

AWSIL news

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CONTENTS

- [Report from the Chair](#)
- [Apply for the AWSL Scholarship](#)
- [Be Sociable! 2014 AWSL Member Summer Socials](#)
- [AWSL at the 2013 WLA Conference: What Makes Special Libraries Special](#)
- [Member Q &A: Kris Turner](#)
- [Library Profile: Catching up with the Forest Products Lab Library](#)
- [AWSL 2014 Officers](#)

Report from the Chair

Greetings! Spring is finally here! The AWSL chapter hosted several successful events at the annual conference last October in Green Bay and has several upcoming events on the slate for summer and fall.



At this year's conference, the division sponsored a panel, which Carrie Doyle reports on in this edition of the newsletter, and a "sold out" tour of the Oneida Nation Library. The tour found a full busload of conference attendees trekking to a tour hosted by Louis William. The library held many unique historical Oneida documents, tribal art, and community gathering space. We were all treated to some traditional Oneida fry bread and corn soup to warm us up on the chilly fall day. Thank you to everyone who attended AWSL events in 2013!

Looking ahead, the chapter has two summer events, a fall social and events at this year's WLA conference in Wisconsin Dells. On June 9th, I hope you will join us for the tour of Forest Products Laboratory Library, profiled in this newsletter. Following that, we have two socials planned to take place on the UW-Madison Memorial Union Terrace, with invitations forthcoming.

Following those events, chair-elect Kris Turner has been planning some exciting conference sessions and events for the division to sponsor. Kris has submitted ideas for programming related to apps for librarians, innovative signage, and how we special librarians often end up as “accidental librarians,” working in disciplines we didn’t expect. These proposed sessions are in addition to a tour of the Circus World museum and archives. We also will be sponsoring the usual business meeting and a social gathering.

I’m really excited to connect with as many of you as possible at these events! If you haven’t attended past events, I’ve personally found the group to be very welcoming and the events to be energizing when I return to my day to day work. Encourage your colleagues in the special library community to come along as well. New faces and ideas are always welcome.

Here’s wishing you all a wonderful summer!

Best regards,
Jennifer Edmonds

Apply for the AWSL Scholarship and Attend the 2014 WLA Conference in Wisconsin Dells!

Each year, AWSL gives a scholarship to a librarian or library student to attend the annual WLA conference. This year’s theme is “Connect. Engage. Transform” and is being held at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. If you are interested in special libraries and would like the opportunity to attend WLA, this is a great way to get some financial help, and gain valuable professional experience.

Criteria: The successful applicant will be either employed in a library or working as an information specialist in Wisconsin OR be currently enrolled in Library School (either SLIS or SOIS). The winner will be asked to write a brief article about their experience at WLA and how it impacted their professional lives. Winners must be members of WLA and AWSL if currently employed.

Application Process: Applicants are expected to 1) complete the scholarship form ([found on the AWSL scholarship section of the WLA website](#)) and 2) write a one page essay reflecting on why they want to attend WLA and how their attendance will improve their understanding of special libraries or librarianship in general.

Scholarship Description: The Scholarship consists of a stipend to be used towards conference expenses (registration, hotel, travel, meals). For more information about how to apply or questions about the process, please contact Kris Turner at Kturner3@wisc.edu.

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

Be Sociable! 2014 AWSL Member Summer Socials

It's a great way to end a workday - networking with special librarians while enjoying the beautiful view at the Memorial Union Terrace at UW Madison. Join fellow AWSL members on Tuesday, July 29, 2014 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm for a relaxing evening of lively conversation and all the amenities the Terrace has to offer - summer vibes, beverages, ice cream and sailboats to name a few. Just look for the table with the friendly librarians and the AWSL sign.



Directions: <http://www.union.wisc.edu/directions.htm>

Parking: <http://www.union.wisc.edu/parking.htm>

Then come back to Madison for the Fall Social when we get together with UW-Madison School of Library and Information Studies students enrolled in Ron Larson's special libraries class. It's a great opportunity to get to know our future library leaders and learn about their passions and dreams and to share our collective passion for librarianship and libraries. The Fall Social will be held at the Memorial Union Terrace, starting at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, September 16, 2014.

See you on the Terrace!

Carrie Doyle, Head of Acquisitions and Serials, UW-Madison, Law Library



Pictured: AWSL members Janice Laubenstien, Megan Wiseman, Bob Shaw and Amy O'Shea enjoying the 2012 Summer Social.

AWSL at the 2013 WLA Conference: What Makes Special Libraries Special

One of the more interesting sessions at the 2013 WLA Annual Conference in Green Bay was a panel program entitled “What Makes Special Libraries Special,” planned and moderated by AWSL’s own Jennifer Edmonds. Jennifer, a research librarian at ERDMAN in Madison, was joined on the dais by panelists Anjali Bhasin, Librarian, UW-Madison School of Library and Information Science; Cindy Reinl, Bellin Health Systems Librarian, Bellin College, Green Bay; and Molly Hamm, Research Librarian, ERDMAN, Madison. The panelists explored common threads within the roles of specialized librarians in three very different settings, especially the importance of communicating one’s value proposition.

One way the librarians bring value to their respective organizations is by creating internal white papers on key topics of interest to their patrons. For example, Cindy researches and produces white papers on key healthcare topics to distribute to the faculty at Bellin College and doctors, nurses, physical therapists, etc. at Bellin College. Cindy conducts the research for the white papers in addition to the individual research and literature search requests she performs.

The importance of a strong intranet presence was a common theme among the librarians, as was the importance of making sure people know all that you can do for them. The panelists try very hard to reach out to students, new employees, and current employees who are taking on new roles to let them know that the library is there to support them in their work. Asking people how you can help them, even when you are busy, goes a long way towards making the library, and you, an indispensable part of the organization.

The panelists also described how they attend meetings to keep abreast of developments in the organization and to offer their services in helping the different teams within the organization meet their goals. As Cindy put it, it’s important to show up, be seen and remind people you exist. Be approachable and always ready to help as well, and you will surely further your goal of communicating your value. That’s good advice for all of us.

Carrie Doyle, Head of Acquisitions and Serials, UW-Madison, Law Library

Q&A with Kris Turner, Reference and Technology Services Librarian, University of Wisconsin Law School Library

Describe your current job: My time is split between working at the reference desk and working with nearly anything in the library that has technology involved in it. At the reference desk, I help students, faculty, lawyers, paralegals and the general public find the law or legal research they are looking for. It is always challenging, and I really enjoy learning more about the nuances and differences of the law across the world. Working with technology can be even more challenging. I maintain the website, update databases that the library purchases, and work with database vendors to get access for students and faculty. We are starting to expand into other great areas, ranging from the use of QR codes to digital signage to redesigning the website. Wish us luck!

Previous professional endeavors: When I first came out of college, I was set on teaching. I am certified to teach grades 6-12, and taught for about 9 months in a 5th grade classroom in Evanston, Illinois. After that, I dabbled in the law working in a very busy bankruptcy law firm in downtown Chicago. Finally, I worked as a trivia host in restaurants around Madison for about four years while I was working at the Madison Public Library. That is where I was bit very hard by the library bug, and the rest is history.

Why did you decide to work in the library profession? I had worked in a large undergraduate library while I was in college, but it never occurred to me to pursue a library career...I am still kicking myself for not figuring it out sooner! I got a job at the Public Library (Meadowridge Branch) when I moved to Madison, and loved every second. Working with the public, teaching kids and locating and organizing. That sold me and I entered SLIS after about 18 months there.

What is the favorite part of your job? I really enjoy finding obscure text or tracking down articles for students and professors. I also really like showing students how to locate these resources. Once they see how they can find these items on their own, they really appreciate the resources that the library has to offer them.

What is the least favorite part of your job? Tough question! It is not too fun when a member of the public calls looking for legal advice, which we cannot give out. I can help them find the law they need, but I can't help them interpret it or tell them how to use it. Some people feel that we should do more for them, even though I am certainly not a lawyer.

Do you have a role model as a librarian? I have worked with plenty of great librarians at Madison Public, the Forest Products Laboratory and of course at the Law School. I am still relatively new to the profession, and they have all been very kind helping me and they are all amazing role models for me.

What is your favorite book of the last year? Another tough question! I really enjoyed Khaled Hosseini's *And the Mountains Echoed*. It was a very ambitious book and he really pulled it together with some beautiful writing. On the other end of the literary spectrum, I really enjoyed a gritty fantasy novel called *The Blade Itself* by Joe Abercrombie. It resembles *Game of Thrones*, and the series is only three books long. Half the length, hopefully just as good!

What is your dream vacation? I love to travel and I love history, so I would love to take a month vacation and travel from Rome to Cairo, with stopovers in Athens, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Petra, Dubai and perhaps a Serengeti expedition (the old empire itinerary). Feel free to fund this trip for me!

What are your hobbies? Traveling (this year, my wife and I are going to Mexico and Ecuador with a small trip to camp in Northern Wisconsin), Reading (of course), Live music, Trivia (I was bitten by this bug too!) and hanging out with my pets (one cat, one dog).

Catching up with the Forest Products Lab Library: 18 Months After Their Big Move

Are you interested in seeing the new and improved library and the wood anatomy research collection? Join us as we tour the new space from 4:30 pm to approximately 6:00 pm on Monday June 9th. Experience a new library and meet some of your special librarian colleagues!

Last year Julie Blankenburg, the supervising librarian at the [Forest Products Lab Library \(FPLL\)](#), wrote an article for the newsletter discussing FPLL's recent move to a larger and more useful space. Eighteen months later, how is the new space treating the staff and patrons at the FPLL? We asked Julie how life is in her new library.

Have you settled into the new space, or does everything have that 'still new' feel to it? We are past that "still new" feel, except during holidays when we are still finding our way about how to hang decorations and placement of treats!

Do you think that your patrons enjoy the new library space? Are more techs and scientists (or any other users) using the space more often? We have seen a small upturn in walk-in users. There are a couple people who are now using us as an alternate space to their office when they need to be on webinars and don't want to be interrupted. We also started a new policy after the move of keeping the current issues of journals in the library so we have some users who now come in just to read the current journals. (*Author note: The previous space was on the fourth floor, and the new space is on the first, near the entrance.*)

Has the new space made your work-flow easier? Yes. The workflow is much easier with the new space. We have room to spread out large projects on shelving now. Some had been boxed up for years because of lack of space.

Is there anything you would have done differently? There are some things I would have liked to do differently but lack of money would not have allowed us to do so. There are a couple of areas that still need work but I don't think I would have changed much.

What is your favorite feature of the new library? The lighting, heating, and air conditioning (*Author note: None of these worked very well or very often in the previous space...trust me, I spent a lot of time wearing a jacket and gloves while working there.*)

Have you been able to integrate the various collections into one location? (Previously, the collection was in four locations, including a vault for sensitive and rare documents.) We have integrated all our various locations except the vault. That was kept for fire proof storage.

Any advice for librarians that may have to move their libraries? Do lots of planning. Our move went relatively smoothly because we planned everything out ahead of time. We laid out our bookcases with tape on the floor before set-up. We labeled which bookcases were moving where with a letter and numbering system so the movers would know exactly which bookcase to move where. Our neighbors, the wood anatomy collection are still sorting things out because they did not do much planning for their move and ran into issues with their cabinets that could have been identified before the move if they had looked.

Moving a library is a daunting and complicated task. Julie and her staff were able to meet the challenge and greatly improve both their own daily work and the experience of their patrons, and perhaps even found the experience rewarding. Congrats on the smooth transition and new space!

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



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