Channel

Library Legislative Day features Gov. Doyle

by Rick Grobschmidt, Assistant Superintendent
Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning

On Feb. 4 a record 161 library advocates participated in the 2003 Library Legislative Day in Madison, while a snow storm kept even more registrants away from the session. Gov. James Doyle provided the keynote address, and other speakers were Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton, State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster, and Richard Grobschmidt. Mary Panzer, Senate Majority Leader, planned to address the group but was unable to attend due to a family emergency.

Library Legislative Day is an opportunity for librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries to discuss with their legislators issues facing libraries. The day includes briefings on issues, addresses by state political leaders, and visits with legislators. The Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) and the Wisconsin Educational Media Association (WEMA) sponsor Library Legislative Day annually. Library Legislative Day Chair Bridget Rolek organized the program with the help of her committee, consisting of Phyllis Davis, Barbara Arnold, Annette Smith, Karen Schneider, Peg Bredeson, Barb Sanford, Sue Center, and Greg Crews.

In his remarks, Gov. Doyle reiterated many of the themes from his State of the State message, including the challenges ahead to get the state on a sound fiscal footing. He and the other speakers all recognized libraries as an integral part of our state's

Gov. James Doyle was the featured speaker during Library Legislative Day, held Feb. 4 in Madison. The event is an opportunity for librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries to discuss with their legislators issues facing libraries.

Workshops help facilitate library media technology plans

Kathy Boguszewski and Stuart Ciske, members of the Instructional Media and Technology Team with the Division of Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL) have been facilitating workshops on developing a school district combined library media and technology plan. Attendees have begun the collaborative planning process that introduces the four Wisconsin focus areas:

- Teaching and Learning Practices
- Educator Proficiency
- Access to the Information Resources and Learning tools
- Support Systems and Leadership

To date more than 850 individuals from over 230 school districts have at-

tended the workshops in every CESA in the state. They are in the process of co-writing one comprehensive plan that will meet the Federal requirements for E-Rate, No Child Left Behind: Title II, Part D Enhancing Education Through Technology (Ed Tech), and the State of Wisconsin requirements for Standard "h," which deals with Library Media services.

What is different about this approach to planning? Library media, technology, curriculum, and teaching staff share the same table to discuss and plan for how to best utilize the current technology in order to raise student academic achievement and prepare students for the 21st century digital knowledge-based global society. The planning emphasis is on

teaching and learning and proficiency with information, ideas, and technology applications in order to communicate in a persuasive manner using powerful production tools that are available to the PreK-12 arena. They also make suggestions for the future based on a variety of current reliable need assessments rather than on the perceived needs of a few.

For more information about School Information (Library Media) and Technology Planning, visit the IMT website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/imt/libmedtp.html or contact Kathy Boguszewski at (608) 267-1282 (mary.boguszewski@dpi.state.wi.us) or Stuart Ciske at (608) 267-9289 (stuart.ciske@dpi.state.wi.us). ■

Library Legislative Day—*from page 1*

education system that serves the very young to the very old, and includes schools at all levels as well as institutions of lifelong learning.

Libraries And The State Budget

The Legislature is in the midst of deliberating the Governor's 2003-05 Biennial State Budget. Gov. Doyle presented his executive budget bill containing his recommendations for appropriations on Feb. 18. Below is a summary of the Governor's proposed 2003-05 budget and its impact on libraries.

DPI Budget Proposal

Public Library System Aid: The DPI request to increase system funding to the 13 percent level was not included in the budget. For both years of the biennium, the budget proposes that library systems be funded at the FY 2003 funding level of $14.2 million annually. The Governor maintains this level of funding by supplementing a $12.1 GPR appropriation with $2.1 million from the state's universal service fund.

Rick Grobschmidt

School Library Aid: Funding for this program is from the Common School Fund, a key source of funds to purchase materials for school media centers. In the cur-

rent school year, $17.4 million will be distributed statewide. The Governor recommends adjusting the DPI expenditure authority for this program based on anticipated revenues. Because of lower interest rates, funding may decrease in FY04 and FY05.

BadgerLink Funding: The DPI request to increase funding for additional BadgerLink content was not included in the budget. The budget does provide modest funding increases ($36,700 in FY04, $93,300 in FY05) to maintain the current level of BadgerLink services.

Contracts and DPI Staffing: The Governor recommends reducing the library contracts by $103,200, from their FY03 funding level of $1,031,700. This will be reduced to $928,500 for both years of the biennium, a 10 percent reduction. The budget proposes to eliminate 25 FTE posi-

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tions in DPI from the current base of 641 FTEs as part of general agency budget reductions.

TEACH Budget Proposal

The Governor recommends eliminating the TEACH Board, K-12 technology block grants, technology training grants, and wiring loans.

The budget proposes that these programs have met their goal to introduce and expand the use of technology in schools, and that addressing the budget deficit must take priority over continuing the programs. The Governor recommends transferring the remaining TEACH functions to DPI. These include: the telecommunications discount grants; Governor's Wisconsin Educational Technology Conference (GWETC); and E-rate network applications. A total of 2.0 FTE positions are allocated to DPI to manage these three programs. The Governor further recommends expanding eligibility for the telecommunications discount program to include public museums. Discount grants are now provided to K-12 schools, private colleges, technical colleges, and public libraries. The grants provide for inexpensive high-speed data lines which are critical to maintaining affordable Internet access and shared automated systems for schools and libraries.

UW System Libraries Budget Proposal

The UW's request for a $6 million biennial funding increase for campus libraries was not included in the budget. Of this amount, $4 million was to provide for continued development of campus collections; $1 million for development of shared electronic collections; and $1 million to continue the sharing of physical resources and enable the creation of digital collections concerning Wisconsin's cultural and historical heritage. ∎

Statewide Resource Contracts

Cooperative Children's Book Center
4290 Helen C. White Hall,
600 N. Park St.,
Madison, WI 53706
ccbcinfo@education.wisc.edu .... www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/
Kathleen Horning, Acting Director .... (608) 263-3720

Milwaukee Public Library/Interlibrary Loan
814 West Wisconsin Avenue,
Milwaukee, WI 53233-2385
Brian Hannemann, Interlibrary Loan Librarian .... (414) 286-3082

WiLS/Interlibrary Loan
728 State Street,
Rooms 464 and B106B,
Madison, WI 53706-1494
schneid@wils.wisc.edu .... http://www.wils.wisc.edu/
Kathy Schneider, Director .... (608) 263-2773

Wisconsin Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
813 West Wells Street,
Milwaukee, WI 53233-1436
http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/rll/lbphinfo.html
Marsha Valance, Regional Librarian .... (800) 242-8822

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James Klein, Consultant
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Robert Roy, Technology Consultant
Federal Technology Grants 261-6332
Stephen Sanders, Education Consultant
Instructional Technology Program 266-7112

DPI Library & Statistical Information Center
Kay Ihlenfeldt, Team Leader 266-3108
Patricia Stutz
Library Services Assistant 267-1289

Interlibrary Loan and Resource Sharing Team
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Circulation Desk 224-6169
Mary Clark, Coordinator
Resource Sharing Technology 224-6179
Loretta Harmatuck
Government Services 224-6165
Mary Struckmeyer, Coordinator
Reference and Interloan 224-6168
Willeen Tretheway
Audiovisual and Technical Services 224-6171
Terry Wilcox
Interlibrary Loan Services 224-6163
Garrett Erickson
WISCAT User Support.. 224-5394

To send e-mail, use the following format (all lowercase letters):
firstname.lastname@dpi.state.wi.us

Wisconsin Child Care Information Center
Lita Haddal, Director .... (800) 362-7353 or (608) 224-5388

AV Notes
Videos on Schools and Education

by **Willeen Tretheway**, Audiovisual Services Librarian
Reference and Loan Library

These VHS and DVD videos on schools and education are available for free loan from the Wisconsin Reference and Loan Library (R&LL). The programs deal with issues in education, educational quality, students with disabilities, the benefits of parent participation in education, and the history of American education. They are of interest to parents, teachers and other educators, and others looking for materials concerning educational opportunity and excellence and the place of education in society.

Libraries and library media centers of all types may call or send requests for videocassettes and DVDs directly to the R&LL or they may send them through regular interlibrary loan channels. Organizations, teachers at kindergarten through 12th-grade schools, faculty and staff at academic institutions, and state agency employees may contact R&LL directly or send interlibrary loan requests through their public libraries. All other users, including students and other individual borrowers, should request materials on interlibrary loan through their library. The R&LL phone number for direct video requests and information is (608) 224-6169, toll free is (888) 542-5543, fax is (608) 224-6178, and the e-mail address is rllill@dpi.state.wi.us. The R&LL call numbers that indicate format and booking system numbers are included in the citations and may be used when requesting the videos.

A Celebration of Differences (Rush Neurobehavioral Center, 1999; 23 minutes; with guide) presents a positive message about the strengths, gifts, struggles, and successes of people with learning disabilities. It describes learning disabilities as types of neurobehavioral disorders and explains that people with learning disorders have difficulty with some aspect of school because they think and learn differently than most students. While being different can be difficult and painful, thinking differently also can promote progress and invite interest. The program includes comments from children and adults about their academic challenges, determination, and feelings of empowerment. (VHS V-7216 (025672))

Diversity in Action, The Shaker Heights Experience (Stuart Math Films, 1998) is a package of three documentary programs about race relations in the Shaker Heights, Ohio, school district. They describe diversity issues and the creative ways the community dealt with them, and the role young people played in solutions. "Shaker Heights: The Struggle for Integration" (57 minutes, closed captioned) uses a student newspaper article as the starting point to examine the community's history of racial integration (VHS V-7243 (025703)). "Building Bridges" (20 minutes) profiles a high school student group working with sixth-graders to foster interracial understanding and communication in the schools (VHS V-7244 (025704). "Diamonds in the Rough: Emerging Scholars of Shaker Heights High" (27 minutes) looks at the successful student efforts to deal with persistent underachievement of minority students, especially black males (VHS V-7245 (025705)).
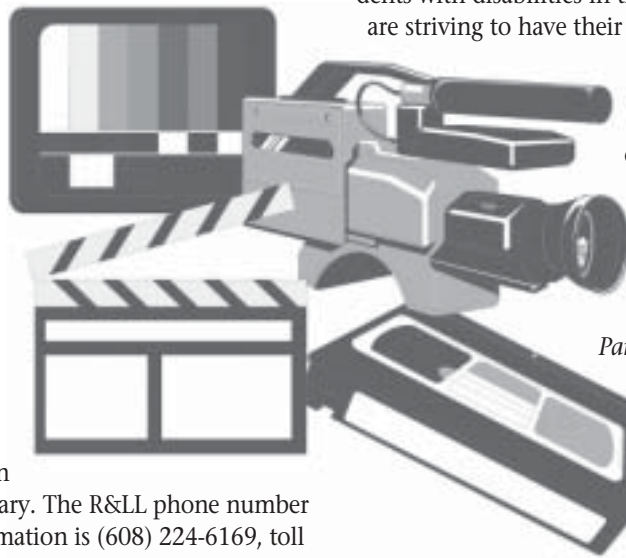
Going to School (Ir a la Escuela) (Richard Cohen Films/Films Arts Foundation of Northern California, 2001; 64 minutes; closed captioned; in English with sequences in Spanish with English subtitles) is a documentary about how the parents of students with disabilities in the Los Angeles Unified School District are striving to have their children receive quality education. The program looks at the positive aspects of educational inclusion and mainstreaming, and illustrates the empowerment parents have by knowing and exercising their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). (VHS V-7342 (025843))

Parents on Board (Elementary school edition) (Active Parenting Publishers, 2001) is a series of three programs encouraging parent participation in their children's education. Program #1, "Preparing Your Child to Succeed" (20 minutes), explains the helpfulness of structure in home life and homework, and how to support the child's learning style and the child's teacher (VHS V-7352/NO.1 (025895)). Program #2, "Behavior Problems at Home and School" (23 minutes) discusses the encouragement of cooperative behavior in a child at school and looks at effective and positive discipline methods (VHS V-7352/NO.2 (025896)). Program #3, "Reinforcing Your Child's Academic Success" (25 minutes) looks at what it means to help one's children succeed in school and how to effectively coach without being an expert in school subjects. (VHS V-7352/NO.3 (025897))

School Prayer: A Community at War (Independent Television Service/Log In Productions, 1999; 57 minutes; with guide) looks at the issue of school prayer and religion in American schools as it tells about a controversy where both sides claimed they were fighting for religious freedom. The program, which was originally broadcast on the television program *Point of View*, describes a lawsuit in which a Mississippi mother of six, originally from California and Wisconsin, sued the local school district to remove intercom prayer and Bible classes from the public schools. Christian community members rallied against her to

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protect their tradition of religious practices in the schools. (VHS V-7178 (025629))

School Sleuth: The Case of an Excellent School (Learning Matters, 2002; 56 minute program plus added features) is a documentary originally broadcast as a segment of the television program *The Merrow Report*, in which education journalist John Merrow plays the role of a film noire detective working for a woman wanting to choose the right school for her children. He discovers what makes a school "excellent" as opposed to "bad" or "good enough" as he examines such areas as school safety, academic quality, school facilities, the adults in charge, and the school's sense of purpose. The program is aimed at parents and educators, and this DVD version has added features including discussion questions, extended interviews with noted educators, and a built-in facilitator guide. (DVD V-39 (D50039))

School, The Story of American Public Education (Stone Lantern Films/Films for the Humanities, 2001; closed captioned) is a four-part history of public education in the United States from the revolutionary period to the present. This series describes universal education in America as an experiment based on the belief that a well-informed citizenry is the cornerstone of democracy. The programs tell of the development of a common system of tax-supported schools; the effects of massive immigration, urbanization, and new curriculum ideas; inequalities in American public education and changes made for equal rights; and the 1983 report "Nation at Risk" and subsequent attempts at educational reform. The 55-minute programs are: "The Common School, 1770-1890" (VHS V-7261/NO.1 (025755)); "As American as Public School, 1890-1950" (VHS V-7261/NO.2 (025756)); "Struggle for Educational Equality, 1950-1980" (VHS V-7261/NO.3 (025757)); and "The Bottom Line in Education, 1980 to the Present" (VHS V-7261/NO.4 (025758)).

Successfully Educating Preschoolers with Special Needs (Edvantage, 2002; 30 minutes; closed captioned) explains the benefits of preschool for children with special needs and their parents. The program describes the general philosophy of preschool and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that entitles children to appropriate services in preschool. Choosing a preschool, tips to help parents prepare for school meetings, and the concern of transitioning from preschool to kindergarten also are covered. (VHS V-7361 (025911))

The Trouble with Testing (South Carolina Department of Education/South Carolina Educational Television, 2002; 2 videocassettes) is a series of three 60-minute programs on two tapes telling educators and parents of school-age children what educational tests are and how they should and shouldn't be used to evaluate the quality of schools. They address key concepts of educational measurement, achievement tests and test preparation activities, and indicators of a school's success. The programs, hosted by education professor Dr. W. James Popham, are: "Educational Tests: Misunderstood Measuring Sticks," "Evaluating Schools: Right Task, Wrong Tests," and "How to Evaluate Schools." (VHS V-7353 (025898)) ∎

COLAND meets in Madison

by Larry Nix, Director
Public Library Development Team

The Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND) met at the Center for Instructional Materials and Computing (CIMC) at UW-Madison March 14. Peter Gilbert, president of the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA), gave a presentation to the Council on the marketing, publicity, and advocacy efforts of WLA. He emphasized that advocacy on behalf of Wisconsin's libraries is the major priority for the association. The Council passed a resolution in support of a proposal to use Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funding for a statewide assessment of library marketing efforts and to develop a plan for future efforts in this area.

Assistant State Superintendent Rick Grobschmidt reported to the Council on the current status of state budget and legislative issues as they relate to libraries and the Department of Public Instruction.

> ### The next COLAND meeting is May 2 in Madison

Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL) staff members Bob Bocher and Steve Sanders briefed the Council on the work of the Wisconsin Education Network Collaboration Committee (WENCC) that has made recommendations for the next generation educational network for Wisconsin. Information about WENCC and its recommendations can be found at www.teachwi.state.wi.us/WENCC/wencc.html.

Jo Ann Carr, director of the CIMC, made a presentation to the Council on the CIMC and then gave members a tour of the facility. The CIMC is part of the School of Education of the UW-Madison. The website for the CIMC is http://cimc.education.wisc.edu.

DLTCL staff briefed the Council on a variety of activities and projects the division is working on, including LSTA, technology issues, and school library media programs. The Council passed a resolution in support of a proposal to use LSTA funding for a study of the impact of school library media programs on school performance.

After adjournment of its regular meeting, the Council reassembled at the new South Central Library System Delivery Service Facility where Bob Blitzke and his staff gave members a tour. The website for the Delivery Service is http://psw.scls.lib.wi.us/delivery/index.html.

The next meeting of the Council will be May 2 in Madison. ∎

Wisconsin's Library of the Year
T.B. Scott Free Library shares successes

by Bea Lebal, Director
T.B. Scott Free Library

Last fall the T. B. Scott Free Library in Merrill received the Wisconsin Library Association's Library of the Year Award. I've been asked to write about the reasons we won the award for the second time in 25 years, and I have selected three of the accomplishments cited by the Awards and Honors Committee as the focus for my article.

Growing to Meet Community Needs

When it opened in 1891, the library was allotted two small rooms in Merrill City Hall. The library soon began to outgrow its quarters, and eventually received a grant from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation that allowed the library to move into its own building in 1911.

In the late 1920s, when the library had again become overcrowded, the Children's Department was moved to the lower level of the building to provide additional space for the growing program. In the 1940s the librarian was once again complaining about the lack of room, but a 1949 fire that destroyed much of the local high school also destroyed any chance of obtaining local funds for a library expansion for another two decades.

A 1969 addition to the Carnegie building doubled the size of the library, but the last quarter of the 20th century brought significant changes in the collections offered by our library, a tremendous rise in circulation, the increasing use of technology, and once again a crowded facility. A decade-long planning process, involving extensive community input, culminated in the demolition of the 1969 addition and the construction of a new addition that once again doubled our size.

The new building has allowed us to: make our building completely handicapped-accessible; provide quiet areas for study and contemplation; gather children in their own special story room; offer several public meeting/study rooms; combine resources into a Local History/Genealogy Room; expand our collection space, particularly for young adult materials; improve the functionality of our work areas; increase display space; and give our community a public building of which it can be proud.

Our library is an excellent example of how a community continues to "grow" its

Last fall the T. B. Scott Free Library in Merrill received the Wisconsin Library Association's Library of the Year Award, the second time in 25 years the library has received the award. The library opened in 1891 in two rooms in City Hall, then used a grant from the Carnegie Foundation in 1911 to construct a building.

library in order to meet the changing needs of its residents.

Forging Strong Local Networks and Partnerships

In 1899, just a few years after it opened its doors, the library started the Merrill Traveling Library Association, one of the first traveling libraries in the state. Small communities throughout the county subscribed.

Following a plea printed in a 1905 *Wisconsin Library Bulletin,* T. B. Scott Library became the first public library in the state to conduct English language classes for immigrants. The library used materials obtained from the Wisconsin Free Library Commission to augment its own small collection of foreign language books.

By the 1940s, circulation to people who lived outside the city of Merrill in Lincoln County equaled about 40 percent of total circulation. In 1944 the county agreed to pay the city an annual fee, based on circulation, that would allow county users free access to the library. This combined support has provided a strong base for library development.

Today, we continue to believe that community networking helps us strengthen library services. Here are just a few examples.

We provide space for Family Resource Center (FRC) meetings in our Community Room; in return, FRC staff supply childcare services to families for children whose siblings are attending story hours. We purchased a kiosk that is used by the hospital to display information about health and wellness; hospital volunteers keep the display updated.

We display school art projects, offer a collection of Accelerated Reader books, and send out supplementary curriculum materials to classrooms; teachers bring in their classes to learn more about the public library. The genealogical group houses its collection in our Local History/Genealogy Room; the group holds regular meetings at the library and provides instruc-

Reminder

Place copyright notice on library equipment (including computers) that can be used for making copies

Copyright law governs the making of all types of copies—whether those copies are made using a photocopier, a fax machine, a VCR, an audio recorder, a computer, a scanner, a printer, or any other device that can be used to make copies. However, under U. S. copyright law [U. S. Code, Title 17, Section 108 (f)(1)] a library and library employees are not liable for copyright infringement for a patron's unsupervised use of library equipment, provided

that the library equipment that can be used for copying displays the notice above.

This notice should be placed on all library equipment that can be used by pa-

trons for unsupervised copying. This includes any public access computer connected to the Internet, any public access computer connected to a printer, and any public access computer with recordable media that can be removed by the patron.

For more information on copyright law, see the following web page of Copyright Resources for Schools and Libraries at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/lbstat/copyres.html. ∎

Library of the year

tion in genealogical research to library patrons. The library director serves as a liaison on the Historical Society Board of Directors; a member of the Historical Society updates the library's newspaper obituary index.

Showing Vision and Leadership in the Development of Library Services

Nathalie Scribner, then Merrill's head librarian, was active in organizing the Wisconsin Valley Library Association, calling for cooperation among the libraries as early as 1936.

Edna Kraft, head librarian after Scribner, enthusiastically promoted the Regional Reference service–Wausau Area, formed in 1961. This 10-county organization, the precursor of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service, proved that it was possible to offer interlibrary loan service over a large rural area.

Development of V-Cat

A study completed in 1997 indicated that the Wisconsin Valley Library Service (WVLS) should develop its own shared automation system, rather than try to join an established system. This provided us with the most important opportunity yet to show our support of regional cooperation.

In order to take a first step toward development of the system, the Merrill Library Board agreed in 1998 to allow the Medford library, which had eagerly been anticipating development of a shared system for several years, to begin adding its holdings to Merrill's Dynix database. We affectionately (most of the time!) called this initiative the M&M Project.

That same year WVLS acquired a TEACH T-1 line, the equipment for which was initially housed in Merrill. The line allowed patrons to use in-house computers to see what materials were available and to request materials from either library online. Materials were shipped between the two libraries via the WVLS courier service. Walk-in patrons could use their library card in either library.

In 1999 WVLS asked our library Board to allow T. B. Scott Library to serve as the headquarters for the new shared system. Ultimately, the Board decided that we did not have either enough staff or enough room to host the system. Instead, the Board approved a plan to transfer our Dynix hardware, software, and database to WVLS in 2000, for a nominal fee.

The most recent addition to the T.B. Scott Free Library replaced a 1969 addition, which has made the building completely handicapped-accessible.

Our shared system, now called V-Cat, has developed rapidly. At the end of 2002, 19 of the 26 WVLS public libraries were members; our combined collections totaled over 500,000 items; and total V-Cat circulation was over 1 million items. ∎

Building BRIDGES

Shared automation system connects southern Jefferson County libraries

by Connie Meyer, Director
Dwight Foster Public Library

We started with an idea. In fact, we had the idea before we had the name. For months prior to the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant proposal deadline we began discussing our plan to begin a shared automation system in the southern portion of Jefferson County. We knew what we wanted to accomplish and generally how to get there. But we needed a snappy name. Everyone knows that image matters—especially for libraries that suffer from stereotypes all their own. But more about the name later.

Who were we and what did we actually want to do? We were the public libraries in Fort Atkinson, Jefferson, and Palmyra. And we wanted to implement a shared automation system to provide access to a larger collection. We've long known that shared automation systems can be an effective and efficient way to share resources and services, and many examples of successful consortia have existed in Wisconsin for years. Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System's technology plan called for the library system to give assistance by providing consortium startup funds and then linking those consortia within its boundaries. This model was different in that it did not call for one large host site in which all members participated. Rather, it involved purchasing software to link up to four separate shared systems. For a variety of reasons, this model was the best fit for our library system and its libraries.

Two consortia formed in the Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System in the late 1990s: LAUNCH (which now includes Beaver Dam, Iron Ridge, Johnson Creek, Lake Mills, Mayville, Waterloo, Watertown, Waupun, and Whitewater) and WACCOOL (which includes West Bend, Germantown, Hartford, Slinger, and Kewaskum). Linking software was purchased by Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System and given the name TIGER. As time went on, the libraries that were not part of TIGER via LAUNCH or WACCOOL began to plan for their best route to share in a way that made the most sense for them locally.

Fort Atkinson was definitely interested in hosting a shared system because we believed we now had the capability and could see the benefits of sharing costs and collections. Jefferson, increasingly aware of technology's escalating costs, also was inter-

ested, and Palmyra was positioned to make a change because its microcomputer-based system was aging and they felt they were ready for the next step up the automation ladder.

We decided to explore the idea of a third shared system. Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System helped in that effort by funding the services of a technology consultant to help us examine all the issues related to the project. The consultant completed her work and provided a detailed report on the feasibility, costs, and benefits. The benefits outweighed the costs and the decision was made to move forward.

We all believed that if the project was based on solid information, careful planning, and smart implementation, we would probably succeed. We also knew that if we could get assistance with federal LSTA grant funds for the project, the chances for it to move forward and be successful were much greater.

At this point, we spent some time talking about a name. Believe me, if there was an acronym we probably considered it. Finally, one word seemed to hit a chord: "BRIDGES." This seemed right. And it had the added bonus of representing words that were actually somewhat relevant: BRIDGES (**B**ringing **R**esources and **I**nformation **D**ynamically to**G**ether for **E**veryone in **S**outhern Jefferson County). We joked that it might be a good name if the grant proposal landed in the wrong department and someone mistakenly thought we wanted to do a construction project involving concrete. But seriously, we liked the imagery that the word represented. Here's some of what the *Encarta World English Dictionary* says about the word "bridge": Bridge (brij) n. 1. Structure allowing passage across obstacle; 2. Something that provides a link, connection, or means of coming together. We certainly couldn't think of a better way to describe this shared library automation system.

I'm very happy and thankful to report that the BRIDGES grant proposal was funded. I'm sure it wasn't because of the name. I'm also sure it wasn't because someone mistakenly thought we wanted to put down concrete. The reality was that it makes great sense for governmental units to share as much as possible. Providing funding to help begin that process is a valuable use of precious dollars. Shared automation systems are a proven way for libraries to provide services in the modern technological world.

However, projects of this sort tend to be easier to conceptualize than accomplish. Bringing all the parties together to think as

LSTA wending its way through reauthorization, budget

by **Peg Branson**, Consultant
LSTA and Continuing Education

The Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) program, the only federal program specifically for libraries, was authorized for a five-year period—through 2002—and must be reauthorized by Congress and signed by the President to be continued. The program is part of the Museum and Library Services Act, administered at the federal level by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The LSTA reauthorization process began early in 2002 when bills for reauthorization were introduced in the House and Senate. However, work on them was not completed in 2002 and the reauthorization process had to start over again in 2003 with the 108th Congress.

On Jan. 7 the Museum and Library Services Act of 2003 was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives (bill number H.R. 13). The bill would reauthorize the Library Services and Technology act, as well accompanying museum programs. On Jan. 29, S. 238, the Museum and Library Services Act of 2003, was introduced in the Senate.

On March 6 the House of Representatives passed H.R. 13, by an overwhelming vote of 416 to 2. The 416 "yea" votes came from 220 Republicans, 195 Democrats and 1 Independent. The next step is for the companion bill in the Senate, S. 238, to be passed. H.R. 13 maintains a modest but essential federal role in support of libraries. The legislation would continue the "states grants" part of the LSTA program, which in 2002 provided $2.8 million for improvement of library services in Wisconsin.

Federal Budget for LSTA
While action on the federal budget for FY 2003 wasn't completed until Feb. 20, the first step in the FY 2004 budget process began with the release Feb. 3 of the President's budget proposal. It is a rare occurrence that the budget for FY 2004 would be presented before the completion of the budget for FY 2003. The budget request includes $207.6 million for the LSTA program, including $166.4 million for grants to states (a portion of which would come to Wisconsin). States received $150 million in FY 2003. The budget will have to be considered by both the House and Senate and signed by the President before final approval. The official start of the federal fiscal year is Oct. 1.

For more information about the LSTA program, visit the DPI website at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/pld/lsta.html. ▐▌

Building BRIDGES—*from page 8*

a team can be a trick. The libraries knew we wouldn't have any problems working together, although some compromises and changes would have to occur. The library boards didn't appear to fear this. They were all incredibly supportive. Would the municipalities agree?

When the city council in Fort Atkinson was approached to commit to the project, then Gov. Scott McCallum had just called for government consolidation and cooperation at every level. For us the timing was nearly perfect. We could demonstrate our commitment to sharing by supporting this mutually beneficial action. During the discussion process we told our story, which included pointing out that libraries have been leaders in governmental cooperation since the beginning of library systems more than 30 years ago. Sharing is what we do best. And technology has made it possible for us to share in ways we never dreamed possible just a few years ago. The formation of the BRIDGES consortium would allow us to make the connections, both electronically and philosophically, to strengthen the infor-

mation infrastructure for our libraries and allow us to better meet the needs of our communities.

But beyond the philosophical was the practical. Since we had LSTA funding committed to our project as well as funding assistance from Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System, we were able to make a very strong case for this project. The municipalities approved, the consortium agreement was signed, and BRIDGES began construction.

Some of the issues we had to deal with included:
• developing a budget;
• upgrading hardware and software;
• moving toward uniform circulation policies;
• setting catalog standards;
• implementing a process to merge and dedupe both patron and bibliographic databases;
• providing publicity; and
• training both staff members and the public.

The project wasn't without "bumps in the road," but by the end of 2002 the BRIDGES project was fully implemented and successfully connected to TIGER. The word on the street has been incredibly positive. Many people deserve thanks including Kate Lorenz (director of the Jefferson Library), Ann Schade (director of Powers Memorial Library in Palmyra), Ann Fridl (former director of Powers Memorial Library in Palmyra), library boards and city councils in each community, the Mid-Wisconsin Federated System staff and trustees, and all the people associated with the LSTA funding process. Without a doubt, the most thanks go to the staff members at each library who admirably and (mostly) cheerfully put up with problems with property rights, traffic issues, detours, lane closures, and speeding.

The pace of change was dizzying but they quietly did the work necessary to lay the foundation that allowed us to span the distances and build the BRIDGES. As a result, citizens in our three county area now have direct access to 1.2 million items in Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System's TIGER linked automation system (http://tiger.lib.wi.us).

To learn more about BRIDGES visit www.fort.lib.wi.us/brdgs.html. ▐▌

Trustee Corner

We have never evaluated the performance of our library director. How do we go about conducting a performance evaluation?

Evaluating the library director is often one of the more difficult tasks faced by a public library board of trustees, but it doesn't need to be. It is only difficult when a board is unsure of the process to follow or the criteria to be used to evaluate the job performance of its director.

There are several good reasons for carrying out an annual review of your library director, one of the most important of which is that the review process can be an opportunity for the board and the director to discuss and agree on the projects that should be accomplished in the next year. A review process that looks not only at the past, but also to the future, can significantly improve the effectiveness of library leadership (both the director and the board).

Below is a basic outline of the steps you can take to conduct an evaluation of your director. (A more thorough discussion of this process is in *Trustee Essential #6: Evaluating the Director* (available online at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/te6.html).

1. Ask your director to update his or her job description. Review, modify (if necessary), and approve the updated job description. (Your library system staff also can help you with this process.)

2. Use the updated job description as the basis for a performance evaluation form. (For an example, see the Sample Performance Appraisal Form attached to Trustee Essential #6.)

3. Ask your director to complete a self-assessment using the director performance evaluation form. Also ask your director to provide the board with his/her suggested goals and objectives for the next 12 months and a written progress report on his/her prior year annual goals and objectives. The board, or personnel committee, should fill out a second set of forms.

4. Personnel committee and/or entire board meets in legally posted closed session to develop and approve a written evaluation of the director. Part of this meeting should include the director to discuss and agree on goals and objectives for the next 12 months, as well as to discuss performance issues. If the personnel committee conducts the review, the final written evaluation also should be reviewed, discussed, and approved by the full board.

5. The director should sign the review indicating that he or she has been given the opportunity to read and discuss the evaluation.

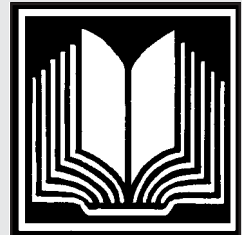6. A copy of the evaluation should be placed in the director's personnel file.

A well-executed performance review is the culmination of formal and informal communication carried out throughout the year regarding the activities of the director. Problems are best brought to the attention of the director as they occur, rather than stored up for the annual review. Success, accomplishment, and simple hard work or dedication should be acknowledged as it is observed, as well as at the annual review.

Be sure to ask your library system staff for assistance, if needed, with any of the steps in this process. For more information, contact Mike Cross, DPI, at (608) 267-9225 (michael.cross@dpi.state.wi.us). ∎

Handbook for Wisconsin public library directors is planned

During 2003, staff members from the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL), with the assistance of an editorial working group, will be developing a handbook for Wisconsin public library directors. Tentatively titled *Administrative Essentials: A Handbook for Wisconsin Public Library Directors*, the handbook will be modeled on the handbook for Wisconsin public library trustees (*Trustee Essentials*).

The new handbook will be designed as a tool to help with orientation and training of new library directors, and as a reference for all public library directors (especially those new to the director's job and/or new to Wisconsin libraries). In addition, it is intended that the new handbook will be useful for those taking the Basic Library Management course that partially fulfills the requirements for Grade 2 and Grade 3 Wisconsin Public Librarian Certification.

The publication will be freely available on the Internet. In addition, it is planned that enough hard copies will be printed to allow the DLTCL to provide a copy to all current Wisconsin public library directors and to all new Wisconsin public library directors within the next five years.

Questions and suggestions concerning this project can be directed to Mike Cross at (608) 267-9225 (michael.cross@dpi.state.wi.us). ∎

DLTCL conducts special needs survey

by **Barbara Huntington**, Consultant
Public Library Youth and Special Services

The Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL) conducted a survey on services to adults with special needs in the fall of 2002 as background information for the upcoming publication *Adults with Special Needs: A Resource and Planning Guide for Wisconsin Public Libraries*. The response rate for the survey was 77 percent, which represents 293 of the state's 380 public libraries that have buildings. The responding libraries account for public library service to 86 percent of Wisconsin's population.

Results indicated that among the services included on the survey, the following eight were most frequently offered by the responding libraries.

• 76 percent had a periodical of interest to seniors with special needs.
• 71 percent had a web page.
• 70 percent added materials on seniors within the past three years.
• 62 percent added materials on learning sign language within the past three years.
• 60 percent offered remote access to the library's catalog.
• 58 percent had hand magnifiers at the library.
• 53 percent provided home delivery for seniors.
• 53 percent had contact information in the library about literacy providers.

Three of the top eight services listed in the survey offered most often by public libraries benefit seniors with special needs. This indicates that services to seniors are a high priority for public libraries in Wisconsin and that seniors are one of the best served special needs populations. In addition to the three services listed above, 48 percent of the libraries indicated they bring materials to senior group-housing units, and 38 percent deliver to nursing homes. Thirty-four percent reported they have a brochure that includes information about services for seniors and 30 per-

cent include information in their brochures about vision aids available at the library, which are needed by many seniors. An interesting observation is that although libraries are aware many seniors need vision aids and frequently use large print books, only 6 percent of the libraries print their service brochures for seniors in large print. The survey indicated

19 percent of the libraries sent at least one staff person to training on services for seniors within the past three years. Seniors are the special needs population most likely to be included in a planning process.

Two of the top eight services listed on the survey provided by the responding libraries involved technology—web pages and remote access to their computerized catalogs. However, a DLTCL survey conducted in 2000 indicated that only 15 percent of these web pages were accessible to people who use screen readers because they cannot see print. It is not

known how many libraries assure that their electronic catalogs are accessible to people who use screen readers.

Two of the eight survey services offered most frequently by Wisconsin libraries involved a service for people with specific disabilities—hand magnifiers for people who have vision problems and sign language materials for people who are deaf or for others who want to learn sign language. Another service for people who have vision disabilities, available at 23 percent of the responding libraries, is a machine, other than a computer, that can scan and read text out loud. Only about 17 percent have described videos for people who are blind.

Fewer libraries try to accommodate the needs of people who are deaf. Only 13 percent have a TTY, one of the most basic communication tools used by people who are deaf or who have speech disabilities. A significant number of libraries (37 percent) do have closed-captioned videos, but only 7 percent have videos that are signed as well as voiced. Signed videos are used by people who comprehend better using sign language than reading. Illiteracy is a recognized issue for many adults who are deaf. According to Gallaudet University, the average reading level nationally for high school seniors who are deaf is between fourth and sixth grade. Service brochures in about 13 percent of the libraries include information about services for people who are deaf. About 11 percent of the libraries flash lights when verbal announcements are made, which is a standard alerting technique used by people who are deaf. Assistive hearing devices are available at service desks in only 9 percent of the libraries. And only 4 percent of public libraries routinely use a microphone or closed assistive listening systems at public meetings and programs. Amplification by a microphone is considered by many people who work with people who are hard of

Wisconsin open records law changes forwarded

by Mike Cross, Consultant
Public Library Administration & Funding

The Legislative Council's study committee on Wisconsin's open records law has approved a bill draft that will be moving forward in the Legislature.

The study committee was established primarily in response to recent Wisconsin Supreme Court cases that held that there is no blanket exception under Wisconsin's open records law for public employee disciplinary or personnel records, but also held that a public sector employee has the right to seek a court order to prevent release of records that implicate his or her privacy or reputational interests. The court decisions, however, did not clearly identify the types of records that implicate this right to court review.

The proposed bill identifies the types of records that do and do not implicate the right of judicial review. In addition, the bill would close public access to certain records relating to public sector and private sector employees and state and local public officials, including a home address, a home e-mail address, a home telephone number, and a Social Security number. The proposed bill also closes public access to information about ongoing disciplinary investigations and job evaluations regarding public sector and private sector employees.

The proposed Legislative Council report on this issue is available at www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/2002studies/OPEN/prop_rl2003_01.pdf. The current bill draft is available at www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/2002studies/OPEN/0040_3.pdf.

After approval by the Legislature, a more complete summary of the final changes in this law will be provided in a Channel article. Information about

Special needs survey—*from page 11*

hearing as the only accommodation needed by the majority of people who have a hearing loss.

As for other types of disabilities, 30 percent of the libraries routinely include information on their meeting flyers about how to request accommodations, and 28 percent routinely put the information on program flyers. In 20 percent of the responding libraries service brochures there is mention of mobility aids and accessible computer workstations, and 19 percent have service brochures that explain how to request accommodations.

The survey included a fairly extensive section on adult literacy and services to people who use English as a second language. Having contact information for local literacy providers was one of the most frequently mentioned services in the survey.

• 53 percent have contact information in the library about local literacy providers.

• 52 percent have literacy tutors meet with their students in the library or have a tutor training session held at the library.

• 49 percent updated their adult literacy materials in English within the past three years.

• 46 percent made a recent referral to a literacy provider for someone who needed a tutor or who wanted to volunteer.

• 41 percent talked to other librarians or system staff about literacy issues within the past three years.

• 30 percent have added new materials to their collections within the past three years for adults who do not use English as their first language.

• 26 percent tried to help raise awareness of literacy issues in their newsletters, programs, meetings, or with displays.

• 22 percent mention the library's literacy services and resources in their service brochures.

• 23 percent allow the local literacy agency to use the library's phone number as the central contact number for the agency.

• 19 percent conducted a tour of the library or held an open house within the past three years for adults with literacy needs.

• 18 percent have the local literacy provider's newsletter available in the library.

• 16 percent have a staff person who is a member of the local literacy agency.

• 16 percent sent at least one staff person to training within the past three years either for adult literacy or for services for people who do not speak English.

• 14 percent have at least one magazine in Spanish; fewer than 10 percent had magazines in any language other than English and Spanish.

• 13 percent have library card application forms translated into another language.

• 11 percent have translated versions of their service brochures.

The complete results of the survey will be included in the Adults with Special Needs publication, which is scheduled for distribution in May 2003. ▍▍

Wisconsin's current open records law as it applies to public libraries is available in *Trustee Essential #15* (available on the web at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/ te15.html). Questions about Wisconsin's open records law can be directed to Mike Cross at (608) 267-9225 (michael.cross@dpi.state.wi.us). ▍▍

CCIC sponsors new online training network, events calendar

by Lita Haddal, Director
Child Care Information Center

The Wisconsin child-care world may appear fragmented to new observers, but behind the scenes are many passionate people who have worked for years to create order and an infrastructure to the training and regulation of Wisconsin caregivers.

The range of training in those considering themselves career professionals in this field is huge, from high school students with an assistant child care teacher certificate to persons with higher education degrees in early childhood. Add to that the health care professionals and parent educators working with children and young families, and add again the many professionals and paraprofessionals working with children with special needs.

All are in need of professional development, and as with teacher licensure, some of it is mandated in order to continue working with children. For instance, there is an annual requirement of 25 hours of continuing education for staff working in licensed child-care centers. This is a challenge for busy workers to both plan for and complete.

Much as DPI Reference and Loan Library is the librarian's library, the Child Care Information Center (CCIC) functions as the statewide mail-order library and information clearinghouse for child-care resources. It is sponsored by the Office of Child Care, Department of Workforce Development, and housed within DPI Reference and Loan Library. CCIC mentors child-care providers, early childhood educators, and teacher and parent educators by providing resources and accessible and timely information. The CCIC also provides a model of quality consistent with research, thereby developing warm, nurturing relationships with clients. Staff also provide ongoing communication, and help to raise the level of training and education in the adults working with Wisconsin's youngest residents.

In an ongoing effort to be useful and provide clarification to the child-care field, the CCIC has helped create a website dedicated to easing the task of finding training that is relevant and accessible to learners. The Wisconsin Training Network and Event Calendar is designed to be a one-stop training information site for child care providers and early childhood educators. With the collaboration of sponsors, a listing of classes, conferences, courses, credentials, events, meetings, workshops, etc., is posted to one central Internet location at www.wisconsintrainingnetwork.info.

Training and education events sponsors include the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA), the Wisconsin Head Start Association, the Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project (WCCIP), the Wisconsin Child Care Resource & Referral Network, the Wisconsin Technical College System, the UW Waisman Center, and many others. Institutions and organizations that sponsor training events are encouraged to swiftly post their events themselves, building this as the central source of reliable and comprehensive training information the field has been clamoring for.

From the website of the Wisconsin Training Network & Event Calendar (T-Net) events and trainings may be sorted according to area of the state, date, topic, sponsor, or presenter of the training. At this interactive site it is possible to create a personalized calendar or training "shopping cart" by selecting only those events or trainings in which one is interested. The potential for expanding this site to provide informal education experiences is exciting, such as posting syllabi, offering core information pieces in html format on key topics, posting bibliographies of materials to borrow from CCIC on these topics, offering follow-up information regarding conferences, notes for participants, and more.

This service is free to users, embedded in the service budgets of initiatives already in existence: the Registry, Wisconsin's recognition system for the childhood care and education profession, and the CCIC.

The State of Wisconsin Office of Child Care has made it a high priority to support the training needs of Wisconsin child-care providers and early childhood educators. There is a whole child-care workforce operating on a parallel plane to schools. Families meet them before they meet schools. Research has shown that there is consensus among parents, observers, and caregiving practitioners on what constitutes quality in child care settings. In a nutshell: it is warm relationships with children, good communication with parents, and high levels of training in child-care providers. The first two quality indicators are influenced positively by the third. This is being done on a daily basis at the CCIC by matching resource materials to the individual needs of child-care providers as determined through personal contact via phone conversations, mail, and e-mail.

The lines between the worlds of child care and schools are blurring as kindergarten moves into child-care centers and 4-year-olds move into schools. The New Wisconsin Promise emphasizes PI-34, DPI's plan to mentor new teachers and incorporate a vision for professional development and lifelong learning into teacher licensure. The training needs of child-care and K-12 staff are going to dovetail as well. CCIC is in a position to help mentors and new early childhood teachers by supplying relevant training resources in an efficient way. If successful, the effect will be one of not only lifelong learning, but life-wide learning as schools, communities, and families are impacted by this spirit of support and involvement.

The Wisconsin Training Network and Event Calendar (T-Net) with CCIC has the potential to be a hub and communication tool for both the child-care and education worlds that embraces children and families regardless of when or where they first meet. ▌▌

AskWisconsin Virtual Reference Consortium opens for business

by Mark Beatty
WiLS Training and Automation Librarian

AskWisconsin is a consortium of libraries formed to offer Virtual Reference services to their patrons, and the consortium currently is testing the concepts, policies, and procedures of delivering Virtual Reference (VR) services. The principle idea behind VR services is to deliver library reference to patrons anywhere, anytime. Wisconsin libraries have worked hard to deliver other services such as online catalogs, and journal databases like BadgerLink, and the AskWisconsin consortium project is working to deliver reference services in the same virtual library manner.

After a period of organization and training libraries went to live VR service in January, but the consortium is committed to a continuing trial period through December. The AskWisconsin consortium is currently using the OCLC QuestionPoint Virtual Reference system to deliver web browser based e-mail and live chat reference to their patrons. The consortium chose the basic QuestionPoint system for its ease of use and low cost. It offers standard VR features without going to technological extremes.

QuestionPoint also provides a set of Knowledge Base facilities that allows consortium members to save particularly good reference questions and their answers for other librarians to use later. This feature has grown out of the original Collaborative Digital Reference Service (CDRS) started two years ago by the Library of Congress and about another 200 founding libraries, including the DPI Reference and Loan Library. The idea of CDRS was to share reference expertise across a wide range of libraries. QuestionPoint and its Knowledge Base feature is the technological implementation of this sharing. An exciting aspect to the Knowledge Base feature is that consortium members get to contribute to and use the existing and growing world wide global Knowledge Base and at the same

time get to create their own AskWisconsin specific Knowledge Base.

Each of the participating libraries offers direct e-mail based reference service and 19 of the consortium libraries are participating in a shared live chat-based reference service. Currently the shared chat service is open 36 hours per week, Mondays through Fridays, for live online reference service to the patrons of all the participating libraries.

AskWisconsin participating libraries comprise all types and sizes, and membership in the consortium is open to any Wisconsin library. Contact Kathy Schneider (schneid@wils.wisc.edu) at WiLS for membership information. Contact Mark Beatty (mbeatty@wils.wisc.edu) for implementation and training information or to join the open to all AskWisconsin electronic discussion group. Check the AskWisconsin website at http//lepton.wils.wisc.edu/askwisconsin.

Below is a listing of the current membership.
- Alverno College
- Appleton Public Library
- Department of Public Instruction, Reference and Loan
- Marquette University
- Mead Public Library (Sheboygan)
- Nicolet College
- Northeastern Wisconsin Technical College
- L.E. Phillips Public Library (Eau Claire)
- Oshkosh Public Library (Winnefox Library System)
- Racine Public Library
- UW-Madison
- UW-Eau Claire
- UW-Green Bay
- UW-La Crosse
- UW-Milwaukee
- UW-Oshkosh
- UW-Platteville
- UW-River Falls
- UW-Stout
- UW-Whitewater
- WiLS

Educational Network procurement update

Plans for the Wisconsin Educational Network, which will carry voice, video, and data to PK-20 schools and libraries throughout Wisconsin, are progressing into the procurement phase.

The Wisconsin Educational Network Collaboration Committee (WENCC) representing TEACH WI, DPI, UW System, Wisconsin Technical College System, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Department of Electronic Government (DEG), and the Educational Communications Board recently completed a needs assessment. It has seven recommendations including that the network extend to all school and library buildings and that the functionality of the present distance education network be maintained. The recommendations are included in "Wisconsin Educational Network Executive Summary and Business Case" that is available online at www.teachwi.state.wi.us/WENCC/wencc.html

The DEG is managing an expedited procurement process, and currently more than 20 vendors are making presentations, laying out their vision of an integrated network. A series of requests for information will be issued to vendors in the third quarter of 2003 with a contract expected to be signed late in 2003. A phased-in transition to the new network could begin as early as July 2004, with project completion scheduled for December 2005.

For more information about this project, contact Steve Sanders at (608) 266-7112 (stephen.sanders@dpi.state.wi.us).

Library Issue Discussion Group meeting held March 18

by Mike Cross, Consultant
Public Library Administration and Funding

At the March 18 meeting of the Library Issue Discussion Group, representatives of the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning (DLTCL) and a variety of organizations representing many types of libraries in Wisconsin discussed their concerns, recent activities, and activities planned for the future.

The Library Issue Discussion Group is an informal group that meets four to six times a year and brings together leaders of various library and related organizations in Wisconsin to discuss issues affecting Wisconsin libraries. The meetings also are an opportunity for communication between DLTCL staff and the statewide library community. Assistant Superintendent Rick Grobschmidt emphasized that DLTCL staff are here to serve the libraries and residents of the state and we want to hear suggestions for DLTCL services and programs.

The discussion was dominated by the issue of the Wisconsin biennial budget and its possible impact on library service statewide. Concerns were expressed about the proposed shift of about $2.1 million in public library system funding from GPR sources to the Universal Service Fund (USF). This use of USF money may face opposition. The impact of possible cuts in state shared revenue to localities for 2004 also was discussed, and concerns were expressed about proposed reductions in funding for the statewide library service contracts.

Mary Lou Zuege, representing the Wisconsin Educational Media Association (WEMA), said members of that organization are concerned about the proposed elimination of the TEACH technology block grants. Other TEACH changes also were discussed. WEMA representatives also reported that they are very concerned about the decisions by many school boards to cut school library media staff positions.

The news at the federal level was encouraging. Congress has finally approved the 2003 LSTA appropriation and the House has overwhelmingly approved LSTA reauthorization. The President's proposed 2004 budget includes a modest increase in LSTA funding. National Library Legislative Day will be held May 13 and Wisconsin will be sending 13 representatives.

Larry Nix, director of the Public Library Development Team, distributed a summary of proposed Wisconsin LSTA projects for 2004 (available at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/lstaprelim04.html) and reported that the LSTA Advisory Committee would hold a public hearing March 26 to receive input on the state's 2004 projects.

Ken Frasier, director of the UW-Madison General Library System, reported that ALA believes there may be another effort to pass UCITA legislation in Wisconsin. UCITA is a uniform law supported by the software industry that would greatly strengthen shrink-wrap and "click-on" software licenses. UCITA has been approved in only a few states and is opposed by library organizations, higher education and research organizations, and many business organizations. Frasier also reported that UW libraries are being required to sign licenses for electronic database products that prohibit interlibrary loan and electronic document delivery of database contents.

Bob Bocher (DLTCL) reported on preliminary plans for a Wisconsin interlibrary loan conference. The idea for this conference grew out of suggestions by the LSTA Advisory Committee to study the future of interlibrary loan and shared systems in Wisconsin, promote the linked shared system project, and report back to the advisory committee.

The DLTCL is sponsoring a conference to be held April 15 on the topic of the important role of public libraries in early learning. Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton will give the welcome address to conference attendees.

Other discussion included COLAND activities, the Gates Foundation Grant, and the activities of WENCC in decision-making for a next-generation statewide video and data infrastructure. (see page 14)

The next meeting of the Library Issue Discussion Group will be scheduled based on the time frame for decision-making on the state biennial budget bill. ∎

Calendar

For more details about specific meetings, see the WISDOM calendar at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dltcl/pld/wisdom.html.

Talking to Reporters

Gov. James Doyle talks to reporters during his visit to Library Legislative Day, which was held Feb. 4 in Madison.

This year's event, which is sponsored by the Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) and the Wisconsin Educational Media Association (WEMA), attracted 161 library advocates.

Open records requests do not require 'magic words'

The Wisconsin Court of Appeals recently ruled that a municipality must respond to requests for public records even if the request does not make reference to Wisconsin's open records law.

The case involved requests by a company for various records held by the City of Elkhorn. The first two request letters said the requests were being made pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. The court ruled that the City violated the Wisconsin open records law by failing to properly respond to those letters.

The court said that a request for public records is sufficient if it "reasonably describes the requested record or the information requested." The court also ruled that the requester was entitled to court costs, legal fees, and damages.

A detailed article about the case is in the March 2003 *Municipality* magazine, the official publication of the League of Wisconsin Municipalities. The article also is available at www.lwm-info.org/publications/magazine/magopinion.html. A discussion of Wisconsin's open records law as it applies to public libraries is available in *Trustee Essential #15* (available online at www.dpi.state.wi.us/dltcl/pld/te15.html). ❚❚

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