

Wisconsin Library Association FoundationNews

Supporting Wisconsin libraries as essential institutions

ISSUE 4, 2010

Reflections on Challenges, Successes

There's a certain post-conference "high" that comes from attending a WLA Conference packed with excellent programming, plenty of opportunities to talk with library colleagues across the state, intriguing exhibitor displays and some moments of sheer fun. The WLA Conference, at the Kalahari in Wisconsin Dells this November, was that kind of experience. It takes the collective efforts of many committed people to make it happen: the WLA leadership, the conference planning committee, the WLA office staff, various board and committee members throughout the WLA structure—and engaged attendees, in the audience or presenting. The WLA Foundation, too, had an important presence at the conference, and I would like to thank all of the people on the WLAF Board and WLAF committees, the WLAF staff and the many WLAF volunteers for their contributions.



WLAF helped to kick off the Conference by sponsoring the "Magic, Power and Joy of Philanthropy" preconference with Marcy Heim. WLAF Board member Bernie Bellin and WLAF communications coordinator Pat Eschmann worked tirelessly with other volunteers to host a silent auction fundraiser that drew in a stream of bidders for the choice onsite and online auction items. They also teamed up as lead organizers for the Bowling & Boards evening extravaganza fundraiser. The combined auction events and fundraiser set a record for the last five years. A hearty thank you to all of you who donated items and bid—and bid again!

It was an honor for me to meet all but one of the WLAF scholarship winners at the awards banquet. These students and in-service library staff clearly were thrilled to have received the WLAF scholarships. As a sponsor of awards and scholarships, WLAF is a partner in promoting excellence in libraries and librarianship across the state. At the banquet, the Wisconsin Library Heritage Center steering committee announced five new inductees. Most of these WLAF Heritage Center honorees were historic, but Cal Potter was recognized enthusiastically at the ceremony!

Pete Gilbert, chair of the WLAF Campaign action committee, and other committee members organized a "Say Cheese Day" program for the last day of the Conference. Thanks to the committee's guidance, the WLAF "Wisconsin Libraries Say Cheese! A Day in Pictures" rolled out on Nov. 17, 2010 with strong participation by all types of libraries across the state. "Say Cheese" is a wonderful way to graphically tell the story of the value of Wisconsin libraries as essential institutions—which is what the Campaign is all about. Check out the Campaign Web site and share with your constituencies these images which illustrate and promote the services that libraries offer and the impact of libraries on Wisconsin citizenry.

The Campaign action committee, working with WLA Executive Director Lisa Strand, the WLAF Board and others has identified a vendor to create a revitalized Web presence for the Foundation. WLAF will be contracting for the work by early next year. In addition, as we look toward 2011, WLAF will be announcing some new donor opportunities and recognition programs orchestrated by the WLAF development committee chaired by Rick Krumweide.

Congratulations to the new 2011 Board member, Valerie Malzacher, who was elected to a three-year term. The newly elected 2011 officers are: Jane Pearlmutter, president; Joseph Rice, vice president; Nancy McClements, secretary and Jan Berg, treasurer. Thanks to the 2010 Board members for their exceptional service this year.

In addition to Pearlmutter, Rice, McClements and Berg, 2010 Board members are Bernie Bellin (who is leaving the Board), Pete Gilbert, Bill Robison and Rob Zimmers. Lisa Strand serves as an ex-officio member of the Board and we are indebted to her for her counsel and support.

The WLAF Board this year grappled with challenging budget decisions. A few years ago, the WLAF staff position of communications coordi-

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nator was created within the context of a much more robust economy. A number of factors have conspired to limit the WLA Foundation's ability to continue staffing at the level originally conceived. Corporate support declined with the recession and the Foundation experienced the same disappointing investment returns many nonprofits have faced since mid-2008. The Board made the very difficult, but fiscally responsible and necessary decision not to continue the WLAF communications coordinator position after December 2010. As an employee of the Foundation the last several years, Pat Eschmann has made valuable contributions, thinking outside of the box to shape new initiatives like the online auction format launched this fall. She has helped to move the work of the Foundation forward in countless ways. We applaud her significant efforts and wish to thank her for her

committed service to the WLA Foundation and Wisconsin libraries. Her insights, creativity and dedication will be greatly missed.

Every WLA member is a member of the WLAF Foundation. And so many of you are actively committed to strengthening the Foundation so that WLAF in turn can support Wisconsin libraries, librarians and staff and ultimately the vast array of diverse users of all ages, all walks of life, all economic strata and many ethnicities who use library services and reap the benefits every day. I would like to thank you most sincerely for your past and continuing generosity. Your contributions, and donations by libraries, library systems and corporate sponsors, insure the WLA Foundation's continued success. 

—Anita Evans, WLA Foundation president

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Consider Making WLAF your Beneficiary

Most people understand the importance of estate planning and of having an up-to-date will. Some WLA members have even made provisions in their wills to leave a portion of their assets to the WLA Foundation to help ensure a strong future for libraries and librarianship in Wisconsin. Did you know that there's an easy and beneficial way to designate that a portion of your assets go to the Foundation that doesn't require modifications to your will?

Certain assets, such as pensions and insurance policies, require that you designate beneficiaries, and it's easy to designate multiple beneficiaries who each receive a percentage of the particular asset. Naming specific beneficiaries for an asset will avoid probate and ensure that the asset goes directly to the named beneficiaries.

If you have one or more retirement accounts (WRF pension, 401(k), 403(b), 457), annuities

or life insurance policies, please consider making the WLA Foundation one of your primary or contingent beneficiaries. It's as easy as filling out a form. Change of beneficiary forms can be requested (often online) from financial institutions managing your individual accounts, from your employer's human resources office in the case of retirement funds or from the insurer where your life insurance policy or annuity was purchased.

In addition to helping WLAF with its mission to support the role of Wisconsin libraries as essential institutions, you'll become a member of the Legacy Society, and you may also inspire some of your colleagues to do the same. For more information, please contact Lisa Strand, WLA executive director. 

—Rick Krumwiede, WLA Foundation
development committee chair

Wisconsin Libraries Say Cheese!

The Campaign for Wisconsin Libraries Celebrates a “Day in Pictures”

The Campaign for Wisconsin Libraries, a multimedia publicity campaign sponsored by the Wisconsin Library Association and the WLA Foundation, has once again created a visual reminder of the variety and wealth of resources, services, programs and activities libraries offer the increasing number of people entering their doors during this period of economic uncertainty. Wisconsin Libraries Say Cheese! (www.wisconsinlibraries.org/say-cheese) will spotlight what’s happening in today’s libraries through online sharing of photographs in Flickr – photos that capture the vital essence of Wisconsin’s public, academic, school and special library activities, programs, resources and services.

Today’s libraries transcend the stereotypes that once shaped people’s opinions of them. They are now dynamic, inviting community resources that offer something for everyone. Books in various formats, CDs, DVDs, free Internet access, in-person and online reference help, adult, youth, children’s programming, job search and resume writing assistance, a community gathering place, are just a few of the multiple resources your library offers.

As libraries throughout the state face budget reductions (such as the upcoming vote on a proposed \$300,000 cut to Sheboygan’s Mead Public Library — a cut that could reduce staff, library hours and purchasing funds for the library which last year experienced a 10 percent rise in checkouts

and averaged 121 patron visits per hour) Wisconsin Libraries Say Cheese! A Day in Pictures attempts to present a better visual understanding of what’s happening in Wisconsin libraries with the intention to strengthen the support base libraries have among the public officials who fund them and the people who use them. Academic, public, school and special libraries have always been an integral part of their communities’ character, but in today’s difficult budget-cutting times, limited resources and funding for all types of libraries are being stretched more than ever.

Libraries are unique among taxpayer-supported institutions in the way they meet the information, education and recreational needs of individuals. Be aware that to continue meeting these essential needs, libraries must receive adequate ongoing funding and support. We ask for your help to make this happen. Visit the Say Cheese Flickr group page (www.flickr.com/groups/1240440@N21/) to view hundreds of reasons to speak up for your library — and speak out for its critical funding needs when local and state budget dollars are being allocated. 📷

—Pat Eschmann, WLA Foundation
communications coordinator



2010 WLA FOUNDATION CIRCLE CONTRIBUTORS

The WLA Foundation thanks these individuals for contributions made *and processed* through December 17, 2010. We appreciate your generosity and support! If you have made a donation and do not see your name on this list, please contact Pat Eschmann at the WLA Foundation office (608-245-3645) or e-mail eschmann@scls.lib.wi.us.

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