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Transformation Beyond Tradition

by Jennifer Wiseman

The theme of the 2013 OLA/WLA Conference this past April—"The Future is NOW"—prompted me to think about how we can ensure that the Washington Library Association continues to be a relevant organization, now and into the future. WLA must consider how best to meet the needs of its members, just as libraries continually evolve to be responsive to the needs of the communities they serve.

One of the challenges WLA faces may be our traditions—the ways we have always done things—that were developed in response to the world in which those who came before us operated. As the world around us constantly changes, some historical organizational choices have grown obsolete or are no longer viable.

Jeff De Cagna, a leading voice for innovation in the association community, challenges us to view tradition differently. Rather than tradition being our ways of doing things, tradition becomes a platform for innovation and a commitment to respect certain ways of thinking and being. I am inspired by six new traditions De Cagna recommends and how those traditions might apply to WLA.

Go beyond learning to pursue a “Tradition of Curiosity”

De Cagna says: “Curiosity inspires us to learn as much as possible—especially about the ideas that challenge our perspectives…” To embody this tradition, WLA members should be motivated to ask questions and look at the full spectrum of possible answers, rather than simply looking for the “right” answers. Can you imagine what a membership of continuous learners who are driven by curiosity could achieve?

Build a foundation for community by demonstrating a “Tradition of Care”

WLA is made up of a vast array of individuals and institutions. The differences between us will not be divisive if we actively put ourselves in the place of others and see situations through their eyes. We don’t have to agree at all times, but we should be cognizant that the way we react to our colleagues in the midst of disagreements either supports or prevents community building. De Cagna remarks, “When we care, trust is our default setting; we do not demand that our colleagues first prove their fidelity either to the association or to us as colleagues.” WLA members can best personify this tradition by choosing to be as empathetic towards those with divergent position as they are to like-minded members.

Approach innovation from a “Tradition of Imagination”

The future of WLA is dependent on the degree to which we are willing to imagine it. De Cagna observes, “We cannot build a more vibrant future for associations using only what we already know.” Instead we need to think beyond trying new things or doing old things in new ways. Together we can envision what is possible and make that a reality.

Support our desire for inclusion with a “Tradition of Choice”

Sameness—bringing together those who are alike—is a barrier to transformation. As in the diverse world we live in, we need to embrace variety in our organization. De Cagna is clear that achieving this tradition does not mean we need to be “all things to all people,” but rather that WLA become a trusted community where anyone interested in contributing can find a home for their ideas and aspirations within the organization.

Meet the growing demand for transparency with a “Tradition of Courage”

Organizational openness starts with authenticity. We should feel open and encouraged to speak frankly, even when some views may be unpopular. We should also be willing to step outside of our comfort zones to take risks and commit our resources. We learn when we tackle challenges head on. As De Cagna notes, “plans matter more than possibilities.”

Pair our commitment to stewardship with a “Tradition of Responsibility.”

While every WLA leader is committed to leaving the organization better than how it was found, we should also recognize the importance of ensuring things go right over time. Our responsibility is toward achieving our vision now and into the future.

In an effort to make innovation a top strategic priority, I sincerely believe that these new ways of thinking will serve our organization well. So I challenge all of us to re-imagine our Association: Live in the future and focus your energy and attention on what’s next. I look forward to seeing what we can accomplish together under this framework!

Notes

"Alki," a Native American word meaning "by and by," was suggested by Nancy Pryor, Special Collections at Washington State Library, as the title for the Washington Library Association’s journal. “Alki” is also the state motto, signifying a focus on the future.

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Direct your submission queries to:
Joyce Hansen, incoming editor
Email: alkieditor@wla.org

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Cover photo: 2013 Conference, Theme Graphic
From the Editor

by Bo Kinney

The theme of this year’s annual conference was “The Future is NOW,” and this issue of Alki fits that theme well. As is typical of conference issues, there is a mix of reporting from conference sessions, reviews and analyses, and deeper investigation of conference themes and ideas. And the articles in this issue present a multitude of possibilities for thinking about the future.

As always, Tony Wilson presents his careful and original thinking on the future of libraries, in this case taking on ebooks, library publishing, and conversation (p. 9.) Eura Szuwalski reminds us that whenever we plan for technology, we need to make sure we aren’t leaving any of our community members out (p. 16). And Dan Howard argues that WLA needs to take a long, hard look at its core beliefs regarding internet filtering (p. 11).

The annual conference gives us an opportunity to recognize some of the outstanding work that is taking place in our libraries and in our organization, as well as to welcome and encourage new leaders to our ranks. Read the stories of WLA’s award and scholarship winners (p. 25) to get a sense of both the solid foundation and exciting new possibilities being created by the people who make up this organization.

On that note, I am pleased to welcome Jennifer Wiseman as WLA’s new president. Her inaugural “Up Front” column (p. 2) provides a sturdy framework for thinking about how WLA can grow and change as an organization. I’m also pleased to welcome three new members to Alki’s editorial committee: Stephen Bailey; Anna Shelton, who has served for the past year as an editorial intern, and who is now stepping into a regular committee position; and Brent Mills, our new editorial intern.

Finally, I am both excited and a little sad to announce that this is my final issue as editor. I have greatly enjoyed working with the editorial committee for the past five years (first as an intern, then as a committee member, and for three years as editor). It’s been a marvelous way to learn about the challenges and successes of Washington libraries and to engage with difficult and interesting ideas about where they should be going. I’m thrilled that Joyce Hansen will be taking the editorial helm. Joyce is a journalist and a librarian, and she is excited about taking full advantage of the opportunities offered by electronic publication. I’m looking forward to seeing where Joyce takes Alki!

Correction
In the March 2013 issue of Alki, the program series “Beyond Books” was misidentified as a Spokane Public Library series (“Having What You Want, Wanting What You Have,” p. 7). In fact, “Beyond Books” is a program of the Spokane County Library District. The Alki editor regrets the error.

Join WLA

The Washington Library Association includes some of the best and brightest members of the Washington library community.

We are united by our care for the well-being of Washington libraries. For more information visit our website at wla.org. Explore the site and make our business your business.

Membership information is at wla.org/membership.

Bo Kinney is a librarian in the Special Collections department of the Seattle Public Library.
Legislative Update

National Library Legislative Day, May 2013
by John Sheller

Washington Library Association members traveled to Washington, DC in May to participate in National Library Legislative Day, the American Library Association’s annual advocacy event. ALA’s Washington Office Staff coordinated a full day of briefings on library issues May 7. May 8 was spent visiting our congressional representatives to discuss items impacting their constituents.

We focused on the following Washington library issues:

- **Ereader content access**: Major publishers continue to inhibit fair access to full ebook content. WLA has joined the Urban Libraries Council in seeking a congressional investigation (http://www.urbanlibraries.org/e-books-pages-140-php).

- **LSTA funding**: Sequestration plus House, Senate, and White House budgets propose significant cuts to Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) support for library training and pilot programs.

- **Eligible entities**: Public libraries are positioning to be considered “eligible entities” to disseminate federal information on major policy changes, such as immigration. The “eligible entities” designation would allow libraries to participate in the planning of information dissemination that will likely impact our patrons.

- **Congressional visits to libraries in state**: WLA Board adopted a goal of having two members of Congress visit libraries in our state during the 2013–2014 period.

- **Recognition**: In addition to legislative issues, the Pierce County Library System was awarded the 2013 National Medal for Library and Museum Services in a White House ceremony.

Visit Reports and Follow-Up

- **First Lady Michele Obama** congratulated director Neel Parikh of the Pierce County Library System on PCLS’s 2013 National Medal for Museum and Library Services. Also at the White House **State Librarian Rand Simmons** met domestic policy leaders to discuss how libraries can carry forward President Obama’s programs on STEM, early learning, immigration, and affordable health care.

- Ariel Evans of **Senator Murray’s office** conducted some preliminary research into the ebook content access issue. **WLA President Jennifer Wiseman** is in contact with the Senator’s staff and is pressing for congressional oversight into the access disparity issue. Senator Murray will be invited to visit a King County Library branch in the near future. **Senator Cantwell’s staff** discussed the ebook access issue with interest. WLA thanked the Senator for signing a “Dear Colleague” letter in support of LSTA funding earlier this year.

- **Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers** met with WLA Vice President/President-Elect Nancy Ledeboer. Close members of the congresswoman’s family are regular library users, and McMorris Rodgers will be invited to visit a Spokane County Library District branch. Her staff expressed interest in the “eligible entities” designation for Washington libraries.

- Members of the WLA delegation also met with **Congressmen Heck and Reichert**.

2013 WLA National Library Legislative Day delegation:

- **Jennifer Wiseman**, President, Washington Library Association; King County Library System
- **Nancy Ledeboer**, WLA President Elect; Director, Spokane County Library
- **John Sheller**, WLA Federal Relations Coordinator; King County Library System
- **Rand Simmons**, Washington State Librarian
- **Neel Parikh**, Executive Director, Pierce County Library System; 2013 National IMLS Medal winner

WLA delegates meet with Ariel Evans of Senator Patty Murray’s office.

John Sheller is WLA’s federal relations coordinator and is a senior managing librarian at King County Library System.
Night of the Count, Day of the Librarian
by Ann Crewdson

Even the darkest night will end and the sun will rise.

For one night every year, cities all across America count their homeless populations in an effort to reduce homelessness. It’s called “the night of the count.” For most of Washington State, it was January 24, 2013. Hundreds of volunteers dispersed into the night to count the number of homeless people sleeping on benches, under bridges and bushes, and in parking garages, doorways, and alleys. The snapshot revealed that the number of men, women and children experiencing homelessness had increased five percent over last year. This data is mainly used to inform and engage legislators to make key decisions, allocate more money for resources, and research ways to end homelessness.

Select libraries participated in the night of the count for the first time this year. One reason might be the growing population of homeless youth who rely on libraries. According to Jill Woelfer, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Washington, out of 202 homeless young people ages fifteen to twenty-five in her study, eighty percent said that they go to the library and seventy percent responded that they use the internet at the library. Additionally, in interviews with forty homeless young people, several participants talked about how they used the internet at the library in order to stay in touch with family members and even used library access to the internet in times of crisis.

We’ve all seen them in our libraries. Hunkered down over tables, eyes barely open, they seek libraries for shelter, their belongings on their backs, garbage bags, plastic containers, suitcases dragging behind them on wheels. They’ve been around the buildings for so long, people barely acknowledge them as doorstops in the day and draft guards at night. Some carry American flags on sticks, bandanas with stars and stripes—remnants from an old war they once fought; others are disheveled youth, wearing mismatched socks. Still others attempt to blend into society, wearing holey Abercrombie & Fitch shirts so they aren’t preyed on at night.

They could rest assured, however, that day would come faster this particular night. On January 25, 2013, a collaborative effort between WLA and ALA called “Day of Caring” saw over one hundred registered librarians visit Seattle service agencies such as Compass Housing Alliance, Operation Sack Lunch, Urban Rest Stop, and YouthCare. And they were eager to help all the homeless—the hidden homeless, the chronic homeless, and throwaway youth. (These are terms used to describe the precariously housed, disabled homeless individuals, or youth thrown out of the house because of their LGBT status, respectively.) Jaime Hammond, Chance Hunt, Julie Ann Oiye, Nancy Minton, Anna Shelton, and I led volunteers in a hands-on immersion. Chopping food, serving food and cleaning and greening a transitional home would prove to be an invaluable experience which would shine light on the lives of the homeless.

Compass Housing Alliance has nineteen locations and 205 apartments. Group leader Julie Ann Oiye commented: “I was struck by the extensive services offered besides shelter, laundry, meals, and chapel. There is a bank-type service and mail service that are so critical for their clientele.” The center is several stories tall and hosts Operation Sack Lunch out of its cafeteria. Chance Hunt recalled the experience: “We helped serve meals for about one hundred people through OSL. All members of the group expressed gratitude and were inspired by the opportunity to learn more about services for people who are homeless, as well as a way to give back to the Seattle community as part of their conference experience.”

The groups that toured Urban Rest Stop saw its five showers, nine washers, fourteen dryers, and toilets. It operates like a truck stop, except the facilities are immaculately clean and free. Forty-five percent of their clients are English language learners and eighty percent are men. Rubber ducks and plants gave the place a homey feel. Volunteers assembled hundreds of hygiene bags. URS meets its hidden homeless halfway by giving them supplemental housing—many have jobs but don’t make enough to buy a home.

The volunteers who prepared and served the LGBT youth hot meals at Orion Center and cleaned Straley House understood that volunteerism was a way to help those with poor self-esteem. Reportedly, suicide attempts are highest among LGBT homeless youth. Some sheltered youth were thrown out of the home by their own parents after coming out of the closet. It was intriguing to learn about Walter Straley, a former runaway himself, buying the twelve-bedroom house to give back to the community. Habitually he would come to the house once a month to talk to the homeless over dinner.

The long-lasting effects of the event have been encouraging. The future is NOW. This OLA/WLA Conference mantra gives us strength. We can’t wait for the night to continue, where the population of the homeless grows exponentially, ignored as pariahs. Will we continue to intervene and do our part as community? If we bother to stop and talk to the homeless, we will know them as Anthony, Stanley or Al. Through events like the Day of Caring, we can continue to bridge the distance. Abbie Anderson, Assistant Director of the North Bend Public Library (OR), says it well, “Librarians know how to get things done, and we also know that we are a serving profession—and that many of the people we serve struggle with mental health challenges, addictions, poverty, and/or homelessness.” It is incumbent on us to be positive change agents, to become thought leaders of the community, in an effort to reduce homelessness.
Libraries are constantly on the lookout for ways to connect more effectively with people who have been traditionally underserved. It’s part of who we are. But there are often a million other priorities that can push to the side our goals to research demographic changes in our community, spend more time on outreach, or create new community partnerships. This year’s conference theme encouraged us to act. The future is what we make it, shaped by the actions we take—or don’t—right now.

I attended three excellent workshops at the conference that grappled with the question of how libraries can better serve our whole community. One workshop shared best practices in services to Spanish-speakers; another discussed services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) families and youth; and a third reflected on libraries’ intersection with both immigrant rights and LGBT movements including marriage equality. These topics are particularly timely because of recent changes regarding marriage equality and immigration policies. Marriage equality passed in Washington, and may be on the brink of moving forward soon in Oregon. With regard to immigrant communities, over 17,000 undocumented young people in Washington and Oregon have applied since August 2012 to be considered for temporary safeguard against deportation and work authorization under Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). At the federal level, both immigration reform and marriage equality are perhaps closer to passing than ever before. As conference presenters Luis Guerra (Causa Oregon) and Sasha Buchert (Basic Rights Oregon) pointed out, this alignment of timing is not a coincidence. Immigrant rights organizations and LGBT organizations have worked together to raise awareness of common ground in human rights concerns and priorities for people of color, immigrants, and LGBT individuals.

Several themes emerged from the three sessions I attended, providing tools and inspiration to go home and get started, whether your library is beginning to look at how to best serve Spanish-speaking, immigrant, and LGBT communities or already has well-established relationships and programs. The themes I heard fell into six areas. Synthesized below into these six themes are some of the comments that came out of these rich conference discussions and presentations.

1. Know your community.

“ When major political changes are afoot that drastically impact the day-to-day lives of people we serve, it’s perhaps even more important for libraries to take stock of how we’re doing.”

Gathering data can help assess where to begin. Learn about how local immigrant communities break down in terms of first, second, or third generation in the United States. Review Census data on language spoken at home, number of individuals who identify as Hispanic or Latino, and number of same-sex couples. Look at information from local schools, such as school district report cards that include number of English language learners and student achievement levels. If local data isn’t available, look to the national level with school climate survey data from the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) and Pew Hispanic Center. Panelists who presented in the session on “Spanish speaking communities” have found it useful to have data ready when asked by community members to justify spending on non-English materials. In another session, responding to a question from the audience on what to say when people are upset by programming on immigration topics, Guerra (Causa Oregon) suggested using depoliticizing and inclusive language, such as “These are our families, our communities, our children.”

2. Stay grounded in professional values.

Presenters encouraged participants to look to our strong professional history for guidance. In her session, American Library Association (ALA) past president Ann Symons reminded those gathered that “librarianship is a values-rich profession.” One of the many sources Symons recommended is an overview of ALA policies, resources, and access issues for serving LGBT communities. In another session, University of Washington librarian Cass Hartnett highlighted the Library Bill of Rights and talked about collection development that is not neutral, but equitable, while graduate student Amanda Jasso called attention to the ALA resolution in support of immigrants’ rights and recommendations from REFORMA that encourage libraries to “make it a priority to serve the community regardless of individuals’ legal status.”

3. Prepare.

When major political changes are afoot that drastically impact the day-to-day lives of people we serve, it’s perhaps even more important for libraries to take stock of how we’re doing. Guerra encouraged libraries to start thinking about what impact federal immigra-
tion reform could have on libraries, saying, “For those of you who provided assistance with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals at your libraries, think of ten times that number of people for immigration reform...It will not be a single form for people to fill out. It will be many forms. It will be a process. We’re getting ready for it. Immigration lawyers are getting ready for it. Libraries need to get ready for it, too.” Guerra also emphasized that libraries can join with other organizations in providing accurate information to immigrant communities, especially during the rollout of brand-new programs, since during that time people are particularly vulnerable to fraud and misinformation.

4. Consider the collection.
All three sessions emphasized the need for people—especially youth—to see themselves accurately represented in library materials. The panel of presenters on “Services to Spanish Speakers” provided clear recommendations for selecting Spanish materials, with the first choice being works originally written in Spanish by authors whose country of origin matches that of your library’s patrons, since these materials are likely to circulate best. Presenters also mentioned the importance of allowing time for Spanish-language materials to begin to circulate. They highlighted resources for Spanish language selectors including Tintafresca (for Spanish speakers) and Accidental Bibliotecario (for non-Spanish speakers). ALA members working to develop Spanish language collections were reminded to apply for the ALA-FIL Free Pass Program to attend the Guadalajara International Book Fair. In addition to print materials, pathfinders and other electronic resources can be helpful as well. Jasso posed the possibility of libraries creating an immigrant resource guide for their community, such as one created by Denver Public Library that includes information about employment, health, housing, adult education, and more.

5. Look at the whole library.
Creating a welcoming environment goes beyond thinking about the collection. Librarian Annie Lewis identified prioritizing diversity in the workplace as a core foundation of effective service. Jasso highlighted Multnomah County Library’s work to provide cultural effectiveness training to staff, and Symons reflected on the importance of training as well, saying, “If patrons get an unwelcoming vibe from any member of the library staff, or feel a stigma, it doesn’t matter how many rich materials you have.”

Symons encouraged libraries to think about the ways the space is gendered: Do you have separate book lists for boys and girls? If so, is there another way to present this material? Sasha Buchert (Basic Rights Oregon) mentioned the powerful and positive impact of signage that identifies the library as a safe space for transgender and gender-nonconforming people. In addition, Buchert emphasized the importance of using correct pronouns when referring to people, “Using the wrong pronoun can be really hurtful and make it a not safe space. If you don’t know the person’s pronoun, ask them; or don’t use any pronoun; or use their name.” Both sessions on serving LGBT communities mentioned the need to check library internet filters to ensure that LGBT-positive websites aren’t getting filtered out, and encouraged libraries to consider gender-neutral bathrooms.

Library card application forms are another place for possible improvement. Is it possible to remove gender from your card application, or at least make it very easy to change? Does your library accept alternate forms of identification, such as the Matrícula Consular (Mexico) to establish an account?

6. Partner.
Community partnerships with local organizations extend the library’s effectiveness and influence. Jasso mentioned that when the process opened for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, some libraries provided space for legal services organizations to offer informational workshops in the library on determining eligibility. Buchert suggested that libraries wondering what LGBT materials to add to their collections might have local LGBT organizations they could reach out to for recommendations. When libraries purchase materials likely to be useful to clients or patrons of local businesses or organizations, staff can reach out to these organizations to let them know and ask for help in promoting these materials.

Bringing it Home
These sessions were inspiring reminders of the array of resources and local expertise to help develop or enhance library services, spaces, and materials in the area of services to Spanish-speakers, immigrant communities, and LGBT people. With so many starting places, there’s no time like the present to take up the opportunity to provide more relevant, stronger, and more innovative services. For sample programming and evaluation ideas, resource lists, and more from the workshops referenced here, visit WLA’s webpage of conference session handouts.

Notes
1. Annie Lewis, Elizabeth López, Maria Aguilar, Crystal Garcia, and Angelica Nova De Cordeiro, “Best Practices in Library Services for the Spanish Speaking Community.”
Technology is upon us, changing what we can do and changing what is worth doing. Using notes from the 2013 WLA/OLA conference, some impressions from Lankes's Atlas of New Librarianship; and some articles from an American Libraries online supplement for June, I can suggest some newly relevant tasks, priorities, and opportunities for library practice.

What we should first add to our repertoire are techno-skills for putting users in control of manipulating information. Philosophically, we should not say "users," but rather "patrons," or in Lankes's terminology, "members." "User" and "customer" put our client outside the system; we need to bring them in.

We already know what we need to give up: ready reference. We used to be able to imagine sitting with our ten favorite reference books and providing a useful service—Webster III, Stat Abstracts, the last print Britannica, what else? Whatever, no one will care. They satisfy on their cell phones. We can give up teaching the catalog as well. Everyone will just treat it like Amazon and, rightly or wrongly, feel they are doing just fine.

Many of our current issues center on ebooks. The technical tasks involved in helping patrons mount e-content on their devices seem to be something we accept, unlike the resentment we felt on having to learn to reload printers and clear jammed copiers.

In practice, we seem to be on top of the technical issues relating to ebooks. The issues of contention involve digital rights management (DRM). Clifford Lynch points out several aspects:

[A]t least when dealing with the major publishers, nobody buys an ebook; one licenses it under typically very complex terms that constrain what you are allowed to do with it. The notion that you buy an ebook or own an ebook is a great marketing lie.

And

Many common social practices—sharing books among friends, inheriting books from one's parents or grandparents—don't apply to ebooks in any meaningful way.3

Our skill set may include circumventing DRM, but there is a fully aboveboard approach to DRM: crowdsourced funding as exemplified by unglue.it:

Unglue.it is a place for individuals and institutions to join together to give their favorite ebooks to the world. We work with authors, publishers, or other rights holders to decide on fair compensation for releasing a free, legal edition of their already-published books, under Creative Commons licensing. Then everyone pledges toward that sum. When the threshold is reached (and not before), we collect the pledged funds and we pay the rights holders. They issue an unglued digital edition; you're free to read and share it, with everyone, on the device of your choice, worldwide.

Because I don't hear much about unglue.it, it seems very small at the moment. But the ethical appeal seems very consistent with library values. Imagine a high-demand author crowdsourcing through the unglue.it model. The author could get whatever he/she thinks the material is worth, and no intermediary need get anything.

Walt Crawford's conference presentation, "The Librarian's Guide to Micropublishing," summarizing his ebook of the same name, dealt primarily with setting up templates for composing a manuscript that allow it to be automatically converted to any needed format—PDF, ebook, HTML, or whatever. His vision, however, is having librarians help authors create local histories, family histories, and other works that need only limited copies. Helping local authors produce such manuscripts is a reasonable part of a librarian's skill set.

James Larue would take Crawford's vision much further into library...
publishing. Larue argues that by helping local authors produce and market their works, libraries could increase their support from the community:

As documented in many places (see OCLC’s report “From Awareness to Funding”), libraries have seen a steady erosion of support even as their use has risen. Why is that? I think, in part, it’s because we haven’t asked for that support in ways that engage funders’ hearts and minds. We ask only for money.

By appealing directly to local constituents to help us do precisely the things that most interest them—read, rate, talk about books—not only can we find new strength in a changing publishing environment, we can also grow an articulate and committed network of advocates.

...[T]here is a burst of enthusiasm in the publishing world outside the Big Six—a chance to embrace the disruptive change, the creative destruction, that always precedes the establishment of a new and more inclusive order.4

I did not attend the session “Planning a Makerspace With Teens,” but I can see extending Larue’s model to 3D printers, Arduinos, and other Maker activities. It is not only teens who would be interested in 3D printing. Most Maker activity is very open-source in orientation.

With regard to open-source orientation, there was a time when computing for seniors meant teaching Word. Imagine what those seniors could be doing with a yard-sale laptop, Ubuntu, and OpenOffice/LibreOffice or Google Docs.

In a recent New Yorker cartoon, a reader is being shown an early codex. He responds “Nice, but as long as there are readers, there will be scrolls.” Now, it is hard to find anything to read that has no relevant Web references or Web citations. It may soon be nostalgic to see a book as a single unit. Peter Brantley notes,

Ultimately we can envision a book that cannot live comfortably as a central downloaded package with simple supporting outriggers of alternative or enhanced content. Publishing upstarts will design ebooks with features so dependent on web technologies that they can be read only with a full-fledged web-rendering engine—either a consumer browser or one embedded in a reading application.

The publishing platform of the future is the network. The integrity of the book will wind up broken apart as a by-product.

EPub and Kindle ebooks were never intended to be fully functioning websites, but rather utilized subsets of the web’s markup language in a file format that is divorced from the web’s heritage as server-based information, retrievable by remote client computers. Every ebook is its own broken website, an island unto itself, divorced from the web’s fabric.5

Lankes wants to define knowledge as that which results from conversation and also as our contribution to the community. The conversation may be internal, but there is surely a need for conversation with real people. “High tech, high touch,” we used to say.

The “Conversation Programs that Engage” presentation, with representatives from Oregon Humanities and Humanities Washington, described programs that subsidize selected speakers with expertise on specific topics (they have catalogs and lists of what or who is available) who will lead adult discussions on their topics.

Both programs could lead to exciting, worthwhile sessions. Their basic format, however, with subject experts trained in facilitation, seems elitist. Other models could lead to library staff-facilitated sessions without anyone having an “expert” role. Socrates Cafes provide one possibility. A more fully developed model can be found in Conversation Cafes: “At a Conversation Cafe there is nothing to join, no homework, no agenda, just a simple process that helps to shift us from small talk to BIG talk, conversations that matter.”

Given the foregoing impressions from the conference, I am convinced that if we want to engage the “hearts and minds” of our patrons or members, we need to get beyond just hobnobbing with community leaders and doing things for or to the poor. In the alternative, we can use the increasing digitization of our intellectual world to develop the computer skills and facilitation skills that will bring our users within the system and make them a vital component of our system development.

Notes

Anyone who has ever worked on a library policy has probably done the research. You know what I mean: googling to find policies from other libraries, so you can “borrow” some wording or ideas. Having done just that this past spring, I found the conference session “Writing Patron-Friendly Library Policies: Get your Policy Wonk On” to be an unbeatable opportunity to get more direct information. The panelists were library directors with a library board member and a lawyer thrown into the mix (a brilliant idea): Eileen Simmons, director, Everett Public Library; Abigail Elder, library manager, Tualatin Public Library; Georgia Lomax, deputy director, Pierce County Library System; Buzzy Nielsen, library director, Hood River County Library District; and Jeff Baker, partner at Annala, Carey, Baker, Thompson & VanKoten, P.C.

The policies under discussion address user behavior. Such policies are necessary to improve service, create consistency, guide staff, and protect the building, its contents, and the people within. Policies also ensure you do the right thing. One of the panelists provided questions to determine if you need a policy: Is there a lack of consistency? Are people (staff or patrons) uncertain of the rules? Has something changed so that new or revised policy is required? For us, the breakup of a tent city downtown brought a whole new group of community users into our academic library, and we needed to set some boundaries, so hearing that it’s never too late to create a policy was encouraging. The Visitor Policy for our twenty-year-old building was just approved in May.

When creating policies, the panelists supported simplicity and clarity, along with enough flexibility to allow staff to use their own judgment when appropriate. Policies should be written in a friendly tone and include a welcoming opening statement. We were advised by our institution’s risk management office to open with what services are available to the public, followed by what areas are off-limits and then add our list of “unacceptable behaviors include but are not limited to…” Keep things as general and open-ended as possible and don’t even try to list every possible infraction. Something you never thought could ever happen in your library will eventually occur and you won’t have a “thou shalt not” to cover it. It’s obvious some unacceptable behaviors listed in library policies are born from past infractions. These are, as one panelist put it, “jerk-based policies” and should be avoided. Here are a few examples:

• No inappropriate public displays of affection (lots of academic libraries have this one)
• No foods requiring heavy use of napkins, like BBQ, fried chicken, etc.
• Users are responsible for returning trays and dishes to the cafeteria.
• Please do not put your feet on the furniture.
• Food/beverage preparation equipment of any kind (electric kettles, coffee makers, etc.) is not allowed.
• Patrons may not gamble in the library.
• Bathing suits are not considered proper attire.
• Failing to follow rules for printing power points.

Some additional tips from the panelists:

• One person should write the policy, then take it to a committee for review.
• Have a lawyer look over your policy before final approval and implementation.
• Communicate policies to staff, patrons, and board members.
• Be sure your staff understand the intent of a policy.
• Post policies on your website.
• Enforce policies consistently.
• Trust your staff and back them up.
• Review policies regularly, especially if something has changed.
• Provide regular policy training or refreshers at staff meetings.

One final recommendation: In March American Libraries Live presented a “Library Safety and Security” webinar that included a discussion of patron behavior policies. It was very informative. If you missed it, you can view it here: http://americanlibrarieslive.org/blog/information-about-episode-4.

(For more policy fun, check out Scott Douglas’s “Dispatches from a Public Librarian” at http://www.mcsweeneyes.net/articles/dispatch-38-rules-of-conduct.)

Theresa Kappus is the distance services librarian at Gonzaga University’s Foley Center Library.
A new book *The Art of Doing: How Superachievers Do What They Do and How They Do It So Well* explores how accomplished individuals such as tennis player Martina Navratilova achieve greater success by challenging their core beliefs. Most of us avoid questioning our own biases and deeply held assumptions, likely because it’s less painful to attribute our lack of success to external obstacles. Despite our reluctance, individuals and organizations need to engage in vigorous self-assessment to be successful. Respected professional associations like the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA) provide illustrative examples of this process. Well into the 1960s, the AMA practiced institutional discrimination by denying African-Americans membership solely because of their race. Until 1974, the APA considered homosexuality to be a psychiatric disorder, a mental illness. Because their members found the courage to question their core beliefs, the AMA and the APA reformed and ended these unethical practices. My experiences at the 2013 OLA/WLA Conference led me to conclude that the Washington Library Association (WLA) needs to honestly examine its core beliefs about filters and the internet.

Two programs at the conference presented by the American Library Association attorney Deborah Caldwell-Stone and others set forth information that was unapologetically hostile to the North Central Regional Library (NCRL), a long-time member of WLA. The pre-conference “Intellectual Freedom, Privacy and Libraries: Hot Topics in the Northwest and Nationally” and the Thursday session “Libraries, Internet Filters, the First Amendment and the Law” provided content about the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and *Bradburn v. North Central Regional Library District* that was inaccurate, biased, and presented in an inimical manner inconsistent with WLA’s mission. The sessions failed to meet standards for courtesy, professionalism, and ethics expected from WLA.

It was astonishing to see that Duncan Manville was selected as the sole presenter of information on *Bradburn* at the conference session “Libraries, Internet Filters, the First Amendment and the Law.” Mr. Manville was an attorney representing the plaintiffs in *Bradburn*. He is not a library employee, trustee, or library friends member, but is instead an attorney associated with the American Civil Liberties Union. As a paid adversary of NCRL whose views were discredited by both the Washington State Supreme Court and Judge Edward Shea of the Ninth District Federal Court, his perspective lacked both objectivity and authority. His selection as a presenter was wildly inappropriate.

When I attempted to speak at the end of both sessions, I was cut off after only a few seconds and informed that only questions were allowed, not comments. This was deplorable: as a conference attendee and member of both WLA and its Intellectual Freedom Interest Group, a sponsor of the sessions, I should not have been denied the right to speak. It was particularly disturbing and more than a little ironic that my viewpoint on this subject was suppressed at workshops purportedly exploring free speech.

At these workshops and in her writing, Ms. Caldwell-Stone promotes the core belief of ALA that the First Amendment is violated whenever adults are denied full access to constitutionally protected materials online. Apparently, any use of internet filters results in illegal censorship. This notion has now been contradicted by three courts: the United States Supreme Court in *United States v. American Library Association* in 2003, the Washington State Supreme Court in *Bradburn* in 2010, and the Ninth District Federal Court, again in Bradburn, in 2012. These courts could not be more clear in their intent: “A public library may, consistent with article I, section 5 of the Washington State Constitution, filter Internet access for all patrons without disabling the filter to allow access to web sites containing constitutionally protected speech upon the request of an adult library patron,” and “Because NCRL’s Policy, including not disabling the Internet filter at the request of an adult patron, is reasonable, there is no overbreadth or impermissible content-based First Amendment violation.” When they pretend that these decisions don’t exist or don’t matter, ALA and WLA demonstrate an unfortunate intransigence that diminishes their credibility.

Continued on page 15
Sarah Houghton, director of the San Rafael Public Library in Northern California, was the keynote speaker at the 2013 joint conference of the Oregon Library Association and the Washington Library Association. The conference theme, “The Future is NOW: Network Oregon and Washington,” was a perfect fit for this library director and active blogger. You may know her better as The Librarian in Black from her blog.

When the 2013 WLA/OLA Joint Conference Committee set out to find a keynote speaker for the conference, their goal was to identify a speaker who would reflect the conference theme. That meant a big-picture, forward-thinking speaker who, while thinking large also had her feet firmly planted on the ground. Those on the planning committee who follow the Librarian in Black’s blog identified Sarah Houghton as being innovative while also being grounded on terra firma. They were attracted to her experience, both with the boundless innovation that comes from large budgets as well as innovating that is bounded by a much smaller budget.

Sarah Houghton has worked with state and national library advocacy organizations including Infopeople, the California Library Association, the American Library Association, and the Library and Information Technology Association, where she spent three years as a member of LITA’s Top Technology Trends Committee and the American Library Association’s Office for Information Technology Policy Ebooks Taskforce. She was named by Library Journal to their list of Movers and Shakers—Trendspotters in 2009.

“I always wear black,” says Sarah Houghton. “Yes, always”—hence the name of her blog. Houghton describes herself as “100 percent goth on the inside” and on her blog as a “big technology nerd.” She believes in the power of libraries to change lives and her mission “to make librarians comfortable with technology and able to use it effectively, regardless of time and budget constraints.” Houghton offers libraries of any size her best advice to implement technology wisely while maximizing resources. Realizing that resources are scarce not only in her own library, she “encourages smaller libraries to do new techie things, helping them plan and do it for free or little cost.” Houghton’s commitment is to help libraries find relevant technologies they can afford and provide better customer service to patrons in order to improve their lives with technological confidence as well as competence. Her commitment to open source options parallels her commitment to librarianship; she sees more libraries moving to open source technologies and communities that match the philosophy of the library profession.¹

Sarah Houghton has been the voice of The Librarian in Black blog since late 2003. On the blog she tells her readers that its genesis came from “displeasure at having to wade through dozens of websites, blogs, & RSS feeds related to librarianship, technology, web services, and current trends to find those few posts that applied to my work.”

Finding information on library web and digital services has become Houghton’s passion, which she continues to share with the rest of us. The blog has covered technology, reference, and web services, gathering resources and ideas useful to any size library. As she maintains a constant watch on trends, looking at cutting-edge publications to see “what people are buzzing about” and how that affects libraries, the ideas rush in, as she spins them around in her mind and makes connections which she shares with her blog readers (“Librarian in Black,” 2009, p. 33).

Alki interviewed Sarah Houghton for an insight into the WLA/OLA Joint Conference Committee’s goal of identifying a keynote speaker who would reflect the conference theme. That meant a big-picture, forward-thinking speaker who, while thinking large also had her feet firmly planted on the ground. Those on the planning committee who follow the Librarian in Black’s blog identified Sarah Houghton as being innovative while also being grounded on terra firma. They were attracted to her experience, both with the boundless innovation that comes from large budgets as well as innovating that is bounded by a much smaller budget.

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OLA Conference’s keynote speaker, in her own words:

*Alki*: In your keynote presentation at the WLA/OLA Conference you described a number of highly innovative ways to reach your community primarily through social media, an Internet presence, and all sorts of media-based outreach. How does social media presence supplement or replace a physical sense of community in your library?

SH: I don’t see our social media presence as replacing a physical anything, really. The library’s social media sites seem to be reaching a mix of existing library users and fans as well as people from the community who haven’t been in a library in a while. It allows us to easily, and freely, reach thousands of people in our town with notices of services and events, to ask them for feedback, and to push out web resources or news items of interest. Our in-building users are engaged. Our online users are engaged times ten.

*Alki*: How do you use the idea of engendering stories and feelings with particular segments of your community such as the elderly, Spanish speakers, the homeless, or children?

SH: As most libraries do, our staff are very intent on providing services and resources that matter to the daily lives of our users, and delivering those with the best possible customer service possible. Stories come from meaningful experiences—and if our services are meaningful and the personal touch is there, stories will happen organically with any user group.

*Alki*: How is technology impacting your library’s delivery of children’s services?

SH: Kids adopt technology first, often before their parents. Even if they don’t own the technology, they’re using friends’ devices or accounts or using it at school. The library has to be prepared to not only offer services and resources that match up with current standards, but offer the technology itself to continue to bridge the digital divide that exists in every community.

*Alki*: In light of the customer service mission of libraries, do you think that library patrons who may be less engaged with technology are continuing to be served by libraries?

SH: Yes, but they either can’t/don’t access some of our services or need staff intervention to do so, such as a small group of our users who don’t want to learn to use the computer so require staff to place all of their requests for them. This group is shrinking every year, though, as more and more people of all ages become fluent in basic technology skills and own more devices.

*Alki*: Your Librarian in Black blog rails against the violations of the core values of librarianship and violations of legal rights. How do ebooks play into this? Do they pose any new challenges to library values?

SH: In my opinion, librarians are showing poor fiscal stewardship by throwing in with the outrageous pricing and limiting licensing models that we see with subscription-based library ebook services currently. All digital media poses a new challenge to library values, not just ebooks. Digital movies and television, as well as music, are equally challenging. If we can sort out how to handle digital books in a fair way, hopefully that model will translate to other digital media so we don’t have to go through this painful growing process yet again.

*Alki*: How do you use marketing to encourage your community to support your library?

SH: We’re hoping for a marketing makeover in the next year. Currently we’re using more of the tried and true methods (press releases to newspapers, banners on the downtown corridor, in-library advertising) combined with newer free options (like Facebook and Twitter).

*Alki*: What was the biggest challenge of becoming a library director?

SH: For my particular situation it was being placed in an Acting Director role with very little warning, no preparation, and no desire for the position. The subsequent budget, facilities, and staffing challenges that faced the library in the next year were all compounded by a lack of preparation, I feel.

*Alki*: Has directing a library changed the way you think about innovation and trends?

SH: I think I’ve lost my ability to think in the “out there” way...
I used to. My interpretation of trends, changes, and new technologies is now tempered by the reality of the place I work. Instead of thinking “Wow, this would be a great idea” I think “Wow, this would be a great idea if we had money/staff/time/etc.” In that way, I find I’ve lost a lot of the blind enthusiasm I had for innovation before. Whether that’s good or bad remains to be seen.

**Alki:** What are the top ways libraries can innovate on a budget?

**SH:** Look for community partnerships and opportunities with other departments to get free or discounted stuff. And don’t underestimate the power of free services. Using Skype as a way for people to contact you for assistance doesn’t cost you a dime but could gain you a whole new user base.

**Alki:** You seem to be an extrovert, and extroverts are certainly valued and admired in our culture. In your WLA/OLA keynote, you said that “timid librarians are not allowed” in your library. What about the strengths of introverts, many of whom make up the library profession and the community of library users?

**SH:** I don’t know that a majority of library professionals and users are introverts. I would actually challenge that. However, I don’t think being introverted necessarily makes you timid, which is what I think you’re getting at. You can be introverted but still willing to take risks, try new things, and roll with changes. Often the people we perceive as extroverts are the most timid—but they cover it up with bravado and bluster. The people we need in libraries are those who may be scared of something new but walk into the face of it anyway.

**Alki:** Where do you see yourself in the future?

**SH:** Continuing to raise hell in libraries.

**Notes**


**Notes**

CIPA as a violator of the Library Bill of Rights when they filter access for children and remove the filter for adults. According to the ALA, when we accept E-rate funds and comply with this law, we violate our professional ethics. This radical position fails to acknowledge that CIPA was created by Congress and signed into law by President Bill Clinton because they believed that using internet filters was the right thing to do. They believed that protecting children from harm and limiting adults’ access to child pornography and obscenity by using internet filters was both ethical and constitutional. This practice also protects library employees from a potentially hostile work environment that the presence of pornography can create. Allowing access to pornography has proven to be a greater risk to libraries than any theoretical risk of violating the First Amendment by filtering. The lawsuit *Adamson v. Minneapolis Public Library* resulted in a $435,000 settlement and a determination by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that the library had violated the civil rights of its employees by failing to prevent sexual harassment. Only recently, the City of Birmingham paid a settlement of $150,000 in a similar case. ALA and WLA ask us to ignore the will of our democratically elected officials, the opinions of our courts, potential harm done to children, and our legal obligation to provide safe workplaces. This is asking too much.

It is surprising that no one from WLA ever contacted a representative from NCRL to participate in conference sessions intended to explore the significance of the *Bradburn* case. Instead, WLA presented only NCRL’s discredited, paid adversaries and an attorney from the American Library Association to provide information on the Children’s Internet Protection Act, Bradburn, and NCRL. ALA’s views on internet filtering have been rejected by multiple courts, and it lacks the objectivity and authority necessary to be a reliable source of guidance on this topic. WLA appears to have forgotten the need for objectivity when framing issues of importance to libraries. It has lost sight of its essential purpose to support all Washington State libraries and their role in society. I hope that its members examine their core beliefs and find the will to change.

Your Usable Library: Creating an Accessible Space in the Real and Virtual World

by Eura Szuwalski

When librarians and library staff talk about accessibility, we are often referring to technology or virtual spaces that specific groups of people may use to access information or navigate the world. However, the conversation should really focus on universal design, a term that incorporates a larger idea of usability and access that considers the needs of the greatest range of the community. Designs of library programs and websites, restructuring library spaces, and reorganizing workspaces in the library are improved when all users are considered. Good design removes obstacles to the information and resources that your library provides. As Char Booth wrote, “you don’t have to become an accessibility expert to dismantle these barriers: the first step is making a commitment to awareness.”

I presented “Providing Library Services to Underserved Individuals” with three other librarians at the Washington Library Association and Oregon Library Association Joint Conference in Vancouver. Three of the four panelists work at the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library in Seattle, WA, which provides reading material in Braille, audio and large print books, assistive technology support, and a youth services program to Washington residents unable to read standard print due to a visual impairment, blindness, a physical disability, or a learning disability. The fourth panelist works with Seattle Public Library’s Library Equal Access Program (LEAP), which provides computer access, training, and general support at the Central Branch of SPL for patrons with disabilities. The goal of the panel was to address the idea of “other” or different when working with these populations in our libraries. Rather than doing a presentation, we opened the floor for questions and encouraged participants to ask us anything, no matter how taboo the question might be. The unasked questions can often cause the most harm for staff and patrons.

The 2011 American Community Survey estimates that Washington State has 771,082 residents over the age of eighteen of the civilian non-institutionalized population with a disability. This comes to about 15 percent of Washington’s over-eighteen, non-institutionalized population, who have hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, or self-care difficulties. These hundreds of thousands of residents reside all over the state, and many are already using the resources provided by their local library. Although the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library may be the main resource for reading materials for these individuals, your library can still act as a place of community for these residents. Your outreach and mobile programs are likely already serving these residents, and your library and virtual space can also provide increased access to information about your services and resources. Working to offer an inclusive space for their computer needs will benefit all patrons, and ensuring that your virtual space is usable will make the experience of all patrons more successful. In this article I will address accessibility questions not covered in the “Providing Services” session. Throughout, I will come back to the idea of universal design and the importance of creating an environment that is accepting and open for all users, with or without disabilities.

Assistive Technology in Your Library

The Job Accommodation Network defines assistive technology (AT) as “any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” Assistive technology (AT), also referred to as adaptive technology, can refer to a number of low and high tech items. Both groups of items also have a range of prices, and the potentially pricey computer programs often have free demonstration versions.

Eura Szuwalski is the electronic services and instruction librarian at Washington Talking Book and Braille Library. She co-presented “Providing Library Services to Underserved Individuals” at the 2013 WLA/OLA conference.

Shannon Curry, one of WTBBL’s Readers’ Advisors, uses a Braille display and JAWS

When developing a lab or redesigning an existing space, there are many resources and checklists that can help guide you and your facility managers and information technology departments in creating a space that will be used by many patrons. One such resource provided by the Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT) program at the University of Washington gives a helpful checklist of steps to consider when creating an accessible computer space. First is to include students with disabilities in the discussion of what to include in a lab. Including the patrons, of all ages, who will benefit from the equipment, will help you to purchase materials
The items to put into a lab will depend on the needs of your community. Many communities will benefit from having low-tech items and training staff on using the accessibility features built into Microsoft and Apple operating systems. Typical low-tech items are adjustable tables and desks, alternative keyboards (e.g., large-print, high-contrast, and one-handed), and different pointing devices, (e.g. joysticks, track pads, and head-controlled mice). Closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs) to magnify text and images, and scanners to scan text for optical character recognition (OCR) can also be useful. CCTVs of the past were large, clunky machines that feature a TV and magnifier and were often stationary due to their size. Modern CCTVs are portable, often the size of decks of cards, and can be indispensible for students with visual impairments. Both can be wonderful resources for your patrons, and by bringing the larger CCTVs out of the closets and into the lab, you can create a more welcome environment for those in need of these tools. One of the more popular scanners produced by Kurzweil will scan text and read aloud the scanned information. However, even the scanner sitting in your computer lab can provide the same support with the addition of OCR software, such as OpenBook by Freedom Scientific, which scans and reads the text aloud, or ABBYY FineReader, which scans for text and can transform the text into a variety of file formats.

As mentioned, both Microsoft and Apple operating systems have built in accessibility options that can provide your patrons with magnifiers, speech recognition and, in some cases, a robust screen reader program. Enlarging text, speech recognition, and screen readers can benefit patrons with disabilities, and because these are part of your existing system, there is little to no cost to your library. The key is knowing where to look to learn more and develop an in-house training for your staff. Accessibility training on Microsoft systems can be found on the Microsoft website, which explains the Ease of Access Center that has come with operating systems since Windows Vista. Even Windows XP computers offer the option of enlarging text, which can provide enough magnification for many users. All Apple products provide VoiceOver, a screen reader, and Zoom, a magnifier, out of the box.

More advanced or specialized items can be actual devices, such as refreshable Braille displays, or hardware, such as screen reader or magnifier programs. The devices are often costly; however, you can avoid unused equipment by holding focus groups composed of your patrons. Many computer programs have demonstration versions that allow for a timed use. Establishing a temporary accessible workstation with a trial version of these software programs could be a way to learn from your community if the products are useful. You can also work with individual branches to test which location will receive the most benefit from the equipment. For a more detailed look at AT options, the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) provides free tip sheets for library accessibility. Their 2010 Assistive Technology tip sheet provides very relevant information that can assist you and your patrons. This is a great place to turn for help in understanding the differences among and uses of the devices. Christopher Guder, in his article “Making the Right Decisions about Assistive Technology in Your Library,” provides a study of the different types of products available. Like ASCLA, he stresses the importance of training and states that “there is a substantial difference between offering and supporting a software or hardware tool...specific individuals within a library can be designated as resident ‘experts’ and pursue additional training to become fluent in local adaptive tech.”

It is not possible for every library to purchase every assistive technology item; knowing what is necessary can help you decide on the best option for your community. Knowing what is available and providing training for your staff will make each purchase more beneficial. Creating a plan, using Census data to understand the needs in your community, and working with focus groups will give you a strong foundation to present to your funders. The goal is to "develop a plan that would allow the library to purchase the essential tools which will help the most people.”

**Website Accessibility**

Understanding the guidelines and the standards for creating an accessible website can benefit all staff at the library. There are many terms and acronyms floating around the world of website accessibility; the main ones to consider are Section 508, WCAG, W3C and ARIA, all of which are related to the standards that currently exist for accessible web design. They each have their limits and “only seventeen states have codified laws ensuring web accessibility for their state websites.” Washington is not one of those states, meaning that there is no general state law that requires websites to be usable for all users. This work falls to libraries and their webmasters to take the time to inspect their websites and develop sites that are robust and accessible using the guidelines set up by organizations like the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

There are a few existing standards or guidelines that can help shape a web design or revamp. There are also tools that can help you determine whether your existing website is following the guidelines. The first term, Section 508, is a 1998 amendment of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which states that federal agencies must make their electronic and information technology accessible to users with disabilities. These standards are only a minimum needed for website...
accessibility, and because they are only required by federal agencies and those benefiting from federal funds, they are not standard across all websites. The W3C's Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) developed the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and put them forth as a set of recommended guidelines in 1999. While there is a good deal of overlap between Section 508 and WCAG, WCAG gives more details and provides priorities and a checklist that can better assist webmasters, especially those who are new to creating accessible websites. To address more dynamic features of websites, the WAI-ARIA, the Accessible Rich Internet Applications Suite, was developed. For web designers working in AJAX, JavaScript and related technologies, these developing guidelines will help designers learn what attributes need to be identified for use by screen reader users and those unable to use a mouse.

While there are tools to test how accessible your website is and determine errors, it is important to remember that “no automated tool can be [a substitute for human evaluation], because web accessibility is best evaluated subjectively.” 9 Using a program like WAVE (Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool) from WebAIM will help to expose errors in your site, but without the knowledge of the guidelines set forth in the WCAG checklist, fixing the errors can be overwhelming. Debra Riley-Huff in her article “Web Accessibility and Universal Design: A Primer on Standards and Best Practices for Libraries” explains a few other tools that can be used to evaluate an existing site, but points out that “the way your website is built ultimately determines if it is accessible.” Starting with a well-built website, including proper heading labels, tagged elements, and well-organized structure, will make the evaluation of your site easier.

### Conclusion
This is an introduction to a larger conversation of technology accessibility; having discussions about accessibility in your library will help you to reach and serve more of your patrons on their terms. Changes in procedures and practices must come from all levels: from the administration to the volunteers. All libraries can work with local community centers, assisted-living communities, and senior centers to create partnerships to provide access and, if possible, training on using AT devices. The first step will be creating a plan of action and developing a team of staff and community members to take part in executing each step. Even if you or your staff do not have control over the authoring of your website, your input and evaluation can help those authoring these virtual spaces to consider accessibility when adding features. Libraries, as community space in the real and virtual world, can lead the charge for incorporating universal design in computer access and website creation. Every change in your accessibility practices, no matter how minor, will help your library to remain a vital part of the lives of all of your community members.

### Notes
6. “Assistive Technology,”
Sonia Gustafson is a librarian in the Spokane County Library District.

“Many of our best new practices come from a simple ‘why do we do it this way?’”

A year ago, I was approached with an exciting new challenge: I was asked to serve as the strategic planning coordinator for the Spokane County Library District. I attended PLA’s strategic planning boot camp, presented by June Garcia and Sandra Nelson. I learned about planning for change, including the importance of staff involvement and transparency of process.

One of the important first steps in increasing staff involvement was made when I, a non-manager, was named strategic planning coordinator. I led a staff planning team and over the next several months, we held public forums, interviewed community members, coordinated staff day activities, and shared information with staff at each of our libraries. We created online discussion boards for staff to contribute ideas to the community impact plan.

Now that the plan has been adopted, the real work begins. Staff participation and a culture of innovation are key, given the new priorities, lofty goals, and the knowledge that our changes will be made with no new resources. Innovation isn’t easy though—which is why I was excited to attend the OLA/WLA conference session called “Zen and the Art of Innovation.” Presented by two members of the Seattle Public Library’s Innovation Team, Sarah Hashemi Scott and Heather McNamee, the session focused on how to foster innovative thinking on every level.

The presentation was incredibly relevant and helpful as we begin the implementation of our new community impact plan at SCLD. It’s easy to say we welcome new ideas, but it’s also easy to fall into the “devil’s advocate” role when an idea surfaces. McNamee and Scott referenced Tom Kelley’s book The Ten Faces of Innovation to share roles beyond the “devil’s advocate”; which can derail innovative thought. To counter the “devil’s advocate,” there are ten roles that foster innovation in an organization. Two that will help our district promote innovation are the “cross-pollinator” and the “hurdler.” The “cross-pollinator” draws associations and connections between seemingly unrelated ideas or concepts to break new ground. An example could be involving IT staff members in Makerspace activities along with public services staff. The “hurdler” is a tireless problem-solver who gets a charge out of tackling something that’s never been done before. We have staff that fit into many of the ten faces; some are “caregivers,” “directors,” “storytellers,” and “anthropologists.”

Staff innovation has to be encouraged from the top down. Implementing the community impact plan without new resources has been part of our reality since the beginning of the process. Our administration has been working to foster and implement innovative ideas in light of emerging priorities. McNamee and Scott shared their experience on SPL’s first Innovation Team and gave examples of what worked and how staff on different levels can foster innovation. Diversity is critical to innovation, and even though we struggle with scheduling, we’ve found that taking the time for staff to connect with each other and share ideas has been wonderful and exemplifies a commitment to staff participation. The Seattle team created an online “idea lab.” We use internal discussion boards for all staff to share insights.

McNamee and Scott gave helpful tips on what both managers and frontline staff can do to promote innovation. They suggested fostering transparency and being better about giving a why for changes. Managers need to acknowledge staff concerns, and be open to staff ideas. One of the my favorite parts of the session was this quote shared from Shunryu Suzuki’s Zen Mind, Beginner’s Mind: “In the beginner’s mind, there are many possibilities, but in the expert’s there are few.” It is helpful to take a beginner’s mindset when thinking about change and innovation. At SCLD, we incorporate this idea into page evaluations. They are asked and encouraged to share ideas on how to improve work processes and procedures. Many of our best new practices come from a simple “why do we do it this way?” McNamee and Scott encouraged staff to ask questions and to get familiar with their library’s strategic plan, mission, and goals.

There are some key traits that are part of an innovative mindset: openness and acceptance, transparency, diversity, curiosity, and a freedom to fail. Transparency of process has been very helpful in creating a culture of innovation at SCLD. I continue to post updates and ask for feedback and ideas. Staff are seeing some ideas already being supported and implemented.

Since beginning the strategic planning process, SCLD has been working towards fostering and implementing innovative ideas. With the application of information I learned at “Zen and the Art of Innovation,” I’m even more encouraged by the road ahead.
An Insight into Conference Planning
by Cadi Russell-Sauvé

The Ask
It all started in February 2012. There I was, minding my own business, when an adored acquaintance emailed me out of thin air to ask if I’d be interested in planning the next conference; a joint activity with the OLA.

I hummed and hawed, stuttered and babbled, finally managing a coherent “I’ll think about it.”

“Oh,” he says, “it’ll be a piece of cake. Besides, you already have experience planning conferences.”

“Oh, um, unconferences...”

Not taking anything less than a yes, he retorts: “Well, it would be a shame if anyone were to find out about...you know...that one time you—“

And that’s how I got hooked.

The Planning
“Oh, and by the way—your WLA membership has lapsed.” So I renewed my membership and registered for the 2012 WLA Conference in Tulalip to see how these things were supposed to work.

And then: down to business. First came email introductions to the Conference Chairs, my Co-Chair from Oregon on the Programming Team, and the WLA office staff. Then, the Doodle polls for meeting times. Next, a flurry of getting-up-to-speed correspondence.

As Programming Co-Chair, I was involved in the identification and selection of speakers within budgetary limitations; reading through over 120 session proposals and organizing them into themes; organizing and co-facilitating a five-hour meeting of more than twenty people to discuss and vote on selection of proposals; communicating with volunteers, presenters, committee members, and more. In the year of working on the conference, well over 2,000 emails made their way into my inbox (I counted)!

While the committee was large, the slice of the conference I worked on was manageable and worked independently of the larger group. I forged strong relationships with my Programming Team over email, through virtual meetings, and over the phone. We focused on creating a balanced selection of programming options that would appeal to a wide range of library types and workers. We haggled and argued and compromised. We did not abuse our power—too much. We shared the workload as best we could; we balanced our “regular work” lives with the demands of conference planning. If a ball was dropped, there was always someone near to pick it up and run with it with no ill feelings.

Planning was not a piece of cake. There were some long days combing through proposals, tying up loose ends, managing spreadsheets, addressing technical difficulties: the learning curve was steep. However, through the frustration and seeming endless amount of stuff-that-needs-to-be-done, I had the support of the Conference Chairs, the Programming Co-Chair, and the amazing staff in the WLA office, one of whom worked closely with the Programming Chairs and was a powerful source of knowledge, creativity, and confidence. The depth of her experience and her clarity of counsel allowed us volunteers to respond competently and coherently to problems and issues that arose over the duration of the planning. For any question I posed, I received detailed responses; for every mistake I made, there were at least two people supporting me and helping me fix them; for every success, there was acknowledgement and celebration.

And I learned, in a supportive environment, more about the jigsaw puzzle of conference planning: being responsible for many pieces that then fit into a much larger puzzle that became seamless as all those pieces fell together.

The Event
Working with disembodied voices for a year, not having faces to go with names, made arriving at the conference feel a bit like Cinderella arriving at the ball—an amazing anticipation mingled with anxiety. Meeting my team, who felt (though those thousands of emails) like an extension of my own personality, was one of the most powerful moments. A glance, a squinting the eyes and quizzical turning the head, glancing down at name badges to determine identity, and then the hugs, the excitement, the feeling of success and accomplishment.

Attending the conference was like walking on clouds. Or maybe that was just the exhaustion. Regardless, watching all the pieces fall into place, seeing attendees enjoying themselves and overhearing conversations about the future of libraries and library service and plans to put into action ideas sparked during a session: it was amazing!

The End
The networking and amazing connections and relationships I was able to build aside, conference planning for WLA was worth the work, the clogged inbox, the color-coded spreadsheets and copious notes. I learned about new initiatives at the local, state, and cross-border level, discovered the amazing breadth of activities libraries are engaged in from infants to elders, and engaged with all types of libraries and perspectives.

And did I mention making deep and lasting connections with fantastic people?

Would I do it again? Yes, why—are you asking?
Busy in Hot-lanta: Washington Reps attend CSLP Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia
by Josephine Camarillo

Summer reading 2014! Or 2015? 2016? Wait: have we even started 2013?

Answer: Done, yes, almost, and that was soooo last year!

On April 17–19, Martha Shinners from the Washington State Library (WSL), Josephine Camarillo from Ellensburg Public Library, and Meredith Hale from Pierce County Library attended the annual Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) held in hot Atlanta, Georgia. During this meeting, future summer programs were planned, themes and slogans were voted on, and activity ideas were discussed.

The CSLP is a consortium of states working together to provide high-quality summer reading program materials for children, teens, and adults at the lowest cost possible for their public libraries. Every fall, the Washington State Library sends out program manuals to all libraries in Washington to help with their summer reading program planning and promotion. These manuals are created two years in advance by CSLP committee members. Each year, three representatives from Washington attend: WSL’s Youth Coordinator, a second representative selected by WSL, and a third rep selected by WLA’s Children’s and Young Adult Services interest group (CAYAS).

The three-day meeting began with the formalities of introductions, agenda, minutes, reports, and all that other good stuff. The next few hours were spent discussing slogans for the 2015 Heroes theme (2014’s theme having been soooo last year). Over fifteen previously suggested slogans were reviewed. After some hemming and hawing, discussions and challenges, each state was given three votes, and our 2015 slogans for the children, teen and adult programs were decided. Thereafter, activity ideas were suggested and compiled, and away we went, our creative minds collaborating harmoniously! The group also voted on potential artists to design the slogans and posters.

Probably the most contentious portion of the meeting came when deciding the 2016 theme. It was a close battle between Environment/Hiking/Woods and Wellness/Fitness/Sports. Many sided with the upcoming Olympic Games in 2016 and others bemoaned the pressure put on kids playing competitive sports. More voiced the opinion that wellness does not necessarily mean competition and that, in the theme’s favour, we would be reaching a broader audience more familiar with recreation on the field rather than with books. But contenders claimed pressure of social images of fitness figures and the upset of those patrons not interested in sports at all. In the end, a theme was decided with an overwhelming seventy-nine votes for Wellness/Fitness/Sports, twenty-one votes for Environment, and DIY (Do-it-Yourself) a close third with seventeen votes.

Upcoming program themes and slogans are as follows:

2014 Summer Reading Slogans (general theme: Science)
- Children: Fizz, Boom, Read!
- Teens: Spark a Reaction!
- Adult: Literary Elements

2015 Summer Reading Slogans (general theme: Heroes)
- Children: Every Hero Has a Story
- Teens: Unmask!
- Adult: Escape the Ordinary

2016 Summer Reading Theme: Wellness/Fitness/Sports

It was a busy yet productive week with a true collaborative effort amongst all state representatives across the country. It was also a great opportunity to meet and network with other librarians in the field from all types of libraries. With the first word in CSLP being Collaborative, it was truly a collaboration of librarians’ ideas, expertise, and cost to produce a high-quality summer reading program.

Even though only three representatives can attend the annual meeting, everyone has a voice! If you have any activity ideas, suggestions, or questions/comments regarding summer reading (incentives, themes, slogans), please email Martha Shinners at martha.shinners@sos.wa.gov and she will take it to the next annual meeting. Watch for future emails regarding input for upcoming programs. Your voice matters, we just need to hear it. The next annual meeting will be April 7–9, 2014 in Biloxi, Mississippi.

L–R: Meredith Hale, Martha Shinners, Little Red Hen, Josephine Camarillo, at the Center for Puppetry Arts, Atlanta
As we gear up for this year’s *Reflections: 22 Years of WALE* Conference in Chelan, October 28-30, 2013, I have had the opportunity to chat with others on why they come to WALE conferences. Personally, my favorite things about attending the Washington Library Employee (WALE) Conference are meeting new people, learning neat stuff to make my work easier or better for our patrons, and going to Campbell’s Resort—it’s like a mini-vacation with incredible scenery and serenity. Not to mention that I sometimes feel more productive traveling to and from a conference than I do during a week of staring at my office computer.

What more could you ask for? Here are five excellent reasons shared with me: reasons why you, too, should attend the 2013 WALE Conference in Chelan:

**Network:** The WALE Conference is a great chance to meet new people! Conferences really do take all the hard work out of networking by providing the perfect context to go and quiz people about their work. Nobody minds if you ask them awkward questions—most are enthused to share about their work.

**Enrich Your Life, Increase Your Knowledge:** By attending conferences you get to hear about really great work that is being done in libraries all over the state. It is rare to return from a conference without bringing back an idea to apply to your own library. There’s always a nugget to be gleaned from the conference sessions or informal chats with colleagues at mealtime or social times.

**Rekindle Your Passion:** Conferences are a great way to refuel yourself. Just when you are feeling worn out from the day-to-day challenges, conferences can give you the boost you need to get reenergized and motivated about your library job.

**Enjoy the Scenery:** This year’s WALE Conference will be at Campbell’s Resort in Chelan, or “Washington’s Playground.” Lake Chelan promises four seasons worth of memories—deep blue water, 300 days of sunshine, world-class wineries, activities for all ages, gourmet restaurants, and small-town charm. Since you are investing time in traveling, you might consider spending an extra day or two relaxing or exploring. For even more fun, plan to do it with a friend.

**Support Your Profession:** Participating in events and activities that are important to your profession is essential. You have a responsibility to be knowledgeable about your profession, and to contribute to the expansion. When you show up at a conference, the empowerment that you feel is exhilarating. You can also list conferences you’ve participated in or attended on your resume.

Consider that you get a couple of joyful days connecting with your peers and enhancing your knowledge, and in one picturesque place! That doesn’t even count what you will learn from the sessions that will allow you to continue to develop your library career. Online registration for the WALE conference will be available mid-July. Come plan to share a few days with your old and new friends at the 2013 WALE Conference in Chelan.

Featured Speakers for the 2013 WALE Conference include:

- **Robert Dugoni,** award winning author of several books including *The Cyanide Canary* and the David Sloane series, with the latest in the series being *The Conviction* ([http://www.robertdugoni.com](http://www.robertdugoni.com)).
- **Part of the Unshelved Duo, Gene Ambaum** will present *Surviving the Public: Customer Service the Unshelved Way* and explain how to stop worrying and enjoy difficult people.
- **Award-winning reporter, editor, and publisher, John Hughes,** is the Chief Historian for *The Legacy Project* and trustee of the Washington State Historical Society.
REFLECTIONS
22 Years of WALE

October 28-30, 2013
Campbell’s Resort at Lake Chelan
Proactive Patron Education
by Kirsten Edwards

Both government and corporations have long understood that it is important to convince the customer that he needs what they offer—not that they can offer what he wants (or needs). After all, “it’s not a bug—it’s a feature!”

Thus, as the economy remains sluggish, and budgets stagnate or shrink, automation is employed to fill the service gap created when businesses and libraries can no longer afford to hire more front-line staff. Libraries have joined the ranks of grocery stores and other shopping emporia in employing “self-checkout” stations, where software completely replaces library staff in every way, except for helpfulness, accuracy, and ease of use.

Still, with self-checkout stations at nearly every library, some patrons continue to resist the change, insisting that human interaction is a fundamental part of the library experience. Our challenge therefore is to proactively educate our patrons on the virtues of self-checkout. To that end I offer this edifying display:

The top ten “How To” books you’d really rather check out all by yourself:

9. How to Hide Money from Your Husband by Heidi Evans
8. The Joy of Self-Pleasuring by Edward Rowan
7. How to Cheat on Your Taxes by Thomas Kill
6. It’s Not All in Your Head: A Couple’s Guide to Overcoming Impotence by Bruce Makenzie
4. How to Clear Your Adult and Juvenile Criminal Records by William Rinehart
3. Put Hemorrhoids and Constipation Behind You by Kenneth Yasny

2. The American College of Physicians Home Medical Guide to Urinary Incontinence

And the number one item you don’t necessarily want a bunch of middle-aged female library staff helping you check out:

1. The Better Built Bondage Book: The Complete Guide To Making Your Own Sex Toys, Furniture And BDSM Equipment by Douglas Kent

* And yes, all of these titles are real, and can be checked out or interlibrary loaned from a library near you.
People and Places

Four Ellensburg teens representing the Ellensburg Public Library (Serah Manning, Grace Pearsons, Sierra Cook, and Miranda Sherrell) won top honors for the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) best video in Washington state promoting the 2013 Teen Summer Reading Program “Beneath the Surface.” They were awarded $275 in prize money. Their video is titled “Reading: The Ultimate Boredom Buster.” This video competition is in its third year of encouraging teens to get involved with promoting summer reading and public libraries. Each participating state selected one winning video to be named the official CSLP Teen Video Challenge state winner for 2013. Watch the video at http://www.dailyrecordnews.com/free/scrapbook/win-video-contest/article_825480ae-b1e1-11e2-934e-001a4bcf887a.html

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has presented Pierce County Library System with the National Medal for Museum and Library Service. The IMLS National Medal is the nation’s highest recognition of museums and libraries for service to the community and celebrates institutions that make a difference for individuals, families, and communities. Pierce County Library is the first library in the State of Washington to earn this award. IMLS selected the medal winners from nationwide nominations of institutions that demonstrate innovative approaches to public service and exceed expected levels of community outreach. At a ceremony in Washington, D.C. in May, IMLS presented the award to Joelyn Cruz, a person IMLS selected as an individual whose life has been enhanced with services from the Library and the Library’s Executive Director Neel Parikh.

Talented teenage artists and writers demonstrated their creative skills through original poetry, short story, drawing, and photography in Pierce County Library System’s Teen Writing & Art Contest, “Our Own Expressions.” Between January 21 and February 24, students submitted nearly 1,000 poems, short stories, drawings, and photographs. Volunteers, including library staff and Pierce County Library Foundation Board members, reviewed the entries. Professional writers and artists selected this year’s winners. The Library System published all of the winning contest entries and distributed them throughout Pierce County Libraries and to the winning students’ schools. At a free public event in May, the winning authors and artists showcased their work.

Thanks to a grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, the Burlington Library Foundation is launching a year-long intergenerational program in partnership with the Skagit Valley Genealogical Society. The “Making Connections through ROOTS Project” is designed to educate teens and community genealogists on basic library research skills.

The Washington State Library announces the award of a $200,000 grant from the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation which, together with LSTA funds, will be used to develop a mobile app to connect patrons with their libraries. After completion of a formal procurement process, and with advisory committee advice, Boopsie was selected as the vendor for this project. Development costs are covered for public, academic, and tribal libraries. One year of subscription costs are covered for public and tribal libraries. An internet-based marketing campaign is also planned. As of June 1st, over 40 libraries have signed on; more are welcome. Additional information, including a timeline, listing of app features, and the intent to participate form can be found at http://sos.wa.gov/q/app.

On June 8, Grandview Library and Grandview Friends of the Library sponsored a presentation by “Predators of the Heart,” a nonprofit organization which runs an animal sanctuary in Anacortes and is “the largest traveling wildlife exhibitor in the Northwest.” Their goal is to educate children about wildlife “not only to teach the facts about the animals, but to use an approach that leads to an appreciation, affection, compassion and respect for these living creatures.”

First Lady Michelle Obama presents the National Medal for Museum and Library Service to PCLS

Predators of the Heart at the Grandview Library
Merit Award for Outstanding Service
Mary Bucher Ross, Consultant and Trainer

Mary Ross is a remarkable trainer in both face-to-face and online environments; Mary has taught, mentored, and inspired trainers throughout the Washington library community. As a staff trainer in Washington libraries, training consultant for many library services, online instructional designer, founding member of Washington Library Trainers, and Coordinator of Continuing Education for WLA, Mary has educated us and enabled us to educate others. Through her talent as a teacher and her passion for libraries and learning, she has created a legacy of effective continuing education in Washington libraries.

CAYAS Visionary Award
Shannon Peterson, Youth Services Manager, Kitsap Regional Library

Shannon was singled out for her amazing dedication and enthusiasm at both a local and national level. Amongst her many creative programs and outreach efforts in her community, Shannon is also the president-elect of YALSA.

WLFFTA Friend/Foundation Award #2
Brenda Kochis, President, Friends of the Spokane Public Library

Brenda has gone beyond traditional Friends of Spokane Public Library activities. She listens to library needs and advocates to her Friends’ board in support of those needs. When the library is discussed at a city council meeting, Brenda is there to speak on behalf of the library. When the city council, at short notice, put a levy on the ballot to generate additional revenue for the library, Brenda became the backbone of the phone bank at the Yes for Spokane Libraries campaign. With her successful book store, generous financial support for library programs and stellar advocacy work, Brenda represents a true and vigorous library champion.

WLA Honorary Lifetime Membership
Joan Airoldi, Retired, Former Director, Whatcom County Library System

Joan has made a lasting impact on the libraries in Whatcom County and on the state of Washington. She helped co-write the first Whatcom READS! One Book grant, a program by which all members of the Whatcom Libraries Collaborate, Village Books, and many school districts work together to sponsor and to create a community book club and bring the author to Whatcom County every year. Through her leadership and hard work, Whatcom READS! has become a non-profit corporation. Nationally, Joan Airoldi is recognized as a champion of First Amendment rights. She received the 2005 Pen/Newman’s Own Intellectual Freedom Award when she challenged the FBI’s effort to search patron records. All of the award money, $25,000, Joan donated to create the Whatcom County Library Foundation. Joan has had an impact on the Whatcom County Library System and all of the libraries in Whatcom County, on literacy, on lifelong learning, and on intellectual freedom.

WLA Honorary Lifetime Membership
Pat Partovi, Director, Spokane Public Library

Pat worked diligently with the Legislative Planning Committee and the public library directors to seek creative solutions to the chronic underfunding experienced by many of our state’s municipal libraries. She and a small working group even drafted proposed legislation to give city libraries access to the type of funding certain park districts and fire districts benefit from. While the legislation was never floated, Pat’s concepts and language laid the groundwork for future WLA efforts in Olympia.

WALE Outstanding Employee of the Year
Brian Soneda, Director, Mount Vernon Public Library

Brian is one of the biggest reasons the WALE Conference still exists. After a few bad years when the conference lost both money and attendees, the WALE board was informed that the WLA board was thinking of doing away with the annual fall WALE Conference. WALE rallied to host a magnificent conference in 2011 at the historic Davenport Hotel in Spokane. Although WALE members managed to pull off a spectacular conference that made a profit in 2011, it was Brian Soneda who recognized the passion of WALE members and told the WLA board that he had made an executive decision and had given his okay to schedule the 2012 conference. Brian has been, and continues to be, a proud and passionate supporter of libraries and library employees.

WLFFTA Trustee Award #2
Jacquelyn DeFazio, Trustee, Sno-Isle Libraries

Jacquelyn has served on the Sno-Isle Libraries Board of Trustees since 2004. During her tenure, she has been an unswerving supporter of intellectual freedom, services to communities with limited library resources, and avid support of library staff. Due to Jacquelyn’s foresight, experience, and sound judgment, Sno-Isle Libraries successfully weathered the downturn in the economy—providing compelling documentation to voters for a levy lid lift election in 2009 when many others in the library community felt that a request for a tax increase was politically adverse. This was accomplished with no staff furloughs, library closures, or staff layoffs. Following the levy lid increase in 2009, Jacquelyn worked with staff to maintain service levels in all of Sno-Isle’s libraries, while at the same time enacting cost saving measures to ensure the best use of public funds. She was a strong advocate for establishing a pilot library project on Camano Island, which currently serves over 15,660 individuals who previously needed to drive to another community for library services.

Awards Committee
Tim Mallory, Committee Chair
Carolynne Myall
John Sheller
WLA’s 2013 Maryan E. Reynolds Scholarship Winners

by Mary Ross

At the 2012 Democratic Convention, Michelle Obama said: “When you've worked hard, and done well, and walked through that doorway of opportunity, you do not slam it shut behind you. You reach back, and you give other folks the same chances that helped you succeed.”

That’s the way that I think of our WLA Graduate Study Scholarships, as our opportunity to reach back and give others a chance to succeed. The scholarships are an investment in the success of our future library professionals, as well as in the success of WLA as a library professional’s organization. At the April Board meeting I saw five WLA scholarship recipients who are now in leadership positions: Bo Kinney (2008), John George (2010), Anna Shelton (2012), Brianna Hoffman (2012), and this year’s recipient Richard Counsil.

As chair of the WLA Scholarship Committee for the past two years, it’s been my privilege to introduce the scholarship recipients at the awards lunch during the annual conference. The 2013 scholarship recipients (who also received grants to attend the 2013 OLA/WLA Conference) are Richard Counsil and Andrea Hermanson.

Richard works as a Library Associate IV at Seattle Public Library. He graduates from the University of Washington Information School (iSchool) with an MLIS degree in June, 2013, and is also working on a Master of Public Administration. He has been the iSchool rep to the WLA Board and was instrumental in organizing WLA’s Student Interest Group. In his application, Richard said: “I want a career in libraries because I want my work to count for something valuable to as many people as possible.” He values the diversity of the communities he serves, saying, “my ability to listen, to provide options, and tailor my communication style to the needs of others has made my work in libraries both fun and meaningful.”

Andrea also finishes her MLIS degree from the iSchool in June. She works as a reference assistant at Seattle Central Community College and as the librarian at University House, a retirement community in Seattle’s Wallingford neighborhood. As a student she has pursued work-study opportunities with Seattle Public Library, and served on the organizing committee for the iYouth Conference, and as co-secretary of the UW student chapter of ALA. Andrea says: “Librarianship incorporates my core values and interests: my deep-rooted commitment to community and public service, my unabashed love of books and learning, and my passion for working with people. As a new librarian I am most excited about the connector role, connecting people with information and services that are empowering and often life-changing.”

Congratulations to our scholarship recipients!

Each year, WLA awards as many scholarships as our funds allow. The process attracts students enrolled in the residential and online programs at the iSchool, and in the online programs at Emporia State and San José State Universities. This year’s applications were outstanding, and it was hard to determine which applicants would receive scholarships. These difficult decisions were made by a committee, which includes:

- Carolynne Myall, head of the Collection Services division of Eastern Washington University Libraries, and president of the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALCTS), a division of the American Library Association. Carolynne is a past president of WLA and brings a wealth of experience to the committee.

- Nancy Huling, head of Reference and Research Services Division, University of Washington Suzzallo and Allen Libraries. Nancy has been a member of the committee for many years, and her historical perspective was invaluable to me as a new chair.

- José Garcia, teen/reference librarian at the Lake Hills Library, King County Library System. As president of Northwest REFORMA, José is able to help us promote scholarships more broadly and reach REFORMA members.

- Valerie McBeth, director of the Lummi Library, Northwest Indian College. Valerie has also been the Special Libraries representative on the Library Council of Washington.

Mary Ross is the chair of the WLA Scholarship Committee

Continued on page 30
The Learning Curve

Active Learning: Just Do It
by Betha Gutsche

The New Trends in Learning session, sponsored by the Washington Library Trainers interest group (WALT) at the 2013 OLA/WLA conference, was billed as “a whole new look at training and learning.” It was more than a “look”; it was an experiment. It turned out to be a new approach to conference learning and participation. When I told the AV setup person that we didn’t need a podium or a projector or a screen, and that we didn’t have a PowerPoint presentation, his look of surprise gave me a clue as to how rare that is. For me, having spent many months researching what education innovators are doing with learner-centered discovery, it would have felt too contradictory to deliver a standard sage-on-the-stage presentation. I wanted to put the participants in the driver’s seat of their own learning.

We engaged the assembled participants in a real-time laboratory of learning. Instead of lecturing them on what I have learned from researching learning trends, we put many of those trends and strategies into practice in a highly interactive session. The learning was structured around a set of nine “discovery documents,” each a two-page summary of significant ideas. The titles of these documents, which are referred to throughout this article, are as follows:

1. Brain Rules
2. Drive: the Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us
3. Teaching Adults Anything
4. How the Flipped Classroom Is Radically Transforming Learning
5. Find the Intrinsic Game
6. Learner-Centered Teaching
7. Self-Directed Achievement
8. Very Pinteresting! The hot social network is taking educators by storm
9. The Mobile Effect

As participants were unpacking the documents, we were all applying many of the concepts and strategies contained in them.

Picture a room of ten round tables, ten people per table, expectant, waiting to increase their understanding of new trends in training and learning. This is how the session progressed:

Connections first
It’s important to get learners connected to each other and to the subject right from the start, according to Sharon Bowman in “Teaching Adults Anything.” After a brief orientation about the session (and an explanation about the lack of PowerPoint), we asked everyone to pair up and share what motivates them to learn. The room immediately sprang to life as participants connected with each other, drew on past experience, and triggered reflections on learning—the topic of the hour.

After five minutes of sharing, we asked for shout-outs of some of the motivations discussed. Comments such as “curiosity,” “life is more...”
interesting,” “want to change and grow,” all spoke to intrinsic motivations, or pursuit of learning for internal, personal satisfaction. Half of the comments reflected some external pressure coupled with an internal desire to achieve: “keep up with grandchildren,” “be a step ahead of students,” or “necessity.” Nobody mentioned any purely extrinsic (external) rewards, such as a promotion or a tangible prize, as a motivation to learn.

Exploration and discovery
At each table, each person was asked to read one article from the group of “discovery docs,” so that each person was reading something different from everyone else at the table. As all participants delved into individual reading, the entire room fell silent. After the hubbub of the introductions, it was a little unnerving for the facilitators to have five minutes of silence—an experiment indeed.

Dr. John Medina says in “Brain Rule” Number Twelve, “we are powerful and natural explorers.” Exploration breeds curiosity to explore even more. If learning is an adventure, each reader was pursuing a five-minute adventure into new knowledge. A primary intention of learner-centered teaching is to instill individual responsibility for learning; it aligns with the necessity of a lifetime of independent, self-motivated learning. The assembled participants fully embraced this responsibility. As one participant later said, “We each owned our document.”

Teachback
After the quiet of the reading period, we asked each person to take two minutes to “teach” their tablemates about the document they had just read. Adding to their responsibility for owning the learning, they now had to explain it to others. The room exploded into participatory conversation. This activity supports the three most powerful intrinsic motivators identified by Daniel Pink in “Drive: the Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us”—autonomy, mastery and purpose. Each person had the autonomy to put their own lens on the topic. They were encouraged to demonstrate an incremental progress toward mastery by teaching back to peers. And they were empowered by a sense of purpose as the “expert” of the moment entrusted to enlighten others.

“Brain Rule” Number Four says, “We don’t pay attention to boring things.” Dr. Medina and others cite the ten-minute rule: “Audience attention drops precipitously at about ten-minute intervals. You must do something emotionally relevant at least every ten minutes to regain attention.” Apparently, our session participants were providing their own continuous stimulation and emotional relevance. When we called for an end to the discussion after twenty minutes, there were cries of “give us more time!” We allowed five more minutes—two and a half times past the ten-minute rule.

The reports from every table clearly indicated that a lot of learning had gone on in a half-hour. Not only did all reporters accurately represent the knowledge in the documents, they made connections between ideas and filtered them through their own experience. One participant reflected back on the warm-up exercise about motivations to learn, noting the lack of extrinsic motivators and predominance of intrinsic motivators the group had come up with spontaneously, before they even knew the terms or distinctions. Another person made the surprising association that being granted the extra five minutes to continue their conversation was like receiving an unexpected reward in a game and made the bonus time even more compelling. Another person acknowledged the power of collaborative peer learning, exclaiming “I love my table!”

Synthesis and application
Real learning is all about synthesis and application to one’s work. We wanted to push beyond conceptual knowledge to something contextual and concrete. We asked each individual to write down on an index card a specific training or learning event to which they would like to apply one or more of the ideas they had just learned about. Then we asked them to write down one idea, concept, or strategy they might try to enhance this training or learning experience. The index card was then passed to the right twice so that two other peers at the table could fertilize the original idea with their added suggestions. Again, the room buzzed with activity, coming up with as many fresh approaches to learning as there were participants. Here are just three examples:

Citation writing
One librarian admitted that teaching students how to write proper citations was a least favorite aspect of her work. She was inspired by the “Flipped Classroom” and the “Intrinsic Game” ideas to breathe new life into the effort for herself and her students:

- Have students look at examples of correct citations before class.
- In class, make a game out of it, with students working independently or in small teams.
  - Award points for finding errors so students are motivated to increase their point totals and thus their attention to the details of citations.
  - Create levels of achievements, with books as the first level, moving up to magazines, and then websites.

Database classes for parents and teachers
A school librarian needs to instruct parents and teachers on the
The Learning Curve

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Erin Krake, director of the Roslyn Public Library. Erin was herself a recipient of a WLA graduate study scholarship in 2003. As the director of a small public library, she brings a special service perspective to the process.

Daria Cal, supervising librarian, Seattle Public Library. Daria was the recipient of an SPL scholarship to attend library school and is actively involved in her sorority’s scholarship program.

The committee recognizes that the cost of an MLIS degree is increasing every year. In their applications, we see that MLIS students are often completing their coursework while working part-time or even full-time and participating in professional associations like WLA and ALA. The estimated cost of an MLIS degree at the iSchool is $44,415, for either the two-year residential or three-year online degree. And that’s only the tuition.

The WLA Scholarships are named for Maryan E. Reynolds, Washington State Librarian from 1951 to 1974. Reynolds joined the state library staff in the 1940s and was a leader in the development and expansion of state library service in Washington State. Her book, *The Dynamics of Change*, provides a history of the Washington State Library from its territorial beginnings in 1853 through the late 1990s.

This year we are changing the timing for the scholarships. In previous years, the scholarship cycle was announced in the fall, with applications due at the end of the year. Going forward we will announce the scholarship cycle in June, with applications due mid-July. This change was suggested by Joe Janes, UW professor and MLIS program chair. Moving the cycle from winter to summer quarter means that applicants will have completed three quarters and will have a clearer picture of their professional goals. Faculty will also be better able to write letters of recommendation.

New Scholarship Committee chair Sue Anderson will implement this cycle. We are also hopeful that the scholarship fundraising that is a priority for WLA president Jennifer Wiseman will result in our ability to implement another committee and Board priority—to reinstate the conference attendance grants for WLA members.

On behalf of Richard and Andrea and all of our scholarship recipients, I want to express thanks to those who have contributed to scholarship funds in the past. Now, more than ever, because of the increasing cost of tuition, we need your help! We need you to reach back and help these young professionals succeed.

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WLA Communiqué

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effective use of the library’s databases so that they can help their children and students. Building on ideas from “Teach Adults Anything,” “Brain Rules,” and “Flipped Classroom,” she intends to boost the level of engagement.

- Provide a short video to watch before class on how a database helped a child succeed.
- Identify a list of homework “crisis” points (late, don’t know the info, how to cite, beginning stages/lost at sea, information overload).
  - Enliven the list of crisis points with funny photos to add memorable visuals and humor.
- Have participants circle an objective (crisis point) they want to tackle; work individually or in pairs to use the databases to accomplish their objective.
- Once they’ve learned a database skill, teach it to the rest of the group.
- Or, have the kids teach the parents!

**Discovery learning**

If I were handing out awards for “best application of learning” from our session, first place would go to Marie Martin, web system administrator for Washington County Cooperative Library Services. Marie took the ideas and techniques she learned at the New Trends session and put them immediately to use at the conference in her “Weed Your Website” session. When she learned that one of her co-presenters was sick and out of commission, she had to make an impromptu, short-notice adjustment to her presentation plans. She decided to try the discovery learning process. She collected relevant articles, asked the attendees to each read one, and then present a summary to their small group. Marie reported that the participants had great discussions and good observations or “aha!” ideas to share: “For being the last session on a lovely Friday afternoon, they stayed very engaged and interested!”

When the learner-centered experience works well, it is as exhilarating for the “teachers” as for the learners. Much of the credit for the success of this session goes to the participants in the room, who were willing to play the “game,” to dive into the experiment with enthusiasm, and to amplify their shared learning and effective synthesis of the ideas. As two participants wrote in their evaluations of the session: “This was an exercise and experiment that worked brilliantly.” “Fast, fun and fabulous! Made me think and want to take action.”

I hope everyone is motivated to try some active learning. Just do it!
I’d Rather Be Reading

A Western Girl

by Andrea Gough

I am a western girl. I grew up in Idaho and have now settled in Seattle; in between I tried out the East Coast, the Midwest, the Southeast, and overseas. In many ways, it wasn’t until I left Big Sky Country that I realized how much “being a Westerner” was an identity. Then, in my mid-twenties, the reader in me discovered Novels of the West (nomenclature by Nancy Pearl; grandiose capitalization mine). These are distinct from the classic Westerns of Louis L’Amour and Zane Grey, which have frontier settings, a pitched battle between good and bad, a solitary male hero who rides in when the trouble begins and often literally rides out when everything is set right again. For me, Novels of the West are instead characterized by the western landscape itself: there’s always that super strong sense of place. Many of the characters may still be loners, and there is often still a sense of justice, but it is all more ambiguous.

Here, then, are some of my favorite novels of the west:

I came to the Walt Longmire series, by Craig Johnson, from a patron recommendation. She had read the two books the library had available as ebooks and loved them so much she put the remaining print books on hold; it was the first time she had been in the physical library in years. I thought devotion that intense warranted checking out, and so I took home the only book on the shelves: book five in the series, The Dark Horse. And then I obsessively read all the other books. The series revolves around Walt Longmire, sheriff of Absaroka County, Wyoming. This is a mystery series, and there is a central unifying and often complex puzzle to each book, but I mostly read them in order to hang out with Walt and his friends and coworkers for a while (get in the truck and drive to the station; have a beer with Henry Standing Bear; go to the retirement home and play chess with the former sheriff; try not to die in a blizzard whilst hunting down a serial killer). Johnson is also a master at bringing the Wyoming setting to life: everything from small towns to the reservation, from remote mountains to a top-notch horse ranch, with a detour to the junkyard. These books really make me want to vacation in Wyoming; and that’s saying a lot, considering that driving through Wyoming was the part I dreaded most of every road trip in the past thirty years. The fifth book, The Dark Horse, makes a lovely starting point.

I’m not the first person to love Patrick deWitt’s The Sisters Brothers—it truly is a masterful reimagining of classic Western tropes. Hired guns, and brothers, Eli and Charlie Sisters have been ordered by the Commodore to track and kill Hermann Kermit Warm (one of my all-time favorite character names). DeWitt takes what could be a classic bloodthirsty tale and, through the doubts and deadpan delivery of Eli Sisters, transforms it into a comedic masterpiece, complete with palpable frontier landscapes from Oregon down to California, circa 1851.

Girlchild, by Tupelo Hassman, is the first person narrative of a very smart girl growing up in—and trying to grow out of—a Reno trailer park so dusty and desolate you can feel the grit in your teeth. As a lifeline, she seizes upon an outdated copy of the Girl Scout Handbook and becomes a troop of one. Hassman plays with form in some fun ways that also serve the story, including Rory’s diary entries, reports from social workers, math story problems, and chapter headings from the Handbook (The Right Use of Your Body; Finding Your Way When Lost). This isn’t an easy book to read—a lot of things happen to Rory. But I cared what happened because I cared so much about her—I just wanted her to be successful and find what she needed, and everything else.

The solo non-fiction title in this list is Winterdance: The Fine Madness of Running the Iditarod, by Gary Paulsen. Paulsen is best known as an author of children’s books (Hatchet, etc), and so I was blown away by the voice in this memoir (Manly! Occasionally profane!). Essentially, in the late 1980s Paulsen was in northern Minnesota in a small cabin with his wife, living simply, hunting with a trapline that he checked by sled with four sled dogs. Then one day Paulsen decided to add eleven dogs to his team and run the Iditarod. The entire second half of the book recounts his passage on the Iditarod Trail, a glimpse into the intense corners of Alaska’s uninhabited land. Paulsen has a wonderful, conversational tone that draws you in while also painting a detailed, vivid picture. Each stage in his training for and running of the Iditarod is clear and fascinating; it totally gripped me. I was also surprised by how many times I laughed out loud while reading. Just wait until you get to the part where his butt actually catches on fire. After you read this, pick up Paulsen’s novella Puppies, Dogs, and Blue Northerns, all about his lead dog Cookie.

To round out this list, a few brief mentions of some truly fine short story collections. From Annie Proulx, a trio of collections containing Wyoming Stories—Close Range: Wyoming Stories; Bad Dirt: Wyoming Stories 2; and Fine Just the Way It Is: Wyoming Stories 3. I think Proulx must be the reigning queen of western snapshots, perfectly sketching a moment, a place, a person with sparse and crystalline style. In my opinion, carrying on the tradition set by Proulx—with a modern Montana twist—is Maile Meloy in her collections Both Ways is the Only Way I Want It and Half in Love.
## Business Members
- FairVega Russian Library Services
- Garfield County
- McHugh Management Consulting
- Rice Fergus Miller

## Friend of the Library-Group
- Friends of Aberdeen Library
- Friends of the Anacortes Library
- Friends of the Roslyn Library

## Institutional Members
- Asotin County Library
- Bellingham Public Library
- Big Bend CC Library
- Burlington Public Library
- City of Richland - Library
- Clark College Library
- Clover Park Technical College Library
- Columbia County Rural Library Dist
- Eastern Washington University Libraries
- Ellensburg Public Library
- Everett Public Library
- Foley Ctr. Library Gonzaga University
- Fort Vancouver Regional Library District
- Grandview Library
- Green River Community College/Holman Library
- Highline Community College Library
- James Brooks Library, Central WA University

- Jefferson County Library
- King County Library System
- Kitsap Regional Library
- La Conner Regional Library District
- Liberty Lake Municipal Library
- Libraries of Stevens County
- Longview Public Library
- Lopez Island Library
- Mount Vernon City Library
- Neill Public Library
- North Olympic Library System
- Orcas Island Library District
- Pierce County Library System
- Ritzville Library District #2
- San Juan Public Library
- Seattle Public Library

- Sedro-Woolley Public Library
- Skagit Valley College/Norwood
- Sno-Isle Libraries
- Spokane County Library District
- Spokane Public Library
- Timberland Regional Library
- University of Washington Libraries
- Upper Skagit Library
- Walla Walla Community College Library
- Washington State Library
- Whatcom Community College
- Whatcom County Library System
- Whitman County Library
- Yakima Valley Community College
- Yakima Valley Libraries
- Yale Valley Library District