Welcome to the WLA eNewsletter

By: Plumer Lovelace, Executive Director

WLA Members, Colleagues, Trustees and Friends,

As I have traveled to libraries and visited with many of you, one thing that I hear frequently is, “Plumer, I never receive any communication from WLA.” This observation could not be more accurate. Yes, you get broadcast e-mail messages announcing dates of the conferences, conference session highlights and early bird registration reminders. However, you don’t get ongoing communication you might expect from associations. Of course, we all know what it feels like to receive too much contact, but too little communication can send a negative message as well.

Therefore, I am pleased to announce that the communication blackout is over. With the support of the WLA Board and our great volunteers, we are launching a new version of the WLA newsletter in an electronic format. We will use this e-newsletter to generate WLA Board and committee updates, share stories and alert you to anything of importance that affects your association.

Please let us know if you have anything you would like to share with your colleagues. This includes upcoming events, free resources, best practices, staff changes or your favorite Rum Cake recipe. This communication tool belongs to you. You can submit articles to wla@wisconsinlibraries.org. In addition to the WLA eNewsletter, you should also be receiving the WLA Legislative eNewsletter. If you have trouble receiving either of these communications, please contact the WLA office.
A Message From The President

As the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) Board President, I have heard how the association has impacted your professional career and fostered personal growth, for the good. WLA is not just about the conferences for librarians, library workers and library advocates, but what it does for and with people. WLA’s powerful legacy is truly inspiring.

Today, the work of the Wisconsin Library Association Board of Directors and Staff has the same charge as it did when WLA was first established, to serve as a unified statewide advocacy group by strengthening libraries of all kinds, across the entire state of Wisconsin.

The priorities in 2016 are to:

• Support the work of the Membership Taskforce to grow membership and increase conference attendance, because there is strength in diversity, resource sharing and inclusiveness.
• Celebrate the 125th Year Anniversary of WLA through publications and the WLA events, to pay tribute to our rich history and showcase the dynamic ways in which libraries have adapted to the changing information landscape.
• Increase communication to the membership by reviving the WLA newsletter, implementing a marketing plan and upgrading the website.
• Enhance the volunteer experience by continuing the President's Volunteer Award, revising and streamlining the WLA policy manuals, unit structure and procedure manual, and integrating WLA board members in the WLA volunteer orientation, to strengthen partnerships and collaborations among our peers and to support a new generation of library leaders.
• Refocus on WLA legislative strategies by increasing our contract with our Library Lobbyist to develop a pre-budget strategy and focus building relationships between the membership and their legislators.
• Engage public library systems in active WLA legislative lobbying efforts.
• Rollout a new WLA Leadership Institute to further support and foster a new generation of library leaders and professionalism.
• Research the viability of a Wisconsin Public Library Accreditation Program.

Through these efforts and more, we are better together!

Sincerely,

Pamela K. Westby, WLA Board President
L.E. Phillips Memorial Public Library Director

Fall Conference
October 25-28, 2016,
Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, Milwaukee, WI
Disaster Strikes the Newly Created Wisconsin Library Association

Just a little more than a year after the Wisconsin Library Association was founded on February 11, 1891 one of the most bizarre events in American library history occurred. In *The Wisconsin Library Association* (WLA 1966) Benton Wilcox writes:

“Disaster struck the infant Association in the spring of 1892 through the loss of its president, K. A. Linderfelt, who had also received, in October 1891, the even greater honor of election to the presidency of the American Library Association. Mr. Linderfelt was born in Sweden and achieved an excellent classical education before coming to America and Milwaukee in 1870. Here he had secured employment in the Milwaukee Female College as an instructor in Latin and Greek at a pittance of $400 per year, later increased to $600. In 1880, he was appointed librarian of the Milwaukee Public Library at $1,200. As recorded in the *Library Journal*, “In his twelve years of library administration he won a permanent place among eminent American librarians. A man of brilliant capacities and devoted to his calling, he was practically the creator of the Milwaukee Public Library, which he developed to a high efficiency.

Unfortunately, in trying to maintain a standard of living comparable to the culturally elite of the city with whom he was associated, he became heavily indebted. In early 1892, the city discovered a shortage of $10,000 of the public library’s funds. Mr. Linderfelt readily acknowledged his guilt and aided the auditors in tracing the shortages. His staff and library board members showed their support by replacing the missing funds, and he was given a suspended sentence. Though Mr. Dewey offered him a position in his organization, he returned to Europe, studied medicine and died a practicing physician in Paris in 1900. The American Library Association expunged him from its records by accepting his resignation as of the day he had been elected its president. The Wisconsin Library Association, without machinery or heart for such decisive action, was left leaderless and apparently no one knew just what to do. As a consequence there was no annual conference in either 1892 or 1893.”

The Wisconsin Library Association forgave Linderfelt and welcomed him back into their fold at WLA’s Centennial reception in Milwaukee in 1991. It went even further and inducted him into the Wisconsin Library Hall of Fame in 2009.
WLA’s Path To Leadership

By: Jean Anderson  
Vice President/President-Elect

Over its 125-year history, the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) has helped develop some great library leaders. A quick glance at the Past Presidents list on the WLA website (http://wla.wisconsinlibraries.org/about-the-wla/board-of-directors) shows leaders from all sizes and types of libraries. This is only the tip of the iceberg, though. WLA is full of leaders of units, divisions, committees and more.

Over the last ten years, WLA has been working on a plan to formalize the development of library leaders. The WeLead project began in 2005 and is coming to an end this year. In 2011, a proposal to create a Leadership Committee was presented. Their work was put on hold as the 2012-2013 WLA Board focused on hiring a new Executive Director.

In 2013, with a new Executive Director on board, the first of three leadership task forces began work on the Leadership Development Institute (LDI). The first task force focused on researching leadership competencies that would best apply to Wisconsin library professionals. The second task force incorporated that information into the instructional design of a 2½ day educational program. The third and final team was charged with implementation. You’ll hear more about this soon as the plan is to hold the first LDI later this year.

With the beginning of the Leadership Development Institute and the integration of the WeLead Program into that project, it’s also time to create a Leadership Committee to oversee the leadership activities in WLA - including the LDI. This is my project as Vice-President and I look forward to seeing where the process takes us.

Wisconsin Library Association First Quarter Financial Summary

By: Tom Klement, WLA Financial Manager

WLA’s first quarter of 2016 is ending predictably status quo. With WAAL and WAPL conferences set to take WLA into spring, we will look forward to growth in membership and conference attendance right along with the flowers of spring!!

As always, our balance sheet remains strong with the exception of the year ending loss due to investments. We hope 2016 brings strength and growth in the markets.

At this time, membership revenue is on par with 2015, but remember we were behind pace last year and need to keep striving for membership growth. WLA’s new marketing plan will be implemented this year, but it is equally important that every member takes their role as ambassadors to the Association very seriously and spread the word of their great experiences and development to their colleagues who have yet to join WLA! Spring conference registrations are just starting to roll in in the first quarter and we will look to the second quarter for those results. Investment returns closed on the positive side and we look forward to watching that progress as well.

Expenses are within projected budget amounts and we will wait on those spring conference numbers as stated in the revenue summary. The expenses for WLA’s 2016 Library Legislative Day were significantly higher over last year, primarily due to changing the day’s schedule so we could include the kickoff of our 125th Anniversary at the State Capitol.

Keep encouraging your peers to join WLA to help ensure the sustainability of Wisconsin’s libraries for present and future generations!
A Few Words From Our WLA Foundation President

By: Valerie Malzacher, WLA Foundation President

The Wisconsin Library Association Foundation, the charitable arm of the Wisconsin Library Association, has a long and successful history of supporting libraries and librarians in Wisconsin. We are committed to creating a future where Wisconsin libraries are revered by the public and sustained as institutions that bring social, economic, educational and cultural benefits to the communities that we serve.

The Foundation Board includes membership from a variety of libraries in Wisconsin as well as representatives of the business community who are committed to working with librarians to forge a better future for our users. Our mission, to support the role of Wisconsin libraries as essential institutions in a democratic society and to help raise the visibility of Wisconsin libraries in the communities that we serve, guides the Board as we raise funds to support our strategic priorities. These include enhancing the next generation of Wisconsin librarians with scholarships for library and continuing education; honoring Wisconsin libraries, librarians, and authors with several awards and honors that are presented at our annual conference; and respecting our past to help us prepare for our future through the activities of the Wisconsin Library Heritage Center.

In addition to our traditional scholarships and awards, we also fund special projects that support our mission. This year, we supported the Library Development and Legislation Committee's project to distribute engaging "Libraries Transform!" posters to all of our elected state legislators. In each legislator's office, these posters are sending the simple but powerful message that libraries really do transform the lives of the people of Wisconsin.

With your help, we can do even more! To fund large and meaningful projects that can tell our story to our current, but even more importantly our future users, we are ramping up our efforts to grow our endowment fund. Our goal this year is to raise $25,000 for our endowment. Please consider attending one of our fun fundraising events (read more about our first ever summer fundraiser in Jen Gerber's article), supporting our silent auction at the annual conference, or laughing your way through our always amazing conference events. Stay tuned to our Foundation website for more details on how you can join the fun and support our efforts.

Libraries do transform lives! Help us to support libraries and librarians in this meaning work.
Spring Conference Wrap-ups

WAAL Conference 2016

By: Amy Rachuba and Rene Ettinger, 2016 Conference Co-Chairs

We had a great time in Green Lake WI at the WAAL 2016 Annual Conference. Information literacy, streaming video, training student workers and managing collections were just a few topics covered by the 21 breakout sessions, 12 lightning talks, and more than 20 posters that introduced us to new ideas and connected us to new colleagues. The opening keynote presenter, Courtney Greene McDonald, spoke about user-centered, holistic design and reminded us that “you can never go back to not being a librarian.”

Our luncheon speakers, Daniel Golden of Boswell Book Company and Todd Bol of Little Free Libraries, gave us a glimpse into the world of selling, not loaning, books and the phenomena of front yard, community-driven book sharing. Closing keynote speaker Amy Buckland taught us we are all connected to digital scholarship. Slides and handouts from many of the sessions will be posted to the conference website: http://goo.gl/YTmoip. Along with learning came lots of fun in Green Lake. #WAAL2016 dominated the Twittersphere (at least in our narrow corner of the world) with the 2nd offering of our hashtag contest. This year, two lucky conference goers with the best #WAAL2016 social media posts were awarded prizes provided by a generous donation from local winery, Vines & Rushes. Local quartet, Jazz Orgy, entertained the crowd on Thursday evening with original compositions, and Wednesday evening was spent happily welcoming new (and old) WLA members at the New Members Round Table cocktail hour. It’s never too early to save the date for WAAL 2017, to be held on Thursday and Friday April 20-21 at the Osthoff Resort in beautiful Elkhart Lake WI. Prompted by feedback from you, the WAAL membership, the conference has been shortened to two days. You will hear more about the format change for the conference in upcoming editions of this newsletter. This conference is possible because of the support of the wonderful WLA staff and the hard working WAAL 2016 Conference Committee, a big thank you goes to both. See you next year in Elkhart Lake!
WAPL Conference 2016

By Dawn Wacek, Connie Meyers, Beth Carpenter, and Katherine Elchert

This year's Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries conference was fantastic. Thanks, pretty much entirely, to our awesome planning committee. We had a great turnout and as I walked through the conference I heard lots of people talking about how great the programs were, how much they liked the facility and how much they were enjoying the speakers.

I asked our WAPL Board to share a few of their favorite parts of the conference.

Connie Meyers

- Meeting cool new people!
- Enjoying the outstanding conference venue. One speaker even said, “Gee, they have great wi-fi here!”
- Catching up with colleagues from around the state. That’s *always* one of my favorite things about a conference.
- Feeling incredibly inspired by author Matthew Hefti’s message about the importance of libraries to him personally.
- Working with an amazing team of dedicated professionals who worked hard behind-the-scenes to make this a very special WAPL conference.

Beth Carpenter: I loved the Thursday luncheon speaker, Matthew Hefti. Other speakers have given lip service to the impact of libraries, but he gave more - his personal story. He shared examples of librarians to aspire to be like, an understanding of our challenges and aspirations, all with humor and levity. Thank you to WAPL for bringing him to the conference!

Katherine Elchert: So even though I'm WAPL Chair-Elect, this was actually my first time attending the WAPL conference. But I'm so happy I did! Like my other experiences with various workshops and conferences, my favorite times at WAPL were the moments chatting with friends and colleagues from around the state. It's always lovely to find out what my counterparts are creating within their own library walls - whether it's innovative programming or new ways to expand outreach to patrons. One more thing to note: I highly encourage my fellow WI librarians to follow their own interests and become more involved WLA!

Trustees: You’re Invited To A Special Program

Come and meet your colleagues at a special coffee for Library Trustees & Friends immediately following the morning WLA Conference keynote on Thursday, October 27. The short program will include a welcome from the Trustee/Friends Chair, plus highlights of the day’s programs of special interest to those serving in these important positions, such as a luncheon featuring Dr. Tomas Lipinski, Dean of the UW–Milwaukee School of Information Studies (“Information wants to be free”); a follow up by Dr. Lipinski on library liability issues with 3D printing; a program on re envisioning libraries; and a panel discussion on building effective relationships with legislators.
It’s Almost Luau Time

The warm August air envelopes you as you relax outside while the afternoon turns to dusk. You take in the sunset colors of the sky and the beauty of the water; your toes curl in the sand on the beach. A woman walks by your chair and rests a lei of flowers across your shoulders. You sigh in relaxation and take a sip from the Mai Tai in your hand. Off to your right, the torches are being lit in preparation for the night’s performance of live Polynesian music, Hula Dancers, and Fire and Knife Breathers.

As you walk towards the outdoor Tiki Bar to grab yourself another Mai Tai, you pass a group of your friends standing around the Pig Roast, others are laughing while attempting the Limbo (how low *can* they go?), some are toasting around the bonfire.

The outdoor Tiki Bar has a full line of beverages, but the drinks you’re interested in tonight are “The WLA Mai Tai” and “The Plumer Blue Hawaii” because you know the cost of these two drinks help go toward the fundraiser.

Even though it might seem you are off on the beautiful island beaches of Kauai, tonight you are actually at the WLA Foundation Summer Fundraiser! The Wisconsin Library Association Foundation and the Luau Foundation Fundraiser Committee Members are pleased to invite you to what is sure to be one of the best events of the year!

Save the Date: Sunday, August 21, 2016

Event Begins at 3:00 PM  
Performance Begins at 6:00 PM  
Bar Open until 10:00 PM  
Where: The East Side Club, Monona Wisconsin

Ticket price includes indoor/outdoor venue on beautiful Lake Monona, traditional Pig Roast & sides, and exciting Hawaiian Performance by Hale O Malo Productions

Costs: Adult: $50, Child age 3-12: $15, Child under age 3: Free
The Wisconsin Public Library System Redesign Project (PLSR) is a project to consider how to best provide public library system services in Wisconsin. Its goal is to develop a plan for implementation of new models of service. While the project builds on the work of other processes before it, it is starting its work with a clean slate and creating new models for service through a community-based process. The process, led by the PLSR Steering Committee and managed by WiLS, includes nine workgroups made up of over 100 service experts and stakeholders. These groups will use data, information and input gathered from the library community throughout the process to design new models for delivering coordinated and shared services to be provided by systems, other agencies/organizations, and statewide collaborations.

While changes in society, resources and technologies over the past decades have created new demands and opportunities for systems, the law and services required of them as well as many of their practices are still relatively unchanged from the original law. Wisconsin’s library system law, providing funding for coordinated regional library services, officially went into effect in 1971 when Senate Bill 47 was signed into law (1971 Act 152). The creation of public library systems fostered the establishment of a strong network of resource sharing and mutually beneficial interdependence. The library community—the systems, libraries and the legislature—has recognized the need to update what is required of library systems as well as to redesign the services in a manner that offers improved services and equity, and made the decision to undertake this process.

Due to the complexity and magnitude of the potential change, the process will take time, and the workgroups will be developing their recommendations over the course of the next two years. One of the core principles of the process is that it belongs to the community. As such, it is essential that our Wisconsin library community keep up with the project and provide their thoughts and feedback. To stay up-to-date and to offer feedback or ask questions, visit the project website. There will be updates in future WLA newsletters as well, and opportunities to learn more at the Fall WLA Conference.

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Get the full experience of being a WLA member…volunteer!

Becoming a volunteer allows library professionals to develop leadership skills, create professional development opportunities, expand career networks and learn more about your association. It also plays an important role in advancing the mission of the Association and benefiting libraries throughout the state.

Current opportunities include the Nomination Committee, 2017 WAAL Conference Committee, and the Fund Development Committee. If you are interested in volunteering send your message to wla@wisconsinlibraries.org. Include in the subject line, “WLA Volunteer.” Thanks for your continued support.