

trustee tale

Newsletter for Public Library Trustees

Trustees Make Up a Vital Part of the Wisconsin Library Association

By Lisa K. Strand, Executive Director, Wisconsin Library Association

Of the more than 2,000 members of the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA), nearly 400 public library trustees find a home as part of the Wisconsin Library Trustees and Advocates (WLTA), a division of WLA. We're proud of that level of participation by those who help govern the libraries in this state. However, there are close to 2,000 public library trustees in Wisconsin, and WLA would be even stronger if a larger number of trustees would become members of WLA/WLTA. Not only would WLA benefit, but trustee members would reap many rewards.

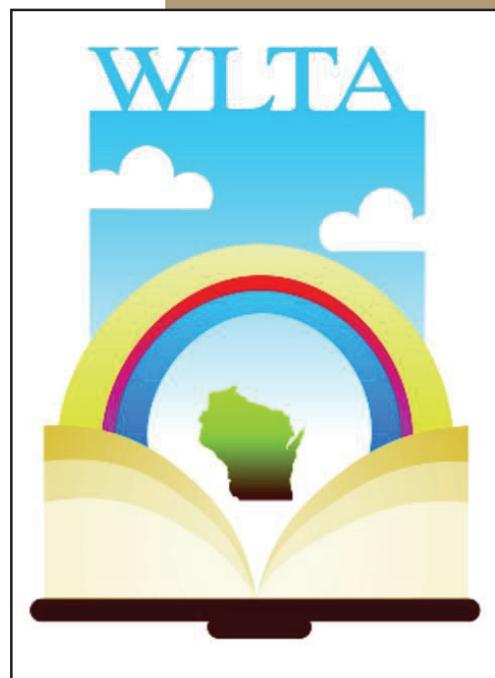
Doug Lay, former chair of WLTA and currently the WLTA representative on the WLA Board, puts it this way. "A basic premise behind belonging to WLA is that individuals can become more effective locally if they are better informed about library developments taking place state-wide," Doug says. "By bringing like-minded people together, WLTA hopes to extend to all library promoters in Wisconsin expanded opportunities to exchange perspectives, pool intellectual resources and synthesize ideas."

For instance, WLTA provides opportunities to become better informed about a wide range of library issues by sponsoring programming at the annual WLA Conference. Special rates for library trustees and friends make it more economical to attend this 3 day event, which rotates around the state.

This fall's conference included sessions on promoting the library, recent legislation affecting libraries, library service to special populations, fundraising, running effective meetings, and creating sound policies. WLTA holds an annual meeting at the conference to give trustees a chance to gather in one place, and the informal opportunities to exchange ideas and information are just as valuable. WLTA also sponsors programs at the annual public library conference, which will be held May 2-4, 2007, at the Plaza Hotel in Eau Claire.

The WLTA website at <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/wlta/> provides links to resources that can assist trustees with their governing responsibilities. It's a great place to connect with information on open meetings law, public records compliance, and DPI resources such as "Trustee Essentials," the comprehensive guide to trustee authority and responsibilities. Trustees can also link to a Legislative Status Report of all library-related funding and other bills currently pending before the state legislature. Thumbnails of the issue, WLA's position, and links to more detailed information are provided for each legislative issue.

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Library 2.0

by Tasha Saecker, Director, Menasha Public Library

Library 2.0 is a buzzword for the changes we can already see happening across the profession. Library 2.0 is about far more than libraries adopting new technologies. It is a philosophy of rapid change, as our community changes we must be ready to change too. Libraries must be willing to adopt an open stance with transparency in decision making, which in turn gives our patrons the right to suggest changes that will serve them best.

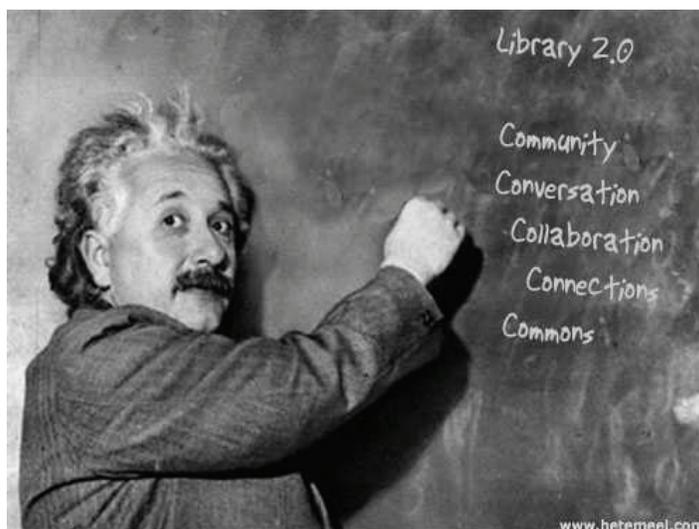
One could say that Library 2.0 is being customer-centered, but it goes beyond that into libraries actively listening to their customers and creating online as well as in-person ways for customers to speak out. When we start to do this and begin to really listen and adapt to what our customers want, we become the public libraries our communities desire. Rather than being large organizations that resist change, we become organizations that are flexible and adapt easily to changes our customers want.

In Library 2.0 there are the “Five C’s” that reflect the basic tenets of the movement. Libraries must be a part of their Community. We must start a Conversation with our customers. We must Collaborate with customers and other organizations. Libraries must concentrate on forming Connections with our patrons and community as a whole. And we must focus on being a modern Commons for our communities.

To those five tenets we must also adopt what makes Library 2.0 a very important movement: the idea of “radical trust.” If we are to really listen to our patrons and react to what they are asking for, then we have to change our approach to the very people we are here to serve. We must trust them to a radical

level. We must allow them to make suggestions on open online forums. We must trust that the community will speak out when something is wrong. We must simply trust our customers, and that is a huge step for many libraries.

In order to trust, we as librarians have to be willing to hand some of the control we currently have over to our communities. We have to understand that the public is changing in the way they view service, the way they interact with each other online, and in what they expect from their public libraries. We have to take a step back and hear, be willing to adopt new technologies to better communicate, and allow our communities to both guide us and inspire us.



Library 2.0 is technology. It is community. It is policy, programming, and our physical library building. It is all of these things. But mostly, Library 2.0 is about librarians being open to new ideas and trusting their communities.

Library 2.0 is an exciting new way of looking at libraries and the services we offer. I hope that as trustees, you allow your library staff to experiment, make mistakes, learn, listen

and grow. This change has to come not only from the librarians themselves but from the trustees and administration. Everyone must come to understand that libraries must become a collaborative space where all employees have a voice, all ideas are taken seriously and all patrons are served in the way they need to be.

Governor Doyle's Proposed State Budget

by Mark Arend, Assistant Director, Winnefox Library System

On 13 February Governor Doyle presented his proposed 2007 – 2009 state budget to the Legislature. As it moves through the approval process over the next couple of months the Joint Finance Committee will study it, hold public hearings, and draft a final budget, after which it will go to each house of the Legislature for approval.

Even though your library doesn't receive funding directly from the state, there are several items in the Governor's proposed budget relating to public library service.

Public Library System Aids: Your library receives support services from Winnefox Library System (you can see more information on system services at: http://www.wals.lib.wi.us/blogs/speakup/2006/08/library_systems_in_wisconsin.html). State statutes require the DPI to request funding equal to 13% of the amount that local cities, villages, and counties fund libraries. The Governor and Legislature, however, are not required to fund systems at that level. Current library system funding is about 8% of local spending and the Governor has requested increases to keep funding at this level.

Here are the 2008 & 2009 requested amounts as well as the 2007 budgeted amount:

2007	\$15,521,200
2008	\$16,140,000
2009	\$17,372,300

The Governor has recommended that a part of library system funding be paid out of the Universal Service Fund (USF). The Universal Service Fund is funded by a tax on telecommunications providers. One of its purposes is to increase access to technology and the Internet in rural areas of the state. Library systems fulfill this requirement by providing internet access and technology services to public libraries.

The Wisconsin Library Association has more information on this issue at <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/systemaids.htm>

Badgerlink: If you've used the online magazine or newspaper indexes through your library's web site you've used the Badgerlink service. These reliable, up-to-date, and age-appropriate resources are available to all state residents from home, school, or office as well as at the library. The Governor has

proposed increasing Badgerlink funding to maintain service at its present level. Here are the 2008 & 2009 proposed amounts as well as the 2007 budgeted amount:

2007	\$2,030,500
2008	\$2,061,700
2009	\$2,142,200

The Wisconsin Library Association has more information on this issue at <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/BadgerLink.htm>

Statewide Library Service Contracts: The state has several contracts with agencies that own special collections not available elsewhere in the state or that provide special services to state residents and libraries.

- **The Wisconsin Library Services (WiLS)** on the UW Madison campus and the **Milwaukee Public Library** lend materials from their highly specialized collections.
- The **Wisconsin Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped** provides services to state residents who cannot use print books.
- The **Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC):** The CCBC is a nationally-known examination, study, and research library for librarians, teachers, early childhood care providers, students, and others interested in children's and young adult literature.

The Governor recommends increasing funding to fully support the costs of library service contracts. Here are the 2008 & 2009 proposed amounts as well as the 2007 budgeted amount:

2007	\$876,900
2008	\$1,134,200
2009	\$1,097,200

The Wisconsin Library Association has more information on this issue at <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/contracts.htm>

County Library Funding Levy Limit Exemption: There is an additional item connected to the budget document effecting libraries. Beginning in 2008 counties are required to reimburse libraries in adjacent counties, as well as libraries in their own county, for use by persons living in areas that don't maintain their own libraries (primarily rural residents). The Governor has recommended these county library expenditures be exempt from any levy limits imposed on local governments. The Wisconsin Library Association has more information on this issue at <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/exemption.htm>

Comments on any of these items can be addressed to your state legislators. To get your legislator's address, phone number or e-mail, visit <http://waml.legis.state.wi.us/>

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The WLTA News is another way trustees stay connected and informed. You might learn about a new piece of legislation, a tip on advocating more effectively for your library, or how a library handles new trustee orientations. The quarterly WLA Newsletter is also provided to all WLTA members, keeping you informed about the activities of the entire association. WLA and WLTA also have e-mail discussion lists. The WLA list is a great way to get the latest legislative news, just as it happens.

For the sense of community, the educational opportunities, and the chance to advocate more effectively for libraries, WLTA membership makes a lot of sense. We hope you'll join WLA today and become part of the Wisconsin Library Trustees and Advocates.

To join or get more details about membership benefits, go to <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/membership/>. Select the individual membership application form, print, complete the form and send to WLA with your annual dues of \$32. Or, contact the WLA office (608-245-3640 or wla@scls.lib.wi.us) to request a membership application or more information.

TRUSTEE SOAPBOX

Do you have a question, comment or topic to suggest for a future TrusteeTale? Send an Email to Mark at: Arend@winnefox.org.

Editor/Author: Mark Arend
Graphic Artist: Renee Miller

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Winnefox Library System
106 Washington Avenue
Oshkosh, WI 54901-4985