



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Marengo-Union Library District Adds New Library Services

On Wednesday, June 30, 2021, the Marengo-Union Library District will become an active member in PrairieCat, a regional shared library catalog, providing new features to the library's patrons and enhanced services and efficiencies for library staff. The library received a grant from the Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS) to help with the upfront costs of this membership.

The PrairieCat online catalog includes nearly five million items from 137 libraries. The catalog provides easy searching, relevance ranking, and other tools to make finding items easier. Syndetics Unbound, a catalog enrichment service, provides additional information on materials and allow users to easily find their next great book online.

Marengo-Union library patrons in good standing can place holds on items right from the library's website nearly 24 hours a day, seven days a week and can see at a glance if and where an item is available. They can then have the item delivered directly to Marengo-Union Library District through the RAILS delivery system, or can choose to go to the library owning the item to pick it up.

In My Account on PrairieCat, patrons can check account status, view their items checked out, and update their personal information online. They can renew materials online or over the phone. They can pay fines or fees online via credit card. They can also suspend or cancel their own holds. And, they can store a list of titles read and create bibliographies to make research and classwork easier. Patrons can sign up to receive hold and overdue notices via email, phone or text message.

PrairieCat membership also benefits the library staff. Being part of a shared catalog greatly reduces the cost of making the library collection available online. The library benefits from centralized hardware, increased security, robust training, and technology and software support. Many more routine staff processes are automated, so library staff can focus more on patron support and services.

"PrairieCat is thrilled that Marengo-Union Library District is joining PrairieCat," said Carolyn Coulter, Director of PrairieCat. "Shared library catalogs like PrairieCat are a wise use of resources and improve the experience of Illinois' library users."

The Marengo-Union Library District is located in Marengo, Illinois. It serves a population of nearly 14,000 in the service area. The library circulates more than 84,000 items annually.

PrairieCat is an integrated library system (ILS) serving 21 counties and 137 public, school, academic and special libraries across Northern Illinois. Through resource sharing agreements, patrons of PrairieCat member libraries gain access to more than 5 million items via interlibrary loan among members. The organization provides libraries with access to online systems, support, and training to help them best serve their patrons and students. See more information at: https://support.prairiecat.info/about_prairiecat.

RAILS provides delivery, shared online catalogs, e-book services, continuing education programs, communication services, and other support to all types of libraries in northern and western Illinois. The system serves private, public, school, and university libraries in a 27,000 square mile area. More information : www.railslibraries.info.

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