



WLTF NEWS

WLTF NEWSLETTER IS GOING GREEN

JIM BACKUS, WLTF CHAIR

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LIBRARIAN BLOGS

It seems that virtually everyone with an opinion about something has a blog these days. Our media personalities on TV and print media all seem to have blogs in which they solicit input about current issues.

Librarians are no different. A current estimate is that there are over 1,000 "librarian blogs" on the Internet - a number that changes daily. These blogs cover a wide variety of subjects pertaining to libraries and information management. As would be expected with a group this large, some are better than others. Some are terrific sources of information for Trustees, Friends and other people interested in the latest information regarding the operation of libraries, and others aren't worth the time it takes to key in their Web address.

(Continued on page 2)

The Trustee and Friends unit of WLA is moving to an electronic format with this issue. We are following the lead of several other WLA units and focus groups as well as countless organizations across the nation. In addition to saving paper and trees, the "Green" movement greatly reduces mailing costs, which is one of the biggest segments of our budget. With the US Postal Service racking up huge deficits, postage costs can only be expected to escalate.

The newsletter will appear in a PDF format, which lends itself well to electronic transmission. The WLA office will send emails to the membership containing a link to the newsletter, including a content list of the featured articles. A link to the newsletter will also be available on the WLTF web page. It is our intent to create an archive of past issues.

Currently, the WLA office has email addresses for only about half of the WLTF membership. It is very important for those who have not already submitted an email address to do so now because *we will no longer be sending newsletters via the US Postal Service except to those who formally request this service in writing.*

We are appealing to the general membership of WLTF to support their board in this action. In these troubled economic times, it makes sense to streamline and upgrade our communications to the most economical method possible. Doing so in an environmentally friendly mode makes even more sense.

So, if you have not previously done so, please send your email address to Brigitte at ruppvacha@scls.lib.wi.us, and request that it be added to your profile in the private WLA directory. If you do not currently have email, you can view the newsletter on the WLTF website from a computer at your local library. A librarian will also be happy to help you establish an email account. If that is not a possibility for you, please send a letter to **WLA, 5250 East Terrace Drive, Suite A1, Madison, 53718, Attn: Brigitte Rupp Vacha**, and request that the WLTF newsletter be sent to you via US Mail.

The Twenty-First Century is upon us. In fact, it's almost 10 percent over already.

WLTF LEGACY CONTINUES WITH INCOMING CHAIR

Carol A. Chapman is an attorney at the Madison, Wisconsin, law firm of Axley Brynson, LLP. Ms. Chapman first became a library friend in the early 1990s in Phoenix, Arizona, where she volunteered on Saturdays at the Friends Book Corner. She currently serves as past president of the Friends of the Madison Public Library, and vice-chair of the Wisconsin Library Trustees and Friends division of WLA. Prior to joining WLTF, Ms. Chapman served on the board of the Friends of Wisconsin Libraries, including a three-year term as treasurer. Ms. Chapman is also a trustee of the South Central Library System, where she serves on the Personnel and Facilities Committees.

Ms. Chapman has been volunteering since high school, when she was a candy striper at a local hospital. Today, in addition to her library volunteering, Ms. Chapman is president of the Starfish Foundation, which provides scholarships for individuals to attend emotional healing workshops such as *Taking It Lightly* and *Vets Journey Home*. An Army veteran herself, Ms. Chapman staffs these workshops, supporting women's veteran issues as a member of United Women Veterans, and providing legal assistance and counseling to employers and veterans about veterans' rights and opportunities.

During her term as chair of WLTF, Ms. Chapman has chosen an outreach theme. As we are all well aware, in today's economy, libraries are not spared from budget cuts. Accordingly, libraries need:

- advocacy from non-librarians at the city, county and state levels to ensure that libraries receive the funding they need to serve their communities
- trustee education to ensure that the money received is utilized wisely
- support for Friends groups to provide a clearinghouse for ideas on how to start a Friends group, fundraising ideas, advocacy and other ways in which Friends can support their libraries

By continuing the legacy of recent WLTF chairs to increase both membership and participation in WLTF, Ms. Chapman will work to ensure that the WLTF, through its Board and membership, remains a valuable resource for library boards and Friends groups across the state in their efforts to provide the best possible library service to Wisconsin citizens.

(Continued from page 1)

In the new WLTF newsletter, we intend to guide you to the very best of this huge list of librarian blogs. Opinions, insights and advice about the ever-changing world of libraries may well be very important to you at your next board meeting. It is always important to get a broad base of information to augment the, perhaps, narrow parochial input you receive in your own community.

One of the best of this list of blogs is *The Free Range Librarian*. You can check this one out at <http://freerangelibrarian.com/>. I think you'll find K.G. Schneider's writing well worth your time.

TRUSTEE EDUCATION

JIM BACKUS, WLTF CHAIR

One of the programs that the WLTF board will be presenting at the WLA conference in Appleton in late October [see: <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/conferences/2009/>] deals with Trustee Education. The presentation will deal with the importance of education for the people we appoint to serve on our library boards. Life experience and innate intelligence alone are not necessarily enough to bring to the table when important and financially significant issues are presented to a library board. Ability to judge the performance of your director and your library are extremely important.

The WLTF presentation will review some of the "best practices" currently in use throughout the Badger state, as well as some used in other areas. We know that what is identified as a "best practice" for a large city library may not be effective or practical for a library in a small rural community, and vice versa. We intend to offer a variety of Trustee Education alternatives for you to choose from so that you can find one that is well-suited to your own library culture.

We will also be addressing the essential core skills needed by newly-appointed library trustees in a library of any size. Once the trustee understands the "block and tackle" aspect of his job, he can turn his attention to more intricate issues as detailed in the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Trustee Manual.

It should be noted that very few states have a trustee manual as comprehensive and well-organized as the one we enjoy in Wisconsin. This manual serves as the foundation for all aspects of our Trustee Education game plan.

THE WLTF NETWORK

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REQUESTS TO REPRINT ARTICLES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR.

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2009 WLTF BOARD MEETINGS

- **October 21**, Business meeting at Wisconsin Library Association Annual Conference, Appleton, WI.
- **November 14**, 10 a.m., "Freeconference.com" Telephone Conference.

LEGISLATION & ADVOCACY RESOURCES

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FEATURED WEBSITE: *THE LIBRARY LINK OF THE DAY*

One of the content elements in the newly redesigned WLTF newsletter will be an article introducing websites worthy of your attention as a Trustee or Friend. Since the vast majority of Trustees and Friends are not library professionals, they are not frequently exposed to information regarding issues affecting libraries locally and globally. These featured websites are intended to bring your attention to websites worth exploring, some of which are updated on a daily basis.

Our first featured site is *The Library Link of the Day*. This site searches a broad spectrum of newspapers, magazines and other types of publications for articles that are of significance to people in the world of libraries and information management. Such information can be of great

use to you as you are called upon to make important decisions regarding your library.

The Library Link of the Day currently has more than six years of archived articles. It also outlines simple setup instructions to follow so you can receive the daily message in your email. Even if you just want to give it a trial run, this is very handy in that you don't have to search for the site every time you want to look it over.

Check it out at <http://www.tk421.net/librarylink/>. I think you will find it gives you great insight into the dynamic world of today's libraries. You'll be better informed when you go to your next board meeting.