

# ILA/ACRL Newsletter

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## **Election Results of 2015 Officers**

The votes are in!

Vice President/President-Elect: Beth McMahon (Central College)

Secretary/Treasurer: Jennifer Sterling (William Penn)

Member-at-Large: Cara Stone (Grand View)

## **Reflections on Fall Conference by Scholarship Winner, Ashley McHose**

ILA Fall Conference: A Newcomer's Experience

Four months ago, I experienced my share of culture shock as I moved from the busy downtown center of Montreal, Quebec to begin my first professional position in Waverly, IA as an Information Literacy Librarian at Wartburg College. Even in the brief time I've been in Iowa, however, I can tell you that the leap of faith it took to pack up my family and move 1,000 miles has truly paid off. Iowa library professionals are among the most passionate, driven, and innovative individuals I have ever met. Nowhere was this more apparent than at ILA's 125th Annual Conference – an event that I was able to attend thanks to a generous scholarship from the ILA/ACRL.

The ILA/ACRL 2015 Fall Conference Scholarship gave me the opportunity to understand how Iowa's public, academic, and special libraries are evolving to meet the needs of today's diverse users. A new, developing professional like myself couldn't have asked for a better line-up of speakers and presenters at the ILA Fall Conference. I soon ran out of space for notes as I participated in engaging sessions covering everything from social media tips to grant-writing tricks and heard from some of the most creative minds in the field, such as Jamie LaRue and Ben Bizzle. These innovators helped me reflect on what it means to be entering the library profession today and how we can thrive and reach new users in a time of change and uncertainty in the field.

At the end of the conference, I realized that it was the connections I made and the people I engaged with that made the trip so valuable. Having the chance to speak with vendors, to talk with librarians and see how they engage with their communities, to trade teaching tips with fellow instructional librarians at the Information Literacy Interest Group meeting, and to work as a team to answer those elusive trivia questions, truly showed me what it means to be a part of the Iowa Library Association and makes me eager to attend future ILA events. I cannot thank the ILA/ACRL enough for awarding me the 2015 Fall Conference Scholarship and giving me this indispensable opportunity to grow as a library professional. I encourage all newcomers to the field and to Iowa to apply for this award in the future – it is truly an exceptional experience.

*By Ashley McHose, Information Literacy and User Experience Librarian, Wartburg College*

## **Conference Sessions at ILA**

### *College Readiness: Building K-16 Information Literacy Foundations*

Ericka Raber, Research and Instruction Librarian, University of Iowa

Pam Rees, Director of Library and Information Resources, Grand View University

Denise Rehmke, District Library Coordinator, Iowa City Community School District

The presenters shared results the work of the K12-Higher Education Ad Hoc Committee and joint projects of ILA/ACRL and IASL, including preliminary results from the K12-Higher Education Information Literacy Pilot Study. Presenters were eager to share ideas and strategies to encourage audience members to seek deeper collaboration with school, academic, and community library partners in their home communities.

The K12-Higher Education Information Literacy Pilot Study uses a modified version of the 9th grade TRAILS: Tools for Real-Time Assessment of Information Literacy Skills instrument. During the first two years of data collection, the researchers found that first-semester college students collectively scored below 68% on average on this assessment and demonstrated challenges in the areas of focusing a topic, selecting appropriate resources, and recognizing bias. An Executive Summary of the pilot study can be found on the ILA/ACRL website.

Researchers considered how the results from this pilot student connect to the Common Core for K12 education, and saw links to the Literacy standard in the Iowa Core Literacy Standards. Researchers emphasized the need to extend these conversations about information literacy and college readiness beyond the library and engage teachers, professors, and administrators. As the pilot study proceeds into its third year, the ad hoc committee will come to the end of its term. However, in its business meeting on October 15, 2015, the ILA/ACRL membership voted to continue this work through the creation of a permanent College Readiness Joint Committee with IASL.

*Reported by Beth McMahon*

### *Government Documents Resources for Public*

Maeve Clark, Adult Services Coordinator, Iowa City Public Library

Amy Groskopf, Director, Davenport Public Library

Marianne Mason, Federal and State Information Librarian, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City

Government documents encompass a wide variety of resources. There is a common misconception that they are all congressional or regulatory and that they are boring. Marianne Mason of the University of Iowa Libraries showed that this is not the case, and that citizens and

researchers use all kinds of government documents to help them in a variety of ways. A number of different valuable online government resources were mentioned, such as the Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov>), Congress.gov, the Digitization Projects Registry (<http://registry.fdlp.gov>) and Medlineplus (<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>) However, barriers do exist for some of those seeking this information. For instance, there are many Spanish speakers and as a result there is a need to find much of this information in Spanish, which can be difficult. However, many valuable federal agency websites do have their information in a variety of languages. Additional barriers can include the difficulty for one to stay connected and informed. The Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) can help to counter this issue with its archive and training site resources, as well as its regular webinars available to the public.

Amy Groskopf presented on the use of gov docs in a public library, in this particular instance the Davenport Public Library. She identified major users of these gov docs as genealogists, tax filers, those involved with the court system, and local government watchdogs. There is a heavy use of online government resources, as shown in statistics from the Davenport Public Library, with over 130,000 page views total in a three month period this year.

Maeve Clark of the Iowa City Public Library discussed current issues (or the good, the bad, and the ugly) affecting the use of gov docs in the public library setting. In the past, one used to be able to obtain paper gov docs from their public library, nowadays most of this information is only available online. However, this does not necessarily mean that they are easy to find online. Some information and forms are very difficult to find browsing on a government website, and in some cases it is simply easier for one to do a Google search of the specific document one is looking for. Public libraries still can provide an invaluable resource to those in search of government documents. Many are intimidated by only being directed by a website by a government agency or social services. Additionally, if one has no internet access, the library is often the first place where they are likely to go. The presentation concluded by summing up a library's duty is to make it easier and more accessible for government information to the people who need it the most.

*Reported by Justin Baumgartner*

### ***So All May Read: 2015 Great Children and Teen Books***

Sarah Willeford, Director, Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Ms. Willeford presented some very interesting information regarding the workings of the Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, part of the Iowa Department for the Blind, located in downtown Des Moines. The main library portion of the building is on the fourth floor, but there are braille book collections placed in thirteen locations throughout the building. The library contains roughly 56,000 books in Braille, and 40,000 title in audio format. There are also 10,000 Large Print titles in the collection. The library is able to produce Braille versions of books when necessary.

The Library also helps K-12 schools in what Ms. Willeford called “Textbook Season,” providing Braille-friendly textbooks for the first day of school. The Library also has a studio and makes use of volunteers to narrate the texts of books in order to produce.

*Report by Dan Coffey*

*The Pathfinders Evolved: Barriers, deep linking, and identifying strategies for increasing database usage*

Presentation by Joe Hyman, Virtual Librarian, Des Moines Public Library.

Mr. Hyman began his presentation by outlining a list of barriers that can prevent pathfinders (or as he calls them, “Personas,”) from being as useful as possible to patrons. There are a whole host of problems inherent in how lists of databases and “landing pages” appear to patrons who use pathfinders/personas. The question Mr. Hyman proposes is how to get past this problem to make the resources attractive and easily useful to patrons.

One answer is to bring together various resources rather than keep a separate list of databases that may or may not take a user to a viable platform page, and also something that grabs attention.

The idea for a “persona” was taken from the realm of website development and evaluation – the persona being the ideal user of one’s website. So, the persona became the library user, and care was taken to build a pathfinder with the needs of the persona in mind.

EZProxy was a solution to the problem that Mr. Hyman and his colleagues found when they tried to provide a list of database links that would bring patrons to a searchable interface instead of an intermediary web page. This tool allowed patrons from within and without library walls to easily access the database search interface.

Mr. Hyman stressed that it was essential for the pathfinders to be “fun to look at,” and easy to navigate, including summaries at the top of the screen, divided sections according to topic, and a “list of featured books with covers in the main content area.”

*Report by Dan Coffey*

*Get the Most out of Your ILA Membership*

Brett Cloyd, ILA Executive Board Member

Duncan Stewart, ILA President

ILA President and Executive Board members shared their thoughts on the value of ILA membership and their experiences as members. They emphasized that the breadth of the organization means that there are opportunities to pursue almost any interests as well as opportunities to grow professionally. ILA President Duncan Stewart summarized the

organization's goals as adding to the professional development of the membership, representing all libraries of all sizes and types throughout the state and maintaining an "effective presence at the State Capitol." Through participation, members can develop useful professional skills such as how grow an organization, moderate a panel, or organize a conference or workshop, then bring these skills and experiences back to benefit your library and your community. In particular, the Executive Board members encouraged the audience to become involved in the upcoming Planning Day, the annual ILA/ACRL Spring Conference, and the biennial Leadership Institute.  
*Reported by Beth McMahon*

### *Networking: Make It Work, for You and Your Library*

Sue Mannix, Moderator, Director, Bettendorf Public Library Information Center

Samantha Helmick, Public Services Librarian, Burlington Public Library

Andrew Fuerste-Henry, Adult Services Manager, CarnegieStout Public Library, Dubuque

Carina Mulcrone, Circulation Manager, Bettendorf Public Library

This lively panel discussion blended a variety of perspectives from academic and public libraries to demonstrate how patron and community awareness can be built with social media and area partnerships. St. Ambrose University successfully promoted its summer reading program with librarians at the Smithsonian Institution; staff use the library's Twitter and Pinterest accounts to highlight student success. Even though social networking may seem very challenging for a small staff, the LeClaire Public Library praised the power of Instagram to build community and national relationships. Such virtual connections afford new opportunities when funds or circumstances limit travel and continuing education. The Burlington Public Library views social media as a community connection vehicle -- promoting event awareness and building patron relationships. Shelfies, seven word book reviews, and Snapchat videos have all contributed to an active teen program and new school connections. By "inviting yourself to the table," the Washington Public Library has created the "Healthy Relationship Summit" to highlight city and area resources for families. A library's strategic plan should guide the staff in selecting partners for programming and service. All attendees were encouraged to network with other professionals, knowing that librarians not only maintain a "map of information sources" but also serve as a resource to their peers. The panelists emphasized the importance of being part of a statewide listserv and choosing media platforms that best suit a library's needs, in terms of staffing and the time commitment to post content.

*Report by Kristy Raine*

### *Flash Drive/Hard Drive/DVD? Preserving Your Digital Files*

Tom Keyser, Government Documents Librarian, Iowa Library Services, Des Moines

Tom Keyser, Government Documents Librarian at Iowa Library Services, presented on the methods and importance on preserving digital files. Much discussion was given to information obtained from the Library of Congress Digital Preservation Outreach and Education (DPOE). The Library of Congress realized all of the great things possible in digital preservation, but

realized that there were no guidelines of direction in this. Storing digital information is a relatively new process, starting in the 1960's. As a result, the DPOE addresses many of these issues.

The DPOE mission statement is to foster and encourage the active preservation of digital content. Keyser outlined the DPOE's six baseline modules in its mission: identifying one's digital content, selecting what will be preserved, recognizing any storage issues, finding the steps needed to protect one's digital content, long-term management provisions, and what considerations should be made for long-term access.

These modules lead to a number of baseline principles in preserving digital content that Keyser went into detail. At the beginning of a digital preservation project, one needs to know what content they have and what to prioritize. Identifying where files are stored, what types of files they are, and what formats they are in are also very important. When prioritizing items in a digital preservation project, one should differentiate between what files they need to keep, what they want to keep, what they want to keep if possible, and what should be discarded.

Once these initial steps have been taken in a digital preservation project, the tedious work of copying this information is to be done. There are a variety of options one can make in copying content to storage media, from CDs and DVDs to hard drives to solid state drives and flash devices to cloud storage sites such as Dropbox. Keyser recommends to make at least 2 copies of your files and to be sure to have at least one copy in an off-site storage location. This brings to mind the acronym LOCKSS: Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe. Keyser also recommended to keep a paper inventory of one's digital files as well. Additionally Tom also recommended to make it a habit to immediately duplicate your new files for preservation as well as access.

The issue of the deterioration of media was also covered. This is a common issue in storage media, with CD-Rs and flash drives having especially short lifespans. If one wishes to copy to a physical storage medium, Keyser recommended burning files to a newly created form, the M-DISC, which offers superior quality and shelf life. Cloud storage is also recommended, and there are many different providers of this service, although the possibility of hacks into this medium are always possible.

*Reported by Justin Baumgartner*

### *Open Meetings and Open Records*

W. Charles Smithson, Executive Director, Iowa Public Information Board

The Iowa Public Information Board, created in 2012, is charged with enforcing the open meetings and open records laws as defined by Chapters 21, 22, and 23 of the Iowa Code. Because public libraries in particular may be called upon to host an open meeting or retain records of governmental bodies, this session was very practical in focus and shaped by questions generated by the audience. Conversation covered such foundational issues as what constitutes a "meeting," how to ensure appropriate public notice, and circumstance under which meetings can and cannot go into closed session. Smithson lent his expertise to discuss how the requirements

for open meetings and records apply to formats such as email communication or video conferencing. In conclusion, Smithson emphasized that the goal of the Iowa Information Board is to educate Iowa communities in order to reduce complaints over open meetings and records and to support public institutions such as libraries when conflicts arise.

Smithson is also a contributing author to the book "Money, Politics, and Campaign Finance Reform Law in the States" and an adjunct faculty member at Drake law School.

*Reported by Beth McMahon*

### *Seed Libraries*

Madeline Jarvis, Youth Services Librarian, Ely Public Library

Dave Mixdorf, Director, South Sioux City Public Library, South Sioux City, NE

Sarah Sellon, Director, Ely Public Library

Debbie Stanton, Director, Washington Public Library

In this panel session, four librarians from a variety of public libraries exchanged information and ideas on how a library can start a seed library or exchange of their own. There are differences between a seed library and seed exchange. A seed library loans seeds of specific plant varieties which patrons can check out, grow, save and return the resulting seeds for future use. Seed libraries often pair their collection with educational classes and materials. Seed exchanges are more akin to a swap, exchanging one kind for another. Generally, seed libraries and exchanges are not concerned with getting the same exact number of seeds back that were lent out. More important is for patrons to understand the importance of growing produce as a cycle that doesn't end when it is harvested.

Sarah Sellon and Madeline Jarvis from the Ely Public Library have a popular seed lending library, started in March 2012. A mission statement was created first for this seed collection, stressing the importance of building the community through sharing open pollinated seeds, educating the public, and creating a forum on the importance of local food sources. In addition to their seed collection, Ely's future plans include creating raised bed gardens at the library and providing dehydrators for classes and checkout. Debbie Stanton from the Washington Public Library also discussed the seed collection at her library, which they label as a "seed exchange". This exchange, which began with donations from Sand Hill Preservation Center (a local source of heirloom seeds), is most concerned with encouraging the public to take and use the seeds than with the return of these seeds come harvest time. Dave Mixdorf at the South Sioux City Public Library had a slightly different experience. In Nebraska, a state law exempting seed libraries and exchanges failed in the state legislature this year, making it technically illegal to have one labeled as such. While a few libraries in the state have kept theirs, South Sioux City Public Library does not label their seed collection as a "seed library". In keeping with the goals of the other seed libraries, South Sioux City Public Library has been able to expand to classes on gardening, canning, and cooking. One major question asked was if it is legal in Iowa to have a seed library. A state law to make seed libraries fully legal in Iowa is currently in the works in the

state legislature but has yet to pass. As a result, this issue is currently a gray area and it much depends on how one words their seed collection as well as its scope.

Numerous tips were given on how to set up and maintain a seed library or exchange. Donations from individuals and organizations are important in the success of a diverse seed collection. Returning seeds was a major issue brought up during this session. Most seed libraries have policies in place to encourage patrons to return seeds come harvest time. Dave Mixdorf stressed the importance of educating your public first on topics such as how to retrieve the seeds when returning them as well as isolation distances to preserve plant species. He also explained how one can create their own unique plant species after saving seeds for a period of time. Cataloging the seeds presents a unique issue for the catalogers. Ely Public Library has started using the Follett ILS system to catalog their seeds. Debbie Stanton stated that the catalogers at the Washington Public Library are excited about the interesting challenges that come with cataloging these items.

*Reported by Justin Baumgartner*

### ***Start a Revolution: Stop Acting Like a Library***

Ben Bizzle, Ben Bizzle Consulting, Jonesboro, AR

This session was a follow-up to the keynote speech given that morning on marketing your library. The amusing and amiable Ben Bizzle took questions from the large gathering of librarians. One librarian asked about public libraries strengthening relationships with local colleges to which Bizzle replied that using colleges as a resource for creative students doing internships and get some fresh ideas is a win-win scenario. Bizzle discussed Facebook ad parameters and defended having a consistent vision of aesthetics amongst one's staff, especially in limiting the amount of text and info; he advocated creating a good web page as the info destination for posters, billboards and flyers. Bizzle often joked that his private company could assist folks, but recommended Drupal as a robust freeware. He even spoke to the advantage of taking down old posters as you bring new ones to minimize asking business for space over and over. All-in-all everyone enjoyed his folksy charm and inspiring marketing enthusiasm.

*Reported by Stella Herzig*

### ***The Future of Cataloging***

Dreama Deskens, Technical Services and Information Technology Librarian, Johnston Public Library

Lori Osmus Kappmeyer, Associate Professor, Head, Metadata and Cataloging Department, Iowa State University, Ames

This fascinating session drew many catalogers, but also some reference librarians. This reviewer thought it an important session for all areas of librarianship. Lori, a veteran cataloger who has seen many changes in her long career, brought us quickly up-to-date with the changes going forward as we move from MARC records to a Bibframe universe. Authority control and linked

data will have more flexibility and we learned how RDA (Resource Description and Access) can be useful in a linked data world. She gave us some recommendations to position our technology and communities for the newly efficient workflow (the use of spreadsheets for fields) and the access environment and how that will strengthen our library and information science profession. She stressed that catalogers will devote more time to cataloging materials unique to their collections. She added that we need to study and implement standards development, such as Bibframe, create better-structured machine-usable data, and boldly do the needful to enter our future with enthusiasm, confidence and best practice. This reviewer wishes that every one of the conference attendees could have been at this excellent session.

*Reported by Stella Herzig*

### *Social Media Tools, Tips, and Tricks*

Marci Behm, Service Librarian, Des Moines Public Library  
Kathy Leonard, Service Librarian, Des Moines Public Library

Marci Behm and Kathy Leonard demonstrated how librarians can use social media to connect with the community by sharing their own experiences with social media, as well as some best practices. Central questions such as: 1) Who's making the decisions? 2) What's the endgame? & 3) Who is your audience? Provided a way in for audience members who may be thinking about starting a social media program, but might be unsure about how to begin. Behm and Leonard stressed that answering these questions can help your team be strategic about how, what, and where to post.

The art of social media is knowing how to post good content at the right time, so Behm and Leonard shared some strategies that have helped their team at Des Moines Public Library develop an effective social media program, some of which are summarized below. Each social media platform has different times of day and days of the week in which they experience the most traffic, so knowing what those times are and scheduling your posts accordingly will help ensure that your posts are seen by as many people as possible. It is also important to give your library a distinct, but consistent, voice and personality. The social media team at DPL achieves this by reviewing all potential posts to check for consistency of voice and branding.

The function of social media need not be limited to promoting the events and services your library offers, can go beyond library-related content by offering tips (i.e. tech tips), summer reading lists, or sharing popular articles.

Many social media platforms will keep track of statistics for you, so put them to good use! Look at factors such as number of followers, number of clicks, and rate of engagement to help you figure out who you are reaching, and assess the effectiveness of your efforts.

*Reported by Sarah Slaughter*

## *Making Your Library Accessible to Individuals with Vision Loss*

Emily Wharton, Technology Director, Iowa Department for the Blind, Des Moines

Emily Wharton began her presentation by asking those in attendance why they were interested in the session and what they hoped to learn about accessibility. Many attendees were public librarians who are dealing with an increasing number of aged patrons, and so were interested in seeing what sort of solutions are available to help this population.

Wharton came fully equipped to answer these questions, by demonstrating a wide range of tools. The assistive technologies she brought ranged from small handheld magnifiers, to an ABiSee, a portable device that can magnify, scan, and read text aloud. Wharton was also able to share her perspective on the pros and cons of each of the devices, so that audience members could envision which tools might work best for their patrons.

In addition to the specialized assistive technologies, Wharton also demonstrated some more “homegrown” solutions, ideal for those working on a shoestring budget. These included using an iPhone magnification app, or projecting the image from a smartphone or tablet to a TV or large monitor with an HDMI cable. For libraries that already circulate tablets, downloading these accessibility apps provides a low cost, extremely versatile solution for patrons with vision loss. Solutions are also available for public access computers, at minimal or no cost. Windows computers come with a built-in screen reader and magnifier, or download free screen reading software, such as Non Visual Desktop Access (NVDA).

*Reported by Sarah Slaughter*

## *Challenging Situations: Answering a Book Challenge in Your Community*

Kristin Pekoll, Associate Director, Office for Intellectual Freedom, American Library Association, Chicago, IL

Kevin Roberts, Formerly with Waterloo Community Schools

Mara Strickler, Director, Algona Public Library

Facing a book challenge can be a scary and stressful situation but understanding what to expect can help mitigate some of that fear and stress. In this session, three panelists shared their own experiences with book challenges, as well as the lessons learned.

Kevin Roberts was involved in challenge in his Waterloo School District over the use of Sherman Alexie’s *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* in his eighth-grade class. He received an email from administrators stating that all classroom sets were to be returned because the book was “deemed inappropriate.” In this case, the administration made the decision to pull the book, without the formal review called for in district policy.

Mara Strickler received a complaint from a group that held meetings in the library, requesting that the book *Pro: Reclaiming Abortion Rights*, by Katha Pollitt, be removed and replaced by a

book of the group's choosing. The library kept the book on the shelf, and the challenge was ultimately resolved by discussing the library's collection development policy with the group and agreeing to purchase a book of their suggestion.

Kristin Pekoll shared a story from her time before working at the office for intellectual freedom, in which a challenge to a list of LGBT books turned into a book challenge. The challenge came at a time when the library board was up for renewal, and so several board members were dismissed because they didn't reflect the "ideology of the community." After much debate, and a visit to the community by the ALA, the new board voted to keep all books on the shelf, in the YA section, without "sexually explicit" stickers.

Some important takeaways from these stories and the question and answer segment were: 1) Make sure you have a detailed collection development policy, and stand by it 2) Be careful not to demonize the person bringing the challenge, because it can an opportunity to enter into a conversation 3) It is important to have support, be it from community organizations, or library organizations such as the ALA Intellectual Freedom Office.

*Reported by Sarah Slaughter*

### *Collaborative Professional Development: Creating Your Own Opportunities*

Amy Blevins, Clinical Education Librarian, Hardin Library, University of Iowa, Iowa City  
Mara Eggherman, Library Services Manager and Adjunct Instructor, Marshalltown Community College

Anne Marie Gruber, Assistant Director for Library Instruction and Public Services, University of Dubuque Sponsored by The Iowa Association of College



As this session was led by instruction librarians, it was only fitting to start out by stating the learning objective for the session: Attendees will be able to articulate professional development strategies that they could implement both collaboratively and individually.

To achieve this end, each of the three panelists shared their preferred professional development strategies.

The panelists stressed the importance of making time for professional development and finding a strategy that fits your needs. Professional development can also be done both individually and collaboratively. It's impossible to keep up with everything on your own, so coming together as a staff to share new ideas can be a good way to get some solid professional development in-house.

Another theme of the presentation was that professional development is often more about inspiration than learning specific skills. Before implementing a new program, read up on what other institutions have done, or find people who have done similar things and ask for advice. Professional organizations and conferences are a great way to find people and make connections.

Of course, a large part of professional development is keeping up with your reading, but it can sometimes be difficult to know where to start. Listservs, blogs, and social media are all good tools for keeping up with conversations. The panelists recommended following professional organizations and individual libraries or librarians as a way to sift through to the most important articles.

After the panelists' presentations, the attendees shared their own experiences and strategies for keeping up with professional development. All this led to the conclusion that if you find a strategy that works for you and are able to make it a regular part of your life, it can benefit your career and institution in unexpected ways.

*Reported by Sarah Slaughter*