I want to start by thanking WLA’s Immediate Past President, Tim Mallory. Tim worked extraordinarily hard for WLA. He came into the position with core values and remained committed to them. Sometimes what he thought was a good idea was not, shall we say, heartily embraced by the membership. To paraphrase Chumbawamba, I’ve seen Tim get knocked down, but he always got up again (and with his customary sense of humor intact). Through it all, his leadership helped WLA accomplish great things for the association and its membership.

Tim probably has his own highlights from his presidency but here are two of mine: First, his work with Friends of the Washington State Library to pull a fair number of us together on February 1, 2010, to go down to Olympia to lobby for the State Library and “Maintenance of Effort” and, second, his tireless cheer-leading for Library Snapshot Day, which helped make LSD a broadly successful event across the state. Thanks, Tim, and, by the way, expect calls from me asking for your advice over the next two years—maybe this will help me avoid some of that “get knocked down” part of being President.

Tim seemed very relaxed at WLA Conference. It was almost as if some great weight was soon to be lifted from his shoulders. (Wait a minute…) But it was also because the 2011 WLA Conference was a great conference. Big tip of the hat to Mary Wise, Conference Coordinator, her Conference Committee, and to WLA staff led by Dana Murphy-Love. With apologies to Lyanda Haupt and Tim Egan (both truly engaging, thought-provoking speakers), and to the many skilled session presenters, my favorite memory of WLA Conference 2011 will be of coming to the Vendor Reception and walking, almost literally, into an array of stunningly beautiful birds of prey. The raptors were so fitting for the conference theme of “Libraries Take Flight” (but of course Yakima Valley Libraries’ Linda McCracken knew that when she came up with the idea).

But it’s broader than that. I’m not new to the Mallory Agenda. I didn’t call it that of course, but the partnering/collaborating/dialoging thing is a core value for me, too. Recently I attended two events, a “Dropout Prevention—Local Solutions” meeting and the last graduation ceremony of a wonderful program at Skagit Valley College called Life Transitions. Life Transitions students are women who, through divorce or death of a spouse, job loss, poor life choices, or some combination of these and other factors, find themselves needing help getting their lives back on track through training but also through the support network the classes provide. (It is a regional tragedy that this program is a casualty of college budget cuts.) At both events, I was asked by some, “Nice to see you Brian, but why are you here?” And because the questioners were people in the community I like and admire, I didn’t say “How the hell could I not be?” But I thought it. Again, no person, no library, no association can walk alone and hope to succeed in these hard times.

With the support of WLA’s highly professional staff, a quality WLA Board that the membership in its wisdom has elected into office, and the quality volunteers who have agreed to serve as committee chairs and members, please expect great things from your WLA leadership. It’s all about the work, guys. Let’s get to it.

Brian Soneda is Mount Vernon City Library director and president of WLA.
“Alki,” a Native American word meaning “bye and bye,” 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.

Alki (ISSN: 8756-4173) is published three times per year in March, July, and December, and mailed to over 700 WLA members and interested parties. Print subscriptions are available at $20 per year, or $7.50 per single issue. Contact the WLA office at the address above.

Alki’s purpose is to communicate philosophical and substantive analyses of current and enduring issues for and about Washington libraries, personnel, and advocates, and to facilitate the exchange of research, opinion, and information.

Direct your submission queries to:
Bo Kinney
Email: alkieditor@wla.org

Alki was designed by Tammy Reniche, Director of Publications for Melby Cameron & Anderson.

Cover photo: Owl at Raptor House Rehabilitation Center demonstration, during exhibitor reception at 2011 WLA conference. Photo by Kate Skinner.

Table of Contents

Up Front
By Brian Soneda ................................................................. 2

From the Editor ........................................................................ 4

2011 Conference: Libraries Take Flight
Birds of a Feather ................................................................. 5
By Emily Keller

Krista Orhtman, 2011 WLA Scholarship Recipient ...................... 6
By Diane Cowles

WLA Award Winners ............................................................. 7
By Bo Kinney

Rural Broadband and the Libraries of Stevens County ................. 8
By Amanda McKeraghan

An Interview with Lyanda Haupt: WLA Keynote Breakfast Speaker, Naturalist, and Award-Winning Author .................................................. 10
By Tami Echavarria Robinson

Digital Storytelling and Its Place in Library Service ....................... 12
By Tony Wilson

10 Tips for Improving the Impact of Public Access Technology in Your Library ................................................................. 14
By Samantha Becker

Articles
Washington Library Snapshot Day ............................................. 16
By Craig Seasholes

Renew Washington Takes Off ................................................ 18
By Karen Goettling and Jennifer Fenton

Using Technology and Community Partnerships to Archive an Orchestral Collection ................................................................. 21
By Robert Olivia

Legislative Update:
National Library Legislative Day 2011 ........................................ 24
By Julie Miller and Rand Simmons

Solinus
Interactive Professional Self-Assessment Examination .................. 25
By Kirsten Edwards

WLA Communiqué
WLA People and Places .......................................................... 26

The Learning Curve
Energizing WILL: Yes to Collaboration! ......................................... 28
By Kate Laughlin

I’d Rather Be Reading
Mixing It Up in the Stacks ...................................................... 30
By Hayden Bass and Linda Johns
This issue of *Alki* centers on the 2011 WLA conference, which took place April 6–8, in Yakima. It was a full, rich conference, and it gave us much to explore within these pages—from engaging keynote speakers to provocative conference sessions to inspiring awards ceremonies.

I admit that at first I wasn’t sure what to make of the theme “Libraries Take Flight.” But as the conference unfolded, and as we began to plan this issue, I became quite impressed by the many interesting interpretations: It was of course fun seeing everyone dressed up as birds and butterflies at the Interest Group Meet and Greet Reception. I was, and am, intrigued by keynote speaker Lyanda Haupt’s description of librarians and library workers as crows, or tricksters (Haupt explains in her interview with Tami Robinson on p. 10). And looking owls, hawks, and an eagle in the eye, at the Raptor House Rehabilitation Center’s demonstration, was quite an experience. (One of these birds is featured on this issue’s cover.)

But I think my favorite interpretation of the flight theme is the one advanced by Emily Keller in her article “Birds of a Feather,” which starts this issue off (p. 5). Emily asserts that no matter how different our jobs or our libraries, we have much in common, and much to gain by working together across our differences. Emily’s idea of breaking artificial boundaries is echoed by a number of other pieces in this issue. Hayden Bass and Linda Johns, in a guest “I’d Rather Be Reading” column (p. 30), encourage us to ignore the distinctions between teen and adult literature. Robert Olivia describes a process of partnering with many different organizations to accomplish a major rejuvenation of the Seattle Symphony archives (p. 21). And Craig Seasholes, in an article on Library Snapshot Day (p. 16), shows us the power that disparate library associations can create when they join together.

I’m happy to announce that, with the addition of Emily Keller to the *Alki* editorial committee, we have now filled all positions on the committee. I’m also pleased to welcome former editorial committee member Brian Soneda as the new president of WLA and, therefore, a regular columnist. Finally, Kate Skinner did a yeoman’s work as conference photographer, and her marvelous photos are featured throughout this issue. Kate’s photos, along with all the other contributions to the issue, allow us to share with you some of the heights to which the conference soared.
Birds of a Feather

by Emily Keller

Spots an academic librarian at the Washington Library Association Conference is a little like seeing an Arctic Loon in Kansas. WLA’s membership is well-represented by public and school librarians, but academic librarians, for whatever reason, have not flocked to the organization in large numbers. And so I registered for the conference wondering if I might feel like a bit of an odd duck. But on the contrary, my experience at the WLA 2011 conference in Yakima demonstrated to me the vitality of one of WLA’s core values: inclusivity. Meeting librarians from so many different settings, who serve in so many different roles, simply reinforced all that unifies us as librarians, regardless of our job titles or the types of libraries in which we work.

The power of our complementary skills and backgrounds was the central focus of a workshop that I co-facilitated with my colleague, Judy McMan, a librarian from Richland Public Library. We wanted to have a frank discussion about the divergent cultures of public and technical services, often considered entirely different species, and explore solutions for improving relationships between the groups. Judy and I paired up precisely because of the differences in our backgrounds, she having a wide range of experience in technical services in public libraries, and I exclusively in public services in academic libraries. In our discussion with participants, we unearthed some of the stereotypes we carry about each other, and also recognized our particular strengths and contributions to our organizations’ missions. By developing deeper understandings of our respective roles and enhancing communication and relationships across organizational boundaries, we ultimately provide better service to our users. Whether we’re working directly with the public or behind the scenes, perhaps we’re not such different species after all.

I also managed to weasel my way onto a panel about advances in electronic government information with government documents librarians from depository libraries in Washington State. Now, I’m not a full-fledged government documents librarian, but a number of government documents librarians have taken me under their wings, preparing me to integrate government information into my social sciences reference and instruction work. Most non-documents librarians have not had the benefit of such guides through the strange habitat of government information, so we wanted to share some of the new, more accessible tools that would be of interest to general reference librarians working on the front lines. We introduced new tools such as FDsys, an easy-to-navigate government information portal to government websites that are useful for general reference work for a wide range of subjects and audiences. In doing so, we hoped to kill two birds with one stone by sharing helpful sources while also turning non-documents librarians on to ways that government information is becoming friendlier and less difficult to penetrate than in the past.

In addition to participating in valuable professional development activities, I also did a fair amount of networking. I’m generally kind of a chicken about socializing in a crowd, but folks were so hospitable that I felt like a veritable social butterfly. I got to catch up with librarians who have recently left the nest of the University of Washington Information School and are now navigating through the early days of their careers. I reconnected with former classmates from when I was an MLIS fledgling myself. I met folks from all of the WLA Interest Groups, each with something interesting to share about their affinities and backgrounds. I even met a couple of people who work right here in my building. (We only had to travel 150 miles to finally meet.) Connecting with community near and far was one of the most valuable parts of my experience.

Working in a large organization, with so many wonderful colleagues, faculty, and students to tap as human resources, it can be easy to become insular, to stop looking beyond these walls for inspiration, problem-solving, and sharing. My WLA conference experience brought me back in touch with the value of having a broad and rich community of practice beyond my own organization. I’m grateful for an event that exemplifies the best of what we get from participation in professional associations: community, education, and insight. What a great reminder that in spite of our differences, we’re all really just birds of a feather.
Krista Orhtman, 2011 WLA Scholarship Recipient

by Diane Cowles

You're in good hands, WLA! Krista Orhtman, 2011 scholarship winner, ensures our future—if her current accomplishments, leadership skills, and love for Washington libraries are any indication of future success. Krista is currently a distance learning student at the University of Washington iSchool, planning to finish her degree in Spring 2012. From a far-flung corner of the state, Stevens County, she juggles classes, two active young children, and a full-time job as Library Manager of the Colville Public Library. If being hired as a branch manager without an MLIS is a bit unusual, Krista readily acknowledges that she was tremendously fortunate in meeting Library Director Amanda McKeraghan, who recognized her passion and special talents for libraries, and took a chance on her. That chance in 2008 has allowed her in the past three years “to work on a variety of projects which have done nothing but provide confirmation that public librarianship is where I belong,” she states with conviction.

“In Krista’s ability to communicate with firmness and gentleness serves her well in this community, where partnerships are everything.”

In a typical day last week, Krista worked on the circ/ref desk, then went into town to gather quotes and estimates for interior refurbishment that a $60,000 donation from the Friends of the Library will allow, met later in the afternoon with a consultant, who advised on traffic and usage patterns for the branch, and finally, in the evening, she spoke at a fledgling meeting of Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbian and Gays (PFLAG). Krista’s topic for this newly-formed group covered library services and the ALA Code of Ethics, which highlighted the privacy and confidentiality aspects that libraries everywhere uphold and cherish. In rural and sparsely-populated Stevens County, which only received public library services in 1996, the proclamation of those library values is especially meaningful to those whose lifestyles are not of the mainstream. Krista’s ability to communicate with firmness and gentleness serves her well in this community, where partnerships are everything.

Stevens County has created a model for information delivery called “fusion centers,” multi-use facilities that house libraries along with other community agencies to share resources and maximize efficiency. "In a rural library fusion center, a user could visit their library and not only check out a book or access the Internet," she explains, “but could also meet with representatives from other agencies to address their needs.”

She knows that it will take hard work to finesse this innovative way of merging traditional library services to a more holistic vision, needing “to evolve to welcome these new services into our midst.” These services could include economic development, energy assistance, legal assistance, and the unemployment office. Furthermore, the advent of broadband in late 2012 into Stevens County will allow library branches to champion new forms of electronic access that will connect patrons to a variety of service points as never before. It is just this potential for innovation and change that she says drives her continued interest in librarianship and provides the fuel to complete the MLIS.

The WLA Scholarship was an honor, she says. When notified that she was the winner, Krista was thrilled and humbled, knowing the talent at the iSchool, and she says she also felt great relief. The funds will help her take a full course load more readily, and if so, could allow her to finish sooner. Already she is busy giving back to WLA. At the annual conference, she participated on a panel about broadband implementation and was elected to be Vice Chair/Chair Elect of the TRIP Interest Group. Upon receiving the Scholarship Award at the Awards Luncheon, she spoke movingly about how important the yearly scholarships are to students and how a small donation can make a huge impact to a person's life. Once out of school, she promises to give more of her time and talents to WLA, as well as to do all kinds of things she has put on hold. She’ll read for fun, break into gardening, explore the slow food movement, hike, and enjoy the beauty of her backyard, Stevens County, Washington.

If you were to wish Krista “a great career,” she would say, “It feels more like a vocation than a career. It’s just doing what I love.”

Diane Cowles is a children’s librarian at the Beacon Hill Branch of The Seattle Public Library.
It’s hard not to enjoy the Awards Luncheon—the time during the conference when WLA recognizes the most exceptional people and organizations in Washington libraries.

Every one of the award winners is an inspiration, but for me, this year’s highlight was the presentation of the WLFFTA Friend/Foundation Award #1 to the Friends of the North Fork Community Library. The North Fork Community Library opened in February, 2011, in the rural Whatcom County town of Kendall. Due to the Friends’ advocacy efforts, the entire building was constructed by volunteers. Some 71 businesses donated material and labor. Nori Zukerman, a Friends member and volunteer electrician, accepted the award along with library manager Georgina Furlong-Head. Zukerman told the audience that after she and about 75 other volunteers completed construction of the building (ahead of schedule, by the way), they can’t help but feel that “this is our library.”

In addition to the regular award winners, Tim Mallory was recognized for his accomplishments as WLA President for the past two years. Congratulations to all the winners!

**Awards Given**

**Lifetime Membership Award:**
Emeritus Membership:
- Jan Walsh, retired, Washington State Librarian

**Merit Awards:**
Advances in Library Services:
- Pamela Mogen, Director, Liberty Lake Municipal Library
- Kristie Kirkpatrick, Director, Whitman County Rural Library District

For Outstanding Performance:
- Kristie Kirkpatrick, Director, Whitman County Rural Library District and Rand Simmons, Acting Washington State Librarian
- Mike Wirt, Director, Spokane County Library District

**WLFFTA Distinguished Service Award:**
Friends / Foundations Award #1:
- Friends of the North Fork Community Library, Whatcom County Library System

**Other Awards:**
WLA President’s Award: Washington Library Media Association
CAYAS Visionary Award:
- Margaret Martin, Children’s Librarian, King County Library System

Graduate Study Scholarship:
- Krista Ohrtman, Library Manager, Colville Public Library

Bo Kinney is a librarian in the Special Collections department of the Seattle Public Library.
By now, most people in the Washington State library community will have heard about the nearly $140 million dollars in ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) funds awarded to NoaNet in order to bring high-speed broadband to economically-depressed communities in 25 of Washington’s 39 counties. The Libraries of Stevens County are one of hundreds of institutions (schools, libraries, public safety, hospitals, etc.) that are being impacted. We are often asked by other libraries in the state, or other agencies in our county, to help provide some context on what this grant is, how it came to be, what it will do, and when it will happen. (The session “Libraries at Light-Speed,” presented at the 2011 WLA conference, discussed the implementation of the grant.) Here are some questions we’ve been asked, and how we tried to answer them:

1. What is NoaNet?
NoaNet (Northwest Open Access Network) is essentially a non-profit mutual corporation comprised of public utility districts in Washington State. From their website (http://www.noanet.net): “NoaNet...provide[s] wholesale telecommunications transport and is headquartered in Tacoma, Washington. For more than 10 years, it has operated a reliable public open-access broadband communication network totaling over 1,831 fiber miles that provides rural areas access to broadband services, supporting 61 last mile providers that serve more than 260,000 customers. NoaNet’s members are twelve public utility districts and a joint operating agency that have served wholesale customers in Washington State since 2000.”

2. In a couple of sentences, what are these grants all about?
These grants will bring broadband infrastructure (i.e., high-speed fiber) to parts of the state that would not have been able to bring broadband in the near future because the market demand simply didn’t exist. In other words, there was no financial incentive for telecommunications companies to bring broadband to areas with few clients. Some people compare this government grant funding to the Rural Electrification projects of the 1930s and 40s. The new broadband infrastructure will create a seamless network reaching more than 170 communities and 2,000 schools, hospitals, emergency responders, libraries, colleges, and universities across the state.

3. Who wrote these grants?
NoaNet staff wrote the grants on behalf of a consortium of more than 60 private, governmental, tribal, and non-profit participants. Both rounds of grants required matching funds from partners; participant contributions totaled more than $45 million. Partnering agencies played a very active role in helping NoaNet build the grant, articulate local needs and issues, and gather community and political support.

4. These grants required matching funds: how were public libraries able to fund this?
The Washington State Library worked tirelessly to secure funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation ($1.5 million in Washington State) so that libraries could be active players in this grant. Without the Gates Foundation, very few libraries (if any) would have been able to participate. Part of the grant requirement was that the broadband infrastructure had to hook up “anchor institutions” (e.g., hospitals, schools, and libraries).

5. Why is broadband access an issue in rural areas like Stevens County?
Stevens County, Washington is one of the most economically vulnerable areas in the United States.

   • Only 23% of residents have broadband in their homes.
   • Unemployment has ranged from 12.4% to 16.1% over the past few months.
   • Families with children living in poverty exceeded 20% of the county population.
   • According to the National Center for Education Statistics, nearly 20% of adults in Stevens County have a literacy level below the 8th grade.

6. I get DSL at my house; don’t we already have “broadband”?
Sort of. But DSL is not unlike an old-fashioned party-line telephone. If a lot of people are on at the same time, the speed falls dramatically. Many families live on primitive roads miles from their nearest neighbor, and a lack of reliable transportation becomes a barrier to meeting basic needs including employment, education, medical care, and obtaining food and living supplies.

The aggregate affect of these facts is that the county has many people who do not own computers, know how to use computers, or have the ability to pay for a computer and broadband access. The people of Stevens County are becoming increasingly unable to be productive members of modern society, access educational and governmental resources, or provide their own voice in the national discussion.

Continued on next page
The daily onslaught of library wireless and computer users.

"American Tech Gothic": A couple using the wireless in front of the Colville Public Library

productivity falls dramatically in the afternoons and evenings when people return to their homes to use their computers. And the speed many rural areas have is always limited by the size of the pipe coming into their area. The hospital in Stevens County, for example, bundles seven T1 lines together. It costs them $1,000 a month and it still doesn't meet the needs of modern medicine. With the NoaNet grants, the size of the "pipe" coming into the area (the middle mile) will increase by nearly 60 times.

7. So, will this grant enable people to have high-speed broadband in their homes?
In most cases, the answer is “not yet.” These grants are primarily "middle-mile" grants. There are three types: first mile (such as the big "pipe" of broadband that goes along I–90), middle mile (the bits that branch off of the first mile pipe), and last mile (the connection to your home.) The analogy we hear most often is to equate first mile to the freeway, middle mile to the main street in town, and last mile to your driveway. No one was averse to funding a last-mile grant, but since the middle miles were missing (in most cases), there simply was not enough money to make this a last-mile grant. (There are, however, a few cases of some last-mile funding—most notably in Pend Oreille County.)

8. If people still don't have computers in their home, how does this grant help communities?
This is why it was a good idea to make sure that anchor institutions (such as public libraries!) were required to be connected in the grant rules. In places like Stevens County, the public libraries are the primary place many people access the Internet. This grant will simply make that access much more robust so that all current (and future) applications will be accessible to the residents in Stevens County, so that they can more effectively take their online classes, upload online business information, participate in e-government, connect through social media, etc.

9. If I want faster Internet service at my house or business, do I buy from NoaNet?
No, NoaNet is a wholesaler—you will still pay your local ISP (Internet Service Provider) for Internet access. These grants are very good news for local ISPs because it means that they will be able to expand their clientele list (a bigger pipe means they have more bandwidth to sell.)

10. How much will all this increased broadband cost?
This is quite simply one of the most amazing things to happen to rural libraries in a very long time. In Stevens County, all nine locations are 24/7 wireless hotspots. As with libraries everywhere, usage of wireless and of public PCs is busy and constant. At the largest and busiest library, we currently have a T1 line (1.5 Mbps); when the NoaNet infrastructure arrives in the fourth quarter of 2012 the speed will increase to 100 Mbps. As the IT guy at the hospital said, we are going to go from a goat track to a six lane freeway. The potential for rural economic development—through rural outsourcing, for example—increases dramatically.

The daily onslaught of library wireless and computer users.
An Interview with Lyanda Haupt: WLA Keynote Breakfast Speaker, Naturalist, and Award-Winning Author

by Tami Echavarria Robinson

Lyanda Lynn Haupt is a Seattle-based award-winning author, speaker, and naturalist whose writing explores the interconnectedness of life through the relationship among birds, humans, and an ecological understanding of the natural world. Her lyrical writing takes readers along as she ponders the wilderness that survives in the midst of urban encroachment. Her background includes raptor rehabilitation in Vermont, seabird research for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the remote tropical Pacific, and creating and directing educational programs for the Seattle Audubon Society. Her writing has appeared in a variety of popular magazines and scholarly journals such as the Los Angeles Times, the Utne Reader, Wild Earth Journal, Open Spaces, Birdwatchers Digest, The Prairie Naturalist, and Conservation Biology Journal. Her first book, Rare Encounters with Ordinary Birds, was recognized as the winner of the 2002 Washington State Book Award, and her latest book, Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness, was awarded the 2010 Sigurd F. Olson Nature Writing Award. Alki caught up with Lyanda and asked her about herself, her keynote presentation at the 2011 WLA Conference, and her most recent book, Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness. Tami Echavarria Robinson of the Alki Editorial Board conducted the interview by email.

“Librarians are the guardians of information, knowledge, and beauty, and will shepherd these things into an unknown future in ways that we can’t foresee.”

Alki: Please tell me about your background.

Lyanda Haupt: My little sister and I were raised in a suburb with a canyon for a backyard, with a stream at the bottom of it. I was in elementary school in the 1970s, when kids could still run wild until the mom called out the door at dusk for dinner. I spent as much time as I could in the woods, and even as a kid I was quite solitary—I loved to be alone by the water, with the frogs and birds and my diary. My parents were very indulgent of my early love of nature, and there was always a field guide to birds by the kitchen window. Eventually, though I loved natural history, I was more of a humanities student than a scientist, so I decided to combine my interests by studying philosophy, where I could focus on the meaning of the human relationship with nature. In the 19th century, a “philosopher” was a student of both ideas and nature—ornithology, botany, evolution. I took this idea to heart in my own studies, and my eventual work as a writer. While composing my early nature essays, I also worked as a researcher on various ornithological projects. I’ve always tried to keep this balance—between the beauty of imaginative ideas and the steadiness of science.

Alki: During your keynote speech at the WLA conference, you described librarians as “tricksters.” What did you mean by this?

LH: In many native mythologies, including those of some Pacific Northwest peoples, Crow is a trickster figure—one who brings wise chaos, challenging the present order, and allowing something new to emerge. There are all kinds of ways that librarians, and all the “library-people,” are tricksters. Right now, when publishing, books, and information access are in such flux, the librarians are the guardians of information, knowledge, and beauty, and will shepherd these things into an unknown future in ways that we can’t foresee. I am not sure how it’s going to work out, but I absolutely believe they have tricks up their sleeve.

Alki: You shared the wonderful tale about the Raven Who Brings Light into the World, saying librarians are the ravens carrying bits of story, bringing it into the light—changing things around to a new, more exciting equilibrium. Would you comment further on this?

LH: The librarians as tricksters idea came to me via the amazing art installation at the University of Washington’s Allen Library, called “Raven Brings Light to This House of Stories.” That installation was the first thing that popped into my head when I heard the “libraries take flight” theme. It features forty-four life-sized crow and raven sculptures hanging from the ceiling of the library breezeway, as if in flight, each carrying in its bill a representation of “story” from cultures around the world—a bit of type or alphabet character or worn piece of paper. The project is based on the native northwest tale in which the trickster Raven steals the light from the old grandfather who was keeping it, and returns sun to a world of darkness. In the tale, it is easy to see libraries as the “house of stories,” but finally I realized that the tricksters are the librarians, and all the “library people,” who in this time of confusion (or “darkness”) in the publishing and book world, are leading us into an

Continued on next page
Continued from previous page

exciting new equilibrium, into a new light. This is something librarians have done in the past (I was just explaining to my twelve year old daughter what a card catalogue is—the technological transition of the past two decades is one example), and though times are currently challenging, I have every expectation that librarians, and all the “library people” will creatively fly us into a new light, a way of sharing books and technology and information—our cultural story, over which librarians are a kind of guardian—that works for our changing community.

Alki: Do you have any other thoughts on the meaning of the theme “Libraries Take Flight”?

LH: To be honest, the meaning of that theme changed for me at the opening reception, when I could meet everyone at their decorated information tables, many people in costume, and all having a good time. Where at first I thought of “flight” as a practical, almost dutiful rising beyond the difficulty of a distressed economy and uncertain future for books and reading, I started to think more expansively of “flights of fancy.” I was struck by the sense of whimsy and creativity among the people in the room, qualities just as important as “practicality” in carving out a meaningful future.

Alki: Your latest book Crow Planet is something of a defense of the crow. What do crows have to teach us?

LH: Well, I don’t know if I’d say it’s a defense of the crow. It’s more of a recognition that crows are multi-dimensional. “Crow Planet” refers to two things: a planet on which the rich diversity of creatures is diminishing—replaced by a few dominant, successful species, such as crows. At the same time, “Crow Planet” invokes a world where, no matter where we dwell, even in the most urban of places, we are informed and enlivened by the presence of beautiful, native, wild creatures—again, such as crows! I think crows are a wonderful, always-interesting, highly accessible window through which to explore our own relationship to the nature that always surrounds us—a relationship that is both complicated and delightful.

Alki: In the last paragraph of Crow Planet, you describe having a “grown-up optimism” regarding the continuance of the earth environmentally. Would you elaborate on this concept and how you live it out on a daily basis?

LH: I think that our optimism has to be realistic. We live in a time of ecological crisis, and it is not at all clear to me that we humans are acting quickly enough, or deeply enough, to meet that crisis in a way that guarantees a flourishing future earth. Does that mean that my only option is defeat or pessimism? I don’t think so. I believe that “mature” hope recognizes that though we cannot predict what will happen, we realize our participation has value—that our profound connectedness with the rest of life on earth gives meaning to our actions on behalf of the more-than-human world. In my everyday life, this translates into an effort to live in light of that connection—not with a sense of guilt, or fear, but with a sense of creativity and even delight. So yes—we hang our laundry on a clothesline, and grow some of our food, and share eggs from our chickens with the neighbors, and watch the birds every day. We try to keep that sense of continuity alive.

Alki: Let me ask you a personal question: what do you do in your time off to unwind?

LH: Oh! I read, of course (Middlemarch at the moment). I also love to knit, bake, tend my garden and chickens, and go on long walks with my daughter and husband.

Lyanda Haupt brings her readers into a consciousness of concerns about nature and the place of people within the natural world. As concerns for the natural environment deepen, the need for awareness of ecological continuance is a worthy place for reflection on our own kinship with the rest of life. This is the place Haupt takes her readers. If you would like to read more, follow Lyanda’s blog The Tangled Nest, at http://thetanglednest.com/.
Digital Storytelling and Its Place in Library Service

by Tony Wilson

Matt Gullett’s presentation on digital storytelling at the conference in Yakima was inspiring and could be seen as having a number of implications for library practice and our notion of the library mission. Digital storytelling is the use of technology such as video, social media, and games to tell stories. Gullett’s concept of a library is “a community that connects people and culture through story, technique/technology & literacy,” and he suggests that digital storytelling is a natural extension of the work libraries have always done.

Beyond the ubiquitous newness of the technology all around us, none of the technology Gullett discussed is very new. What was new was his placement of that technology and the related components of digital storytelling within the sphere of legitimate library and staff activity. For the technology and resources, one can start with the handout from Gullett’s presentation, available at http://2011wlaconference.wla.org/sessions/. For the technology itself, a web search on “digital storytelling software” gets a wealth of results. Similarly, “digital storytelling libraries” will show an enticingly wide variety of library involvement. A really full-blown example is the Digital Storytelling Station from the San Diego Public Library (http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/digitalstorytelling.shtml), a program that invites the public to create personal narratives and oral history videos using digital tools.

Given all the access and enthusiasm, it might be well to ask, why should we get into this—and, if we do get into it, what does that do to our sense of the library itself and our understanding of its mission?

For years, my own conception of the library has been rather medieval: We are building strong, silent collections supporting the work of single, silent, existential scholars, and we have librarians to maintain both the collections and the silence. I am very fond of that image of the library and of the monumental architecture that signified its importance. Much of that image remains today, but the image and its associated practice is dated. As someone has pointed out, today we “are all living in the library.” We are living, as Peter Morville’s wonderful title suggests, in the age of “ambient findability.” It is becoming much less likely that anyone can find me, or the librarian, or even the reference desk, to do the information finding. And it is also less likely they will even notice that a step has gone missing. Most moderately up-to-date people do a surprisingly “satisficing” job of both finding and evaluating their information sources. As “information profession-als,” where does that leave us?

Maybe information is not the centerpiece any longer. I’ve always thought it was a strange use of English to treat the works of E. E. Cummings, or Walt Whitman, or Dashiell Hammett, as information. In fact, even most of what is in our libraries as nonfiction is not so much information as it is narrative. People read narrative nonfiction; they look up facts or information, probably with Google.

Increasingly, we are left holding not the information, but the narrative. That is, the story. The three quotations below are from a relevant little book by David R. Loy, The World is Made of Stories:

“You get older and you realize there are no answers, only stories. And how we love them.” –Garrison Keillor

“Narrative, in short, is more than literature; it is the way we understand our lives.” –Robert Bellah

“Storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it.” –Hannah Arendt

I’ve written elsewhere about the downside of literacy. In the present context, it is useful to quote Robert Brighurst from The Tree of Meaning: Brighurst writes that literacy “involves, after all, a kind of ritual mutilation of the intellect, a sort of cerebral circumcision. To this day there are missionary agencies, both secular and religious, going about the world attempting to spread literacy, claiming that this technology will empower and enfranchise and enrich all to whom it is given. What these missionary agencies are doing in actual fact is exterminating the earth’s last oral cultures.” Brighurst compares the wisdom of such extermination to the wisdom of clearcutting the last virgin forests.

Certainly neither the extraordinarily erudite Brighurst nor we are able or would choose to go back to some “pre-literate” existence. A short-term expedient for going on is to go forward via modern technology, which we are going to do regardless of what we think about it. We can attempt to come up on the other side, regaining some version(s) of what we have lost.

Consider the following description of language by Brighurst in light of our buzzworded move toward transliteracy and Gullett’s promotion of digital storytelling:

Tony Wilson is retired from Highline Community College where he trained prospective library employees for forty years. He was WLA president 1981–1983. Currently he is president of the Des Moines/Woodmont Library Advisory Board (KCLS) and an emeritus member of WLA.
People often notice that language helps them think—and they sometimes ask, Are there other ways to think besides in language? Doubtless a good question; but that, I think, is not the way to ask it. What the question means is, Are there languages to think in besides the ones in which we talk? and the answer is, Of course! There are the languages of mathematics, the languages of music, languages of color, shape, and gesture. Language is what something becomes when you think in it. Life as we know it thinks, it seems, in nucleic acids. The forest thinks in trees and their associated life forms: asters, grasses, mosses, fungi, and the creatures who move through them, from annelids and arthropods to thrushes, jays, and deer. Humans often, but not always, think in words and sentences.

One of Gullett’s slides reads in its entirety:

Story
Literacy
Library
Community
Culture
Technology

It may be that we in the library were never about information; we just had too narrow a view of a story. People read to create their own internal story, or an external story, or a story that becomes a novel or a business. It is instructive to do that junior high exercise of putting the whole vocabulary list into a single sentence using Gullett’s bullet points. Something like: The library is there to use the full range of technology and an expanded view of literacy to help people with their story in a way that reflects the evolution of culture and develops local community.

Gullett would have us think of the library as a place (an understood reality, versus a space as in cyberspace—I once had a student burst into tears exploring the Web; “I don’t know where I am!”); as an experience (for learning and leisure); and a platform (for connection, creation, and distribution).

In their article “Digital Storytelling, Libraries, and Community” Karen Diaz and Anne M. Fields cite Daniel Pink’s A Whole New Mind to the effect that we are moving into a “conceptual age” that takes us beyond the linear kinds of understanding we have learned through print literacy and into modes of understanding that are much more holistic, right-brained, and empathetic.

Not long ago it would have been acceptable for a librarian to shrug off a computer assistance question as not being our thing—we do books (although we all learned to clear printer jams). Any more, I’d think it inappropriate for a librarian not to know the file formats for most digital media and what paid or open-source software can manipulate those files.

Much of what becomes stories on a personal level shows up in social media: blogs, Youtube, Facebook, and the like. Matt Gullett mentioned a fascinating project that led to the book and website We Feel Fine (http://www.wefeelfine.org) by Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar. The authors ran statistics on twelve million blog sentences around the world that involved “I feel…” or “I’m feeling…” Mining the relevant web sites allowed unending statistical portraits of the world of emotion, often with related photos. Fifty-two percent of the females feel normal, forty-eight percent of the males. Do more people feel guilty in San Francisco than in Paris? There is a fascinating presentation on TED in which Harris discusses telling other people’s stories and their commonalities around the world (http://www.ted.com/talks/jonathan_harris_tells_the_web_s_secret_stories.html).

I may wish that my librarian was still keeping the library shushed down while I silently followed a topic through a few decades of bound journals, but I suspect that the librarian who helps a patron edit video from his Flip onto a CD or a thumb drive will be a better answer to the question of why we need libraries now that we have the Internet.

Notes

4 ibid., 165.
10 Tips for Improving the Impact of Public Access Technology in Your Library
by Samantha Becker

The recent Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) report “Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries,” showed the library community and policy makers across the country the importance of public access to technology in public libraries. The study revealed that one-third of the American public has used a public library computer or wireless network to access the Internet in the past year, and also showed the extent of high-value outcomes these users were able to achieve in the areas of employment, education, health, and eGovernment, among others. The study has had a major impact on the ways that librarians understand how patrons use public access technology, as well as the perceptions of policy makers and the public about the importance of having these resources available in their communities.

While “Opportunity for All” stopped at the accomplishments of library patrons and how librarians provide help and training to struggling users, interviews and observations, as well as thousands of comments from library patrons across the country, provided the researchers with rich data to relate the ways libraries approach public-access services to the outcomes patrons achieve and systematically examine which policies and practices support patrons and their goals. A deep exploration of this topic will be found in a forthcoming report published by the IMLS. This article expands on the top five tips for focusing library policies on improving patron outcomes presented during the “Public Computer Conundrums” presentation at the WLA conference, also a result of this research.

Tip #1: Explicitly integrate computers and the Internet into the library’s mission.

Why do libraries offer public access to technology? Each library needs to have an answer to this question that is appropriate to its community. For some it is a way to ensure some level of access for all people; for others it is an extension of long-established values and is only seen as a new tool for delivering information to patrons. It may also be seen as a way to keep up with trends and stay relevant. Whatever the reasons for providing technology, at this stage libraries should be prepared to articulate the goals of offering technology services and explicitly include the intended role of technology in their mission and vision. Purposefully integrating technology into the library’s mission and vision provides an opportunity for clarifying and aligning the goals of offering technology to the needs of the community, and also helps engage staff in envisioning how technology can serve patrons.

Tip #2: Identify and formalize partnerships with community-based organizations that benefit from library technology.

Community-based organizations, government agencies, and schools routinely refer their clients to public libraries to use technology for tasks associated with the services they provide and sometimes rely on the library’s resources in supplement to, or rather than, having computers and training available for their clients’ use. Libraries must be aware of and account for these shadow mandates. Shadow mandates can drain the library’s resources and impact its sustainability. Formalizing partnerships with organizations that might already be taking advantage of library services is an effective way of managing relationships with community-based organizations. Partnerships help the library get credit for their contribution to broader community goals, control the demand on their services, build relationships that can be called on to support the library’s agenda, and uncover abusive cost shifting.

Tip #3: Give priority to expanding or protecting operational hours in constrained budget environments

When faced with cuts, libraries are forced to calculate a delicate balance between the number of hours the library can stay open, staffing levels, and expenditures on resources, including computers and print materials. If the aim is maximizing the impact of public access technology, the hours the library is open should rise to the highest priority level. Each additional hour the library is open allows for more computer sessions, use of the library’s wireless network, and also allows for other uses of the libraries. Evening and weekend hours are usually especially valuable for public access users.

Tip #4: Help staff understand their roles and support training and development

Staff in many libraries are stressed by unclear responsibilities for providing technology help. Often this results in uneven service to patrons. Library administrators need to express clear support for technology and seek to make it an integral part of the library’s operations, while at the same time defining the boundaries of interactions between technology users and librarians. One clear signal of this intention is to schedule and budget for staff technology-related training, including the release time necessary for attendance. In addition to improving their effectiveness in helping patrons, training improves morale by making librarians feel more
Continued from previous page

providing certain types of help can leave patrons with nowhere short for patrons to finish their tasks. One-computer-per-patron are set to reduce congestion, but can result in sessions that are too time-intensive for staff, is not fully replaceable by formal training classes. From the perspective of patrons, other community organizations, and policy makers, it is often the most valuable service libraries offer to their communities. Libraries must be prepared to help patrons with computer-related questions at the point of service, as with other reference transactions. Having appointments available with librarians or volunteers for one-on-one tutoring is a good way of showing responsiveness to patrons while managing the time demands of new users.

Tip #6: Coordinate volunteers and leverage partnerships with community-based organizations to provide expanded help and training for patrons.

Volunteers may provide a good supplement to librarians for providing one-on-one help to public access technology users, monitoring computer labs, and in some cases providing instruction for classes. However, volunteers need to be trained and supervised. Asking partner organizations to provide or organize volunteers on behalf of the library for technology training or lab monitoring is often an effective strategy for focusing productive partnerships and establishing fair resource sharing with shadow-mandate organizations.

Tip #7: Plan for growth in demand for electronic resources and services

While it is tempting to think that the demand for public access in libraries will decline as the ubiquity of technology rises, factors such as household competition around one computer, high subscription fees for Internet access, inability to maintain hardware or software, and others suggest that demand will continue. Currently, old terminals, slow connections, lack of space for computers, tables, and chairs, as well as a lack of electrical outlets, are major limiting factors for many libraries seeking to serve public access patrons. Investments in the physical infrastructure of library buildings aimed at making them technology-ready should be part of long-term planning. Library technology, including staff time, should be accounted for as an activity in budgeting, and replacement plans must be given funding priority.

Tip #8: Focus on patron outcomes when setting policies

Certain library policies can inhibit patron outcomes. Time limits are set to reduce congestion, but can result in sessions that are too short for patrons to finish their tasks. One-computer-per-patron policies can be barriers to collaboration. Rules against librarians providing certain types of help can leave patrons with nowhere else to turn. When setting public access policies, libraries need to balance promoting access with helping patrons achieve their goals. Effective policies maximize access but at the same time take into account the different skills of users, as well as the needs of users who are performing certain types of time-intensive tasks. Librarians need to be empowered to be flexible with time limits and other policies, and comfortable exercising professional judgment on behalf of patrons. Sometimes extending a session for one patron is more fair than treating all patrons the same.

Tip #9: Implement consistent evaluation of library programs and policies

Evaluation serves two important purposes. It provides information for planning programs and services that are responsive to the needs of a community, and it helps communicate the value of those programs and services to funders, policy makers, and other community stakeholders. Evaluation need not be systematically representative (imperfect information is better than none), but should be thoughtfully planned and done consistently year-to-year. An important tool in evaluation is the achievements and stories of users themselves; for policy makers and funders, survey results alongside stories of real people and their accomplishments using library computers are the most effective way to communicate the value of public access. The IMPACT Survey, a tool created by the University of Washington to help libraries conduct public access evaluation, will be offered to all public libraries beginning October 2011. Interested libraries can sign-up for the pilot study at http://impactsurvey.org.

Tip #10: Extend the wireless reach to outside the library & leave it on

Wireless networks give libraries the flexibility to add computers without taking up more space by relying on patrons bringing their own laptops or by lending laptops in the library. It has been a great success for libraries. Allowing wireless access beyond the walls of the library and during non-operating hours is a simple, low-cost way to provide a valuable extension of its services. Don’t worry over this too much—it almost always works out well and the community will love you for it!

Notes


Ongoing library advocacy is essential.

On April 12, 2011 nearly three hundred libraries across Washington State joined in the ALA-sponsored Library Snapshot Day initiative as easy and effective way to capture and share a snapshot of libraries across Washington State.

The idea is simple and powerful. As ALA describes it: “Library Snapshot Day provides a way for libraries of all types across a state, region, system or community to show what happens in a single day in their libraries.” By sharing the inspiration and brass-tacks examples of others the Snapshot Day initiative helped a cadre of Washington State library associations come together and encourage participation from a wide range of libraries in communities and institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>K-12</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Special</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many libraries are represented in this report?</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patron Visits/Door Count</td>
<td>74,923</td>
<td>16,917</td>
<td>57,064</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>149,176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Reference Questions</td>
<td>2,713</td>
<td>1,272</td>
<td>5,720</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Circulation (all materials) for the Day</td>
<td>157,450</td>
<td>9,787</td>
<td>90,178</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>9,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Computer / Internet Use (# of people)</td>
<td>17,215</td>
<td>6,006</td>
<td>6,730</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>30,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hits to Library website</td>
<td>1,076,753</td>
<td>2,032</td>
<td>98,020</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1,176,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hours open on Snapshot Day</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>536.25</td>
<td>1,312.25</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>2,382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For others, it was the photos themselves: a chance to see and be seen visiting and supporting libraries in our communities. Posed or candid, artistic or mundane, the accumulated mosaic of images is a tribute to the essential role that libraries of all types play in the lives of citizens of Washington State.

No budget. No staff. No problem.

In very short order, folks from WLA, WSL, WLMA, LMDC, ACRL-WA, WMLA and CLAMS joined into a library association soup, building an event wiki to help spread the word. By reviewing and adapting the work of other states, our crew assembled documents enough to launch during National Library Week. But the real story is in the snapshots themselves.

Perhaps the greatest fun in the whole effort stemmed from the multiple interpretations and perspectives available of what “Snapshot” might include.

For some, it’s the data snapshot. Here are the stats:

To get the big picture, take time to browse the shared photos and videos linked to the website at http://walibrarysnapshot2011.wikispaces.com. We’ll be leaving our Flickr and Facebook pages open to ongoing contributions, and invite you to continue to share a glimpse at a typical day in the life of your library.

Craig Seasholes is a Teacher-Librarian at Sanislo Elementary School and WLMA’s President-Elect. In addition to promoting Snapshot Day, he has served as WLMA’s listserv moderator for the past several years and is co-chair for WLMA’s annual conference. He blogs at http://bookmansbytes.blogspot.com.

Continued on next page
What’s next? Take the Snapshot story to your patrons and community media, linking your story and impressions with statewide and national Snapshot Day data. Glean data from the shared report and consider building on this event’s success in outreach to others.

In a profession rooted in stories, our combined “Snapshot” is worth more than a thousand words: it’s priceless.

Renew Washington Takes Off
by Karen Goettling and Jennifer Fenton

Renew Washington

“This little library that could, well served my job search and other correspondence needs. I now know how truly valuable public libraries can be.” – Whitman County Library customer

“In between two job offers right now—one guaranteed and one possible. Thanks for the help.” – Fort Vancouver Regional Library customer

“Great help! I am recreating my résumé after 40 years! I didn’t know what to do first, now I do! Thank you!”

What better reaction can libraries receive than these enthusiastic comments from their customers? These are just a few of the quotes gathered by libraries that provided job-seeking information to their users with the help of “Renew Washington” grants from the Washington State Library.

At the dawn of the latest recession, public library directors asked the Washington State Library to provide support in helping them meet the increased demands of their customers. Besides a substantial increase in usage, libraries faced tremendous budget challenges including reduction of hours and services.

When the State Library surveyed public library directors about what challenges they faced in light of the troubled economy, they noted an increase in users coming in to look for employment help, résumé services, job skills testing, and basic technology assistance. At the same time, libraries had budget shortfalls, fewer staff, not enough job resource materials, and too few computers to meet the needs of their public.

To respond to these issues, the Washington State Library created a “Hard Times Project.” The project was comprised of an information portal for library staff and the public, resource pages, blogging, training, and a competitive “Hard Times” grant cycle.


The Washington State Library announced a competitive “Hard Times” grant cycle funded with federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) money to assist libraries in serving their customers through additional job-related and economic-survival services. Because the State Library received far more proposals from libraries than could be funded with LSTA, the Library requested and received matching funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to fully fund all qualifying proposals.

With the new partnership, “Hard Times” was reborn as “Renew Washington,” to focus on the positive aspects of the project.

The grants helped libraries initiate new services, enhance existing services, conduct outreach and partnership efforts, and complete other activities to help people needing access to employment-related information, resources, and services. This included purchase of materials and resources, hiring of staff, development of programs, and provision of other services that libraries determined appropriate for their respective communities.

A Renew Washington project website (http://www.sos.wa.gov/library/libraries/projects/Renewwashington) was set up to share information on projects, studies, reports, promotional materials, and news articles.

Unexpected outcomes from participation in Renew Washington included unanticipated enthusiasm for the project and increased morale for staff, library supporters, and customers:

“An unexpected outcome is the enthusiasm for this project from staff at all levels and particularly from the Library Board. One board member has volunteered to contact our state and federal legislators to express appreciation for the opportunities that this grant has provided the low income and disadvantaged populations in Whatcom County.” – Whatcom County Library

“…the grant lifted up the staff’s morale as we had a sense of doing something positive in this very negative environment, especially following the library’s budget and hour cuts last year.” – Fort Vancouver Regional Library System

“...the grant had a significant impact on their communities. The Renew Washington grants helped libraries show their value by providing critical services in response to current crises. The following quotes are just a sampling from Renew Washington libraries:

“This grant has...made our small library a powerhouse of information and resources that have made a difference in our community...” – Liberty Lake Library

“This project far exceeded my expectations in the library outreach, welcoming new users to the library, increasing staff awareness of the issues involved in reaching new populations, and improved relationships and collaboration with agencies serving low income and minority populations in our area.” – Whatcom County Library System

“The Job + Business Centers have been a resounding success.” – Pierce County Library

Karen Goettling was the project manager for the Renew Washington project at the Washington State Library. Jennifer Fenton is the CE/Training Coordinator at the Washington State Library.

Continued on next page
The State Library identified the following ingredients for a successful outcome, based on the experience of participating libraries:

- Listen to the needs of your public
- Develop services that fit your budget and your community’s needs
- Train staff to help with job-related materials
- Work with local WorkSource and other community groups
- Develop a variety of services, not just one
- Adjust services as circumstances change

Peer Learning

Another element of the Renew Washington project was implementing peer learning for Washington State Library staff and libraries throughout Washington.

With the current budget crisis, the State Library no longer had the budget or the flexibility to bring library staff from across the state together in face-to-face meetings to share information on new grant projects, to review progress on the grants, and to address potential problems.

Since all the libraries in this project had a similar goal, it was an opportunity for State Library staff to try new approaches and techniques in working with libraries that received these grants.

By incorporating new approaches of working online and incorporating peer learning into their work, State Library staff could become more effective in their management of grant projects. It was also an opportunity for library staff across the state to become familiar with new techniques that could be adapted to work within their own institutions in the future.

The State Library contracted with Nancy White, a peer-learning consultant, to work with the State Library, its Renew Washington libraries, and public libraries across the state. Nancy helped Washington libraries embrace a culture of peer learning that will continue on into the future.

Amplifying the Value of the Library

In the current economic climate, libraries—along with many other government agencies—are facing budget cuts. Taxpayers and government officials alike are reviewing the cost, value, and social worth of many traditional services, including libraries.

As a result, it is critical that libraries respond to their communities’ needs and develop or enhance services to meet those needs. Library staff must actively engage their decision makers to illustrate and amplify the value of the library, ensuring that their institutions remain viable with stable funding.

As a part of the Gates grant to the State Library, the Gates Foundation contracted with GMMB, a nationally-recognized communications firm, to assist the Renew Washington public libraries in developing and implementing communication plans as well as assisting them in learning to “amplify the value” of their library, using the Renew Washington activities as a centerpiece.

To begin this portion of the Gates Foundation project, the State Library asked the Renew Washington public libraries to sign an agreement indicating that they wanted to participate in the communication services provided by GMMB. Once all agreements were in place with the libraries, GMMB made contact with the libraries and reviewed their individual communication activities. GMMB then assisted the libraries in developing or updating their communication plans.

To increase the knowledge and skill of the libraries, GMMB presented a one-day, in-person workshop on marketing and communications for Renew Washington public libraries. GMMB presented sections on messaging to amplify the value of the library, engaging front-line staff in messaging, developing partnerships, utilizing media, working with elected officials, establishing funding strategies, and evaluating and measuring success.

Each library had at least one article in its local newspaper about their Renew Washington project. Of the two libraries that held receptions or events for local decision-makers, the response was positive:

“I believe we were very successful in reaching key decision-makers at our website launch event and WORC presentation. Some of the key attendees included two Whitman County commissioners, the county auditor and county treasurer and the mayor of Colfax...Based on comments I’ve heard from people, I am certain the value of our library had improved for many people.”—Whitman County Library

Personal Stories

“One library patron used the Fort Vancouver Regional Library Job Lab in search of help preparing for a job interview. With assistance from the library volunteers, he found helpful videos in the library databases, tips on interview questions, and even background information on the company. He used what he learned during his interview, and was hired for the job.”

Continued on page 20
Continued from page 19

“A recent immigrant from Mexico attended a citizenship class and the Talk Time classes offered at the Lynden branch of the Whatcom County Library System to practice her English and prepare for her U.S. citizenship test. Before attending these classes, she relied on her three children to act as translators for her. After completing both classes, not only was she more comfortable speaking English, but she also successfully passed the citizenship exam.”

“A young mother brought her son into the Whitman County Library to find books that would address his numerous questions about financial planning. As a result of their visit, the son started saving his money from mowing lawns to get a savings bond instead of a skateboard.”

“Mary came to the WORC program for help updating her résumé. Because of injuries, Mary was no longer able to continue working in the home/assisted living health care industry. Although her résumé highlighted her long-term work experience, it focused strictly on her job duties as a health aide. WORC staff helped Mary identify the additional skills she had gained through employment and re-write her résumé to highlight her excellent work history and her great diversity of skills. They taught her to how to apply for a job online, write an effective cover letter, and practice interview skills. She found employment at a local business.”

A young mother brought her son into the Whitman County Library to find books that would address his numerous questions about financial planning. As a result of their visit, the son started saving his money from mowing lawns to get a savings bond instead of a skateboard.”

What Can Your Library Do to Help Job Seekers?

• Purchase books, videos, DVDs, and other multi-media materials on job search skills, interview techniques, career options, building job skills, sustainable living skills, and surviving crises.
• Purchase software programs and databases to assist customers in job searches, such as Bridges, WOIS/The Career information system, BrainFuse, JobNow, Learning Express, WinWay Resume, Career Library, Resume Maker.
• Change policies to allow customers to use computers for longer periods when they are involved in a job search.
• Purchase additional computers for use by job seekers.
• Purchase and check out notebook computers to job seekers so they have more time on computers to prepare for jobs. Include a flash drive with job-seeking information on it.
• Set up special work areas for job seekers with computers and resources all located together. Some libraries added volunteers or library staff to assist customers on the spot.
• Provide training to library staff on how to assist job seekers. Training can be provided by local experts, agencies, community groups, or WorkSource.
• Develop a webpage that pulls together resources for job searchers, including links to local employment agencies and databases.
• Present classes in the library on basic computer skills, résumé writing, searching for jobs, interview techniques, living sustainably, budgeting for hard times, and more.
• Organize a job networking group for people to meet, discuss, strategize, and motivate each other in searching for jobs.
• Develop partnerships with local employment groups, government agencies, community groups, and assistance agencies to provide classes at the library; teach library staff how to assist job seekers; provide job and employment materials; and advise librarians on how to better serve the unemployed. Agencies with which libraries have partnered: WorkSource, Community Action Centers, Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), Chamber of Commerce, Opportunity Council, Goodwill, Service Alternatives, Washington CASH Latino Outreach Program, and local community colleges.
• Hire outside staff skilled in job searching to coordinate the library program.
• Develop and train a cadre of volunteers to serve in the library as assistants to job searchers—both in their preparation and on how to use the library’s computers and databases/resources.

Conclusion

The Renew Washington grants to libraries were highly successful. As a result of the libraries’ activities, users were better able to find jobs and start new businesses, library staff learned how to serve job seekers, and libraries developed significant new partnerships with local organizations. Users found that libraries could help them in ways they never imagined.

As a result of the peer-learning training and sessions, State Library staff have incorporated the techniques into their work and have scheduled sessions for inclusion is future grant cycles. Renew Washington grant library staff see the value of peer learning and agree that it should be included in grant opportunities. Some libraries have incorporated peer learning into their work with employees.

Libraries received significant visibility for their services. Every library was featured in at least one news article in its local area. Some had up to six articles, and one library had TV coverage of their services. Many of the Renew Washington libraries received support from local organizations to continue some or all of their “new job-seeking” services.

So as one library stated in its final report: “Thank You, IMLS, Washington State Library and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, for giving our state a boost in helping the jobless, and our library a chance to implement such a worthwhile project.”
Using Technology and Community Partnerships to Archive an Orchestral Collection

by Robert Olivia


This is an account of blending tradition and technology to preserve the Seattle Symphony collection and bring its history to the public. It is also an account of how something can be accomplished with few financial resources by forming community partnerships. Finally, it is an account of telling a story of one’s orchestra, its history, and its relationship to its community.

When Benaroya Hall became the new home of the Seattle Symphony in 2001, boxes of materials surfaced that had gone unnoticed for years, such as newspaper clippings, letters, programs, and photographs. This collection of material was a treasure trove that needed to be archived, preserved, and brought to the public. However, as with most orchestras, funds are very limited and we simply could not move ahead without resources to pay professional librarians, curators, and archivists. A solution was to investigate whether we could offer opportunities for skilled professionals to volunteer or earn course credit assisting us in our project.

The result of these community partnerships was that we were able to computerize our library catalogue, inventory the boxes of archival materials, present a month-long exhibit in our Grand Lobby, create a library website to enable the public to access the archive, create a SharePoint site for the players and administration, make a thirty-minute DVD of the items in the exhibit, and secure a $100,000 grant from the Mellon Foundation.

Archive Exhibit
Our first step was to present to the public some of the items we had begun to uncover. We partnered with the University of Washington iSchool’s Directed Fieldwork program with our neighbors at the Seattle Art Museum. The knowledge and skills of these two institutions were essential in learning how to cut acid-free board, how to present an exhibit to tell a story, and even how to prevent off-gassing from within the antique display cases.

DVD
Our experiences with the exhibit led to our next step, which was to provide the public access to our archive. I created a DVD that could be sold in our symphony gift shop and shown on a local PBS station to generate funding and awareness of our project. One such example from our archive is the photograph below, of Danny Kaye and Igor Stravinsky.

Patrons who viewed the archive exhibit and DVD were fascinated with the many personal notations made by musicians on old, deteriorating parts. Audience members asked questions of the players and librarians about markings. The exchange was an opportunity for performers and audience members to interact and raise awareness of our history and tradition.

One such example of how a player personalized his parts stood out to me. We discovered that former principal clarinetist Ronald Phillips studiously recorded many performances on the bottom of the last page of his parts. The example below is from the Brahms Violin Concerto. The dates range from Joseph Szigeti in 1938 to Yehudi Menuhin in 1983.

Sharepoint
The attention generated from our archive exhibit prompted others in the community to offer services. Among them was an employee from Microsoft who played trombone in the Microsoft Orchestra. Microsoft encourages its employees to perform volunteer work in the community, and also matches gifts its employees make to a non-profit organization. He and Microsoft donated a server and SharePoint software. This has been a major benefit to the orchestra players, who can now access music from home. It

L–R: Seattle Post Intelligencer reviewer Louis Guzzo, Igor Stravinsky, Danny Kaye, and Seattle Symphony music director Milton Katims. Danny Kaye was a great supporter of the orchestra and part owner of the newly-formed Seattle Mariners. He did not miss the opportunity to spend the afternoon with Stravinsky before his concert with the Seattle Symphony. (Photo courtesy Seattle Post Intelligencer and MOHAI)
also reduced the high cost of overnight shipping and is a tremendous timesaving device for the Seattle Symphony librarians.

**Library Website**

Our next mission was to create a public website. By its nature an orchestra library is not accessible to the public, but we wanted to have some element of public access. Our website points out to the public the relevance of the orchestra library, the work the librarians perform, and the Symphony's role in the community, both today and historically.

To accomplish this we again turned to the UW iSchool. We were lucky to have the talents of a librarian/programmer who designed a website for the library containing my short narrated DVD clips, a video tour of the library, librarians marking parts, and even a demonstration of the age-old craft of hand sewing and making hardbound scores. Our next challenge will be to find a partner that will agree to host our site since streaming video takes up more bandwidth than our organization’s current servers are capable of providing. This is another obstacle but it is also an opportunity.

**Mellon Grant**

The accumulation of work over the past five years has clearly shown us the value of our archive, and we were encouraged to submit a grant application to the Mellon Foundation. This grant has allowed us to hire professional librarians and archivists to help us formally identify and create an archive and a plan to preserve and manage our collections. We reached out to partner with the Boeing Museum of Flight, which is using the open-source software Archivists’ Toolkit to catalogue its collection. Our future goal is to make our entire archive searchable online.

Greater detail about these accomplishments at the Seattle Symphony is detailed further in the forthcoming book. But in short, what we have done at the Seattle Symphony is a quest to tell a story. As every performance tells a story, so do an orchestra’s library and archive.

I’ve often noticed that during intermissions audience members gather at the foot of the stage and peer upwards to gain a glimpse of the music. Many are not musicians, and yet they feel some intangible relationship to or curiosity about the printed page of music they will soon hear. As evidenced from our archive exhibit, it seems the orchestra parts were the missing link between what the audience was hearing and what the players were looking at.

When I arrived at the Seattle Symphony in 2005 the thought of realizing these accomplishments would have seemed more than daunting. At first we simply wanted to protect and preserve the orchestra parts from further deterioration. However, by proceeding from one small step to the next, we eventually acquired many of the resources we needed. Our efforts have heightened an understanding and appreciation of the work we perform every day as orchestra librarians preparing music for performances. Most important, these pursuits have given us tools to provide an improved level of service to the players and additional resources to the administration.

The key to our successful completion of these projects has been to build community coalitions and partnerships. We were able to surround ourselves with trained volunteers and professionals whose specialized skills helped us accomplish things we could not have done otherwise. In doing so, a sense of pride of participation and relevance to the community has been realized by those who participated. Lastly, these events created awareness of the value of what we have in the collection, and the importance to the orchestra and community of preserving it.

What we have done at the Seattle Symphony Orchestra has been unexpected, and I owe much gratitude to those of you in the library, information and archival fields, who have contributed their skills and knowledge to our projects. We could never have done these things without the help of those of you in public libraries, schools, and research libraries.

As we continue to comb through our collection, we are reminded that the pages of orchestra parts of music are how we began this journey. They are the basis of our archive and have revealed to us our own history. These parts, with the players’ handwritten notations accumulated over many years, have stories to tell. The preservation of these stories is essential to preserving our history and tradition. The respect for tradition has led us forward, with technology, to its preservation. And the fusion of these has enabled us to embark on an exploration of new services to our players. In the end, it is as if the parts of music themselves, and their personal stories, continue to guide
Roaring Twenties
WALE 20th Anniversary
Share the Experience

Two days of premier education sessions and networking

2011 Conference, October 13, 14
Historic Davenport Hotel, Spokane, WA

Keynote address by
Award-winning Author J.A. Jance

Online Registration opens July 14
www.2011waleconference.wla.org/
Library Legislative Day in Olympia 2010
by Julie Miller and Rand Simmons

Here’s a reference question for you: What do the names Cannon, Dirksen, Hart, Longworth, Russell, and Rayburn have in common? If you answered “names of the Congressional office buildings in Washington, DC,” you get a gold star! We got to know these names well when we attended the National Library Legislative Day 2011 on May 9–10 as the WLA delegates representing Washington libraries.

ALA Briefings

On Monday, May 9, we joined delegates from 45 other states at briefings on current legislative issues presented by staff of ALA’s Washington Office and their consultants. Following an overview of the current political climate, they presented key federal legislative issues for libraries:

- Appropriations for FY2012, including funding the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) at its authorized level of $232 million and preserving a budget line of $19.1 million for the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries (ILSL) program;
- Support for student performance by including effective school library programs as part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) through the Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation (LEARN) Act;
- Broadband & telecommunications issues related to libraries, including permanent exemption for libraries from cash-flow regulations for the E-rate program and support for network neutrality;
- Inclusion of libraries in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) through the Workforce Investment through Local Libraries (WILL) Act (H.R. 1616) to insure public libraries are eligible partners in workforce development initiatives;
- Support for legislation related to copyright and orphan works (works for which copyright holder is unknown) to make it easier for libraries to provide access to orphan works without fear of statutory damages;
- Increased public access to federally funded research and continued funding for government information, including the U.S. Census Bureau’s publications (e.g., Statistical Abstract, etc.) and the Government Printing Office’s operations;
- Revision of certain provisions of the Patriot Act, set to expire on May 27, 2011, to protect the rights to privacy of innocent Americans.

Later, the two of us met to prioritize the issues and develop a strategy for meeting with the legislative assistants for several of Washington’s members of Congress. Throughout the day, we heard the repeated message that very little would move through Congress until legislators resolved the U.S. debt limit crisis; only after the debt limit debate was over would the FY2012 budget and other issues, especially education legislation, be addressed. At the same time, bills introduced by early summer might have a chance for action prior to the August recess—anything not introduced by summer is likely to become caught in the 2012 elections.

Taking all of these issues as well as state budget concerns into consideration, we decided to focus on three key areas: 1) appropriations for LSTA and ILSL; 2) support for early childhood learning and K–12 student success by inclusion of public and school libraries in the ESEA; and 3) support for broadband/E-rate issues.

Meetings on Capitol Hill

Our itinerary for Tuesday included three visits prior to lunch and four visits following—a full day’s work. We met with legislative assistants in the offices of Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and of Representatives Norm Dicks, Jaime Herrera Beutler, Jim McDermott, Adam Smith, and Cathy McMorris Rogers. Although we were unable to schedule appointments, we also visited the offices of Representatives Jay Inslee, Rick Larsen, Doc Hastings, and Dave Reichert to leave information packets for the legislative assistants working on education and/or technology policy.

At the beginning of each meeting, Rand provided a summary of how LSTA funds had been used in the individual Congressional district in FY2010 based on documents prepared by staff at the State Library.
Interactive Professional Self-Assessment Examination

by Kirsten Edwards

These self-assessment criteria were developed using a rigorous survey technique involving asking Kirsten’s friend Virginia and by polling random librarians on MySpace. Give yourself one point for every affirmative answer.

You might be a librarian if:

1. Your books at home are alphabetized and (as appropriate) in Dewey or LC order.
2. -----and so is your spice rack.
3. ---------including a “Ready Reference” section.
4. You have nightmares about losing your database access log-in.
5. You can identify titles by “…and I read it about two years ago and it was about yea [hands are held about six inches apart] big.”
6. When planning your holiday vacation you keep in mind whether there are any libraries of note in the area.
7. -----and one of the only phrases you know in the local language is Ich bin Eine Bibliothekarin.
8. ---------and you talk your way into getting a free tour of a National Library or closed collection on the strength of it.
9. You catalog your personal media collection.
10. -----and keep a database or spreadsheet for a home catalog.
11. ---------and buy a barcode scanner to make it all easier to use.
12. You find yourself correcting the mis-shelved books at local bookstores.
13. -----and also at other people’s libraries.
14. When the phone rings at home, you sometimes say, “Hello, Reference Desk.”
15. A friend casually mentions a statistic or factoid and you end up tuning out the rest of the conversation as you mentally rack your brain for the correct database or reference book that can check its accuracy.
16. -----and say out loud, “Right! 803, Brewer’s Dictionary of Phrase and Fable.”
17. Total strangers hand you library books in the grocery store and ask you to return them.
18. -----and expect you to know what the fines are.
19. You don’t like horror, speculative fiction, or even Rachel Weisz that much, but The Mummy is still one of your favorite films.
20. You recite license plate numbers by SuDoc classification rather than as a random string of letters and numbers.
21. You know what the Dewey Decimal License Plate Game is.
22. -----and can play it.
23. ---------and win.
25. Mothers recognize you and your colleague while you are out at Pizza Hut on your break and leave their small children in your care before you can protest.
26. You have your own personal account with Baker & Taylor, Demco, and/or Gaylord.
27. You have no doubt whatsoever that each of these really happened to one of your peers.

Score:
0 – 5 Bookworm
6 – 12 Library school student
13 – 20 Librarian
21 – 27 Children’s Librarian

Kirsten Edwards, when not attending to the manifold duties of the co-President of the Society Gaius Julius Solinus v. Washingtonius, manages to pay the bills by working as a young adult services librarian for three small branches of the King County Library System.
People and Places

The Friends, Staff, and Board of Trustees of Whitman County Library sadly acknowledge the passing of long-time Friends president Virginia “Ginny” Pittman. In 2010, Ginny received a Friends Merit Award from the Washington Library Association for her leadership and dedication to the Whitman County Library District. Among Ginny’s accomplishments during her eleven years as Friends president were huge increases in Friends’ membership, two successful cookbook projects, expanded support for countywide programming, and a fundraising drive that brought in more than $130,000 for the renovation of the Colfax Library.

Marilyn Carpenter is retiring from Eastern Washington University after over 30 years as a teacher, professor, and staff developer. Dr. Carpenter arrived at EWU in 1998 and she oversees the literacy degree in education, having developed the current program. She was recipient of the Outstanding Faculty Award in Teaching (2008) and Graduate Faculty of the Year Award (2009). Marilyn’s love of children’s literature and her expertise in using literature for teaching reading is shown on her current literature blog (http://marilyncarpenter.wordpress.com) and her annual lists of the best children’s books that she shares with current and former students throughout the country. The Curriculum Center at Eastern Washington University Libraries is the proud recipient of her gift of over 10,000 titles of children’s and young adult literature to the collection.

The King County Library System’s new Sammamish Library, which opened on January 9, 2010, has been selected as one of Library Journal’s Ten New Landmark Libraries. The 19,500-square-foot library is located in a new development adjacent to Sammamish City Hall—called Sammamish Commons—overlooking an outdoor plaza. The new library was designed and constructed with several green features including a rain garden system, a green roof and permeable concrete paving. It also features a geothermal HVAC system, radiant heating and reclaimed native elm, ash, and maple for countertops.

With standing room only, a new neighborhood library in Longview was opened to great fanfare on April 20, 2011. The library was created as part of a neighborhood revitalization program through a partnership between the Longview Public Library, Altrusa, and the Highlands Neighborhood Association (HNA). Through donations of materials from all of the partners, and from the community at large, the HNA was able to establish their own library as part of their recently-opened community center. In the future, the Longview Public Library is looking to bring programming to the new library including story times, summer reading events, and its adult literacy program.

Gonzaga’s Foley Center Library is “geeking out”! Library administration purchased several iPads in May and assigned them to librarians with the directive, “play with it!” Staff are just starting to explore relevant apps (like eBook readers) and having some fun with the irrelevant ones (like Photo Booth). They are also discovering which library resources don’t work so well in Safari or on a Mac product—important knowledge when they get questions from iPad-equipped students.

Nadean Meyer, Learning Resources Librarian, and Rayette Sterling, Outreach to Special Populations Librarian at Eastern Washington University Libraries received an American Library Association Carnegie-Whitney publication grant. They are working with EWU students of native heritage and tribal centers around the state to produce an updated youth resources bibliography. The two large regions in Washington State are Inland Plateau and Northwest Coastal with numerous individual tribes within both regions. Many print, digital, web and video resources are now more culturally relevant and will serve as additional resources for the statewide online curriculum Since Time Immemorial: Tribal Sovereignty in Washington State (http://indian-ed.org). The resulting list will be available next spring online and current pieces will start to appear at the research guide (http://research.ewu.edu/tribal).

Asotin County Library has opened a new branch inside the Asotin High School Library. The system’s third location will enable the library to provide even better service to the City of Asotin. A grand opening was held on May 17th with music of the AHS jazz band, refreshments, door prizes, and of course, tours of the library. A small public library collection of new books, CD Books, DVDs, and magazines is available for checkout, and materials can be requested from other libraries and brought in through the VALNet Consortium. Programs for all ages will be offered at the new branch.

Continued on next page
Mark Your Calendar

Join your colleagues in Spokane, Washington for the PNLA Annual Conference
August 3–5, 2011

Thursday
Keynote Speaker: J. A. Jance, bestselling author extraordinaire
Banquet Music and Entertainment: Wylie & the Wild West

Friday
Corks & Cans: Join us at the Northern Lights Brewing Company and the award-winning Dry Fly Distillery, located adjacent to the Centennial Trail and along a scenic stretch of the Spokane River. Local wines will also be highlighted.

Online registration will close July 27, 2011. On-site registration will be available.

http://www.pnla.org/events/conference2011/
Plato’s adage about necessity being the mother of invention came into play in forms big and small when planning for the 2011 WLA Annual Conference. Nowhere was it more prevalent, perhaps, than in the birthing of a new partnership between members of WLA and the Washington State Library (WSL) to offer the preconference Energizing Friends, Foundations, and Trustees: Yes to Libraries! This ambitious event was sponsored by the WLA interest group Washington Library Friends, Foundations, Trustees, and Advocates (WLFFTA). It is in this same spirit of collaboration that I acknowledge the assistance of acting Washington State Librarian Rand Simmons in writing this issue’s column. Rand contributed heavily to the column, in addition to collecting historical input from other WSL employees past and present.

“New board members don’t generally enter into service for our libraries already knowledgeable in the ways of effective advocacy, the values of intellectual freedom, or the bounds of library-related law.”

To tell this story properly, I must back up to early 2010 when I was about six months into my position as WLA’s Program Coordinator. It was around this time that I started noticing an increasing need in Washington’s libraries: training for trustees and other library advocates. New board members don’t generally enter into service for our libraries already knowledgeable in the ways of effective advocacy, the values of intellectual freedom, or the bounds of library-related law. Friends groups and Foundations have similar training needs, and it was not that long ago that WILL used to provide this continuing education for library advocates. If you’re asking “who is Will?” you should instead be asking “what is WILL?”

From the early 1980s until its last occurrence in 2007, WSL offered WILL, the Workshop in Library Leadership conference, as a way to provide trustees and other advocates with basic orientation and relevant information on issues that are critical to understanding and governing Washington’s public libraries. This day-long workshop was held every other year, and generally consisted of a keynote speaker, several sessions by experts on issues of concern to trustees, and a range of concurrent sessions addressing issues identified by trustees and directors to be crucial to their work in libraries.

Then, in 2008, state library agencies began receiving instruction from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) that federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds were not to be used to provide consulting to or training for library trustees, managers, or supervisors. These areas of library work were seen as too far removed from library customers, whom IMLS staff viewed as the primary beneficiaries of the LSTA. Consequently WILL, funded through the LSTA, fell to the wayside. “We were devastated,” says Rand Simmons, who was formerly Head of Library Development for WSL. “Not only did we lose our ability to offer the WILL conference but we were limited in our ability to do trustee orientations and other activities.”

For part of the era that WILL conferences had taken place, the conference was complemented in the alternate years by forums held by WLFFTA. Being an interest group within WLA, WLFFTA seemed to be one of the obvious places to start rebuilding something “WILL-like,” but trying to reproduce what WSL previously provided was a tall order. Compounding the challenge was the timing. It happened that when I came a’ knockin, WLFFTA was in a period of leadership transition that was still in flux. Their membership was regrouping and there was not yet anyone with whom I could partner. Undaunted, yet still needing a reliable “in” to the library advocate community, I worked with former San Juan Island Library director and active WLA member Laura Tretter to conduct an informal needs assessment of library advocates via the WA public library directors. In spring of 2010, after asking the directors to complete a questionnaire and to query their own trustees as well, we collected responses. The mandate to WLA was clear: find a way to support and/or provide training for trustees and other library advocates.

That informal survey also collected relevant topic suggestions, such as this on-target list from Maggie Buckholz, director of the Burlington Public Library: “Intellectual freedom; Building donor-centered
relationships for ongoing funding partnerships; Value of continuing education on library issues and connecting with other advocates; Role of advocates—how you can help promote your library (and when to keep your mouth shut).” The survey results also suggested that respondents did not want to see this event occur at that summer’s joint WLA/PNLA Conference in Victoria, BC, but that they would be open to similar events in a more accessible WA location.

During that same time, WLA worked with WLFFTA members to identify new leadership candidates for their interest group, and it was not without a small amount of serendipity that WSL’s own Carolyn Peterson was eventually elected chairperson of the WLFFTA interest group. This was just the partner I had hoped for, as Carolyn not only worked for the very organization that had previously offered WILL, but as Assistant Program Manager for Library Development at WSL, it is her job to provide library board orientations. You can bet the two of us could be found with our heads together at the 2010 WLA IG/Leadership retreat, brainstorming the possibilities.

It was that collaboration that eventually led to the preconference sponsored by WLFFTA this past April in Yakima. The event was essentially a “conference within a conference,” offering concurrent sessions in strategic planning, lobbying, foundation planning, open government, library law, recruiting and energizing Friends and volunteers, intellectual freedom, Robert’s Rules, fundraising, and advocacy. While attendance didn’t prove to be as high as anticipated, the event did allow WLA and WSL the opportunity to partner in creating a workable model for sustaining this kind of continuing education for Washington’s library advocates. As WLFFTA Chair, Carolyn felt that it went exceptionally well for a first run, and that “due to the great cooperation of everyone involved, everything came together smoothly.” This included Carolyn working with a WSL colleague to record key presentations for future use. She reports that they will be posting the recordings to the WLFFTA webpage by the time of this column’s publication.

Reauthorization of the LSTA in December, 2010, brought a ray of hope. State libraries are now able to provide consulting and training for trustees, managers and supervisors. But there is a catch. “We are still governed by the 2008–2012 5-year Plan submitted to and approved by IMLS,” Jeff Martin explains. Martin is the acting Program Manager for Library Development at WSL. “With the reauthorization of LSTA, we have sufficient leeway to again hold a WILL conference and do orientation for trustees using federal dollars, but we will have to ask IMLS to approve amending the current plan until a new 5-year plan is adopted.” WSL staff have since discussed the amendment of the current plan with the Library Council of Washington at its May 19 meeting, and the Council agreed that staff should move forward with the amendment.

There is another catch: LSTA funds are shrinking. The recently-approved continuing resolution, passed by Congress, keeps the federal government financially afloat through September 30, 2011. But it brings cuts to the Grants to States program through which IMLS passes LSTA dollars to state library agencies. The cuts to the current fiscal year funding is about $200,000, and it is unlikely that 2012 funding will be any greater.

Also lurking in the distance is the erosion of “maintenance of effort” by legislative budget cuts. Maintenance of effort is the spending of state funds in ways that comply with the LSTA and to which WSL commits in order to receive full LSTA funding. So, as federal dollars disappear, the question of “will WSL resume holding WILL conferences?” may become “is there a funding model that will allow the WILL conferences to return?” Rand notes that the latter question will need to be discussed in a wider venue than just WSL, such as within WLA and amongst the public library directors.

While the questions of how it will be funded and what form it will take may remain uncertain, one thing appears clear: The WILL conference will live to see another day. Everyone agrees that training for our library advocates is valued and necessary. In recent communications, Whitman County Library Director Kristie Kirkpatrick shared that her trustees “rave about the training they received at WILL, WLA preconferences, and WSL onsite opportunities.” Kristie went straight to the heart of the matter when she added, “while many of them have previous board experience, these training opportunities do an excellent job of incorporating library values and issues, greatly improving their understanding and performance.”
It started out about as near to perfection as you can get when working in a library. A sunny morning, public computers all in use without glitches, reference questions asked and answered in a thorough and friendly manner, no spills or suspicious odors.

“Can you help me find a copy of The Catcher in the Rye?” a young woman inquires.

“Of course!” we answer with enthusiasm, and quite a bit of relief, since we just spied a copy (a fresh trade paperback edition with original cover art) newly re-shelved.

But just a few feet into the Teen Center, our eager reader falters.

“Um, I don’t want the teen version.” SCREECH!

“Oh, it doesn’t matter where we shelve it,” we rush in to say. “Sometimes we have books in several different sections. That way, people can find them more easily.”

“But I want the adult version.”

Ah, the adult version.

We know, of course, that as librarians, interactions like this one are mostly our own fault. We neatly divide all the books into their separate sections: children, teen, adult. Can we really blame patrons for abiding by the rules we have set? No one wants to look like a dummy, browsing books written for much younger readers. And some younger patrons avoid books written for teens or adults, assuming they will be too difficult or too dark (which is certainly sometimes the case).

But we believe that many books—especially good books—appeal to a much wider age range than the helpful little stickers on their spines would lead us to believe. To prove it, we will now proceed to blow your mind by telling you about some of our recent favorite books in alphabetical order, without regard to marketed audience. Do you think you could guess how each of these titles is cataloged? Might we convince you that it doesn’t really matter?

Confessions of the Sullivan Sisters by Natalie Standiford: Three sisters have all offended their rich and powerful grandmother. Now they must confess their crimes, revealing family drama, secret trysts, and more.

Couch by Benjamin Parzybok: A funny, surprisingly exciting story about three Portland roommates who find themselves on a mystical quest to deliver a couch. What begins as a simple exercise in furniture donation soon leads them across the sea to a different continent, deep into a world that proves far stranger than any of them had realized.

The Fates Will Find Their Way by Hannah Pittard: Nora Lindell disappeared when she was 16, and the boys in town cannot stop obsessing and speculating about what happened that night or where she might be decades later. Told in a first person collective voice that works extraordinarily well and might remind you of The Virgin Suicides by Jeffrey Eugenides.

Heads You Lose by Lisa Lutz and David Hayward: Paul and Lacey Hansen, orphaned when they were teens, enjoy a quiet life growing weed in northern California, until a dead body (sans the head) shows up in front of their house. Given their line of work, there’s no way they can call the police, so the siblings bumble along trying to solve the case. Lutz and Hayward (who claim to have once been “involved”)

Hayden Bass and Linda Johns are librarians at the Seattle Public Library. One works in teen services, the other in adult services. But in the spirit of “it doesn’t matter when you’re helping a reader,” we are not going to tell you who works where.
Continued from previous page

alternate writing chapters, and the end of each chapter includes critiques that quickly and hilariously digress to being more about their failed relationship than the story.

_Hold Me Closer, Necromancer_ by Lish MacBride: This horror/humor hybrid features Sam, a Seattle fast food employee who suddenly finds himself in possession of the power to raise the dead. Unfortunately for him, there’s already a necromancer in town, and he’s not interested in healthy competition. When Sam’s coworker shows up missing her body below the neck (but still maintaining a positive attitude), he realizes the battle is on. With the support of his friends and a lovely werewolf girl, he must learn to control his powers before it’s too late.

_Hush_ by Eishes Chayil: Gittel lives in an ultra-Orthodox Jewish community in Brooklyn, where Oprah Winfrey is mostly unheard of and holiness—or the appearance of it—is everything. Gittel knows why her best friend Devoy died, but her future may depend on her silence.

_The Lock Artist_ by Steve Hamilton: Mike Smith can crack any safe and pick every lock he encounters. He works mysteriously and quietly—with an emphasis on quiet, since he hasn’t said a word since the night his parents died when he was eight. Ten years later, Mike’s in prison and has the time to write down his story. An Edgar winner that inspired at least one of us to revisit her earlier attempts at lock picking.

_Revolver_ by Marcus Sedgwick: Professional reviewers compare this title to the work of Cormac McCarthy and Jack London. A young man stands alone in a cold, bare shack north of the Arctic Circle—alone, that is, except for the corpse of his father, frozen in a corner. There is an ominous knock at the door.

_Shades of Milk and Honey_ by Mary Robinette Kowal takes place in a world similar to Jane Austen’s Regency England, where truly accomplished young women play the pianoforte, cover screens, speak several languages, and, of course, perform magic.

_The Year We Were Famous_ by Carole Estby Dagg: Many book groups around Washington have read and discussed _Bold Spirit_ by Linda Hunt, a nonfiction book about Helga Estby and her daughter’s 1896 walk from Spokane to New York in an attempt to win $10,000 to save their Mica Creek farm. Now Carole Estby Dagg has taken her great grandmother and great aunt’s story and crafted a historical novel from 18-year-old Clara’s point of view. Worth noting: The author, a librarian, was formerly the assistant director of Everett Public Library.

1 We work at the Central Library in downtown Seattle; we made up the sunny part of this story, but not our acknowledgment that a day without suspicious liquids or odors is a beautiful thing worth noting.

2 Alphabetical order by title. Mixing it up even more and challenging your organizational inclinations.

“S. 929’s increased emphasis on libraries is evidence that your phone calls and e-mails really can and did make a difference!”

Without exception, legislative staff found this district-specific information very useful, and it also provided an opportunity for us to relate specific anecdotes about library users to illustrate the importance of LSTA funds to delivering library services to constituents in the district. We also drew upon briefing sheets developed by ALA, which were included in the information packets.

During the course of the seven meetings, we presented the three key areas in the same order, but we varied the emphasis and the anecdotes depending upon each legislator’s committee assignments, history of support, or personal passions. The day was challenging—mentally and physically—as we hiked from building to building, through metal detectors and back again, looking for the green flag of Washington down the gray marble halls.

Being the Change

Perhaps our most significant meeting was the first of the day with a legislative staff member in Senator Patty Murray’s office, where we learned the senator was going to introduce the LEARN Act (S. 929) that afternoon. Just a few weeks earlier, we had called on WLA and WLMA members to contact Murray’s office to ask her to include public and school libraries and librarians in the language of the bill to insure they would be eligible for funding if the bill becomes law.

When Rand called the ALA Washington Office to let them know the bill was being introduced that very day, Executive Director Emily Sheketoff answered the phone with “You’ve done your job!” She was reading the new bill with a yellow highlighter in hand to flag the phrases relevant to libraries. The new bill uses the terms _library, libraries, or librarians_ as resources for literacy education fourteen times, more than twice the number mentioned in the LEARN Act introduced in the 111th Congress.

The LEARN Act, which will probably be folded into ESEA as part of education reform, is still a long way from becoming law. But the bill’s increased emphasis on libraries is evidence of the power of grassroots advocacy: your phone calls and e-mails really can and did make a difference! (“The text of S. 929 can be found at http://thomas.loc.gov.”)

To monitor legislation of interest to the Washington library community, please visit ALA’s legislative action Web site at http://capwiz.com/ala/home/. You’ll also find information about how to take action.
### WLA Thanks Our Institutional & Business Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business and Friends Members</th>
<th>Institutional Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ameresco Quantum, Inc.</td>
<td>King County Library System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphigory Associates</td>
<td>Kitsap Regional Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Way Libraries</td>
<td>La Conner Regional Library District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Liberty Lake Library</td>
<td>Liberty Lake Municipal Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liberty Lake Municipal Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Longview Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lopez Island Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Columbia College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neill Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ocean Shores Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orcas Island Library District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pierce County Library System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Puyallup Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>San Juan Island Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seattle Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sedro-Woolley Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skagit Valley College/Norwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sno-Isle Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spokane County Library District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spokane Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Timberland Regional Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University of Washington Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Skagit Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walla Walla Community College Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walla Walla County Rural Library District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Washington State Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Washington State University - Vancouver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whatcom County Library System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whitman County Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yakima Valley Community College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yakima Valley Libraries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>