

AWSL news

October 2009

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Report from the Chair

Happy October!

The WLA Annual Fall Conference is nearly upon us. I hope that all of you are excited (and registered) to attend!



Since my last Report from the Chair, I was fortunate enough to sit on a panel of "Early-Career LIS Professionals" at UW-Madison's School of Library and Information Studies where I had the chance to learn first-hand just how engaged and "gung ho" our colleagues-to-be are. I mean this in a good way. No sooner had I mentioned AWSL (within the context of the importance of making connections for one's career), and three individuals had expressed interest — two of which have since followed up and are actively exploring ways to become involved!

This enthusiasm and initiative is exactly what special libraries — and AWSL — need to continue to be a strong and significant presence within the larger whole of Wisconsin libraries. What we do is important and often unique, and I love that those about to "officially" enter our profession appear ready to not only make a difference within their own working environment, but are also taking those next steps to strengthen us all.

On a (somewhat) different note, I hope that those of you reading this will consider joining the AWSL board members for our annual business meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, October 21st from 12:15 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. Please feel free to bring your lunch.

In addition to the usual committee reports at our board meeting, we will also discuss two issues of import: 1. the role of AWSL Past-Chair; and 2. the Unit Advisory Council's Proposed Unit Structure Changes — this is an opportunity for individual AWSL members to learn about the proposal in detail and discuss any implications for our division. Please come and make your voices heard.

In fact, to get a broader perspective on this draft proposal, please consider also attending the WLA business meeting on Thursday from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., as part of WLA President, Walter Burkhalter's report will include a "discussion of a draft proposal for improved unit viability."

Finally, if there is one thing I have learned while serving on the AWSL Board and attending the Unit Advisory Council's meetings, it is that the new "Member Clicks" features on the WLA web site are awesome, and I recommend you take advantage of Thursday's useful conference session, "Getting the Most Out of WLA's Online Community," which from 2:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. I look forward to seeing you at WLA!

Sincerely,
Nikki Busch, AWSL Chair

Meet our first-ever scholarship winner—Kirsten Duffin

At the winter meeting of AWSL, the Board unanimously and enthusiastically approved the first-ever AWSL scholarship to attend the WLA annual conference. The \$ 140 scholarship was established to give students enrolled in either UW Madison's School of Library and Information Studies or UW Milwaukee's School of Information Studies the chance to attend the conference, to meet and network with librarians, and to learn some new and exciting things from practitioners in the field.



I am pleased to introduce Kirsten Duffin, our first scholarship winner. Kirsten is a second year graduate student at UW Madison and has a keen interest in pursuing a career as a special librarian. Since coming to Madison, she has worked at the Forest Products Laboratory Library as a cataloger and is now working at the Wildlife Disease Information Node this fall as a program assistant, writing outreach publications and researching hot topics related to current outbreaks. As she put so eloquently in her application essay, "My involvement with the student chapter of SLA, my coursework with the Corporate and Specialized Information Services class, and my engagement with SLA, the Wisconsin chapter of SLA, and AWSL have only supported my interest and desire to work in the specialized library environment."

Kirsten will be attending the full conference in Appleton and AWSL members can meet her at our Business Meeting which is happening on Wednesday, October 21st at 12:15 p.m. Looking forward to seeing you all in Appleton to "Reclaim the Magic."

Anne Moser

Cranes of the World Festival — ICF Annual Meeting

The International Crane Foundation celebrated its 36th year in Baraboo, WI on Saturday, September 26, 2009. Newly names "Cranes of the World Festival," the day's activities at the headquarters featured the Spirit of Africa exhibits which were dedicated and opened earlier this summer. [Schedule](#) of activities for the day. Despite dire weather forecasts the morning promised a beautiful day for touring and sharing updates on the crane programs worldwide, to welcome Dr. Rich Beifuss back to ICF as Vice-President Programs, and to rededicate ICF's efforts for the year ahead as "Ambassadors of Water," addressing: "urgent needs for water —

for the crane marshes and for the human communities living with the cranes." I decided to attend by myself as I had been out of town for the annual meeting during the past two years. I wanted to enjoy the ICF campus and pick and choose from the menu of activities available that day. I had been able to get to the Spirit of Africa dedication so I chose to revisit the outdoor exhibits on my own. It was great to see the signs in each of the African ecosystems representing the four crane species that are found in Africa. As the plantings mature and the cranes get more comfortable with their new neighborhoods visitors will be able to better understand challenges people and cranes face in the river basins in Africa.

As a member of ICF, I was able to join one of the tours of Crane City. This is the isolated rearing and breeding facility that houses more than 100 (now mostly Whooping) cranes. The tour guides were great at describing the various birds' behaviors and personalities. They shared some of their experiences in caring for very different individuals. Ghee Wiz is still a resident of Crane City. She was imprinted on George Archibald in order to successfully breed her through artificial insemination. She taught ICF a lot about breeding these most endangered birds, but she is aging and can be quite cranky when someone tries to enter her pen. The Whoopers are the focus of the migratory restoration population that the Eastern Partnership has been building over the past 9 years. Their efforts have succeeded in establishing some critical genetic individuals at the National Wildlife Refuge in MD, in Baraboo and Necedah, WI. There are over 80 cranes available for migration this year: the older flock, new direct autumn release and about 18 birds that will follow the ultra lite aircraft down to FL with the Operation Migration Team.

Joan Garland, Senior Outreach Coordinator gave an interesting and informative presentation on "Three White Cranes, Two Flyways, One World," exhibit which fills the right half of the Donnelley Family Education Center on the side of the ICF campus where the chick yard used to be. It is next to the Ron Sauery Memorial Library for Bird Conservation. This program connects students in Milwaukee and China through art and other cultural exchanges teaching them their place in the earth's environment and emphasizing the challenges they have in common for the future of cranes. See: www.savingcranes.org/intlartexchange.html for more on the art exchange program and if you want to follow the school programs let me know and I will get the links to those sites. I didn't pick up that handout. After a full day of hiking around the ICF headquarters campus, I changed clothes and headed to the Wilderness Resort in Lake Delton for the annual meeting at the Glacier Canyon Lodge. Board members, contributors, friends and staff joined to review the successes of the past year, to honor the careers of ICFers that have worked for more than ten years, and to recognize the UW-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine with a "Good Egg" award. I had a chance to catch up with Betsy Didrickson before we sat down for dinner. She indicated that the poor economy has effected staffing and hours negatively. She and other staff have had to take on more responsibilities. She is editing The ICF Bugle and has had to cut her hours working in the library. She also said that she has had some great volunteers who have helped in the library, but they have not been trained librarians or students. She could really use some more help from the library community to move forward on some library projects that she has had to put on hold. If you have an interest please let her know. Her email is: Betsy@savingcranes.org

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www.savingcranes.org

Muraviovka Park Upcoming Environmental Education Program in Summer 2010

The Friends of Muraviovka Park for Sustainable Land Use had a table set up during the day. There were t-shirts, post cards and bags for sale. The friends also offered sandwiches and sweets for lunch and coffee breaks. They planned to use the proceeds to help fund projects at the park. See: [Muraviovka Park for Sustainable Land Use](http://Muraviovka%20Park%20for%20Sustainable%20Land%20Use).

Muraviovka Environmental Education Programs: The Friends of Muraviovka Park was established in September of 1998 by teachers who had previously taught at summer camps sponsored by the International Crane Foundation. The group recognized the unique values of this place, and its ecosystem, for the world. Barb Thompson is an environmental educators for the Salem Wisconsin School district, bthompson@wsalem.k12.wi.us, (608)781-2382. Barb hopes to take 20 teachers and students to Russia's Amur River this next summer for two summer camps sessions. She is currently recruiting teams. Although the dates are still to be announced the program will be patterned after her previous trips. [Web site](#) and Friends Newsletter [February 2006](#)

If you have any interest or can encourage someone you know please contact Barb for more information and ideas on how to fund raise your trip.

Barbara J. Arnold, UW-Madison SLIS, Emeritus Staff

Proposal for improved unit viability: Potential Changes to WLA Unit Structure

At the annual meeting Thursday, October 22, 5:30-6:30 p.m., the WLA Board will present a proposal to restructure WLA units. The purpose of the change is to make WLA a stronger, more vital and relevant organization. I encourage you to attend the AWSL business meeting on Wednesday, October 21, 12:15-1:45 p.m. and the WLA annual meeting to participate in the discussion. Stop by the WLA booth in the Exhibits Hall to learn more about this proposal.

What does this proposal accomplish?

The proposal eliminates the unit categories of section and round table in favor of the single category, "Unit". Divisions (AWSL, WAAL, WAPL, and WLTF) would be retained as currently composed. This proposal redefines purpose and strengthens requirements for the new units. Divisions and units would be authorized to do many things and required to do a few important, challenging things. Divisions and units would be required to conduct activities that build WLA's knowledge base and therefore, value for members.

A division or unit could be dissolved in one of the following ways:

- By vote of its membership (currently authorized)
- By vote of the WLA Board (currently authorized)
- At the end of any year in which it is unable to elect a chair for the following year (units only)
- At the end of the third year of existence, unless unit leadership comes forward to request continuation (units only)

The WLA Board will review unit viability on an annual basis. Limited financial and leadership resources require that our organization and its units remain vital and not become a drain on the organization.

Isn't this just the same organization but with different names?

No. The purpose of the new structure is to provide an association that is vital to its members and nimble in its response to changing issues and directions of the profession. We honor our heritage by retaining our traditional "Divisions", but we provide a platform to address the changing nature of library issues and the interests of our membership. Requiring units to be active insures the unit contributes to the overall knowledgebase of the association. Allowing units to dissolve when membership and leadership wanes, allows members to turn their attention to new areas of interest.

Why are we doing this? Why can't we just keep it like it has always been?

Today's members are looking for value-added in their association memberships. Many leadership positions in units go unfilled, and it is a struggle to find new leadership. Offering interest units that are relevant to today's libraries will generate new enthusiasm and involvement in the association.

Emily Wixson
WLA Board Representative for AWSL

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