to see the library as a venue. It was after regular library hours and we had a liquor license for that to sell beer, and there were definitely a lot of people who expressed surprise at being able to drink a beer at the library. And there was a lot of novelty in that I think. [laughs]

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Chelsea District Library  
chelsea.lib.mi.us

Ferndale Public Library  
ferndale.lib.mi.us

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**Trent Smiley** Throughout this episode we've heard about MeL, the Michigan eLibrary. MeL has something for everyone and it's free online.

---Michigan eLibrary  
mel.org---

**Marsha Lambert** MeL is the Michigan Electronic Library. It is a website that collects an amazing number of magazines, journals, databases, images. If you're looking for work, if you're looking for jobs, if you want to practice taking tests, there is just a world of information available at no charge to citizens of Michigan.

**Eunice Borrelli** The databases that I point people to are Learning Express Library and Job and Career Accelerator. Job and Career Accelerator is a wonderful tool that enables someone to build a resume, build a cover letter, search for jobs, take a skill assessment questionnaire, and then work through the process of trying to find a job, change careers. Because it partners with Learning Express Library, it will point to Learning Express Library and say here's an e-book, or here's a class you might want to take on your path to your career.

**Tom Rico** In the process of starting businesses, information becomes very important because if you're going to start a business, you need to know what you're getting into: where's your market, where's your customers, where are your competitors. And you need to find the data to get a closer look at what you're getting into.

You know, as an entrepreneur you're a really busy person. You may be running your business during the day and you don't have time to tap in to it at 3 pm in the afternoon, and that's where I think the convenience of MeL and the data sources they have there is just great, because it puts all that information at your finger tips at any time.

**Bethany Kennedy** Yeah, you can look through Google to see, "Oh, okay. Hey yeah, there's ten other businesses in the county that do what I do. Or a hundred other businesses in the county that do what I do." But with the resources that we have here, we can tell you who those business owners are, what their projected sales are, who their suppliers are. I mean, we can really dig down and get some of the nitty gritty information.

**Kay Wejrowski** And LearningExpress, I know we... that's one of the programs that's on the Michigan eLibrary. And we contacted them earlier this year to tell them the wonderful results. Across the board, the top students were improving, the average students were improving. And you know what was even really significant was that our at-risk students and our special services students all saw significant improvement in their scores.

**JoAnn Schneider** That's a 24/7, twelve months a year resource that's available to all students. All students in Michigan.

**Mike Quillet** And it focuses on elementary school, high school, different subjects. Pretty much everything you can think of. I know for me, I would click on biology or

chemistry and it just has little refreshers. It has flash card kind of ideas just for vocab stuff. I mean, it's a really good tool.

**Jim Murphy** And it wasn't just ACT MME, it had AP tests on there, Compass tests for during college.

**Eunice Borrelli** So an individual who is studying for their GED, they can go online, they can do the math test, the reading test. Somebody is studying or wants to study for a license – a real estate license. Resources through LearningExpress Library lets them go online at their own pace, see what the material consists of and practice. And then of course they get the answers back.

We love MeL and we tell people about it every chance we get.

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Michigan eLibrary  
mel.org  
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**Trent Smiley** As we've seen in today's episode, libraries are far more than physical spaces. So whether it's starting a new business, learning a skill, or just finding something great to read, that next step may be closer than you think.

Thank you for joining me, Trent Smiley, on The Bright Side. If you want to find out about anything more from today's show, or watch the episode again, visit [brightsidetv.com](http://brightsidetv.com).

---Outtakes---

**Robin Linkowski** Are you going to ask me questions...

**Olivia Courant** Yes.

**Robin** ...or is it?...

**Olivia** No, I expect you just to talk. [laughs] Alright, wait, let me...

**Robin** We'll start with my childhood.

**Bob Pierce & Bill Harmer** [at the same time] I'm...

**Bill Harmer** Oh, I'm sorry.

**Bob Pierce** Go ahead.

**Bill Harmer** What are we, Laurel & Hardy?

**Aubrey Martinson** [to Bob and Bill] Anything you want me to add?

**Bill Harmer** Um... Just that Bob and I are cool.

**Aubrey** [to camera] Those guys are cool.

**Donna Olson** For instance, the business nonprofits...

**Kid** [bursts out laughing in background]

**Trent Smiley** A library is a great place... Okay. It is. Alright.

**Bob Pierce** You used to think of the library as a great place to go to check out a book. Or maybe a VHS video. Oh, I guess I'm showing my age!

**Asher** You can videotape something with the cameras and put it on behind the green screen.

**Maddy** You remember that one time where we had that human face behind me? [the group gets excited and says yes]

**Stephanie** The eyeball!

**Asher** We had a giant half of a face.

**Stephanie** Remember when we made a moustache on everybody that time?

**Lauren** Remember when you guys put bunny ears on me? [they all start laughing]

---Credits---

**Host**

Trent Smiley, Genessee District Library

**Producer**

Olivia Courant, CEDAM

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Library of Michigan

**Music**

Tyler Vander Maas – The Bright Side Theme

Ivan Chew – “I Have Often Told You Stories”

Josh Woodward – “Airplane Mode,” “Oh Mallory,” “This is Everything,” and “Invisible Light” (joshwoodward.com)

BOCrew – “SUNBIRDS”

Javolenus – “Ianiscus”

Kevin MacLeod – “Slow Burn” (incompetech.com)

hjcrbass – “Bossa Nova Loop”

### **Youth Programs**

Still photos by Swan Valley High School

### **Community Involvement**

Comedy Showcase video and “I Geek” photos by Chelsea District Library

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