



# WELCOME



**CONFERENCE CHAIR**  
*Roxanne Staveness*

**WAPL 2024 Features:**

Sessions organized by **areas of interest**

**Food + Farm Exploration Center** private tour

**Networking opportunities** with library colleagues

**Book signings** with renowned authors, including WLA 2023 Burr/Worzalla award winning author A.L. Graziadei

**Keynote sessions** by acclaimed authors Jennifer Chiaverini, Jeff Nania, Jenny Kalvaitis, and Kristen Whitson



Wisconsin boasts 381 Public Libraries, varying in size from small collections to vast repositories of up to 5 million items. Our Public Libraries offer diverse services such as maker spaces, story times, author visits, and escape rooms. They cater to a wide range of needs, including reference questions, historical research, and a plethora of reading materials spanning fiction, non-fiction, picture books, chapter books, and easy readers. Libraries also serve as safe havens and warming spots in cold weather, providing essential support and resources to their communities.

Join us at the **Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries (WAPL)** annual conference **Power to The Public Libraries 2024** from May 1-3, 2024. The conference offers a variety of workshops, speakers, and activities, including a Food & Farm Exploration Center tour on Thursday night, May 2nd for a nominal fee of \$6.00. Transportation to the Center will be sponsored by the Stevens Point Convention and Visitors Bureau. The YSS Social will take place from 7:30-9:00 PM. The programming committee has curated a compelling list of workshops. I have the At the Movies session at the top of my list, anyone else with me?

I eagerly anticipate meeting many of you at the **2024 WAPL Conference** in Stevens Point from May 1st to 3rd. Our challenges are real, and our will to keep our doors open is vital. Join us in Stevens Point to find answers, gain new ideas, and meet new friends as we celebrate **Power to the Public Libraries** at the Holiday Inn and Convention Center in Stevens Point, WI.

Roxanne



# KEYNOTE SPEAKER LINEUP

## OPENING KEYNOTE: A Conversation with Author Jennifer Chiaverini



Join Madison's own internationally bestselling author Jennifer Chiaverini for a conversation and Q&A about her beloved Elm Creek Quilts series and her acclaimed historical novels, including several with Wisconsin ties.

She will discuss her lifelong love of libraries and how they figure in her fiction, including her latest release, "The Museum of Lost Quilts" —a new Elm Creek Quilts novel available just in time for the 25th anniversary of the series.

## THURSDAY LUNCHEON



Jenny Kalvaitis and Kristen Whitson, authors of "We Will Always Be Here: A Guide for Exploring and Understanding LGBTQ+ Activism in Wisconsin"



## CLOSING KEYNOTE



Jeff Nania, award-winning author of the Northern Lakes Mystery series

View the full conference agenda, including keynote and breakout session descriptions at [www.wisconsinlibraries.org/wapl-conference-2024](http://www.wisconsinlibraries.org/wapl-conference-2024)

# Pre-Conference Event

## Preservation First: Book Protection & Repair Workshop

\$55 for WLA Members/\$75 for Nonmembers

Facilitated by Kary Barth of Book Kare with Kary, this 3-hour workshop is designed to demonstrate quick and easy techniques for extending shelf life on general circulating materials. Prevention is the key, but we will address specific, common repairs.

Limited to 25 participants. Registration for this event is separate from the WAPL conference. Workshop attendees do not need to register for the WAPL conference. This event is sponsored by the WLA Support Staff & Circulation Service Section (SSCS) and the Technical Service Section (TSS).

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Wednesday, May 1

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9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

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Woodland/Trillium Rooms

## Special Events

### Opening Reception

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Thursday, May 2

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5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

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Expo Rooms 1 & 2

Catch up with your colleagues, make new friends, and create new connections in a relaxed setting. Dinner buffet will be served. Cash bar available.

**\$25.00 per person, pre-registration is required.**

### At the Movies with Librarians

Back by popular demand! The panel will be discussing books being made into movies slated for release in 2024.

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Thursday, May 2

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4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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Expo Rooms 3A, 3B, & 4



After enjoying exciting trailers, panelists will analyze how well (or poorly) these books may translate to the screen.



# Special Events, cont.

## Tour of the Food + Farm Exploration Center

Join us for a special tour of the Food + Farm Exploration Center – a place for connecting with food and those who grow it. Come and see the incredible technology and sustainable practices used in modern production agriculture. Learn about where your food comes from and how it gets to your table by interacting with over 60 [exhibits](#). Visit [Food + Farm Exploration Center | Hands-on Agriculture Exploration Center](#) ([explorefoodandfarm.org](http://explorefoodandfarm.org)) to learn more.

This event will require pre-registration and is limited to 50 participants. \$6.00 per attendee. *Bus transportation sponsored by Stevens Point Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.*



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Thursday, May 2

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6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

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3400 Innovation Drive,  
Plover, WI 54467

## All Conference Social hosted by WISL

Unwind after a long day of learning! Join your friends and colleagues to put together a puzzle, play cards, or just talk shop! This event is hosted by the Wisconsin Small Libraries (WISL) section of WLA. All registered conference attendees are welcome.

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Thursday, May 2

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7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

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Woodland/Trillium Rooms

## Thank You to the Conference Committee

### *Conference Committee Chair*

Roxanne Staveness, Rio Community Library

### *Local Arrangements*

Larry Oathout, Portage County Public Library

### *Programming*

Bailey Anderson, Black Earth Public Library

Heather Thompson, Kenosha Public Library

### *Publicity*

Amy Mitchell, Beloit Public Library

### *Technology*

Nicole Mszal, Hustisford Community Library

### *WLA Conference Manager*

Cindy Foley, CMP



We have chosen the Results @ Hand app for our conference technology needs.

Registered attendees will be able to download the Results @ Hand app or access the app from their smartphone, tablet, or PC web browser.

The app will feature our entire conference agenda, speaker handouts, venue maps, community message boards, sponsor information, and tools to interact with other attendees.

# WAPL Conference 2024 – Schedule At-A-Glance

Complete session descriptions and speaker information can be found on the WAPL conference app or at [wisconsinlibraries.org/2024-wla-conference](https://wisconsinlibraries.org/2024-wla-conference). Schedule is subject to change.

## WEDNESDAY, MAY 1

9:00am-12:00pm Preservation First: Book Protection & Repair Workshop - *Woodland/Trillium\**

1:00pm-3:00pm WPLC Board/Membership Meeting - *Woodland/Trillium*

3:00pm-6:00pm Registration Open - *All Commons Registration Area*

3:30pm-5:30pm SRLAAW Meeting - *Woodland/Trillium*

5:00pm-7:00pm Welcome Reception - *Expo Room 1 (requires pre-registration)*

## THURSDAY, MAY 2

7:00am-5:00pm Registration Open - *All Commons Registration Area*

8:00am-9:00am Attendee Breakfast - *Expo Rooms 3A, 3B, 4*

9:00am-10:00am Opening Keynote: "A Conversation with Author Jennifer Chiaverini" - *Expo Rooms 3A, 3B, 4*

10:30am-11:30am "Help! My phone did something!" – Offering the Tech Support Your Community Really Needs - *Spruce*

Knowledge is Power: Great Lakes Literacy through Reading - *Sands*

Meaningful Meetings - *Frontier*

Reflecting on Ourselves and Our Work - *Evergreen*

Understanding Dementia - *Harvest*

What is Science-Based Reading and Why Should Wisconsin Public Libraries Care? - *Stonefield*

12:00pm-1:00pm Luncheon Keynote: Bridging the Gaps - Connecting LGBTQ+ Identity and Story with Jenny Kalvaitis and Kristen Whitson - *Expo Rooms 3A, 3B, 4*

1:15pm-2:15pm Let's Get Reel: Improving Your Library Marketing with Instagram Reels - *Frontier*

Next Steps with the Wisconsin Public Library Facilities Assessment - *Stonefield*

Power to Public Media: Using PBS Resources in Your Library - *Harvest*

Public-Generated Art at Your Library - *Sands*

The Dynamic Duo: A Tale of Two Organizations Coming Together to Work Towards a Common Goal of Strengthening Families - *Evergreen*

The Personal Toll of Book Challenges: Making Peace and Caring for Yourself - *Spruce*

2:30pm-3:30pm Building Strong Families and Thriving Communities through Family Support - *Spruce*

Go Big or Go Home: How to Make Big Ideas a Success in a Small Town - *Stonefield*

How to Say the Hard Things: Lessons Learned in Years of Crisis - *Evergreen*

Laissez Faire Leadership Is Not Lazy Fare - *Frontier*

Music Collections in the Era of Streaming - *Sands*

Wisconsin Library Association Awards/Hall of Fame Information Session - *Harvest*

3:30pm-4:00pm	Refreshment Break - <i>All Commons Registration Area</i>
3:45pm-4:45pm	Wisconsin Small Libraries (WISL) Business Meeting - <i>Bayba Board Room</i>
4:00pm-5:00pm	At the Movies with Librarians: The Power of Word and Sound - <i>Expo Rooms 3A, 3B, 4</i>
6:00pm-7:30pm	Tour of the Food + Farm Exploration Center - <i>Offsite Event (requires pre-registration)</i>
7:30pm-9:00pm	WISL Social - <i>Woodland/Trillium</i>

### FRIDAY, MAY 3

7:00am-2:00pm	Registration Open - <i>All Commons Registration Area</i>
7:30am-8:15am	Attendee Breakfast - <i>Expo Rooms 3A, 3B, 4</i>
7:30am-8:30am	Wisconsin Association of Public Libraries (WAPL) Business Meeting - <i>Bayba Board Room</i>
8:30am-9:30am	Beyond the Community Conversation - <i>Stonefield</i> Digital Accessibility in Libraries - <i>Frontier</i> Giving the Public a Home: Initiating Library Building Projects - <i>Woodland</i> Popping Pop Culture Programs - <i>Evergreen</i> Rural Language Resources: Building a Shared Spanish Language Collection - <i>Sands</i>
9:45am-10:45am	10 Secrets to Doing More with Less in Your Library - <i>Sands</i> A Conversation with 2023 WLA Burr/Worzalla Winner Al Graziadei - <i>Woodland</i> Analyzing Your Collection: Tools to Diversify & Maintain Your Children's Collection - <i>Stonefield</i> Connect Your Patrons to Financial Literacy Resources to Pay for College & Education - <i>Spruce</i> Depositing Joy: Programming and Services for Families Experiencing Homelessness - <i>Evergreen</i> Powering Up Early Math in Young Child Programming - <i>Frontier</i>
11:00am-12:00pm	Community Engagement Through Reading Challenges - <i>Sands</i> Fair Compensation: Examining Your Library's Pay and Benefits - <i>Stonefield</i> Games, Learning, and Libraries: Harnessing the Power of Play in Wisconsin - <i>Woodland</i> Mapping the IT Frontier - A Tale of Discovery, Perseverance, and Spreadsheets - <i>Evergreen</i> Using Early Literacy Learning Techniques with High School Students - <i>Spruce</i>
12:15pm-1:15pm	Luncheon Keynote: The Power of Community, Conservation, and Crime Fiction with Author Jeff Nania - <i>Expo Rooms 3A, 3B, 4</i>

Outagamie Waupaca Library System



**OWLS**

**LOCAL LIBRARIES  
BETTER TOGETHER**

[owlsweb.org](http://owlsweb.org)



**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

**WLA Conference 2024**

KI Convention Center  
Green Bay, WI  
November 5-8



**ALL IN:**  
Include and Innovate



WISCONSIN  
LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION



# Session Descriptions

## Thursday, May 2

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

### Opening Keynote - "A Conversation with Author Jennifer Chiaverini"

Join Madison's own internationally bestselling author Jennifer Chiaverini for a conversation and Q&A about her beloved Elm Creek Quilts series and her acclaimed historical novels, including several with Wisconsin ties. She will discuss her lifelong love of libraries and how they figure in her fiction, including her latest release, "The Museum of Lost Quilts" – a new Elm Creek Quilts novel just in time for the 25th anniversary of the series. Jennifer's keynote presentation will be followed by a book signing.

10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

### Knowledge is Power: Great Lakes Literacy through Reading

Anne Moser, UW - Madison, Wisconsin Water Library

Just 3% of the water on earth is freshwater and 20% of that is in our Great Lakes. And water is life. Unfortunately, there is a huge knowledge gap about the wonders of this precious resource and the challenges it faces. And it's hard to care about something you know nothing about. The statewide 2024 Great Lakes, Great Read community read program is designed to close that knowledge gap. This session will introduce you to this jewel of a resource and inspire you (and your library community) to be stewards of our Great Lakes - through reading!!

### Meaningful Meetings

Rachel Arndt, Rachel Arndt Consulting

Successful managers make meaningful connections with their team. Without engaging individuals, even the most effective meetings can constrict participation and reduce motivation. Meaningful Meetings will offer methods for team huddles, one-on-one meetings, and other meeting formats to encourage participation, empower direct reports and create a culture of teamwork. The session will be presented workshop-style to include small group work, interactive modules, and individual reflection. The presenter, Rachel Arndt is a library consultant who provides custom solutions for strategic planning, continuing education, and professional services for public libraries, library systems, and library boards.

### Reflecting on Ourselves and Our Work

Abigail Phillips, MLIS, SLIS, PhD, UW-Milwaukee

In our everyday positions as public librarians and library workers, we provide needed, helpful, and engaged services to our patrons and communities. We educate and motivate ourselves on how to offer exceptional and knowledgeable assistance to those who use our physical libraries and virtual resources. However, there is need for deeper discussion on supporting librarians and library workers' mental health and wellbeing. This presentation will highlight supportive workplace practices, share research-based recommendations for library administrations, librarians, and library workers, including practical and actionable takeaways and employ a holistic approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing when serving the public.

### Understanding Dementia

Laurie Baierl, St. Croix Hospice; Debbie Bird, Portage Public Library; Nellie Mueller, ADRC of Columbia County; Carley Prochaska, ADRC of Portage County

St. Croix Hospice staff will provide an overview of dementia-related disorders, including medical complications, behavioral changes, and disease progression. ADRC will offer insight into better communication and support between library staff, caregivers and those experiencing the disease. Debbie Bird from the Portage Public Library will offer insight into how this information is relevant to library staff and what it means to be dementia-friendly. Resources will be discussed. Attendees will have an opportunity to ask questions.

### What is Science-Based Reading and Why Should Wisconsin Public Libraries Care?

Stacy Gray & Jeni Schomber, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

In July 2023, Wisconsin Legislature enacted Act 20, a bill relating to reading instruction in public and private schools. What does this mean for public library staff serving youth and their families? Through intentionality in programming, such as story times, and in curating well-rounded collections, public libraries are already providing opportunities to meaningfully support the goals of Act 20. This session will provide both an overview of Act 20, including the definition of science-based early reading, and practical tips for supporting children and their families as literacy partners, as well as highlighting the ways in which libraries continue to empower youth and families as they embrace the joy of reading through choice and access.



# Session Descriptions

## **“Help! My phone did something!” – Offering the Tech Support Your Community Really Needs**

*Keith Gerlach, Lake Geneva Public Library*

Our communities often face barriers to even basic interactions with personal technologies that limit their ability to engage with libraries and the rapidly advancing world. Tech literacy gaps only continue to broaden and transform. Join Keith Gerlach as he uses two years of data from his library's successful Book-a-Librarian program to illustrate what the everyday barriers and literacy needs are for common technologies within our communities. Gain insight into the current specific needs of patrons, get prepared for future needs, and learn how to deploy a program that addresses them with personal, empathic, and educational interactions.

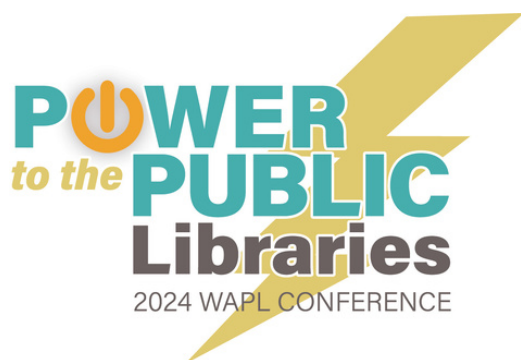
## **12:00 PM - 1:00 PM**

### **Luncheon Keynote: Bridging the Gaps - Connecting LGBTQ+ Identity and Story**

*Jenny Kalvaitis & Kristen Whitson, Authors*

For generations, LGBTQ+ people have had to search for their own histories on the shelves. Libraries can serve as the bridges to span those historical gaps. “We Will Always Be Here: A Guide to Exploring and Understanding the History of LGBTQ+ Activism in Wisconsin” tells the little-known stories of dozens of individuals who have empowered others to make positive changes in the state of Wisconsin and beyond. Co-authors Jenny Kalvaitis and Kristen Whitson will share the stories behind the book, the power of connection, and the importance of activism in everyday life.

This session will be followed by a book sale/signing with the authors.



## **1:15 PM - 2:15 PM**

### **Let's Get Reel: Improving Your Library Marketing with Instagram Reels**

*Jessica Hodges, Kenosha Public Library*

Level up your marketing game with Instagram reels! Reels are short videos that can be used to share book recommendations, highlight collections or services, and promote programs in a way that informs and entertains your patrons. This presentation will give conference participants everything they need to get started: where to find ideas for videos (and how to stay on top of trends!), tips and tricks to make videos engaging, and getting staff to participate. Participants will leave feeling confident in taking their first steps towards implementing Instagram reels and improve the quality of their reels to boost their marketing reach.

### **Next Steps with the Wisconsin Public Library Facilities Assessment**

*Laurie Freund, Bridges Library System; Ben Miller Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; John Thompson, IFLS Library System*

The Wisconsin Public Library Facilities Assessment was conducted in 2023 to inventory information about public library buildings in the state and provide recommendations to improve them. This panel presentation will outline efforts in moving the recommendations in the report forward.

### **Power to Public Media: Using PBS Resources in Your Library**

*Kirsten Caldwell, Holmen-LaCrosse County Library; Jamie Mercer; W.J. Niederkorn Library; Samantha Schoville, Madinah Academy of Madison*

The power of public media is that it has been a catalyst for helping children learn key early learning skills like math, science, and reading, right from their homes. Libraries can leverage these research-based, high quality, free resources to create dynamic learning experiences rooted in play. Dive into this engaging session to discover the transformative power of PBS and how easily you can integrate PBS Kids content into your learning space. PBS Wisconsin Education library ambassadors, coming from rural and urban libraries, bring their expertise offering practical insights and a treasure trove of ready-to-use resources to elevate your library programming.

# Session Descriptions

1:15 PM - 2:15 PM, cont.

## Public-Generated Art at Your Library

*Angela Brooks, Milton Public Library; Eric Norton, McMillan Memorial Library*

The presenters will share how to coordinate art displays and submission-based art programs that celebrate community and creativity. Attendees will learn how to display art shows, host photography exhibits both physically at the library and online, hold art contests and more. The presenters will also share how easily these programs can be adapted for any library space and budget.

## The Dynamic Duo: A Tale of Two Organizations Coming Together to Work Towards a Common Goal of Strengthening Families

*Peg Checkai, MLIS, Watertown Public Library; Stephanie Curtis, Watertown Family Connections Inc.*

Through collaboration and community support, Watertown Public Library (WPL) and Watertown Family Connections (WFC) have combined their resources, expertise, and services to provide comprehensive support to families. Their unique approach showcases the power of community collaboration, inspiring transformative change when organizations share a vision. The dedication, passion, and innovative thinking of WPL and WFC have created a lasting impact on families, demonstrating the potential for remarkable outcomes when working together. The presenters will be highlighting the benefits of collaboration, exploring the approach taken by WPL and WFC, sharing their experiences and successes, and inspiring attendees to make a positive impact through creative collaboration.

## The Personal Toll of Book Challenges: Making Peace and Caring for Yourself

*Sara Gold, WiLS; Monica Treptow, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction*

Book challenges in school and public libraries reached a record high in 2023, according to data released by the American Library Association. Much has been shared about what librarians need to know when dealing with challenges to their library collections and threats to their professionalism. What is less often talked about is the personal toll this takes on public librarians, including additional stress and altering curation practices, resulting in soft censorship.

## The Personal Toll of Book Challenges, cont.

Join Sara Gold and Monica Treptow for a discussion on strategies for self-care during and after a challenge experience. In addition to learning how to create a circle of support, the session will address how to navigate the dynamics between personal feelings and professional responsibilities of education and librarianship.

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

## Building Strong Families and Thriving Communities through Family Support

*Natalie Poppo, Children's Wisconsin; Jessica Schneider, M.Ed., First 5 Fox Valley; Jackie Schommer, Children's Wisconsin*

A two-for-one session! Expand your knowledge of both Help Me Grow and the Triple P - Positive Parenting Program®. Every parent needs information and support at some point along their parenting journey. Learn how both free resources can benefit the families in your community. Help Me Grow's goal is to ensure equitable access to services for all families and presenters will focus on care coordination and collaborating with community resources. The Triple P Program gives parents simple and practical strategies to help them build strong, healthy relationships and confidently manage their children's behavior. Thriving communities begin with thriving families!

## Go Big or Go Home: How to Make Big Ideas a Success in a Small Town

*Robert Ankarlo, Jeanette Rydberg & Barb Sparish, Thomas St. Angelo Public Library of Cumberland*

Over the last few years, the Thomas St. Angelo library in Cumberland, Wisconsin has come up with big ideas and successfully implemented them such as: Hosting a Grammy Award winning band during the fourth of July week; Installing an Everbrite board larger than those at some children's museums; Gathering ukelele players for a symposium and then hitting the road for performances; Joining a research group and implementing citizen scientist experiences for all ages; Starting an artist in residence program; and Replacing the front lawn with a native plant garden. This session will cover how these ideas were shared by library staff and patrons, nurtured, funded and ultimately implemented. St. Thomas Angelo staff will share the process they followed from strategic planning to project implementation and how they created an environment full of creativity and teamwork. (continued)

# Session Descriptions

## ***Go Big or Go Home, cont.***

Special attention will be paid to libraries in rural areas such as Cumberland (population 2,000) that do not always have the resources available to larger libraries. Finally, staff will share how they used an intergenerational lens when taking on projects and what steps they took to evaluate their work after implementation. Session participants will leave with a sample process they can use at their libraries to put their great ideas into action.

## **How to Say the Hard Things: Lessons Learned in Years of Crisis**

*Brandi Cummings, Kenosha Public Library*

There is no denying that how you deliver a message can often be just as impactful as the message itself. Join this session to hear lessons learned while navigating difficult community conversations during an ongoing global pandemic, civil unrest, negative national attention, and book challenges. In this presentation, you'll gain strategies for crisis communication, including how to develop messaging, empower and support frontline teams, and activate community advocates. Discover the significance of transparency, empathy, and authenticity in your messaging while examining challenging scenarios facing libraries today.

## **Laissez Faire Leadership Is Not Lazy Fare**

*Kevin Luebke, Beaver Dam Community Library*

Lead with a "hands off" approach by empowering those you work with! Use your time and energy efficiently! The session will explore adapting your leadership style to the changing needs of those you work with, so you know when and how to empower them to be successful. You'll also explore four handy tools to implement your empowering approach. Whether you lead a library staff, work with volunteers or simply help the public use your space, this session is for you!

## **Music Collections in the Era of Streaming**

*Steev Baker, Sun Prairie Public Library*

It's 2024, what does your library's music collection look like? Steev will talk about how music collections have changed in the past 20 years, discussing how the rise of mp3s, streaming, and vinyl have impacted libraries. Learn about music review resources, ways to promote your collection, and how to support music in your community.

## **Wisconsin Library Association Awards/Hall of Fame Information Session**

*Bailey Anderson, Black Earth Public Library; Walter Burkhalter, Fontana Public Library; Ashlee Kunkel Milton Public Library; Steven Platteter, Prairie Lakes Library System*

Participants will have an opportunity to learn and ask questions about awards available through the Wisconsin Library Association from committee members and 2023 award winners. The panel includes current Awards & Honors Committee Chair Walter Burkhalter, 2023 Librarian of the Year and Wisconsin Library Hall of Fame Committee Chair Steve Platteter, and 2023 Programming Innovation Award winner Ashlee Kunkel. This session will be moderated by 2023 Awards & Honors Committee Chair Bailey Anderson.

**4:00 PM - 5:00 PM**

## **At the Movies With Librarians: The Power of Word and Sound**

*Sherry Anderson, Northern Waters Library Service; Rachel Arndt, Rachel Arndt Consulting; Angie Bodzislav Spooner Memorial Library; Erin Foley, Adams County Library*

The panel will be discussing books being made into movies slated for release in 2024. After enjoying exciting trailers, panelists will analyze how well (or poorly) these books may translate to the screen. Popcorn will be served!

## **Friday, May 3**

**8:30 AM - 9:30 AM**

## **Beyond the Community Conversation**

*Desiree Bongers, Ripon Public Library; Kelly Davis, Waukesha Public Library; Melissa McLimans, WiLS; Katelyn Sabelko, Marathon County Public Library*

Community engagement is critical for the success of any library, especially when you need to learn from and connect with community members. Community conversations have been a key engagement technique, and while valuable, they can be time-intensive, and in a post-COVID world, you may not get a return on that investment. In this panel presentation, learn how WiLS and partner libraries utilize different community engagement strategies to connect with stakeholders through interviews, community gatherings, and Q&A boards.

# Session Descriptions

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM, cont.

## Digital Accessibility in Libraries

*Lori Baumgart, Nicolet Federated Library System*

Technology should be accessible to everyone – including people with disabilities. Not only is ensuring digital accessibility for all the right thing to do but it also helps libraries avoid lawsuits for violating the Americans with Disabilities Act. Accessibility is an important aspect of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); and digital accessibility is about making sure digital technology, such as websites, apps, and electronic documents, is usable by people with disabilities. Learn about the impact of accessibility and the benefits for everyone in a variety of situations.

## Giving the Public a Home: Initiating Library Building Projects

*Devin Flanigan, Keller, Inc; Martha Van Pelt, retired – South Central Library System*

The presenters, Martha Van Pelt, retired SCLS director, and Devin Flanigan, Keller Construction Manager, will share how to develop a plan for building your new library. They will provide the steps needed after you get your board's and municipality's support for your new building. Topics will include:

- Planning and outreach: Contacting design firms, issuing RFPs, consulting with peers, design builders vs not design builders
- Vendor Evaluation: they will share their evaluation process including evaluation matrix, tours, vendor interviews and selection criteria
- Key steps in initiating and managing library building projects
- What to avoid or look out for

## Popping Pop Culture Programs

*Jessica Hodges, Kenosha Public Library*

Do you need new ideas so your library stays "groovy"? Want to mix up your youth programming with something totally "rad"? Join us as we dive into some of the pop culture children's programs and how you can do them at your library. Some pop culture programs lend themselves to incredibly expensive events while others have very low barriers to entry for those of us not already part of the fandom. We will hunt for unicorn programs that are both economical and easy to host! From Bluey to Bulbasaur to Boba Fett, you can create a "bangin" program, too!

## Rural Language Resources: Building a Shared Spanish Language Collection

*Jen Bernetzke & Rosa Moore, Southwest Wisconsin Library System (SWLS)*

The presenters will describe the creation and administration of the Spanish Language Rotating Collections that were built and circulated throughout participating SWLS Libraries. The goal was to provide a leisure-reading collection of Spanish Language materials for all ages. The presenters will incorporate workflows used to build the collection, solicit feedback from the Spanish-speaking community, create a cohort of participating libraries, and administer a rotating collection of Spanish Language materials. They will include data on materials, age groups, genres, and circulation in the first year. They hope to describe a model that other libraries or systems may adapt in their communities.

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM

## 10 Secrets to Doing More with Less in Your Library

*Joe Huberty, Engberg Anderson Architects; David Vinjamuri, New York University*

How can you improve your library's circulation and patron satisfaction and prolong the life of the building on a budget? Join NYU Professor and author of "Library Space Planning: A PLA Guide" David Vinjamuri and Wisconsin architect Joe Huberty to learn the secret of caring for your building and primping your collections, furniture and pathways to get the most from your space on a tight budget.

## A Conversation with 2023 WLA Burr/Worzalla Winner Al Graziadei

*Al Graziadei, Author*

Meet author and 2023 WLA Burr/Worzalla Winner Al Graziadei. Al will tell us about their path to becoming an author, the success of their first novel, "Ice Breaker," and their next book.

This session will be followed by a book sale/signing with the author.



# Session Descriptions

9:45 AM - 10:45 AM, cont.

## **Analyzing Your Collection: Tools to Diversify & Maintain Your Children's Collection**

*Hannah Good Zima, Nicolet Federated Library System; Kristie Hauer, Wisconsin Valley Library Service; Amy Rae Weaver, Kenosha Public Library*

Creating a diverse children's collection is an important role for library staff. Interested in analyzing your collection, but don't know where to start? In this session, the presenters will discuss how to develop a critical lens with which to review books. This will empower you to build an authentic and inclusive library collection that counters bias and promotes cultural pluralism. Additionally, the presenters will provide free resources and tools which can analyze your collection for you, suggest books, and assist you with making informed purchasing decisions. Finally, the presenters will show you how to track your collection's diversity on an ongoing basis.

## **Connect Your Patrons to Financial Literacy Resources to Pay for College & Education**

*Chelsea Wunnicke, Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions*

Many families want to help their children achieve post-secondary education, but don't know where to start. Learn how multiple public libraries are partnering with the Wisconsin College Savings Program, whose mission is to help families save for future education. Partnerships to promote financial literacy programming for all ages will be discussed, including how to help teens access financial aid and recent FAFSA changes. Additionally, administrators can consider adding a free Edvest 529 workplace benefit to help staff save for their families' educational needs. Everyone will receive a kit for a walk-by booth to display at your library. Gain some information for yourself, too.



## **Depositing Joy: Programming and Services for Families Experiencing Homelessness**

*Megan Nigh, Kenosha Public Library*

Are you struggling to pinpoint an outreach program model that works for families experiencing homelessness in your community? Do you dream of allowing families to learn and explore when it's convenient for them and familiarizing them with library resources, thus eliminating social barriers to library usage? Learn how one library established strong partnerships with emergency family shelters by offering tailor-made passive program boxes and deposit collections of diverse, popular and age-appropriate materials. Attendees will learn how to replicate this model; three themed program-in-a-box project ideas will be provided to inspire attendees and help them get started on their own programs.

## **Powering Up Early Math in Young Child Programming**

*Jacqueline Kociubuk, UW-Madison, iSchool*

Early math skills are among the strongest predictors of later school achievement and integrating them into your young child programming may help support your community's school readiness efforts. This breakout will cover a variety of different early math competencies you can easily incorporate into your library programs for young children. Participants will also explore interactive strategies to engage children and caregivers with these skills while fostering a growth mindset, and better understand how early math skills are approachable for everyone through interactive discussions and moments of self-reflection.

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

## **Community Engagement Through Reading Challenges**

*Brandi Kronberg, Hortonville Public Library*

The Presenter will share how their library has created reading challenges that have fostered a growing relationship between staff and patrons. The Presenter will share ideas on educating patrons on a wide range of genres, subgenres, and prompts to encourage them to stretch their reading scope. The Presenter will facilitate brainstorming with the group for engaging with different age groups through reading challenges.

# Session Descriptions

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM, cont.

## **Fair Compensation: Examining Your Library's Pay and Benefits**

*Jeannie Dilger, Arranging Time; Riti Grover, Monarch Library System; Steven Heser, Milwaukee County Federated Library System*

As the cost of living continues to rise, library staff expect wages to rise at the same pace. Employees are more likely to jump ship if they can negotiate better pay elsewhere. How can libraries compete while keeping within budget limits? Join us for a robust discussion of what fair compensation really means in the library world. We'll look at recent data from the 2023 SRLAAW Compensation Study, explore ways to interpret the data available and create a compensation plan for your organization. Learn how to compete for talent in today's market.

## **Games, Learning, and Libraries: Harnessing the Power of Play in Wisconsin**

*Chris Baker, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction*

If libraries hope to remain both relevant and forward-thinking in the eyes of our communities, it's crucial that our institutions evolve, respond, and adapt to modern media interests and innovative learning pathways. Gaming (including video gaming, board gaming, TTRPGs, card gaming, etc.) continues to explode in popularity, demonstrating the unique value that interactive media holds -- both as a recreation, and within the learning sciences. This presentation will highlight the numerous games-based library initiatives occurring in our state, explore the extraordinary learning/literacy benefits unique to gaming, invite interested librarians to grow their knowledge within the space -- and get involved themselves!

## **Mapping the IT Frontier - A Tale of Discovery, Perseverance, and Spreadsheets**

*Alexander Johnson, Marathon County Public Library*

Following a large institutional transition in 2021, the new staff of the Marathon County Public Library found themselves in a vast land equally full of interesting technology and questions about how to make it meet the public's needs in the long run. The presenter will describe how order emerged from chaos, new partnerships were formed, and solid foundations were laid for the years to come.

## **Mapping the IT Frontier, cont.**

Themes include: triage in the discovery process, RFP lessons learned, the importance of documentation, and of course - the awe-inspiring power of spreadsheets.

## **Using Early Literacy Learning Techniques with High School Students**

*Amanda Ehlert, 4-C*

This presentation aims to help adult educators use early literacy teaching techniques to build positive relationships with high school students and enhance their learning outcomes. We will define early literacy, how its influences show up in teenage learners, and how it can promote students' social-emotional learning. The Presenter will share a slide show documenting a recent example of an effective early literacy strategy applied to high school students in grades 9 - 12 to foster interest, engagement, and better subject comprehension.

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

## **Luncheon Keynote: The Power of Community, Conservation, and Crime Fiction**

*Jeff Nania, Author*

Jeff Nania fell in love with his public library the moment a librarian put a copy of Rascal into his hands when he was a boy. An avid reader and library patron his whole life, Jeff continues his support for libraries as an author and has shared his Northern Lakes Mystery series at dozens of library events across the state. Drawing upon careers in law enforcement and natural resources, his award-winning books captivate readers and keep them wondering who is on the right side of the law. Throughout his life, Jeff has taken the path less traveled, and these adventures have provided fodder for his engaging crime fiction while grounding his storytelling in the things he holds dear: family, community, and natural resources.

This presentation will be followed by a book sale/signing by the author.

# PUBLIC LIBRARIANS / lī brerēən/



noun: **librarian**; plural noun: **librarians**  
a person, typically with a degree in library science,  
who administers or assists in a library  
who **advocates for access**  
who **promotes literacy**  
who **creates safe spaces**  
who **advances knowledge**  
who **transforms their community**  
who **is usually the smartest and coolest person in the room!**

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## BUILDING STRONG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN WISCONSIN