New LSTA category established in response to Wisconsin's employment crisis

By Barbara Huntington, Consultant
Public Library Youth and Special Services
Public Library Development Team

In April 2009, the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning learned that Wisconsin's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) allotment had been increased by approximately $200,000, the first increase in a number of years. In consultation with the regional systems and Department of Public Instruction staff, a decision was made to dedicate this funding to help address the needs of Wisconsin workers who have been most affected by the recent economic situation.

A new non-competitive category was added to the LSTA 2009 program. The funding was made available to systems based on a population formula. The new category is called "JOBS—Searching, Training and Support." The plan for 2010 is to make the category competitive and allow both systems and individual libraries to apply.

The purpose of the category is to help the public library community respond quickly to the current economic situation that has affected families and individuals across the state. The systems, in cooperation with their member libraries and other organizations, will use the funding to serve people who are unemployed,

Channel newsletter changes to web-only publication

Beginning with the Autumn 2009 issue, *Channel* will become an online publication only. Since 2003, the newsletter has been available to librarians around the state in a web version, with distribution of printed copies limited to public library and system trustees, legislators, and document depository libraries. Distribution of the printed version frequently took place months after the online version became available, and this change will make *Channel* available to everyone on a timelier basis, as well as conserve resources and eliminate the expense required to produce a printed publication.This change will also make it easier for the Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning to increase the number of pages in each issue and accommodate longer, more in-depth articles about issues of interest to the Wisconsin library community. The e-newsletter, *Channel Weekly*, will continue to provide timely information and updates to the library community on a weekly basis.

A new feature we hope to include in upcoming issues will be articles based on the theme "What's Happening in Wisconsin Libraries," focusing on innovative

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underemployed, and/or seeking to improve their job skills. The intent of this funding is to facilitate and encourage systems and libraries to collaborate with local, regional, and state agencies that are already working to help the targeted population.

All 17 regional library systems requested funding. Collaborating partners include county job centers (7), county Workforce Development offices and boards (11), technical colleges (8), and some University of Wisconsin campuses and UW-Extension (5). Other partnering agencies include county health and human services departments and a CESA district office. Initial response to the project indicates that the agencies working directly with workers seeking jobs are overwhelmed with demand and are very appreciative of the help public libraries are offering. They also value having a place to send their clients that is open on weekends and evenings.

Fourteen of the seventeen systems will be providing training for their librarians to help them understand how best to provide services to people who have recently lost their jobs or who want to improve their job skills. Most often the training will be done by one or more of the systems' collaborating partners.

Three systems are working together to share the costs of staff training and developing a schedule that their partnering agency will implement. Two systems are collaborating on the development of a webinar for their librarians.

Demand is high for resources on teaching resume writing skills and job search strategies. Twelve of the systems decided to use the funds to purchase licenses for online job resources such as LearningExpress, a test preparation service. Learning-Express helps users prepare to take tests such as GED, SAT, and TOEFL. There are Spanish language versions of Learning-Express and some systems have included that for their Hispanic population. WinWay and Optimal-Resume, resume writing software, are also popular choices with systems. Several are also purchasing a subscription to WisCareers, a job database for Wisconsin. Two systems are purchasing materials to create library job centers, where resources will be pulled together to make it easy for people to find the materials they need.

Four systems will use the funding to purchase laptop computers to create portable labs that can be moved from library to library for training purposes. These labs will be used to teach a variety of free computer classes. One system purchased laptops for participating libraries that will be reserved for people working on job-related activities such as resume writing. Often a user can't complete work on a resume in the half hour typically allotted on public workstations.

Many systems report that their partnering agencies indicated a significant need for basic orientation on using a computer and keyboard. Other classes will include resume writing and doing job searches on the Internet. The classes are

frequently being taught by trainers hired with the LSTA funding or by local library staff. In at least two systems, the partnering agencies will offer one-on-one job counseling and computer training at the library.

Some of the systems are helping to create job search web pages that their member libraries can customize. One is developing a Wiki site for local job seekers. One system is helping its member libraries host local job fairs.

The JOBS category has assisted public libraries to work in collaboration with agencies already providing services to people who have lost jobs or who are trying to improve their skills in the uncertain job market. The projects will complement what the agencies are doing and allow libraries to increase their efforts to meet the needs of job seekers in their local communities. ✿

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programs happening in libraries around the state. For an example of the types of articles we hope to include, see Andy Barnett's story on Page 5 of this issue about the McMillan Memorial Library's efforts to make web cameras accessible for families with loved ones serving overseas. If would like to submit an article about a unique service or program your library is providing, send a note to Roslyn Wise, Channel editor, at roslyn.wise@dpi.wi.gov for more information.

The Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning uses a variety of tools to communicate information to the Wisconsin library community. It has published the newsletter, *Channel,* for many years in an effort to share information on issues of interest to the Wisconsin library community. *Channel Weekly,* the weekly electronic newsletter, was introduced in January 1999 to take advantage of the opportunities for fast and efficient delivery of information via the Internet and has been published weekly since that time. The Division was an early leader in the country in its use of the web for posting information about its services and activities. In addition, the Division initiated and has for many years overseen the management of various electronic discussion lists designed to facilitate the sharing of information among librarians throughout the state.

The Division will continue to make every effort to keep the Wisconsin library community informed about significant state library developments through its various communications efforts. ✿

Statewide Resource Contacts

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, Director .... (608) 263-3720

Milwaukee Public Library/Interlibrary Loan
814 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53233-2385
Brian Hannemann, Interlibrary Loan Librarian .... (414) 286-6064

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.wi.gov/rll/wrlbph/index.html
Meredith Wittmann, Regional Librarian .... (800) 242-8822

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Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction,
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Stuart Ciske, Consultant
Instructional Technology Planning & Integration 267-9289
Donna Steffan, Consultant
Information & Technology Literacy Standards & Integration 267-1282

DPI Library & Statistical Information Center
Kay Ihlenfeldt, Team Leader 266-3108

Interlibrary Loan and Resource Sharing Team
2109 S. Stoughton Rd., Madison, WI 53716; fax 224-6178
Sally J. Drew, Director 224-6161
Circulation Desk 224-6169
(Vacant)
Government Services 224-6165
Martha Berninger, Team Leader
Reference and Interloan 224-6168
David Sleasman, Team Leader
Resource Sharing Technology 224-6179
(Vacant)
Audiovisual and Technical Services 224-6171
(Vacant)
Interlibrary Loan Services 224-6163
Vickie Long
WISCAT User Support 224-5394

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

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

AskAway continues to grow in 2009

By Martha Berninger, Supervisor, Reference and Interlibrary Loan Reference and Loan Library

Wisconsin residents, students, and librarians continue to expand use of the AskAway virtual reference service. Residents use the service to get around the clock help finding answers to questions concerning many aspects of their daily lives, students use it to learn about sources to use in completing their homework assignments, and librarians across the state gain valuable experience working with patrons in new and evolving ways.

Statistics

The AskAway statewide virtual service has been busy this year. A total of 12,995 email and chat sessions were held between January 1, 2009 and May 31, 2009. Wisconsin residents have had 5,573 chat sessions; 1,338 with Wisconsin librarians, 4,235 with librarians from other states. Wisconsin librarians have been busy on the service, too, holding a total of 3,172 chat sessions, 1,202 with Wisconsin patrons, 1,970 with patrons from other states. They've also answered 4,250 email questions.

School trial

Wisconsin school students and school library staff are very eager to join the trial of the AskAway virtual reference service in schools. School library staff heard about AskAway in presentations at a number of conferences this past

year, including those of the Wisconsin Library Association and the Wisconsin Educational Media and Technology Associations. A total of 637 chat sessions have been held with students between August 1, 2008, and May 31, 2009. Even some schools that are not formally participating in the trial have been excited about the opportunity and have introduced AskAway to their students. The rush of activity generated by these schools informally joining the trial demonstrates the demand for the service, and introduces some logistical challenges we're working to address.

Regional consortium/best practice sessions

Wisconsin joins Minnesota and Illinois for monthly best practice sessions. Our informal regional group offers chat librarians and administrators an opportunity to learn from one another and share a bigger picture view of virtual reference in our part of the country.

Best practices sessions are held from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month, via WisLine web. Each session includes an informative presentation on a best practice for AskAway chat librarians (prior sessions have covered best

sources for school children, best sites for government and social services, best practices for interacting with young adult patrons); updates on changes to QuestionPoint software, staffing or policies; a review of recent good and bad transcripts, and general discussion.

Outreach

Activities to expand awareness of AskAway are coordinated by the Public Relations Committee, which meets at 2 p.m. the second Wednesday of the month via WisLine. We are planning an in-person meeting this summer for AskAway administrators, current and prospective staffing librarians, and anyone interested in AskAway. We will be reviewing our past activities and discussing long-term outreach efforts. If you'd like more information about the summer meeting or the public relations committee please contact Martha Berninger at martha.berninger@dpi.wi.gov or 608-224-6168.

Our past outreach efforts have included AskAway Awareness Week (including recognition of the most creative library promotions for AskAway); the AskAway YouTube contest; a newsletter; and presentations at WLA, WAPL, WAAL and WEMTA conferences. For more information on the activities and publications of the AskAway public relations committee, please see the AskAway wiki, http://askaway.pbworks.com/FrontPage. ✿

McMillan Memorial Library project helps military families stay in touch during deployment

By Andy Barnett, Assistant Director
McMillan Memorial Library
Wisconsin Rapids

In 2008 the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation funded a project in Alabama to provide webcams to rural public libraries. The project's goal was to provide a way for families to stay in touch with deployed service members. Since the Wisconsin National Guard's 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team was being called up for duty in Iraq, McMillan Memorial Library decided to provide a similar service. After looking closely at the Alabama project, McMillan came to some conclusions:

- The lack of privacy in a public setting is a major drawback. Since these are family discussions, often between spouses, more privacy than a standard setup afforded was essential.

- Synchronicity (both parties being available at the same time) is a major barrier. The Alabama project focused on Skype, which requires synchronous communication. An asynchronous alternative must be available.

- Software flexibility is important, since service members are often using public PCs which may not have Skype. Web-based services should also be supported.

- The speed of the computer used affects the frame rate and resolution of the webcam video. Only recently purchased PCs should be used.

- The speed of the Internet connection affects the frame rate and resolution of the webcam video. Connections that use traffic shaping will cause trouble.

- McMillan's computers used Windows Steady State and Windows XP, since this security model is stable and well understood.

- For webcams, South Central Library System technical support staff recommended a Logitech Quickcam Communicate Deluxe webcam. It is relatively inexpensive (under $100) and it would be easy to replace. Some features were disabled since they degraded the video in most cases.

- To provide better privacy, a Logitech premium stereo headset with noise-canceling microphone was used. With these, there was minimal echo and no need to talk above a regular conversational level.

- Both PCs were loaded with the most recent version of Skype, which provides high quality synchronous audio and video communication and is free between registered users. Registration is also free.

- We provided links to Tokbox.com. This web-based service works synchronously with major IM providers and registered users. It also allows asynchronous video emails of up to ten minutes, which can be viewed without an account or special software.

- At this point, McMillan is limiting use to adults, though that restriction is being evaluated.

So far, the service is lightly used, despite front page publicity in the local newspaper. The expertise that library staff is building will be useful as webcams become more common and builds a foundation for a future move into video reference. ✿

Photo courtesy of Andy Barnett, McMillan Memorial Library

Federal Stimulus Act includes broadband funding

By Bob Bocher, Library Technology Consultant
Public Library Development Team

Several previous issues of Channel had articles addressing problems and issues the library community has in receiving adequate bandwidth for the Internet and other uses. For example, the September-October 2007 issue (http://dpi.wi.gov/channel/pdf/chn4301.pdf, p.8) had an article about a study by the American Library Association (ALA) documenting issues associated with libraries acquiring and maintaining adequate broadband connectivity. And the January-April 2008 issue (http://dpi.wi.gov/channel/pdf/chn430304.pdf) had an article highlighting the important role regional library systems have in ensuring adequate bandwidth for their member libraries.

Federal Broadband Funding

In December 2008, ALA's Office for Information and Technology Policy (OITP) sponsored a meeting in Washington, D.C., to formulate a proposal to the incoming Obama Administration that addressed the library broadband issue.[1] The outcome of this meeting was a two-page "Fiber to the Library" proposal. As the name implies, this proposal advocated for a federal program to bring fiber optic connectivity to every public library in the country. As the paper noted:

> "The challenge for our public libraries is no longer attaining basic Internet access but attaining high-quality Internet access. And high-quality access is directly related to having sufficient broadband connectivity. Fiber to the library (FTTL) is indispensable to ensuring that our libraries can provide high-quality Internet access as the bandwidth demands of the Internet continue to grow at exponential rates. In brief, fiber gets our libraries to the future, faster."

The federal stimulus law, officially the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (ARRA), which passed Congress in February, does include $7.2 billion for broadband funding. Most of this will be awarded in competitive grants. The specific purposes of the broadband funding are to:
- Provide broadband service to consumers in unserved areas of the country and to improve broadband service to consumers in underserved areas.
- Provide broadband education, training, awareness, access, equipment and support

o To educational institutions, libraries, and other community support organizations to facilitate greater use of broadband by or through these organizations.
o To organizations that provide access and support services to facilitate greater use of broadband by low-income, unemployed, aged, and other vulnerable populations.

In addition, a minimum of $200 million is allocated for grants to expand "public computer center capacity." Public libraries and community colleges are specifically referenced in the law as eligible for this funding.

While much of the federal stimulus funding is being administered by states or localities, the broadband funding is being administered by two federal agencies: (1) The Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) received $4.7 billion; (2) The Agriculture Department's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) received $2.5 billion. Grant guidelines and application forms are expected to be released in late June.

In March both federal agencies released a public notice seeking comments on how they should implement the broadband grant program. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) submitted comments which can be viewed at http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandgrants/comments/729A.pdf. DPI recommended the following as priorities or preferences in the grant ranking process:
- Applications that bring fiber and its related infrastructure to schools and libraries
- Applications that support a State's list of priorities
- Applications that provide long-term benefits (e.g., fiber)
- Applications that show collaboration or partnerships or that demonstrate a large regional or statewide impact.

The law allows the two federal agencies to consult with states on implementing the broadband grant program. In Wisconsin, the Office of Recovery and Reinvestment (ORR) is overseeing the stimulus funding. In April State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster sent a letter to the ORR stating that the DPI supports a state priority to bring fiber to our schools and libraries. In this regard DPI staff have been working with both the state Department of Administration (DOA) BadgerNet staff and the University

Trustee Corner

The Public Library Annual Report: What It Is; Why It Is

Why does our public library have to file an annual report with the Department of Public Instruction? What do we get for it?

By John DeBacher, Public Library Administration Consultant
Public Library Development Team

Every Wisconsin public library is required to submit the Public Library Annual Report by March 1 of each year. The report collects financial, collection, staffing, programming, and other data useful to draw comparisons, detect trends, and conduct planning. Much of the data collected is then filed by the state in a federal data survey, and the compiled results allow comparisons to libraries throughout the county. The annual report data also provides information for state library system funding, and gathers required information for county reimbursements. Finally, the annual report requires the library board to certify that the library is in legal compliance with all statutory requirements for library system membership, so that the library can continue to take advantage of regional system services such as shared automation, resource sharing, continuing education, and delivery.

Wisconsin's public libraries have been required to file annual reports with their municipalities since public library legislation was first passed in 1871. Since 1895, when the Wisconsin Free Library Commission was established, libraries have been required to file annual reports to the state agency as well. And since public library systems were established in 1971, each library must submit a report to its system as well as the municipality and the state.

The purpose of the annual report and the resulting benefit to libraries was well stated in the fifth biennial report of the Free Library Commission of Wisconsin:[1]

> "The law requires that the board of directors of every library in the state shall make an annual report to the council, or proper board, and shall send one copy of this report to the Free Library Commission. By means of this report, and through special circulars of inquiry, the Commission collects statistics which it publishes, and which have proved of great practical value to the Commission and to the libraries of the state.
> "In establishing a library, the new board is confronted with such questions as these: How much money is necessary to maintain a library in a town of our size? What part of the funds should be devoted to purchase of books? How much is usually paid the librarian? How many hours ought the library to be open? These and many more questions are definitely and specifically answered by the reports of libraries in places of the same size. Libraries and boards of trustees of the older and larger libraries may gain information from the same source regarding any branch of service undertaken for the first time, such as deposit stations, school duplicate libraries, and other methods of reaching and helping the public. Comparison of statistics of circulation, or of any activity, in different libraries creates a certain wholesome competition which tends to increase efficiency of service, and to extend privileges of the public."

The current law requires that the Division for Libraries, Technology and Community Learning "collect library statistics and conduct studies and surveys of library needs throughout the state and report and publish the findings."[2] Chapter 43 also requires, as a duty of library boards, that

> "Within 60 days after the conclusion of the fiscal year of the municipality or county in which the public library is located, the library board shall make a report to the division and to its governing body. The report shall state the condition of the library board's trust and the various sums of money received for the use of

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the public library during the year, specifying separately the amounts received from appropriations, from the income of trust funds, from rentals, and other revenues of the public library and from other sources. The report shall state the condition of all funds in the library board's control and shall state in detail the disbursements on account of the public library during that fiscal year."[3]

The information collected on the public library annual report is largely unchanged from year to year, since collection of a consistent set of data over time is most useful for relative comparisons and standards. Directors and trustees of libraries can then chart performance of their library over a span of time, or can draw comparisons to other libraries in their region or to libraries of like size throughout the state. As library services and technology changes over time, some additional questions or data collection may be added to the annual survey, but libraries are never required to submit the new data on the first year a data element is included in the survey. Instead, they are requested to adjust their data collection over the course of the year so that the new data element can be reported in subsequent years. For instance, starting on the 2010 annual report, libraries will be asked to report programs targeted to young adult audiences (defined nationally as youth from 12 to 18 years of age), in addition to children's and other programs.

The annual survey does periodically include one-time or special surveys of particular services or topics so that the Division can confirm trends, track the outcome of statewide initiatives, or determine areas for future development. Such supplements have collected information on library technology, services to special needs, and early childhood initiatives.

Library statistics for Wisconsin libraries from 1996 to date are available online at http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/dm-lib-stat.html. Library administrators can download Excel-formatted data files, and sort them to allow comparisons by population, expenditures, revenues, collection size, circulation, or any other statistic collected on the report. The resulting comparisons may be used for the library's budget or long-range planning.

Much of the data collected on the annual report in Wisconsin, such as library hours, square footage, circulation, revenues, expenditures, collection size, technology, and services, is also reported at the federal level, offering a means of comparing libraries nationally. The federal statistics are available at http://harvester.census.gov/imls/publib.asp and this site also includes a link to an online utility to compare individual libraries with others throughout the country.

The library statistics also serve as the foundation for *Wisconsin Public Library Standards,* http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/standard.html, particularly the quantitative standards that recommend the size of collections, staffing levels, hours of operation, and expenditures per capita for library materials.

Through some simple planning and routine recording of regular library activities, along with ongoing bookkeeping of library expenses, the annual report can be a straightforward annual process, and the results can be extremely valuable both to the individual library, and to its peers for comparisons, budgeting, and planning. With most libraries now on shared integrated library computer systems, the circulation and collection data can be easily extracted and compiled, and the resulting non-resident circulation figures allow libraries to collect reimbursement from counties where applicable. Finally, the library's data, when compiled with other libraries, permits state and national library agencies to get the "big picture," to demonstrate the value of libraries and leverage support for regional services and programs. So, while library boards have a statutory obligation to complete and submit the annual report, they also can benefit from the resulting information, just as their libraries benefit from participation in the regional library systems.

Preparing for the Annual Report:
Scheduling a "Typical Week" Tally

By John DeBacher, Public Library Administration Consultant
Public Library Development Team

There are several questions in the Library Services section of the annual report that either require the public library to tally counts throughout the year, or, if that is not feasible, to collect data for a "typical week." If your library does not routinely count each patron coming into the library (visits), each reference question, or each patron using a computer, then the library must conduct a tally during a typical week, preferably in October each year. Since additional data will provide a more accurate result, you might consider conducting two or more "typical week" tally periods during the year.

The questions on the annual report that might be answered with data collected during "typical week" counts are all included in Section III of the annual report, under "Library Services":

- Reference Transactions,
- Library Visits (patron count), and
- Number of Users of Public Internet Computers,

If the library does not count use throughout the year, then the library should schedule at least one week in

October to collect appropriate data (for comparative purposes, the national guidelines dictate that the one-week survey should be done in October). If the library forgets or is unable to do at least one "typical week" count, then the library should report a "-1" (not available) on the annual report for any of the three categories. *Under no circumstances may the library estimate the numbers to be reported.* For instance, libraries should not adjust their previous year's count for reference based on circulation changes, or door count numbers or other criteria.

If your library does a week-long tally, do not be concerned if the result (multiplied by 52) is lower than your previous year's extrapolated count. The important thing is to record accurately and the resulting numbers will smooth out over time. But making estimates or adjusting the previous year's reported numbers by a percentage does not yield accurate results and only goes to undermine the integrity of the state's compiled data.

Electronic door counters are the most unambiguous method for collecting library visit data (remember to divide the result in half, since visitors go past it twice). Some new models can wirelessly report to a central point that interfaces with a computer, and allow for hour-to-hour relative data, useful for library planning and staff scheduling. But simple systems can be purchased for a moderate amount and the count can be recorded and reset daily or weekly. The publication, *Output Measures for Public Libraries, 2nd Edition* (ALA, 1987) contains sample forms that can be used or adapted for recording purposes. Also, additional instructions for Wisconsin's public library annual report can be found at http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/annrpt.html. ✿

Broadband — *from page 6*

of Wisconsin staff on possible grant applications that include fiber to many schools and libraries. More information on this effort is at
http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/pdf/arrabbproposals.pdf.

If you have any questions on the broadband funding contact Bob Bocher, technology consultant, at 608-266-2127 or robert.bocher@dpi.wi.gov. Also, more information, including a Frequently Asked Questions section, is on the department's broadband website at
http://dpi.wi.gov/pld/arrabbfunding.html. ✿

(Footnote)
[1] Editor's Note: Bob Bocher, author of this article, is the chair of the OITP's Telecommunications Subcommittee, and attended this meeting.

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(Footnotes)
[1] Stout, James H., et al. Fifth biennial report of the Free Library Commission of Wisconsin 1903-1904, pp.14-15.
[2] Wis. Stats. § 43.05(4)
[3] Wis. Stats. § 43.58(6)(a) ✿

Wisconsin delegation attends National Library Legislative Day

By Bob Hafeman, Interim Director
Manitowoc-Calumet Library System

You would think that 10 people could not make a difference in the way decisions are made for millions. You would think that with all the lobbyists that roam the halls of Congress, who are paid handsomely for their efforts, that librarians, library trustees, and library friends might come off as insignificant, and only minor players in terms of discussing library issues with Congressional and Senatorial staff.

Not true. Concerning the business of explaining how creating and sustaining excellence in library services directly correlates to creating and sustaining excellence in communities throughout the state of Wisconsin, those who serve in libraries, and are served by libraries, are the most effective advocates in bringing their own personal stories to bear. We represent the voting public, those who have, in fact, elected these same officials to office, and we care enough to take the time and expense to visit them in their offices in Washington, DC, during the National Library Legislative Days (NLLD) organized annually by the American Library Association (ALA).

The ALA takes great care in preparing the state delegations. ALA offered a "basic-training" session on how to effectively approach your elected official for first-timers on Sunday, May 10. On Monday, May 11, all day briefings were held and the collective groups of over 400 library advocates were addressed in the main conference hall. On May 12, visits to our elected officials began in the morning and continued all day.

At Monday's briefings, we were welcomed and given updates by M-J Oberceau, President of the D.C. Library Association; Jim Rettig, President of ALA; and Keith Michael Fiels, Executive Director of ALA.

For the next hour, Michelle Richardson, ACLU legislative council, and Lynne Bradley from the Office of Government Relations (OGR), informed delegates on the reauthorization of the USA Patriot Act. Melanie Anderson, also from OGR, focused on Appropriations and the importance of citing specific House and Senate bills that were pending.

The morning session ended with a primer on advocacy that clearly demonstrated what "not to do" when visiting your Representative (e.g. asking them to throw away your gum before you leave) to the "what to do" straight forward and direct approach of stating your name, explaining your issue, citing the appropriate bill or action needed, and asking for their support. Not only was this an informative session, but very often comical in some of the role-playing examples that were provided.

The Wisconsin delegation lunched together and discussed strategies for Tuesday's visits. The people representing the state were:

- Francis Cherney, South Central Library System and Wood County Library Trustee;
- Sue Vater Olsen, Director, Scandanavia Public Library;
- Stephen Flynn, a student who was awarded an ALA grant to attend this year's NLLD from Carroll College and will attend the University of Michigan in fall for library studies;
- Janice Simmons-Welburn, Dean, Marquette University Library, Milwaukee;
- Jaime Healy-Plotkin, South Central Library System Trustee, Madison;

Members of Wisconsin's delegation to 2009 National Library Legislative Day. Front row, from left: Francis Cherney, Sue Vater Olsen, Janice Simmons-Welburn, Teresa Voss, and Jim Trojanowski. Back row: Stephen Flynn, Jaime Healy-Plotkin, Vicki Lyons, and Bob Hafeman.

(Photo taken by Judith Hafeman)

NLLD — *from page 9*

- Vicki Lyons, Information Technology, LaCrosse School District;
- Teresa Voss, Librarian, Verona Area School District;
- Bob Hafeman, Interim Director, Manitowoc-Calumet Library System;
- Jim Trojanowski, Director, Northern Waters Library System, Ashland.

After lunch, we heard strategies from Corey Williams, Associate Director of OCR on Copyright and Internet and Telecommunications. The afternoon session ended with speakers Vic Klatt of Van Soyocov Associates and Melanie Anderson of OGR speaking about the Federal stimulus package and how libraries can and will play an integral role in turning the country's economic crisis around.

Members of the delegation met for dinner at the Dubliner restaurant, which was within walking distance of the hotel. We were hoping for some Irish folk tunes during our meal, but 'twas a Monday and the lads wouldn't be showing up until later that evening. So, we left with full tummies, but no Irish melodies.

Tuesday was visiting day. Appointments with Representatives and Senators had been made starting in January and on into April, with each legislative staff being informed as to who would be visiting from their district. This year, we met with representatives from all districts except one, and were able to meet with that Representative's legislative staff nonetheless.
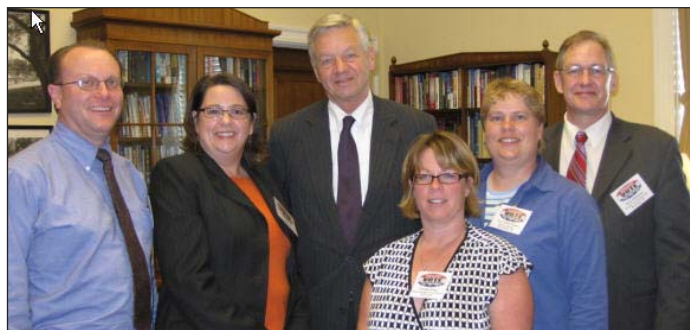
Pictured above, from left: Jim Trojanowski, Vicki Lyons, Representative Tom Petri, Teresa Voss, Sue Vater Olsen, and Bob Hafeman

All attendees were encouraged to wear comfortable shoes and clothing, some did and some did not…regardless of attire…we all walk a lot. The weather was kind to us and made our walking seem easy. There were security measures and metal detectors for entering the building, but the lines were far shorter this year than last.

Our visits went from meeting legislative aides for Representatives Tammy Baldwin, Jim Sensenbrenner and David Obey in the morning and, after lunch in the Rayburn cafeteria, continued with staff for Representatives Steve Kagen, Paul Ryan, Gwen Moore, Senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold, and finally, back to the Rayburn building for a late afternoon meeting with Representative Thomas Petri in person.

Representative Petri was very welcoming. He told us of how he frequently stops at the Fond Du Lac and Manitowoc Public Libraries when he is between meetings or on the road. It was a moment that we all shared, because we all have those types of library experiences.

During our visits, our delegation vigorously discussed National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding, Orphan Works, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, Improving Literacy through Schools, E-rate and the Universal Service Fund, increased usage in libraries in an economic downturn, LSTA, the Patriot Act, access to technology, broadband, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Finally, we discussed how the Administration compares the implementation of broadband to the building of the national interstate highway system during the 1950s. The effect would be transformative and would level the playing field between those who live in rural areas and those who live in larger municipalities.

I want to personally thank all those Wisconsin library advocates who attended National Library Legislative Days this year, and encourage all who read this to start thinking about visiting your Congress person and Senators in 2010. I will begin receiving information for NLLD 2010 this fall and will pass it along. I urge you to consider making plans for an unforgettable visit to Washington, D.C. next year and bringing your library story, issues and concerns to those you have elected. ✿

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COLAND plans school library media staffing summit for 2010

By Nancy Anderson, School Library Media Consultant
Instructional Media and Technology Team

A confluence of recent trends, data, and concern from the field has resulted in a broader recognition of the need to address school library media staffing issues. Since the 2004-2005 school year, 142 school library media positions have been lost throughout Wisconsin according to DPI school staffing reports. The annual 1202 reporting forms indicate that twenty-seven school library media positions have been eliminated in the last school year. This consistent loss of positions makes no sense in light of the 2006 school library media impact study finding that quality school library media programs with certified professionals lead to an increase in students' academic achievement. Members of the Council on Library and Network Development (COLAND) recognized the urgent need to address this concern and will co-sponsor a school library media visioning summit in early 2010.

A planning committee will be convened with representatives from the many groups who are impacted by the variance in school library media staffing levels throughout the state. Planning for the summit will move forward under the leadership of the incoming State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Evers. DPI's Instructional Media and Technology Team will also be very involved with the planning and facilitation of the upcoming summit.

The timing for the summit also concurs with the recent release of the *AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* and the *Standards for the 21st–Century Learning in Action*. The release of the updated standards, the emphasis on the need for students to develop 21st –century skills and the awareness of the need for students to develop an understanding of multiple literacies all link to the need for strong school library media programs and certified professionals who work directly with students. ✿