

ASSOCIATION OF WISCONSIN SPECIAL LIBRARIANS | AWSL

A DIVISION OF THE WISCONSIN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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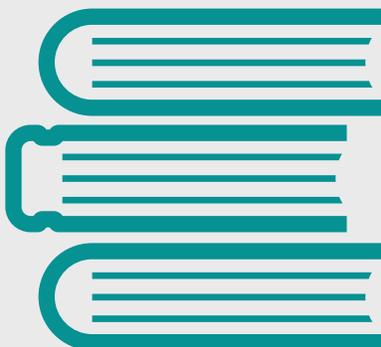
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Chair Report

By Amy O’Shea

Greetings All,

It is with a mix of emotions that I write this final chair report. The Covid-19 pandemic continues, although the arrival of spring and the vaccine rollout bring hope that the end is near. Some libraries are open and have been open for many months, some are in the planning phases working to reopen soon, and some, like mine, will remain shuttered for a few more months until widespread immunity is a reality. There is no playbook for running a library during a pandemic; we are all just doing the best we can to ensure that staff, volunteers, and visitors remain safe and healthy.

This is my final chair report because I have decided to move to the west coast to be closer to family. I have had the pleasure of serving an extra year as chair due to the pandemic, and was lucky enough to serve AWSL as secretary for many years. I will miss the bi-annual business meetings and organizing tours, conference programs, and social events, but most of all I will miss the wonderful colleagues who are working so hard to keep AWSL an active division of WLA. What a privilege to collaborate and learn from a unique group of special librarians. I feel honored to have had the opportunity to form professional relationships with librarians

Apply for a
scholarship
to attend the 2021
Wisconsin Library
Association Annual
Conference
Details on page 2

Next Business Meeting

The next business meeting of AWSL will take place in the fall. Watch the listserv for updates, including the location or connection details for the next meeting.



Join our Board!

Becoming a member of the AWSL leadership team is a great way to meet new people and to provide opportunities for your fellow special librarians to get together to have fun, to learn, and to socialize. Being an AWSL leader is a great way to get in some professional development in a low-key, low-stress, high-reward way.

The time commitment is minimal. The board meets twice a year: once in the spring and once at the annual WLA conference in the fall. All other duties can be completed remotely.

Details on page 7

from a variety of organizations. I urge anyone reading this to consider becoming involved with WLA in one capacity or another. Having a solid foundation in your professional organization is a wonderful way to stay connected to colleagues, be supported throughout your career, and share ideas with others in your field. I am so grateful for the time that I have spent with AWSL and its members!

If you have questions about becoming active in the Association of Wisconsin Special Librarians please contact in-coming chair Anne Moser, akmoser@aqu.wisc.edu.

With gratitude,
Amy O'Shea

WLA Annual Conference Scholarship

A scholarship of up to \$350 is available to a member of the Association of Wisconsin Special Librarians to attend the 2021 Wisconsin Library Association Annual Conference.

This scholarship, to be used toward conference registration, is awarded based on the scholarship winner's registration. It's open to all students and staff who are:

- Currently employed in a library or information agency in Wisconsin OR currently a student in library school interested in employment in a special library setting
- Able to communicate via the AWSL newsletter about the experiences at the conference

To apply

- 1) Complete the scholarship application form on the last page of this newsletter (or go to the URL below)
- 2) Write a one page document explaining your reasons for wanting to attend this particular conference.

Download application materials at:
wisconsinlibraries.org/scholarships-grants

About AWSL

The Association of Wisconsin Special Librarians (AWSL) is a division of the Wisconsin Library Association. Established in October 1986, AWSL exists to focus on the activities and issues of special libraries and librarianship and to provide a forum for exchange of ideas among persons involved with special libraries and collections.

Membership

Membership is open to all WLA members who are special librarians or who have an interest in special libraries. Anyone who maintains a specialized collection of materials is considered a special librarian -- whether they're a trained and certified librarian managing a library's special collection, or a person in charge of specialized materials in a church, museum, prison, hospital, corporation, foundation, newspaper, government office, or other organization.

Join AWSL

Make the most of your WLA membership and join AWSL through the WLA website:

wisconsinlibraries.org/awsl

Big Ideas in Small Libraries

By Aubrey Huff

Libraries faced significant hardships during the COVID pandemic this past year. Despite these challenges, the experts working in Wisconsin Small Libraries (WISL) seized the opportunity to innovate their services and find creative ways to serve their communities. Independence Public Library in Independence, Wisconsin serves as a terrific example of the quality of service patrons receive despite the need for adjustments.

While Independence Public Library reopened to the public, it still enforces mask requirements, social distancing, and other safety measures. Independence Public Library began offering curbside pickup, with materials assembled and brought to patrons outside the building at coordinated times.

The library also curated educational experiences users could enjoy from home. In addition to featuring free online educational courses on a range of dynamic subjects, Independence Public Library created a "Fun From Home" page on its website. Users can enjoy animal cameras from around the world, virtual field trips to natural wonders and historic sites, and even a curated selection of online games fun for all ages!

The library experts that make up WISL find success by sharing ideas for policies, programming, and services. Recently, Independence Public Library Director Kayla Mathson shared an idea for a speed dating-like activity they learned of during a training session.

"You get a chance to hear from people you wouldn't otherwise connect with," said Mathson of the activity, who shared their experience with the activity and the possibilities it provides for programming via Zoom.

The speed dating session was compiled of seven different questions, ranging from serious to silly. Questions included:

- What's your best career advice?
- What's the best program you've done or the best learning experience from a program flop?

- Would you rather come into a library with a flooding toilet or where a patron re-shelved your library by color?
- If you weren't working in a library, what do you think you'd be doing?

Once the question was announced, everyone was sent to a breakout room of two or three people. Smaller groups were used for the more serious questions; larger groups used for the lighthearted questions. The groups occurred at random, and new people met with each question. Mathson recommended seven to eight minutes for each question. Afterwards, everyone returned to the full Zoom meeting, giving everyone a chance to share particularly great answers. Depending on the timing you allot per question, the session can be completed in an hour.

Mathson's recommendation is a great way to learn more about your colleagues, users, and the greater community. Engaging diverse populations in quick conversations supports many library missions to create welcoming, accessible environments to all. It goes to show that big ideas can come from small libraries!

Environmental Justice + #BlackLivesMatter

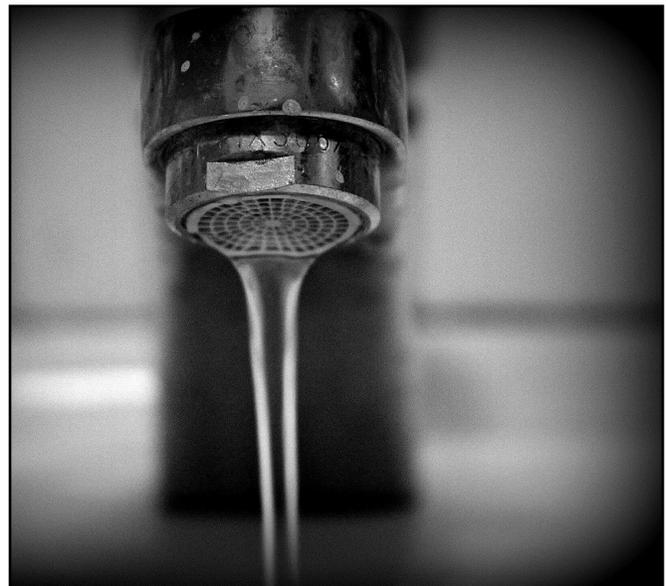
By Anne Moser and Laura Killingsworth

What is environmental justice?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines environmental justice as the “fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Fair treatment means no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies.”

How does it relate to social justice?

In the United States, structural racism is inextricably linked to environmental racism. A disproportionate burden of environmental harm falls on BIPOC (black, Indigenous, and people of color) communities and on working class neighborhoods. Harmful infrastructure such as landfills, poor drinking water systems, and lack of safe play spaces and harmful practices including a lack of investment in communities, leads to poorer physical and mental health. As our society continues to grapple with the very real effects of climate change, these negative consequences will continue to displace marginalized communities at an even more severe level.



Without environmental justice, can we have full social justice?

There is no environmental justice without full social justice, and there is no full social justice without environmental justice. Our core values as librarians surround access to information, and how various societal issues prevent that from happening. We have a duty to dismantle these systemic barriers, meaning that every societal issue is a library issue as well, and something we should be addressing. There is much work to do in terms of advancing social justice and anti-racist initiatives for the black members of our community, and to affirm that black lives DO matter. Further, these conversations belong at the center of any conversation surrounding environmental justice.

A reading list is included on page 8

Re-Opening at Olbrich

Schumacher Library at Olbrich Botanical Gardens will not re-open to the public until mid-summer at the earliest. The small size of the library makes it challenging to host visitors. In the meantime, virtual reference services remain busy, virtual book club has been popular, and the library’s used book sales cart is very active.

Library News

Amy O’Shea, Horticulture Librarian for Schumacher Library at Olbrich Botanical Garden will be presenting at the Council for Botanical and Horticultural Librarians virtual conference in May. Her presentation, *Engaging Youth Pre and Post Pandemic*, will focus on the library’s Garden Adventure Packs and Grab and Go Garden Baskets.



Virtual Visit of Steenbock Library

On Thursday February 4th, the Association of Wisconsin Special Librarians hosted a virtual visit with UW-Madison's Karen Dunn, Information Services Librarian at Steenbock Library. Karen's talk featured Steenbock's unique cookbook collection and included a hands-on exploration using digital editions of the titles found in the stacks. Eleven people attended and a lively Q&A and cookbook sharing discussion followed the visit. For more information on Steenbock's cookbook collection check out Karen's research guide: <https://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/cookbooks>



AWSL Board Liaison Update: April 2021

By Kris Turner

As I write this update, the birds are singing, the sun is shining, and the temperature is well above 70 degrees. It's official – spring is here and more than pretty much any other year, this one feels overdue and deserved. What a long and stressful winter it has been for us all, between new job dynamics, a political transition, and a pandemic. I hope that you are all doing well and that the oncoming summer finds you safe, healthy, and in a good place.

WLA has not been immune to the seismic changes occurring across the world. The economic crunch, cancellations of in-person conferences, and employee turnover have all impacted the association in the past year. Allow me to untangle it a bit and explain how WLA is moving forward.

First, the economic question. As I mentioned before, WLA had clawed its way into the black for the first time in over half a decade in 2019. Then COVID struck and we found ourselves, like many other professional organizations, businesses, and non-profits, in the red. WLA was able to secure some loans to keep things going and the Finance Committee has created plans for a sensible payment plan that should provide WLA with flexible options moving forward. However, WLA does not thrive when membership is down. The Board's goal for 2021 and 2022 is to re-engage with members and attract new and former members that will provide membership dues, but more importantly, inject new viewpoints and excitement. Do you know of any co-workers looking to create new connections? How about colleagues in other organizations like SLA who would like to jump into an active and thriving association? Tell them about WLA and AWSL! We'd love to have you – either as a future leader or just as a member that partakes in the benefits that WLA provides.

Speaking of benefits...our Annual Conference is currently slated to be held in-person in beautiful Green Bay this fall! While that is not entirely set in stone (we will continue to monitor COVID changes and

safety concerns), I am optimistic that WLA can bring our members together safely and with an outstanding slate of programs. Your humble author is also serving on the Annual Conference Programming Committee and I hope to have a call for proposals out in the next month or two. I plan to specifically call for Special Library programs as we have so much to offer to our academic and public friends. The AWSL Board has already started thinking of tours and socials. I hope that we can see you there! Watch for an email blast with more details soon!

Finally, you have probably seen that our Executive Director, Plumer Lovelace, has moved on to another position. Plumer, for nearly a decade, helped provide a calming and professional presence to WLA as we branched out with more professional development, legislative outreach, and financial prudence. We'll miss seeing him at the Board Meetings and at the Conferences. However, the Board has already moved rapidly to find our next great Executive Director. John Keister & Associates has offered to conduct a national search without cost for WLA to locate candidates. Mr. Keister is a member of WLA and so he has a vested interest in helping WLA succeed. I've been very impressed by him and his staff already – he took the time to connect with each member of the WLA Board to ascertain what we look for in an Executive Director. I spoke with John for about 20 minutes where I explained the importance of AWSL's role within WLA and how critical it is to not lose sight of the numerous librarians not working an academic or public library. I will continue to advocate for us on that level and believe that the next Executive Director will do the same. I hope that the new person will be in place by the end of the summer. More news as events warrant!

What a jam-packed update! I am certain that there is more that I am forgetting. For me, the pandemic has presented a strange contradiction where some aspects of work have been slower (I see fewer patrons in-person), but others are infinitely busier (new challenges, remote meetings, quick adaptations, and so much more). With those changes, it can be hard to track all the numerous changes and updates, so please just contact me with specific questions or concerns you may have about WLA or AWSL: kris.Turner@wisc.edu. Let's wrap up by reemphasizing that I sincerely hope that you all are doing well – let's be optimistic and say there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Enjoy your spring!

WLA Elections

By Carrie Doyle



As spring is taking hold in Wisconsin and the gloom of the pandemic is slowly lifting a bit, perhaps you are starting to make plans for things you want to do when life returns to normal(ish). Why not add “run for a position with AWSL” to your list of fun things to do in 2021?

Becoming a member of the AWSL leadership team is a great way to meet new people and to provide opportunities for your fellow special librarians to get together to have fun, to

learn, and to socialize. The time commitment is minimal. Being an AWSL leader is a great way to get in some professional development in a low-key, low-stress, high-reward way.

As a division of WLA, AWSL is required to fill certain positions within AWSL/WLA. Please consider running for one of the positions listed below. Terms start after the WLA conference in late 2021.

AWSL Vice-Chair

This is a three-year position. As Vice-Chair, your main job is to plan a program and a tour of a local special library for the fall AWSL meeting at the Annual WLA Conference. The call for conference program proposals generally goes out in March or April and the WLA Conference is in either late October or early November. The next year you will be Chair and your main duties are to schedule and chair the spring and fall AWSL membership meetings, write a column for the AWSL newsletter, and plan a summer social/tour. The third year, as Past Chair, you will recruit people to run for open AWSL positions and generally help out as needed.

AWSL Liaison to the WLA Board of Directors

As a Division with WLA, AWSL gets to elect a liaison to the WLA Board. The WLA Board meets six times a year. This is a great opportunity to learn more about WLA, network with Wisconsin movers and shakers, and advocate for special libraries. This is a three-year term.

Secretary

The secretary takes minutes for the spring and fall AWSL meetings. This is a one-year term.

I am happy to provide more information about any of these positions. Eleven years ago, I answered a call like this one and I am so glad I did. My involvement in AWSL leadership has given me the opportunity to grow as a person and a leader, and gain confidence in myself and my abilities. Better yet, I have met many interesting and inspiring people, some who have become good friends. I wish the same good things for you.

Thank you for considering becoming an AWSL leader!

Carrie Doyle
608-890-4575
carrie.doyle@wisc.edu

Book List

Environmental Justice + #BlackLivesMatter

By Anne Moser and Laura Killingsworth

We have created this reading list as a means of providing information and facilitating critical thinking surrounding these topics. This list is meant to be an introduction, and is by no means exhaustive. If you have resources or readings to add regarding environmental justice and social justice, please send an email to Anne Moser at akmoser@aqu.wisc.edu

As Long as the Grass Grows: the Indigenous Fight for Environmental Justice, from Colonization to... Standing Rock. by Dina Gilio-Whitaker.

Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors, by Carolyn Finney.

Clean and White: a History of Environmental Racism in the United States, by Carl A Zimring.

Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future, by Mary Robinson.

Confronting Environmental Racism: Voices from the Grassroots, by Robert Doyle Bullard.

Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change, edited by Susanne C Moser and Lisa Dilling.

Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice, by Jace Weaver.

Diamond: a Struggle for Environmental Justice in Louisiana's Chemical Corridor, by Steve Lerner.

Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class and Environmental Quality, by Robert D Bullard.

Cleere, Rickie, "Environmental Racism and the Movement for Black Lives: Grassroots Power in the 21st Century" (2016, Pomona Senior Thesis).

Eyes Wide Open: Going Behind the Environmental Headlines, by Paul Fleischman.

From the Ground up: Environmental Racism and the Rise of the Environmental Justice Movement, by Luke W Cole and Sheila R Foster.

Garbage Wars: the Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago, by David Naguib Pellow.

The Human Right to Water: Legal and Policy Dimensions, by Salman M A Salman.

Justice and Natural Resources: Concepts, Strategies, and Applications, edited by Kathryn M Mutz; Gary C Bryner; Douglas S Kenney.

Landrigan, P. J., Rauh, V. A., & Galvez, M. P. (2010). Environmental justice and the health of children. *The Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine, New York*, 77(2), 178–187.

Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance, by Nick Estes.

Polluted Promises: Environmental Racism and the Search for Justice in a Southern Town, by Melissa Checker.

Rooted in the Earth: Reclaiming the African American Environmental Heritage, by Dianne D. Glave.

The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution, by Robert D Bullard.

Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor, by Rob Nixon.

Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in a Time of Climate Crisis, by Vandana Shiva.

Struggle for the Land: Native North American Resistance to Genocide, Ecocide and Colonization, by Ward Churchill.

A Terrible Thing to Waste: Environmental Racism and Its Assault on the American Mind, by Harriet A. Washington.

There's Something in the Water: Environmental Racism in Indigenous and Black Communities, by Ingrid Waldron.

Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution and Residential Mobility, by Dorceta E. Taylor.

Trace: Memory, History, Race and the American Landscape, by Lauret Savoy.

What Is Critical Environmental Justice? by David Naguib Pellow.

Why Race and Class Matter to the Environmental Movement, article retrieved March 17, 2021.

Readings on the Flint Water Crisis

A Case Study of Environmental Injustice: The Failure in Flint by Carla Campbell, Rachael Greenberg, Deepa Mankikar, and Ronald D. Ross. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2016 Oct; 13(10): 951. doi: 10.3390/ijerph13100951

Flint Fights Back: Environmental Justice and Democracy in the Fsuprelint Water Crisis, by Benjamin J. Pauli.

The Poisoned City: Flint's Water and the American Urban Tragedy, by Anne (Anna Leigh) Clark.

What the Eyes Don't See: A Story of Crisis, Resistance, and Hope in an American City, by Mona Hanna-Attisha.

Iowa State University Libraries Libguide on Flint Water Crisis

Books for Youth

It's Our World, Too! Stories of Young People Who Are Making a Difference, by Phillip Hoose.

A River Ran Wild: an Environmental History, by Lynne Cherry

Read a previous post from our blog about young activists raising their voices about climate change.
waterlibrary.aqua.wisc.edu/our-new-library-display-kids-take-action/

Other resources

Find additional links at: go.wisc.edu/257xlc

US EPA Environmental Justice - <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>

Resources from the Student Environmental Resource Center at UC Berkeley.

The American Environmental Justice Movement from the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (peer-reviewed)

Bowling Green State University Libraries Libguide on Environmental Justice

1 Pellow, D. (2016). TOWARD A CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STUDIES: Black Lives Matter as an Environmental Justice Challenge. Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race, 13(2), 221-236. doi:10.1017/S1742058X1600014X

Find this resource guide at: go.wisc.edu/257xlc

Share Your Stories & Pictures!

Do you have a story to tell about your library or collection? How are you helping your users during the current health crisis? What programs are you offering, or what does your space or collection look like? Send us your stories and pictures to include in our next newsletter! Email the newsletter chair, Carol Hassler, at carol.hassler@wicourts.gov

Association of Wisconsin Special Libraries

WLA Conference Grant Application

Due September 20, 2021

Purpose: This scholarship is to help defray the cost for a member of the Association of Wisconsin Special Librarians to attend the 2021 Wisconsin Library Association Annual Conference.

Criteria: The scholarship is available to library staff or students that are:

- Currently employed in a library or information agency in Wisconsin OR currently a student in library school interested in employment in a special library setting
- Able to communicate via the AWSL newsletter about the experiences at the conference

Application process:

Applicants must:

- 1) Complete the scholarship application form (see next page)
- 2) Write a one page document explaining their reasons for wanting to attend this particular conference (refer to the WLA Conference website at <https://www.wisconsinlibraries.org/wla-annual-conference> to review conference programs)

Selection:

Applicant will be evaluated by the AWSL Board based on:

- Need and desire for the scholarship
- Leadership potential

Application deadline: Application deadline is September 20, 2021.

Notification and Payment: The scholarship recipient will be notified prior to the conference and provided with discount code to be applied during online registration for the conference.

Scholarship description: The scholarship consists of up to \$350 to be used toward conference registration. The amount awarded will be dependent on the cost for the scholarship winner's registration.

Other requirements: Scholarship winners will be expected to:

- Attend the entire WLA conference
- Submit a newsletter article to be published in the AWSL newsletter, sharing what you gained from the conference
- Attend AWSL meetings and sessions during the conference

Send scholarship application to:

Anne Moser
Wisconsin's Water Library
Room 247 Goodnight Hall
1975 Willow Dr.
Madison, WI 53706

akmoser@aquawisc.edu

Association of Wisconsin Special Libraries

WLA Conference Grant Application

Due September 20, 2021

Name: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work phone: _____ Home phone: _____

Email address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Library: _____

How long have you worked there? _____ Position title: _____

Library school currently attending: _____

Please address the following in a one page statement:

What role have libraries played in your life?

Why are you interested in attending this specific conference? How will attendance help you grow professionally, and/or improve your job performance?

What are your library career goals?

Please send completed form and one page statement (via email, or mail) by **September 20, 2021** to Anne Moser.

Send scholarship application to:

Anne Moser
Wisconsin's Water Library
Room 247 Goodnight Hall
1975 Willow Dr.
Madison, WI 53706

akmoser@aqua.wisc.edu