

ILA/ACRL Newsletter

vol. 21, no. 6, Winter 2011

This issue of the ILA/ACRL Newsletter features a semi-annual President's Piece submitted by sitting ILA/ACRL president, Ryan Gjerde, results of the IA/ACRL fall elections, and reports from the fall ILA Conference.

President's Piece

The fall is a busy time of year for many ILA/ACRL committees; making final preparations for the ILA conference, laying the groundwork for the Spring ILA/ACRL conference, and finding willing and able volunteers to lead and work with our committees are just a few examples of the tasks keeping committee members occupied.

Following the ILA conference, we enter a time of transition and reflection, as we on the Executive Board prepare to hand over our duties to the in-coming chairs and officers. This month, I would like to reflect briefly upon the work accomplished by our ad hoc committees. Our bylaws require us to limit ad hoc committees to 2-year terms, and this Fall we had two such committees reaching the end of their term.

The Scholarly Communication committee, led by Kate Hess, has worked to survey membership on issues related to scholarly communication, and reviewed the materials posted on the ILA/ACRL website. The committee recommended, instead of duplicating effort on maintaining resources, to link to the [University of Iowa Libraries' guide on scholarly communication](#), which is routinely maintained.

The Mentoring committee, led by Jen Rouse, has continued to work to connect "new" and "experienced" librarians across the state. ILA/ACRL has sponsored mentoring activities for the past 4 years or so, led by a couple of ad hoc committees. This July, the executive board reaffirmed the desire to continue our mentoring program, and sought to find a more permanent place for it within our committee structure. With that in mind, the duties and responsibilities of mentoring have been added to those of the Membership committee, in support of that committee's charge to encourage Chapter membership and activity.

The executive board thanks all who have served on these committees over the past two years!

The July executive board meeting also saw the creation of a new ad hoc committee, focusing on collaboration between K-12 and Higher Education. The new committee's charge is to partner with IASL to develop and implement a framework and action plan for future collaboration. This committee arises out of the informal meetings and discussions that began at the 2010 ILA planning day, and have continued throughout 2011. Pam Rees will chair this committee. We

look forward to continuing this discussion and finding fruitful opportunities to partner with other librarians in the state.

Thanks to all who have participated in ILA/ACRL in the past year!

Ryan Gjerde
President, ILA/ACRL

ILA/ACRL Election Results for 2012!

The ILA/ACRL Nominating committee is pleased to announce the results of this Fall's elections. Thanks to all candidates who so graciously volunteered to serve the Iowa academic library community!

Amy Paulus, University of Iowa, VP/President-Elect
Natalie Hutchinson, Central College, Secretary/Treasurer
Anne Marie Gruber, University of Dubuque, Member-at-Large

ILA/ACRL sponsored sessions at the ILA Conference

The Academic Library's Place in the Information Economy

*John Buschman, Associate University Librarian, Scholarly Research and Services
Georgetown University
Washington, DC*

Reported by Dan Chibnall

John Buschman spoke to his audience about the academic library's role in the information economy and the 21st century. He stressed early on in his talk that higher education has more value than just giving people higher paying jobs. Higher education brings out the democratic values of people and helps to improve our society as a whole. Libraries have an advantage providing this kind of education because we have the resources and we have, more recently, spaces like information commons in our physical buildings. Blending technology and space is important but Buschman noted that anyone can build a commons on campus. He noted that libraries are a purposely designed research spaces that have special educative properties.

He asked the question, "What behaviors do we want our users to emulate when we build our spaces?" In essence he was making the argument that our physical buildings and our resources should help our patrons build the best possible behaviors and habits when it comes to research.

We also have to be careful about embracing the concept of return on investment. It is difficult to quantify the positive results of what we do as librarians and as library institutions. We have to dig deeply within an area of our curriculum, such as information literacy, and ask the big questions: are our students showing an understanding of these skills? Can they perform them when asked to?

Libraries have a special role as essential space in our society, especially academic libraries. In our modern economy we have to be careful about how we mimic bookstores and coffee shops. We need to stay true to our mission of being connected to the research spirit of the university and tether ourselves to the curriculum as much as possible. Buschman emphasized this point very strongly saying that if we try to change too much then we will not be fulfilling our long-held mission and traditions of helping students and faculty do great research.

L2L: Collaborations Between School, Public, and Academic Libraries

Betsy Thompson, Sioux City Public Library

Dan Chibnall, Grand View University

Rebecca Funke, Des Moines Area Community College (Ankeny)

Reported by Mara Egberman

Three enthusiastic librarians shared their collaborative experiences. Betsy Thompson of Sioux City Public Library started us off with an historical overview of the information literacy collaboration between her public library and local school libraries. Many social studies teachers invited public librarians into their classrooms, forming a cooperative in 1986. Why collaborate? First, it sometimes makes good financial sense. It also broadens use of professional expertise, such as in readers' advisory. Collaboration is great for reaching new audiences. It can take time, and it may be faster to do something yourself. Collaboration also requires consistent communication. But the benefits are worthwhile. You can even have social events!

Dan Chibnall and others of Grand View University Library have been partnering with high school teachers in Des Moines for about two years. Grounded by the active learning model (research based, of course!) and only when invited, GVU librarians went into Advanced Placement (AP) classes, put students in groups, and gave them examples of college assignments. Students used the databases available at their respective high schools to learn how to find scholarly resources. Mention was made of the college writing center and time management. Feedback from high school librarians was positive. They liked the college librarians "coming from the future" to mentor college bound students, and hoped that this kind of reality check might mitigate "senioritis."

Rebecca Funke of Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC)'s main campus in Ankeny has facilitated collaboration between DMACC's library, public libraries, and school libraries. Her favorite thing about it is that it raises visibility of libraries! A partnership with Ankeny

Public Library consisted of a shared film showing and shared promotion and marketing of the event. Then Colin Beavan's No Impact Man was the text for a common reading initiative called One Book, One College, One Community. Book discussions were held at the public library. DMACC has also begun partnering with K-12 classes. A teacher requested that Rebecca come and explain why libraries are important at the college level for her English class. Rebecca outlined expectations for college research to the college bound students.

Discussion followed. The first point made was that we should not forget the school librarians and the public library youth specialists in the mix when collaborating. School librarians have so much on their schedules that they may not be able to attend each class the college librarians visit. Still, they should be invited and informed about these happenings in their schools. If public library youth specialists are included in the dialogue, they can tie in their programming as well. One public librarian mentioned that her library is used as a bridge to other libraries in Illinois. 378 libraries formed a consortium Illinois and Iowa 40 years ago including public, academic, school, and special libraries. They share an electronic catalog and delivery services, and several of the school libraries link to public library catalogs. In such a large group, sometimes there have been problems with communication and she would advise those of us looking into this sort of thing to anticipate that and be proactive.

Other discussion items included the importance of developing trust between cooperating libraries/librarians, the partnership between The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) Library, Cedar Falls Public Library and others who collaborate every year to "Bring a Book to Life." This program was hailed as a good model to follow. A National Library of Medicine exhibit on the science of Harry Potter is this year's theme.

A few of us tweeted about the conference at #IALIB11 which is no longer archived, but feel free to look up my posts from October 13 and 14 @mmegherman on Twitter.

Reading the Garden: Unique Library Collections at Seed Saver Exchange

Bill Musser, billm@seedsavers.org

Robert Becker Memorial Library

Seed Savers Exchange

Decorah, Iowa

Reported by Brett Cloyd

Bill is a full-time librarian at the Seed Saver Exchange (SSE) and started his job in 2010. SSE is a non-profit organization founded in 1975 by Kent and Diane Ott Whealy. Kent and Diane wanted to share heirloom seeds and preserve them. Among early seeds they collected were Grandpa Ott's Morning Glory, German Pink Tomato, and Moon and Stars Watermelon. Their efforts eventually led to the formation of the largest non-governmental seed bank in the nation with an international membership of 13,000. An important part of this work is sharing seed

histories. Members of SSE send in seeds and the stories behind them, so it has been important to develop a system for organizing everything.

Among their publications is a Seed Savers Yearbook which lists seeds that are available in a given year. The seeds come from members and from the central office in Decorah. Diane Ott Whealy also has a new publication entitled Gathering: Memoir of a Seed Saver.

Bill wanted to let us know about SSE current projects. Chief among them is the Global Seed Vault which has generated international cooperation and was funded by the Norwegian government. Located on the island of Spitsbergen, Norway, it duplicates and provides a back-up of other seed saving programs.

SSE has received lots of press including a visit by President Obama and the support of Martha Stewart, Wendell Berry, and Greg Brown.

Bill described the gardens and grounds of Heritage Farm in Decorah as an idyllic setting. The Preservation work is a core activity and takes place in the administrative building and laboratory as well as in the gardens. There are currently about 18,000 varieties of seeds in the preservation collection. The Library is there primarily to support the research work of the preservation lab. The annual Seed Saver catalog, seed racks and seed packet sales help to fund SSE's work. The catalog is a beautiful publication full of vibrant and interesting plant varieties. Bill reports that the seed business is booming as more and more people are gardening.

The Library has transitioned from the private library of Kent and Diane Ott Whealy (for 36 years) to an organizational library. The Library received a substantial contribution of scholarly horticultural and agricultural materials from Robert Becker who was a professor at Cornell University. Becker loved agricultural history and his family decided to donate his materials to SSE when he died in 1996.

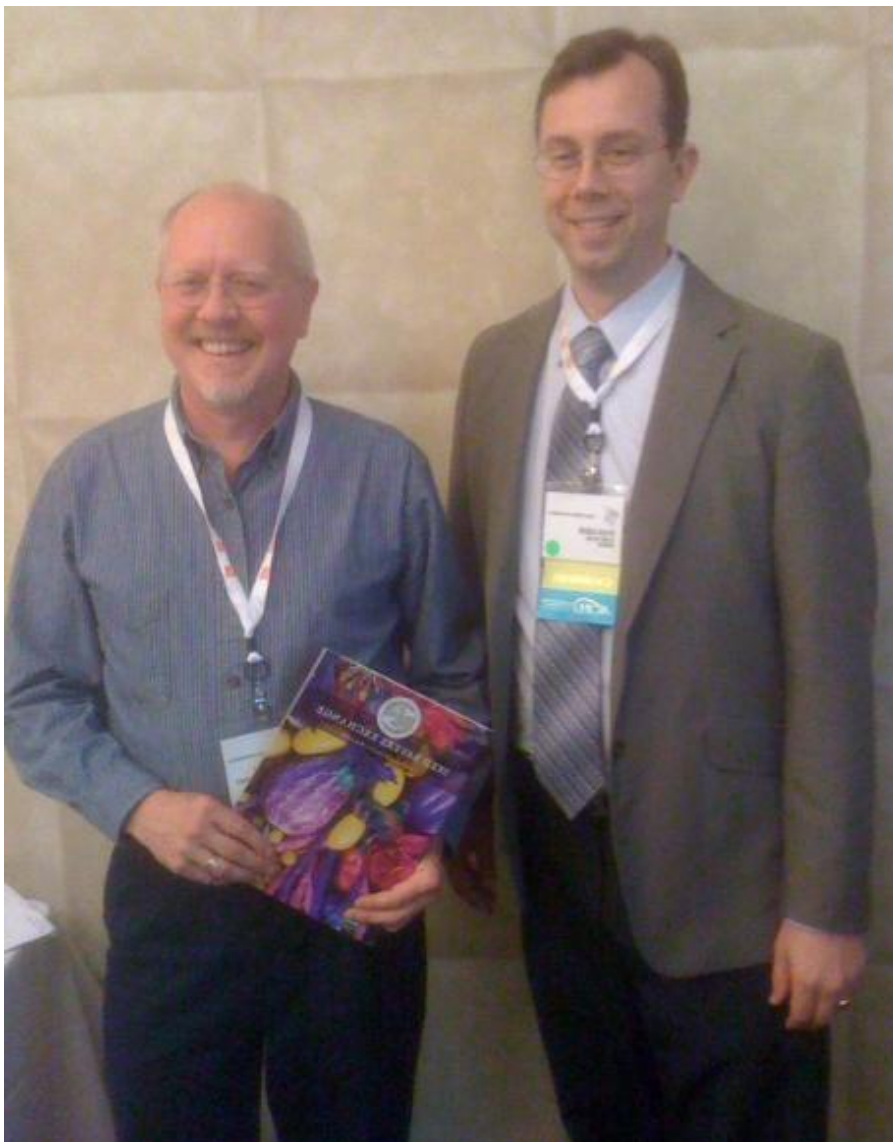
When Bill arrived, books were organized by author's last name. Now at 4,500 volumes, 1,200 are cataloged so far, using LC classification. He has two community volunteers assisting him. The Library's primary audience is the staff at SSE. Recently he was able to purchase 1,500 books from an East Coast collector including material which is historical and rare.

Not many libraries collect seed catalogs. The Smithsonian Institution has an online exhibition of seed catalog covers from their large collection. Landreth is the oldest seed company in the U.S., started in 1784. This year it is closing down. DM Ferry used to be the largest seed company in the world, and SSE has its catalogs, too. Some local seed companies included in the collection are Salzers (La Crosse, WI) and Adams Seed Company (Decorah). Perhaps the youngest seedsman in the nation at the time, Billy Hepler, aged 12, started his own seed company in 1947, following the work of his botanist father in New Hampshire.

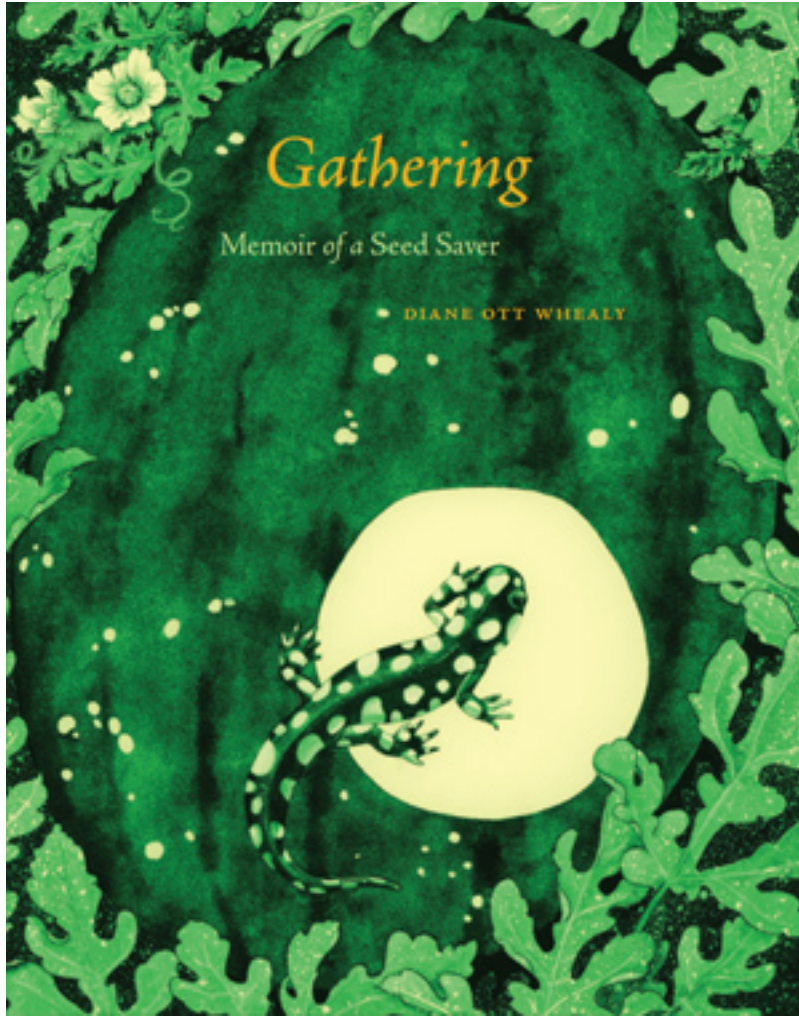
The Library's oldest item is a 1586 rare monograph called *Agriculture et Maison Rustique* by Charles Estienne. William Lawson's *A New Orchard and Garden* from 1625 is also worth noting.

There is a substantial collection of almanacs at the SSE Library. It includes an example of one of the earliest by Nathaniel Ames from 1764. A manuscript by Horace Greeley was found in a book in the collection authored by Greeley entitled *What I Know About Farming* from 1871. Bill presented several books from the Seed Savers Exchange Library and made them available for audience members to explore.

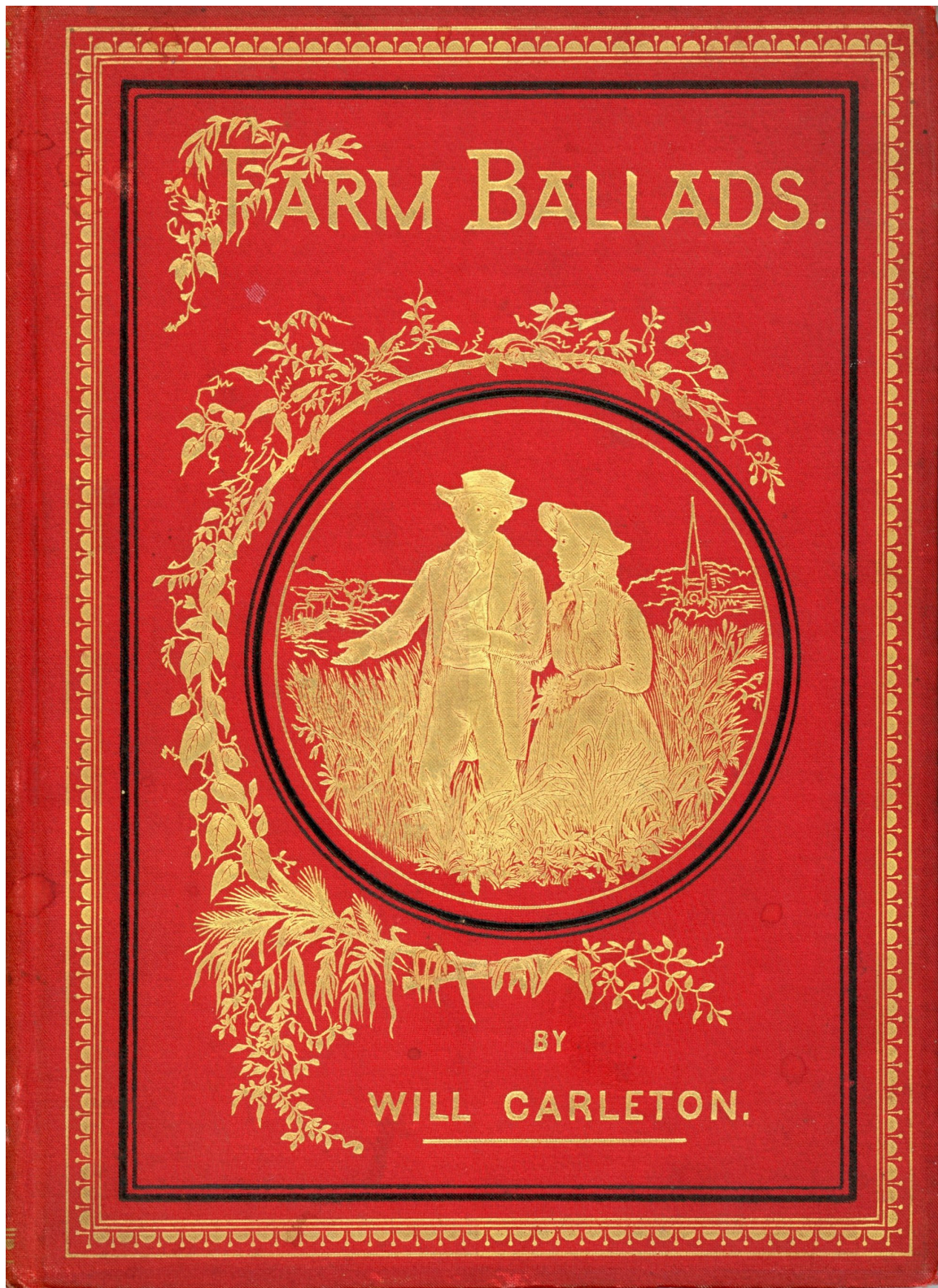
Photos



Librarian Bill Musser, left, and ILA ACRL President Ryan Gjerde



Diane Whealy's new book, Gathering



Farm Ballads by Will Carleton from the SSE Library Collection