

Library Legislative Day Highlights

Nearly 150 people attended the Library Legislative Day held on Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2010 in Madison. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Evers delivered the keynote address, his first opportunity to speak officially to WLA and WEMTA members since he took office.

Evers referenced his goal that every child should graduate ready for further education and the workforce, and said, "Libraries are an important component of this goal because they advance literacy and knowledge—keys to all educational and economic achievement." Evers said that libraries also play a key role in economic recovery, pointing to the 2008 NorthStar Economics study demonstrating that Wisconsin public libraries return more than \$4 for every single dollar taxpayers invested. He also reminded attendees of the 2006 study prepared by EGS Research and Consulting for DPI that revealed that school library media programs positively affect student academic achievement.

Even though Evers acknowledged that government revenues are stretched during this deep recession, he said that now would be the worst possible time to cut library budgets. "Doing so would only compound the negative effects of this recession on families across the state and leave many without the assistance they need to seek employment."

Evers pledged to request funding that ensures that the state is doing a good job of supporting library services for all Wisconsin residents in all types of libraries. Furthermore, he announced that DPI will convene a summit to seek solutions to the budget challenges that have led many schools to reduce their library media staff.

State Rep. Penny Bernard Schaber (D-Appleton) also spoke. She started by telling attendees that she and her husband are avid hikers. Her husband, a retired school librarian, has a sticker on his backpack that she's been able to ponder throughout many years of hiking behind him: "Librarians have it all."

"And it's true!" she said, to audience applause.

Bernard Schaber described to attendees how best to approach their meetings with state legislators: politely, with the facts and a possible solution in hand. However, she said, many people are angry and expect legislators to fix the problem. "We don't know everything," she said, and the best solutions come from community stakeholders.

Attendees started appointments at 10:30 a.m. New materials focused on "building a common agenda" with state legislators around three key issues: jobs and economic development, information technology and access and education. It's hoped that this new framework for sharing the myriad library issues will make it easier for library supporters to have constructive conversations with elected officials and build these relationships.

WLA encourages all members to use the materials prepared for this event. While Library Legislative Day comes only once a year, advocacy is a year-round activity. Go to www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/day/index.htm for all the information you'll need to start a conversation about libraries with your state legislators. And don't stop there! Share the information with local officials or other stakeholders in your community, whether you're in an academic, public, school or special library.

For more photos from Library Legislative Day, see page 11. 



State Supt. Tony Evers addresses a crowd of nearly 150 at Library Legislative Day, February 16, 2010. Photo by Steve Platteter

Association of
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Wisconsin Association of
Academic Librarians

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President's View

Member Support Will Help WLA Face Challenges in 2010

Greetings from Raynor Library at Marquette University in Milwaukee.

My first column is a miscellany of reports, concerns and invitations.

The new year, 2010, is full of challenges for the nation, for Wisconsin, for library employees and for many of our relatives and friends who are suffering during this severe economic downturn. Please remember that the Wisconsin Library Association and its constituent divisions, sections, round tables, committees, task forces and the WLA staff also face a challenging year.

I must remember to renew my WLA-related dues and hope that you all will not only remind yourselves, but also your friends and colleagues in the association, to renew their memberships. Dues, personal and institutional, amount to 45 percent of WLA's revenue. To help the environment as well as the budget, we have switched many of our publications from paper to digital output. Again, to save the environment as well as money, we are switching some committee meetings to teleconferences/conference calls where practical. My ACRL committee meeting at Midwinter in Boston was a hybrid meeting, with some of us physically in attendance while others participated via Webcam. Please help us remain organizationally flexible in adapting to changing interests and professional needs while remaining responsive to our members. To remain a vital organization, WLA needs not only your dues but also your participation, your ideas and your constructive criticism.

If dues account for almost half of WLA's revenue, the WLA Conference contributes a substantial 38 percent. It was my pleasure recently to meet at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells with the 2010 WLA Conference planning committee, co-chaired by Linda Vincent, a branch manager with the Milwaukee Public Library and Melissa McLimans of the UW-Madison Digital Collections. As the conference planning proceeds, I hope you will become acquainted with your colleagues who are serving on the planning committee. The conference theme for 2010 will be "Libraries: Create Adventure." The committee is working to insure that the 2010 WLA Conference at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells on November 3-5, is informative and enjoyable. I do not wish to steal the co-chairs' thunder but we had a tour of the public space at the conference site, as well as a preview of the hotel rooms we will be occupying. The rooms (which come with water park passes) are large and feature a refrigerator and microwave as well as two queen-sized beds and a foldout couch. Please channel your suggestions for Conference programs, exhibits, entertainment, adventures and speakers through WLA's constituent parts to insure that our 2010 Conference is as good as we can make it.

Finally, I am a member of the membership committee of the Law and Political Science Section (LPSS) of ACRL. I met with that committee at the ALA Midwinter meeting in Boston. Final attendance at the Boston meeting was 11,095, higher than last year's total of 10,220 in Denver, but less than the 13,601 in attendance reached at the Philadelphia meeting in 2008. During the meeting, a table was set up to collect funds for Haiti disaster relief. From the proceeds of this collection, ALA and the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority were able to give \$27,084 toward relief in Haiti.

Yes, 2010 confronts us with challenges as individuals, librarians and members of a professional association, but it also offers us the opportunity to make our association more efficient and more responsive. We also have a great opportunity to create a fun, informative Conference at Wisconsin Dells in the fall. I hope you were able to join us in Madison for Legislative Day — and that we'll see you in Sheboygan for the WAPL Conference, in Milwaukee for the WAAL Conference and in Wisconsin Dells for the WLA Conference. Please introduce yourselves at the conferences! Please send me or members of the WLA staff an e-mail if we can be of assistance. Read anything interesting, lately? What was it?



Alberto Herrera, Jr.

—*Alberto Herrera Jr.,
2010 WLA president*

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[http://wlaweb.
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WLA Board Meeting Summary

December 3, 2009

• Approved a petition from the Wisconsin Small Libraries Round Table (WISLR) for section status in the organization. WISLR's name will be changed to Wisconsin Small Libraries Section (WISL). As a section, WISL may have a seat on the WLA Board; Edie Phillips will represent WISL on the WLA Board starting February 2010.

• Approved the 2010 budget recommended for passage by the finance committee, chaired by Treasurer Jan Berg. Berg reported that the budget contains projections for reduced revenue. Expense reductions include more meetings held via GoToMeeting and elimination of printing and mailing WLA and unit newsletters. The Board will monitor performance closely to determine if additional adjustments, such as staff furloughs, will be necessary.

• Approved a Conference cancellation policy that states that refunds for cancelled Conference registrations will be provided, less a \$25 cancellation fee, for all requests received no later than the advance registration deadline. After the advance registration deadline, no refunds will be provided.

• Asked staff to explore the possibility of updating and republishing the Literary Travel Guide.

• Approved the recommendation from the Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT) board to approach leadership of the Wisconsin Educational Media & Technology Association about co-sponsoring the WLA IFRT Intellectual Freedom Award. IFRT also will be searching for a new award funder, since ProQuest is no longer supporting state-level awards.

February 15, 2010

• Approved revisions to the WLA policy on association reserves, noting that the Committee on Organization would need to draft language to amend the bylaws and present them to members for a vote before this policy could take effect.

• Approved WLA & WEMTA Intellectual Freedom Award criteria and procedures recommended by the Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT).

• M&I Wealth Management provided their annual report about WLA's past year's investment performance, the state of the investments and the economy going forward. M&I reported that 2009 was a good year for investments.

• President-elect Rhonda Puntney selected the 2011 WLA annual Conference chair: Bernie Bellin.

• ALA Councilor Julie Schneider reported on the exciting happenings at ALA Midwinter. She attended the Chapter Relations committee meetings. A new program will be "Choose Privacy," which will focus on social networking and personal privacy. There will be a rally on Capitol Hill June 29, 2010 during the ALA annual Conference. Schneider will be organizing appointments with federal legislators since she is also fulfilling the role of federal legislative advocate in 2010.


• ALA has had a decline in membership, and positive net revenue primarily due to furloughs and layoffs. There is a goal to raise \$1 million for scholarships to library schools.

• Barbara Kelly, 2009 Conference chair, reported on the success of the 2009 Conference. Despite uncertainties with the economy and the swine flu, the Conference earned a \$80,000 net profit.

• The Board approved the 2010 WLA Conference budget as submitted by Brigitte Rupp Vacha, staff liaison to the Conference committee.

• The Board discussed the current strategic plan, and in particular, the first goal, relating to advocacy. Further discussion will be scheduled on future Board agendas as well as the Unit Advisory Council (UAC) agenda. The UAC agenda will also include discussions about the proposed changes to unit structure and viability.

• Executive Director Strand reported that the Web task force has decided to proceed with building the WLA Web site in MemberClicks, which is implementing a new content management system based on Joomla. The Web site will be redesigned to make it more user-friendly.

• The Board requested more information about membership dues rates, since Support Staff Section has requested participation in the ALA Joint Support Staff membership program. The Board would also like to examine the impact of anniversary date billing since its inception several years ago. 

2010 WLA Board Meeting Dates

Please consult the Events & Registration link at <http://my.memberclicks.com/wla> for the latest information about meetings. Scheduled meetings are:

- April 9 with Unit Advisory Council
- June 11
- August 20 with Unit Advisory Council
- November 2
- December 2

2010 WLA Board

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Take a Spring Break: Re-energize with Spring Conferences



Something's brewing in Milwaukee!

WAAL Annual Conference
April 20-23, 2010

Conference info: www.wla.lib.wi.us/waal/conferences/2010/

Prepare to stir up some new ideas and some fun at this year's WAAL Conference in Milwaukee. The Conference features nationally known keynote speakers and showcases some of this great city's history and attractions. The WAAL 2010 Conference has something for everyone. Come see colleagues from around the state present sessions on the latest technology, instruction ideas and exciting new ways of meeting patron needs. **Registration deadline: Friday, April 9.**

Conference highlights

The Integrative Information Literacy Opportunity — A Whole Library Response with Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe

As developments in teaching and learning in higher education offer new opportunities for integrative information literacy in the undergraduate curriculum and the student experience, libraries are poised to respond with a full-range of useful information, tools and resources, robust services and welcoming and enriching space/place environments. By drawing on projects from across the Association of College and Research Libraries, this session will highlight strategies for integrating information literacy in content-specific and general education curriculum, engaging pedagogies, creative collaboration and space design and development. Whether you are an instruction librarian or not, this session offers a chance to see how you contribute to student learning and success.



Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe is coordinator for information literacy services at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and associate professor for library administration. She's currently an adjunct instructor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois and a member of the Immersion Program faculty of the Institute for Information Literacy.

Getting Unstuck with Rachel Singer Gordon

We tend to get "stuck" at various points along our career path: when trying to land that first job, when figuring out how to get promoted or move up, when sitting in a comfortable workplace that fails to stretch us professionally, when wanting to strike out on our own, when seeking the courage to tackle something new. This presentation talks about identifying when and whether we are "stuck," and covers strategies for getting "unstuck" — changing our thinking, changing our patterns and changing the way we approach problems.



Rachel Singer Gordon is webmaster at LISjobs.com, and consulting editor at Information Today Inc., Books Division. She's the former head of computer services at the Franklin Park Public Library, Illinois, and is currently a freelance writer, editor and presenter.

For a complete listing of programs and speakers, along with registration information, please see www.wla.lib.wi.us/waal/conferences/2010/.

WAPL Conference: Anchoring the Past, Setting Sail for the Future

April 28 – 30, 2010, Blue Harbor Resort, Sheboygan

Fun for the entire family or a relaxing and reinvigorating getaway for you — or both — this year's WAPL Conference at the beautiful Blue Harbor Resort in Sheboygan promises a time for renewal.

Keynote speaker Keith Michael Fiels, executive director of ALA since 2002, has a wealth of library experience in many library settings, including public and school libraries.

Luncheon speaker John Gurda is a Milwaukee-born writer and historian who has written many books featuring his hometown. Among his books are *Miller Time: a History of Miller Brewing Company 1855–2005*, *Cream City Chronicles: Stories of Milwaukee's Past*, and most notably, *The Making of Milwaukee*, which became an Emmy award-winning documentary on Milwaukee Public Television.

Joel McNally, a well-known Milwaukee journalist, will also provide a lunch presentation. McNally currently writes a column for the Capitol Times and writes a regular column for the Shepherd Express. He's also a featured personality on WMCS radio in Milwaukee.

The conference will also include programs on library meeting rooms and the First Amend-

ment; libraries and e-books; job information and libraries; the public library annual report; perils and pitfalls of small library management; a book discussion on READ; summer library programs and oral history, to name just a few.

The Blue Harbor Resort is fun for the entire family. It features a 54,000-square-foot entertainment area and water park. The water park includes seven water slides, an interactive lighthouse water fort and a nearly 1,000-gallon tipping water ship. The Elements Spa is offering Conference attendees a 10 percent discount, too.

For accommodations and registration, along with a more detailed schedule of programs and events, check the WAPL 2010 Conference page at: www.wla.lib.wi.us/wapl/conferences/2010/index.htm.



Keith Michael Fiels



John Gurda



Joel McNally

Support Staff Section One-day Conference

May 26, 2010, Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton

This popular one-day conference especially for support staff is a must-do event. The formal conference programs and speakers will be announced soon. And just as important as the scheduled programs are the opportunities you'll have to make connections with your peers from around the state and share ideas about common challenges. You'll leave feeling reconnected and refreshed for the big jobs back home. Watch www.wla.lib.wi.us/sss/ for more details, or contact the WLA office.

Government Information Day

Date/Location to be determined

This event, sponsored by WLA's Government Information Round Table, is for anyone interested in government information, federal and state depositories and government information policy. Details will be available soon at www.wla.lib.wi.us/girt/ or contact the WLA office.

Social Software, the Internet and Marketing: the Lester Public Library Experience

By Jeff Dawson, Lester Public Library director, Two Rivers



flickr

When hired as the director of the Lester Public Library, Two Rivers in March 2007, I understood the work ahead. Two Rivers is a community of roughly 12,500. I wanted to become a part of the community sooner rather than later. To my delight, social software helped me achieve this goal, sooner than I had ever envisioned.

I immediately set up Lester Public Library accounts for Flickr, MySpace, Bebo, Ning, Facebook and YouTube. I also created a blog titled, Blogging LPL. These networks are free (the exception is Flickr, which charges a \$25 annual fee for unlimited access) and I took responsibility for managing these online activities. We have a small, dedicated staff and I didn't want to add to their already full plates. I also wanted to brand Lester Public Library, Two Rivers as quickly as possible on these social networks because there are four Lester public libraries in the state.

I presented our online existence to the Lester Public Library Board. The Board's responses varied from what a great way to get the library's message to a new group of potential users and provide a safe place on MySpace — to — how can you validate this as a true library activity and when does it become a waste of your time? By making the Board aware of these new services I was helping them understand the importance of these technologies as a marketing tool for our services and collections — not just for teens but for all our users.

A significant change for Lester Public Library was re-writing our library mission. We moved from a four-paragraph mission statement to four words: Read, Discover, Connect, Enrich (Read. Discover new things. Connect ideas and people. Enrich your life and community.). During my presentation of MySpace a Board member asked why Lester Public Library is active on these sites. The Board president responded by saying, "It meets the requirements of our mission; we are connecting with our users."

If you're considering jumping into social networking, I have several pieces of advice. Make a case for social networking from the library to your administration. Assure them it's not time wasted. From the marketing point of view alone, it's worth it. On our Lester Public Library Flickr account we regularly post photos of library and community events. Our City Manager took notice and has mentioned our Flickr photos in his weekly newspaper columns and during televised City Council meetings. Because of this exposure, I've been interviewed on local radio, in the local newspaper and now write a monthly library column for the Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter. By using these standard networking/marketing tools, radio, television and newspaper, we are directing people to a virtual library experience.

We can help validate our virtual presence through these sites' online tracking tools. For example, Blogging LPL is sustaining over 14,000 hits a month since starting June 2007 and we are heading toward a record 20,000 visits in January 2010. Our Flickr encounters number well over 269,000 since April 2007.

I make a point to update our Flickr, Facebook, Twitter, blog and MySpace (yes, I am a dinosaur and have retained MySpace, I fought long and hard for my 4,000 friends ...) accounts on a daily basis, five days a week. Referring users from one social network to another, dropping a photo into Facebook or referring Twitter followers back to Flickr, Web page or blog, we are creating a buzz for our library that simply did not exist three years ago. My daily contribution takes about 15 to 30 minutes. I won't deny that getting to this point took many hours of experimentation and exploration; but I wish to emphasize — it has been worth every minute.

What has the overall impact been on Lester Public Library because of social networking? I have:

- Presented social networking as a marketing tool to the Two Rivers Business Association; to area Rotary Clubs; to the Green Bay Chapter of the Service Core of Retired



twitter



facebook

Executives; Manitowoc Area Visitors and Convention Bureau's annual dinner; Lakeshore Human Relations Association; Public Library Association Conferences in 2008 and 2010; Manitowoc-Calumet Library System and the Wisconsin Library Association Annual Conference — placing Lester Public Library in front of industry and local decision-makers, raising awareness of our library, collections and services.

- Assisted with the City of Two Rivers Facebook page.
- Developed positive relationship with the City Manager and fellow City department heads.
- Used the city e-mail account to direct city employees back to Flickr photos of a community event. This has proven very successful; employees send these links on to family and friends.
- Recognized that people who have since moved from Two Rivers can maintain a long-distance relationship via social networks, fed by the Lester Public Library.
- I sit on the Manitowoc County Economic Development Corporation's Marketing Committee.
- I sit on the Two Rivers Business Association Board of Directors.

If you are willing to go where potential customers are — using such tools as social networks — you can target both existing customers and the potential of reaching an entirely NEW customer base.

In addition, the social media presence has:

- Raised the library's 'cool' factor.
- Gained national recognition for the library (we are big in Germany right now and have a loyal following in Japan. Go figure).
- Elevated LPL awareness on the local level resulting in increased transparency.
- Consulted with local businesses on social networking possibilities.
- Placed Lester Public Library directly in homes, on prospective library patron's computers, laptops, handheld devices, etc.

These tools are basically free but my time is valuable. Making time to make it work can happen. I'm now *expected* to shoot photos of community events.

Library staff is involved — experimenting with our Web page, adding a Teen Blog, a Teen Ning page, and capturing local history on video through interviews with senior citizens.

Ultimately, it is Lester Public Library's mission in action: Read, Discover, Connect, Enrich.

Please remember that social networking is not the end all and be all of our existence. Lester Public Library offers wonderful traditional library services via our collections, outstanding programming and quality customer service. Social networking is but one more tool in our marketing tool kit.

I find promoting Lester Public Library through social networks exciting. There are no rules. While some may find this intimidating, I find it opens the door to infinite possibilities. I do plan and set goals, but understand these goals can change month to month, day by day, and in some cases hour by hour. For me, it's a labor of love and it's fun, which translates into fun for the entire Two Rivers community. 📺



Find Lester Public Library in the cloud:

Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/lesterpubliclibrary/

Facebook: www.facebook.com/LesterLibrary

Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Two-Rivers-WI/Two-Rivers-WI/104580897190

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/lesterpublic>

Blogging LPL: <http://engagedpatrons.org/Blogs.cfm?siteID=4030&BlogID=142>

Teen Blog: www.lplteen1001.blogspot.com/

MySpace: www.myspace.com/lesterpubliclibrary

YouTube: www.youtube.com/lesterlibrary

Who Gets the Job and Why

Our panel:

Pete Gilbert is library director at Lawrence University, a small, private, liberal arts college with 1,400 students and a Conservatory of Music. With seven professional librarians carrying a busy workload, nearly everyone does reference and instruction, collection development, Web page development, library user materials and attends university meetings. The library has 13.75 total FTE staff.



Tasha Saecker is director at Menasha Public Library, with a service population of about 25,400 and a staff of just over 19 FTE and eight librarians. The library makes use of social media to promote its programs and services and readily shares the expertise of its staff with library users.



Terry Dawson is director at Appleton Public Library, which has a service population of nearly 114,000 and a staff of more than 55 FTE, including 15 librarians. Appleton is working toward building a new library, a challenging project at any time, but especially in a difficult economic climate.



Kathy Schneider is director at WILS (Wisconsin Library Services), based in Madison, which provides interlibrary loan service from the resources of UW-Madison and Wisconsin Historical Society. WILS provides OCLC training and support as well as cooperative purchasing and support for library consortia projects. There are 23 FTE staff at WILS, including nine librarians and other professionals.



Searching for a job can be an experience filled with excitement about potential opportunities — or a frustrating quest for just the right fit. Much of your success will be determined by your attention to detail in crafting your resume and cover letter as well as your approach to the interview. Just what is your potential new boss looking for?

WLA asked four experienced, respected directors to give us their best advice for library job seekers. Based loosely on a panel discussion, “Who Gets the Job and Why,” held at the 2009 WLA Conference, the following advice is especially timely given today’s job market.

All four gave one piece of critical advice that seems obvious but is often overlooked: Research the library to which you’re applying. Dawson elaborated, “Before applying, spend some time learning about the employing library’s programs, services and community. This will help you understand if you’re a good fit for the organization and [the] job, and to show it in your application. If you get an interview, work to learn more, in order to be well-prepared, to know what you’re getting into and to understand the employer’s priorities.”

Saecker and Schneider both say that the questions you ask indicate how much homework you’ve done. “Bring questions to ask me beyond how much vacation you get and what the benefits are,” said Saecker.

Gilbert summed it up with, “You should try to know as much about us as we know about you. You’re librarians — do the research.”

And research should start before you actually apply for jobs. Gilbert advises applicants that they need to be aware of their goals, such as the type of library and the type of position they prefer. That kind of self awareness and preparation will come through in enthusiasm for the job you’re applying for — and if it’s a good fit.

Applicants should know themselves in another way, too. “What will I find when I Google you?” asked Gilbert. Know your online presence, he said, because your brand is not only in your application but in your e-mail address and your profiles on MySpace, Facebook and LinkedIn.

These online first impressions obviously make a difference, but the traditional way of making that first impression is critical. A cover letter is a way to introduce yourself and why you’re applying for this particular job. Your resume details your experience in a way that relates to the job you’re applying for.

Dawson said, “If the employer says they are looking for X, Y and Z in the ad and job description, be sure to show them X, Y and Z in your cover letter, resume and application form. Being a good person won’t get you an interview — being demonstrably among the best-qualified applicants might.”

Saecker finds the cover letter a good place for applicants to share their passion about library work. “Express your enthusiasm for what makes librarianship exciting for you personally,” she said.

Schneider added, “It sounds obvious, but make sure the letter is addressed to the right person, not to “whom it may concern.” Or worse yet, don’t forget and use the name of the employer for the last

job you applied for, something Schneider has seen.

She also encouraged applicants to use the cover letter to fill in the blanks. "Explain gaps in education or work experience" in your cover letter. Don't let the potential employer draw the wrong conclusions, when you may have a perfectly reasonable explanation.

Finally, Schneider urged prospective applicants to avoid including a career objective unless it really suits the position. Again, it sounds obvious, but don't say your objective is to work in reference in an academic library if you're applying for a cataloging position in a public library. Tailor everything to suit the job you're applying for.


Demonstrate the "right stuff"

If you are lucky enough to be selected for an interview, do more research to prep for the experience. Gilbert recommended finding out the format for the interview. Will there be a search committee? Who and how many individuals will be interviewing you?

Schneider said, "Most important is to show some energy, even passion for the work." And indicating an eagerness to learn new things is also important. Saecker agreed, adding, "You have to be psyched for phone interviews, too." One recent job candidate was spectacular on paper but lacked enthusiasm on the phone, using short answers and very little humor. Needless to say, this applicant didn't get the job.

All four directors reminded applicants to be prepared for the standard questions and also to ask meaningful questions that show your interest in the job, not just in the salary and benefits. Again, this shows you are thinking about how the position will fit your goals and skills.

The interview is your chance to "demonstrate the right stuff," said Dawson, and potentially great employees can lose the job if they don't master that part of the interview. He encouraged applicants to practice their interview skills if needed ahead of time.

The job market is certainly challenging right now. Even by adhering to these guidelines, it can be difficult to land a job. But by taking an honest look at your approach to the job search and applying these important tips, you're looking more and more like the right fit for one lucky library. 

Top Tips for Job Seekers

Be yourself.

This requires knowing yourself and what you want before you apply for a job.

Match your skills and experience to the job.

Follow application instructions. Tailor your cover letter and resume to the position, and be clear, accurate and consistent in all documents.

Let your passion for the work show.

In your cover letter and interview, express your enthusiasm for librarianship and the position in a way that shows who you are and why you'll be an asset.

Prepare for the interview.

Show you've done your homework; use good questions that show your understanding of the place and the job. Practice interview techniques if needed to stay calm and focused. Remember, this is where you demonstrate your fit with the position and the organization. Being a good person is not enough – you have to be a good fit.

Follow up.

A well-crafted thank-you note sent after the interview is always a good idea. It not only shows your continued interest, but it gives you an opportunity to emphasize key information shared in the interview.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

To get a complete calendar of events, including links to more information about meetings and registration forms, go to <http://my.memberclicks.com/wla> and click on Events & Registration. All meetings are held at the WLA office in Madison unless otherwise noted.

APRIL

- 9 WLA Board of Directors with Unit Advisory Council
- 16 Library Development & Legislation Committee
- 20-23 WAAL Conference, Clarion Hotel & Conference Center (airport), Milwaukee
- 20 WAAL Board of Directors, Milwaukee
- 27 WLA Conference Committee
- 28-30 WAPL Conference, Blue Harbor Resort & Conference Center, Sheboygan
- 28 WAPL Board of Directors, Sheboygan

MAY

- 14 YSS Children's Book Award Committee
- 14 READ Literary Awards Committee
- 17 Finance Committee
- 19 WLA Foundation Board of Directors
- 25 WLA Conference Committee
- 26 SSS One-day Conference, Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton
- 31 WLA Office Closed for Memorial Day Holiday

JUNE

- 1 WLA Foundation Scholarship Applications Due
- 1 Awards & Honors Nominations Due
- 4 Library Development & Legislation Committee
- 11 WLA Board of Directors
- 22 WLA Conference Committee

South Africa's Future Includes Library Services Development



Jim Trojanowski, Northern Waters Library System, and Karla Strand, Carroll College Todd Wehr Library, both traveled to South Africa and are pictured at Cape Point in the Cape Town area.



Entrance to the National Library of South Africa in Pretoria.



Entrance to Cape Town Library from above.



A staff member of the National Library of South Africa works in the binding room.

WLA members Jim Trojanowski, director, Northern Waters Library Service, Ashland, and Karla Strand, Learning Commons librarian and Diversity librarian, Carroll College Todd Wehr Library, Waukesha traveled with 26 others to South Africa late last year. Trojanowski agreed to provide WLA with this article about his experiences.

In October 2009, I was fortunate to be among 27 delegates from across the country to visit libraries in South Africa through People to People, a non-profit program begun by President Dwight Eisenhower in the belief that to avoid war we must meet in times of peace. Our eight-day trip was spent primarily in Johannesburg and Cape Town. In addition to visiting libraries in these two cities as well as in Pretoria and Stellenbosch, we also spent time on Cape Point, toured Robben Island (where Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 18 of his 27 years), and enjoyed the waterfront in Cape Town.

Today, 15 years after the end of Apartheid, most South Africans we met were optimistic about the future of their country despite high poverty, rampant unemployment, a crime rate among the highest in the world, an undereducated populace, substandard housing for most citizens and poor infrastructure. They believe that despite these challenges, their government is moving in the proper direction and that the future of their country is bright. We often heard that South Africa is the only nation in Africa to transfer power peacefully between governments, that its economy is stronger than those of its neighbors and that it has the most liberal constitution on the continent.

South Africa's Constitution guarantees its citizens free access to information, and librarians are justifiably proud of this. There are challenges, however, in implementing this right because public libraries in the country are underfunded, and, in many rural areas, they simply don't exist.

Under South African law, provinces are required to fund library services, but most libraries are funded primarily by local governments. What funding provinces do provide is used primarily for collections. To remedy this problem, the national government has begun providing conditional grants to the provinces to improve library service. Currently, most of the conditional grants have been used for planning library services. According to John Tsebe, director of the National Library of South Africa, these plans identify the development of public library services in rural areas as one of the highest priorities.

My visit to South Africa was the realization of a dream I've held for more than 20 years made better by the opportunity to learn more about the country's libraries. The trip was rewarding both personally and professionally, and I encourage anyone with the chance to visit this beautiful country to do so. 📖

More pictures from Library Legislative Day in Madison

All photos by Steve Platteter



Kris Wendt uses humor and puppets to start the program.



Michael Blumenfeld, lobbyist for Wisconsin Educational Media & Technology Association, provides tips on meeting with legislators.



Paul Nelson, chair of WLA's Library Development & Legislation Committee, presents the key messages at the 2010 Library Legislative Day briefing.



Ed Van Gemert, UW-Madison, describes key issues for campus libraries.



Tony Driessen, WLA government relations advisor, describes the current focus of the legislature as part of the briefing.



State Rep. Penny Bernard Schaber speaks at 2010 Library Legislative Day.