It's Summer

Have you joined the WLA Listserv yet? This new member benefit is only a couple of months old and there are already almost 200 members. Join today for another way to stay in touch with your WLA colleagues. Sign-up is easy. Simply use this link, sign into MemberClicks, and sign up. Contact the WLA Office if you have any trouble.

And, while you’re signed into MemberClicks, take a few minutes to complete the Volunteer Form. There are many ways for you to become involved in WLA, from helping out at the registration table at a conference to running for Treasurer or Vice-President to working on the Leadership or Membership Committee. Speaking of the Leadership and Membership Committees, I am currently looking for volunteers to serve on these two important committees. If you’re interested, please let me know or fill out the Volunteer Form.

The first cohort of WLA’s Leadership Development Institute began their studies August 9-11. This professional development opportunity had been in the works for several years and I was excited to participate in its launch. Congratulations and thank you to all the volunteers who helped get the Leadership Development Institute off the ground.

(continues on page 2)
Every association’s leadership spends a fair amount of time planning, discussing and anticipating the future. Inevitably those conversations lead to the topic of membership growth and retention. In my years working with associations I’ve seen my share of membership growth strategies. I bet you have, too. The effectiveness of these strategies depends entirely on the profile of the association. However, one approach tends to work for every association no matter what industry is represented. It is the power of existing members to bring new people into the family.

No membership advertising campaign, conference discount, logo t-shirt or fancy swag can take the place of a pitch from a close colleague describing the benefits of attending a conference or joining the association. Of course, when you think about it, we respond to recommendations for movies, restaurants, physicians, mechanics and even pet care all the time. That’s why business surveys always end with the question, “would you recommend this ________ to a friend?”

For this reason, I am asking each of you to join the WLA membership growth initiative. How does this request translate into action? Here are some suggestions, 1) Promote WLA to your friends and colleagues and be on the lookout for prospective members, 2) forward conference promotions to non-members and include the statement, “I hope to see you there,” 3) when approaching a non-member, give a personal testimony of what WLA means to you and the future of Wisconsin libraries, 4) toot your WLA horn! Let your library know about WLA and your involvement as a volunteer. WLA is a statewide association with over 1400 members, 5) purchase a membership as a gift for someone as a way to help them grow professionally and 6) re-invite members who may have dropped membership a few years earlier due to working hours, health, family situation, etc. WLA membership may be more appealing to them now.

I encourage each of you to invest in your relationship with WLA by recruiting at least one new member into the association this year. You will be richly rewarded in knowing that you have made your library community stronger. And, if you aren’t a WLA member, what are you waiting for?

(cont. from page 1)

And, finally, registration is open for the fall WLA Conference. Plan to come and Recharge with us at the Kalahari in Wisconsin Dells from October 17-20. It’s going to be a great conference!

Have a great rest of the summer. See you in October!
Alice Sturzl – Life Is About Living Well and Giving Back

By: Barbara Hernandez, Marketing Consultant

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.” I had one conversation with Alice Sturzl, retired librarian from Laona, WI, and it appears that many people in Laona breathe easier every day because they met her along her life’s journey.

And what a journey it’s been. She started her career in 1971 as a school librarian in Laona and, upon her return to Laona from Phoenix, continued to work in the joint school/public library in that community into 2011. “I liked working with all ages of people and this library gave me the chance to interact with and help so many people,” said Alice. “I also taught English classes from time to time. You might say that I helped many of them from birth to death. Many of these people still stop me when I’m in town and thank me. It tells me I made an impact on their lives. I will forever treasure the time I spent with each of the individuals I met along the way.”

Libraries like the one in Laona have become community centers, offering many more services than they used to. “Times have changed and it’s critical that we stay a step ahead of the trends to be relevant in our communities. I’m proud of the work we did to keep the combined school/public library going through the years. Our library recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. That’s really something in a small community like Laona, but it tells you how important libraries are, no matter how many people you serve.”

Through the years, Alice was active in the Wisconsin Library Association, the system board, the county library board and the local Library Board. “I had a superintendent who wanted to make sure his staff gave back to their profession and I can proudly say that I served with many fantastic people on many boards and committees through the years,” she recalled. “People may not look at professions like they used to, but there are many ways to give back to preserve libraries and educate the next generation of librarians. It may even be time to do more outreach to tap into funds from people who use the many important library services.”

“I give to the WLA Foundation because it means so much to members,” continued Alice. “The financial pies that fund libraries are shrinking, so we need to do what we can to continue to serve our communities. Even as times change, there will always be some kinds of library services in communities, ensuring that information is readily available to all who need it.”
SSCS 2017 Annual One-Day Conference Wrap-Up

By: Sam Vogel, SSCS Board Secretary

This year’s Support Staff and Circulation Services (SSCS) Annual One-Day Conference in Fort Atkinson attracted more than 70 participants from across the state. Everyone came away feeling connected and full of new ideas. Professionals gathered to build new relationships and learn new skills at nine exciting sessions.

Attendees were pleased with the beautiful location of The Fort Atkinson Club along the Rock River. The temperature was exceptional for the walking tour that was offered as a lunch time activity, which several attendees took part in. Everyone was extremely fond of the food catered by Beauty and the Bean. Beauty and the Bean took it upon themselves to make boxed lunches “library” themed and made it a memorable and tasty day! The conference ran smoothly and everyone was able to experience all things that a good conference should offer.

This year's SSCS Conference offered sessions about the importance of community, customer service skills, different library display ideas, and more. Our opening keynote speaker Cindy Fesemeyer, Library Director of Columbus Public Library shared how the Library came up with new ideas that served their community. She also shared specific ideas that attendees could take back to their individual libraries to implement, if desired. Cindy gave an excellent presentation that reiterated the benefits of learning the needs and wants of the community while finding new and different ways of delivering programs to accommodate those needs and wants.

This year, SSCS was able to offer a revised version of the Paralibrarian Award. Meredith Meier from Manitowoc Public Library was the well-deserved winner of this prestigious award. We congratulate all of the paralibrarian nominees and thank them for their accomplishments. We also thank Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC), UW-Madison School of Library and Information Studies and Bridges Library System, to name a few, for their generous sponsorships.

Finally, the SSCS Board will be announcing the date and location for the 2018 SSCS Conference in the next month or so. Stay tuned for further information. If you’re thinking of presenting a session, have suggestions for speakers or program ideas, or would like to volunteer to help, please contact Brendan Faherty at faherty@midlibrary.org.
Every year, a significant number of WLA members retire. Some, mostly those who serve as library trustees or are active in the WLA Foundation, keep up their close ties with the association. Most of the rest of us, as the saying goes, "just slowly fade away."

This represents a substantial loss both to the association and to the retiree. The association loses many years of accumulated wisdom and experience, and is frequently cut off from powerful and painstakingly created personal networks of legislators, public officials and other library supporters. The retiree, on the other hand, gradually gives up long-standing camaraderie with other WLA members, and frequently also loses easy access to information concerning new developments and ongoing events in our field.

WLA, in an effort to serve those who might otherwise fall through the cracks of the current organizational structure, is currently establishing a mechanism for the formation of Special Interest Groups (SIGs.) These groups are intended to be small (10 members as a start), and to meet the needs of these members (such needs to be determined by the SIG members themselves as time goes by) without recourse to any extensive formal bureaucracy. The Silver Circle, a SIG intended for those retired and those soon to be retired, is one such proposed group. The only requirements for membership in the Silver Circle are that you be retired (or are soon to be) and that you remain (or become) a member of WLA.

If there is significant interest in forming such a group, then initially we propose to offer some sort of social event at the upcoming fall conference (Kalahari in Wisconsin Dells), where we can talk about future events and activities - informational programs concerning new developments in our field as well as special topics of direct concern to retirees – or just drinks with friends. We hope to offer a “significantly” reduced rate for the one-day conference registration the day of our event.

If you are interested in the formation of such a group, please send an email expressing your interest to Kathy Schneider (ksmichaelis@gmail.com), or to Peter Hamon (phamon@aol.com).

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A FEW WORDS FROM MEGAN ADAMS

Greetings, WLA members! My name is Megan Adams and I am the chair of the WLA Student Task Force for the 2017-2018 academic year. In our first year, the WLA Student Task Force worked to lay the groundwork for a WLA student group on campus at UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee. Thank you to the WLA for supporting us in our first year as we established a group identity and explored the interests of our peers. This year we plan to create a more visible and sustainable presence for LIS students in the WLA membership by transitioning from a task force to a special interest group. As the academic year picks up, look for us at the WLA Conference and watch for events sponsored by our group.
The WLA Conference Committee has put together a phenomenal slate of programs and events for the 2017 WLA Conference held at the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells.

The Conference kicks off on Tuesday, October 17, with two pre-conferences: (1) Deliberate Creativity Workshop: How to Innovate on Demand, presented by Amy Climer, Climer Consulting, Asheville, North Carolina, and (2) Representation, Authenticity and Being Real: Diversity in Youth Services with Anna Haase Kruger and Tami Lee, both youth services librarians at the Ramsey County Public Libraries in St. Paul, Minnesota. Also, don't forget those all-important meetings, including the System and Resource Library Administrators' Association (SRLAAW), Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) and the Board of Directors of the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA). To cap off the evening, join WiLS for their annual fall classic at the Kalahari Upper Deck Lounge & Lanes.

On Wednesday, October 18, Grace Lim is the opening keynote speaker. Ms. Lim has more than 20 years of journalism experience and has covered stories ranging from hard-news crime to celebrity profiles. She currently teaches at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, where her students produce the Humans of Oshkosh Storytelling Project. Lim firmly believes in the power of storytelling and how we all can work toward the proverbial common good through our stories, and how librarians must continue to take a lead role in the telling, the protecting, and the sharing of these stories.

The keynote address will be followed by the grand opening of the exhibit hall—welcome the vendors and bid on items in the WLA Foundation Silent Auction.

Other Wednesday highlights include the YSS Luncheon with author Andrea Davis Pinkney, who will discuss the role libraries can and do play in creating welcoming and inclusive communities, and how her work as a book creator supports these efforts; UW-Madison SLIS and UW-Milwaukee SOIS reunions; and the WLA Foundation Fundraiser, Return of Team Trivia.

Get up early Thursday morning to attend a WLA unit business meeting and get involved in WLA! These meetings will be followed by the Thursday keynote speaker, Linda Liukas. Ms. Liukas is a programmer, storyteller and illustrator from Helsinki, Finland. Her book series Hello Ruby introduces the whimsical world of technology for kids and has been translated to over 20 languages.

Other Thursday highlights include a special library tour of the Crane Foundation Library in Baraboo (registration required); WLTF luncheon with Jessamyn West, a librarian and technologist living in rural Vermont who has been speaking on the intersection of libraries, technology and politics since 2003; the annual Awards & Honors Reception; and a YSS Booktalk and Social.

Start your Friday with a 5K walk/run and conclude it with the President’s Luncheon featuring Michelle Wildgen. Ms. Wildgen is a writer, editor and teacher in Madison, Wisconsin, as well as the executive editor at the literary journal Tin House.

We hope you can join us for this fabulous conference! Registration is open and rooms may already be reserved at the Kalahari. For more details see the conference website, http://wla.wisconsinlibraries.org/events-conferences/annual-conference/registration-hotel
Letter From Our Foundation President

By: Linda Pierschalla, WLAF President

The Foundation is alive and well! Thank you to all who have contributed in the past and present, as well as future contributors! Your generosity and love for our profession and the future of libraries in Wisconsin is so very important. The Wisconsin Library Association Foundation (WLAF) remains committed to the mission of supporting the role of libraries as essential institutions and funding scholarships and projects to achieve high visibility in our communities and organizations.

The Foundation is committed to funding the annual scholarships, which, this year, included a new project, the WLA Leadership Development Institute. Three individuals received $300 scholarships to attend the Institute, held in early August. One of the recipients could have been a colleague, or even yourself!

Moving forward, the Foundation would like to provide a robust endowment to put us into a position to fund even more projects, such as fulfilling fund requests from libraries for assistance with building projects, emergency assistance, special events, speakers, short term staff needs, etc. The list goes on and on. But we need your consideration as a donor or, even better, your help to find corporate sponsors who value libraries and would like to have Wisconsin libraries in their portfolio of giving. Please give it some thought and reach out to potential sponsorship contacts, then contact a WLAF Board member.

Thank you for your giving. You should have received a letter and giving envelope. We hope you will consider making a charitable gift. Attend our Foundation Fundraiser, Return of Team Trivia, at the WLA Conference this October! It’s a great way to give and have fun with friends at the same time.

Thank you for empowering Wisconsin libraries.

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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. 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.