

AWSIL news

October 2015

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REPORT FROM YOUR CHAIR

Happy autumn to all you AWSLers out there. I hope that the start of school, football and cooler weather have made your lives busier...in a good way. The AWSL board has stayed busy over the summer with events, and planning, and has another great slate of programs prepared for the WLA conference in less than a month. I hope to see you all there.

In this issue, you'll learn about just a few of the events that AWSL hosted over the summer, get more detail on those WLA programs at the conference, and get to know our incoming chair, Lisa Abler.

I'm excited to announce that AWSL has given out its yearly grant to attend the WLA conference to a second year SLIS student. Emma Babler will be attending her first conference and writing about her experiences for the spring 2016 newsletter. If you are attending, please join us for our business meeting or social (more on those below) and meet Emma. She is interested in law librarianship, already has her JD and has a passion for reading. I know she would love to meet more special librarians.

The best part of being involved with AWSL is getting to meet and talk with library students as they begin their careers. For the past two years, I have attended SLIS orientation to give a brief run-down on what special libraries are, what AWSL does, and how we all work together. There has been a good amount of enthusiasm from students both years, and I hope to continue to meet and work with students in the coming years. If you would like to join me, please let me know! Carrie Doyle attended this last year, and it made the event even better.

As AWSL looks to the future, we plan on presenting more programs or projects that would be useful to our membership. To understand that, we need to hear from you! If there is something you feel AWSL should take part in or create, speak up. If you'd like to join the Board or want to be more involved, we

would be more than happy to have you. Volunteering with us is fun, easy and not too time-consuming. I hope that the board can continue to serve you, and I look forward to working with many of you in the next several years.

The AWSL officers and board join me in welcoming you to our fall newsletter, and hope that you have a great remainder of 2015. Thanks for having me as your chair this past year. See you at the WLA Conference!

Respectfully,
Kris Turner

REPORT FROM THE WLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AWSL LIAISON

AWSL has a liaison to the WLA Board of Directors thanks to Article VI, Section 3 of the Wisconsin Library Association Bylaws, which deals with Board of Directors. Section 3 reads, "The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers of the Association, the ALA Councilor, and one representative from each of the divisions of the Association. The membership of each division shall elect a representative to serve on the WLA Board for a three-year term."

As I am in the second year of my three-year term, I thought it was time to share a little bit about what the WLA Board has been talking about this year. I would also like to mention that each member of AWSL is welcome to contact me with questions, concerns or suggestions that you would like raised with the Board of Directors.

President John Pollitz has identified growth in membership and conference attendance as priorities for 2015 and beyond. The Membership Committee is working on developing strategies and communications (like a new brochure) to increase membership. In addition, all members are encouraged to talk up the benefits of WLA with their friends. We all benefit from a strong and vibrant association, and the stronger the association is the more it will be able to offer members.

A part time marketing expert has been hired to develop print and online content designed to raise the profile of WLA. As an example, check out the WLA Facebook page for posts in a new series WLA is sponsoring called "Library Stories" that features stories about how Wisconsin Libraries impact their communities. The stories are also posted on the WLA Website and sent to local media outlets. Contact Plumer if you think your library has a story to tell.

Executive Director Plumer Lovelace has also been working on creating, populating and strengthening WLA committees (like Marketing and Membership) and task forces (like the task force that is planning the WLA 125th Anniversary celebration in 2016.) He is always looking to add names to his list of people who would like to volunteer for a WLA Committee or Task Force, so please feel free to contact Plumer if you are interested in serving WLA in that way, or fill out this volunteer form.

These are just a few of the topics the Board has been discussing. There is much more going on with WLA than I can mention here. If you are attending the WLA Annual Conference, please consider attending at least part of the WLA/WLAF (Wisconsin Library Association Foundation) Annual Business Meeting, to be held on Wednesday, November 4th from 5:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M. in the Green Bay room

of the Madison Marriott West. The AWSL social starts at 6:00 P.M.; you can attend a portion of the Annual Meeting to catch up on what's happening with WLA before heading off to socialize with your fun special librarian friends.

- Carrie Doyle

AWSL MAKES IT HAPPEN AT THE 2015 WLA CONFERENCE

This year, AWSL is once again presenting on a wide range of topics at the WLA conference. I may be slightly biased, but I would say that we certainly create the most interesting and useful programs of all the various divisions and sections.

Below is a chronological list of our events, which includes two programs, a tour, our business meeting and our social. The conference will take place at the Madison West Marriott (in Middleton) from November 4 to November 6. After reviewing all the various programs, I think this will be one of the strongest and most useful WLA conference yet.

If you would like to help out during the conference (either being a room monitor or by attending our business meeting) **please let me know.**

See you there!

Wednesday, November 4th:

12:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Association of Wisconsin Special Librarians (AWSL) Business Meeting

Sprecher's Restaurant & Pub

1262 John Q. Hammons Drive, Madison

5:45 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Association of Wisconsin Special Librarians (AWSL) Social

Madison Marriott West - Falling Waters Café

Thursday, November 5th:

10:15 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Wisconsin Historical Society Tour

(Transportation will be provided)

Tour of the Wisconsin Historical Society's Library and Archives Reading Rooms and highlights of recent collections and current exhibits.

2:45 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Build It and They Will Click It: Rebuilding a Library Website

Track: Mix-It-Up Programs

Milwaukee Room

Kris Turner, Reference and Technology Services Librarian, UW Law School Library

Library websites can be complicated creatures. They are becoming the new portal where many users first interact with the library. Helping create content for a website and deciding on how to present it can be a daunting task. This session will give you pointers and highlight how one library redesigned their website for the better. What should be included on the home page? How do library users find content on the web? What can I do if I am not an IT nerd? These questions and many more will be answered as AWSL dives deep into the depths of web design and online web content.

4:30 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

Every Picture Tells (and Needs) a Story: Outreach through Cataloging

Track: Building Collections

Green Bay Room

Christina Johanningmeier, Visual Materials Assistant Archivist, Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison

The job of a cataloger can seem distant from patrons, but the records we create are often the first things patrons or researchers encounter when they begin their search. Describing the collections and items patrons are seeking is, in essence, telling stories, stories of collections, their contents and creators. The presenter will talk about her experience cataloging visual materials at Wisconsin Historical Society, including a retrospective conversion project, and what the changing cataloging landscape means for libraries, archives and museums and their collections. What will the future bring for professionals and patrons? What will the stories of the future look like for patrons?

- Kris Turner

AWSL MEMBER HIGHLIGHT: Q AND A WITH LISA ABLER



Name: Lisa Abler

Position: I am an assistant scientist at UW-Madison.

Describe your current job: I incorporate many aspects of my library training into my lab job. Specifically, I have an interest in data management and curation. Our lab generates considerable amounts of data in the form of urinary function testing results and sample imaging...and we are just one small group. I work to help lab members and our collaborators with naming, saving and storing the data they generate, both to make those data accessible to the lab as a whole and to ensure we can relocate or revisit unutilized or incomplete data at a later date if desired or necessary.

My job as a scientist focuses on benign diseases that contribute to lower urinary tract symptoms such as urgency, frequency, nighttime urination, incomplete emptying, etc. My current project involves investigating the associations between obesity/diabetes, obstructive sleep apnea and lower urinary tract symptoms.

Previous professional endeavors: I have worked in the sciences for most of my career. I served as a lab technician for several years before attending graduate school to obtain a PhD in Cellular and Molecular Biology. Following graduation, I worked as a post-doctoral associate in my current lab before being promoted to my scientist position. The library aspect is a relatively recent addition to my career.

Why did you decide to work in the library profession? Towards the end of my PhD training, I realized that I spent nearly as much time organizing my data as generating it, that I enjoyed researching answers to informational questions from my colleagues as much as I enjoyed answering scientific questions at the lab bench. That was when I knew library school was the right option for me, though I was always certain I wanted to utilize both my scientific and my library training in concert.

What is the favorite part of your job? My favorite part of my job as a librarian is the opportunity to organize and distill the things we learn in the lab and to make them accessible to the larger community. I think access to scientific discoveries is a foundation of the spirit of scientific research. My training as a librarian helps make that goal a reality. Also, lifelong learning is an inherent aspect of what I do.

My favorite part of my job as a scientist is that no two days look the same...and lifelong learning is an inherent aspect of what I do.

What is the least favorite part of your job? As a librarian in a laboratory setting, it is sometimes challenging to convince investigators that best practices for data management and curation are in their best interests, despite the added time those practices may demand. The current funding environment puts a great deal of pressure on investigators, and justification for why students and staff should be concerning themselves with things like metadata and file naming can be a hard sell.

As a scientist, there is ample reason “research” begins with a “re”...we end up doing a lot of things a lot of times before we get something to work. Sometimes that repetition can be frustrating, especially when a protocol you have used successfully on previous occasions is suddenly, and usually at a critical time, less than cooperative.

Do you have a role model as a librarian? I do not have any single role model. Instead, I look to the academic librarians on campus for guidance and inspiration. Since my primary focus is the lab, it can be difficult to stay on top of all of the advances in the library field. But by maintaining interactions with people who are immersed in the field everyday, I can learn a tremendous amount in a short time from the people who are thinking about these advances routinely, testing and applying them in search of those that prove most effective and efficient.

What is your favorite book of the last year? Admittedly, I have not read many books that were published this last year. Instead, I spent time reading older books I had on my bookshelves at home, and I reread a few titles that intrigued me the first time around. For example, I finally read Ransom Riggs' Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children, which had been on my bookshelf for almost a year. I had a hard time putting this one down--the characters, the fantastic nature of the story and the

“peculiar” photos all kept me engaged. Emma Donoghue’s Room was one title I revisited. Her story is so haunting, so heart-wrenching, so impactful...both times I read this book, I finished it in one sitting.

What is your dream vacation? When I want to get away, I envision a warm and sunny destination (sorry, Wisconsin...I love you, but not your winters) with plenty of activities to choose from: hiking, biking, kayaking, volleyball.

What are your hobbies? When I want to be active, I play volleyball or go for a run. When I want to unwind, I read.

AWSL TOURS THE KOHLER ART LIBRARY

One of the highlights of any AWSL summer is a tour of a special library. I think that the one thing that really ties AWSL together is the uniqueness of our collections and how knowledgeable and proud we are of these collections. Both pride and knowledge (as well as one amazing collection) were on display when AWSL toured the Kohler Art Library, located on the University of Wisconsin campus, in June.

With about 12 WLA members in attendance plus an incoming SLIS student, the tour was a great success. The group met with Lynn Korenic, the head librarian at the Art Library, who gave us a full tour and background on the building. The Art Library is located in one wing of the Chazen Art Museum, and is well worth visiting not just for the beautiful artwork but also for the unique architecture. The group also got a series of behind-the-scenes looks at areas of the building that the library may be expanding into in the future. This proved to be very interesting, and I look forward to seeing what the library will look like in the coming years.

I think that few, if any, would argue with me when I say that the highlight of tour was the opportunity to review some of the special artist books and recreated sketchbooks that the library has in its collection. The artist books, to someone who has never seen one (like myself) sounds like a book about artists...right? It was so much more than that. The books themselves were created by talented artists, and I would be hard-pressed to choose which one was my favorite. I enjoyed the one that had pages made out of different plants and leaves, the accordion-shaped book, the one that had been made into a shoe...the list goes on and on.



Above: AWSL and WLA members review artist sketchbooks

The artist sketchbooks were just as incredible. Each sketchbook was a recreation of a well-known or well-regarded artist's original sketches. These were created so other artists and patrons can review the process that famous artists such as Picasso went through as he or she worked on their creations. It was a different kind of beautiful than the artist books, but still an amazing collection that is housed right on the University of Wisconsin campus.



Above: a recreated artist's sketchbook.

The tour was wonderful, and I am kicking myself for not checking out the Kohler Art Library sooner. I encourage anybody to visit and enjoy the very special collections, and sit in some of the most comfortable chairs that can be found in a library. Thank you to Lyn and Christina Johanningmeier for organizing the tour and for allowing us to tour the library after hours.

Watch for an announcement early next year for our next special library tour!

- Christina Johanningmeier

AWSL TRAVELS: LIBRARIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

We love our professional very much and even on vacation, some of us will drag along our traveling companions and loved ones to visit libraries during our travels. AWSL has decided to document the libraries our members visit around the world. Here is our inaugural collection.



Seattle Public Library
Submitted by Kris Turner
July 2013

Bayfield
Public Library
Bayfield,
Wisconsin
August 2015
Submitted by
Carrie Doyle



Burlington Public Library
Burlington Vermont
September 2015
Submitted by Anne Moser

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 3-6, 2015

Annual WLA Conference to be held at the Madison Marriott West in Middleton. Many great AWSL programs will be presented. See you there!

YOUR AWSL BOARD

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A FINAL PLEA!

The BIG Print

The strength of any organization is found in its people. Please, please consider getting involved in AWSL (or any part of WLA). We want and need your ideas on making this an even better organization. And as an added bonus, we love to have **FUN!!**

Contact any board member if you are interested – in helping one time or as an AWSL board member. We would LOVE to have you.

See you in the library!