

REPORTER

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

JUNE 2009

VOLUME XXVII ISSUE 3



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The Illinois Library Association Reporter

is a forum for those who are improving and reinventing Illinois libraries, with articles that seek to: explore new ideas and practices from all types of libraries and library systems; examine the challenges facing the profession; and inform the library community and its supporters with news and comment about important issues. The *ILA Reporter* is produced and circulated with the purpose of enhancing and supporting the value of libraries, which provide free and equal access to information. This access is essential for an open democratic society, an informed electorate, and the advancement of knowledge for all people.



ON THE COVER

"Warm Embrace," John Asaro (Californian, 1937–). The serigraph (48" h x 38" w) is from the Illinois Wesleyan University Library collection, a gift of Dennis Lockhart, class of 1987. Asaro is a contemporary artist known for his romantic images of women and children, especially in scenes at the beach. More recently his work includes nude females, often in poses of dance and movement.

The Illinois Library Association is the voice for Illinois libraries and the millions who depend on them. It provides leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services in Illinois and for the library community in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all. It is the eighth oldest library association in the world and the third largest state association in the United States, with members in academic, public, school, government, and special libraries. Its 2,900 members are primarily librarians and library staff, but also trustees, publishers, and other supporters.

This year's *ILA Reporter* covers showcase the incredibly rich heritage of Illinois libraries photographed, inventoried electronically, and archived in "Art and Architecture in Illinois Libraries." (See April 2006 *ILA Reporter*, pp. 12–17.) This project was supported by the Illinois State Library, a division of the Office of Secretary of State, using funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). Principal investigators: Allen Lanham and Marlene Slough, Eastern Illinois University.

The Illinois Library Association has three full-time staff members. It is governed by a sixteen-member executive board, made up of elected officers. The association employs the services of Kolkmeier Consulting for legislative advocacy. ILA is a 501(c)(3) charitable and educational organization.

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See ILA calendar for submission deadlines for the *ILA Reporter*. Copy should be submitted by e-mail to ila@ila.org. Copy may also be submitted on disk or faxed to (312) 644-1899. You are encouraged to include digital or film photos (black/white or color) and graphics (on disk or camera-ready) with your articles, which will be included on a space-available basis.

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Trustees and Administrators: These Are the Days for Advocacy

It can't be mentioned enough: advocacy is imperative to the success of libraries. When trustees and administrators practice advocacy, they are effectively influencing the library's future in active, positive ways. It's a no-brainer.

Ask ILA's Legislative Consultant Kip Kolkmeier. He says, "The most important advocacy work any library supporter can do is to develop a personal relationship with his or her elected officials. This should be done long before there is a hot issue for which we need their help. It is new and sometimes scary to reach out to elected officials, but they are almost always eager to meet and discuss our issues. They will respond to library supporters both because they are constituents and their local library experts. The goal is to reach a point where public officials never take action on a library issue without first calling their local library contacts for help and guidance. At the very least, they need to know that we are watching them to make sure they look out for us."

Advocacy is a no-brainer, but it often slips through the cracks. This is a mistake. As budgets have tightened and priorities have been pitted one against another in the past year, advocacy takes on a sense of urgency. We must advocate for funds and support, and trustees and administrators are far more successful when relationships are strong.

"When trustees and administrators practice advocacy, they are effectively influencing the library's future in active, positive ways."

Inara McGroarty is the Prairie Area Library System (PALS) Advocacy Coordinator, and she models excellent advocacy behaviors for trustees and administrators to emulate. She says, "It's about developing and building on that relationship [with local and state legislators]! More than one legislator has said that a call from a known person counts much more than ten calls from an unknown person."

Waiting for your library's customers or users to step up to the plate and do the job of advocacy for you? A new study says that simply doesn't happen. OCLC's 2008 report, "From Awareness to Funding: A Study of Support in America," brings the importance of advocacy out away from the library's front doors. Included in the report's findings were that "library funding support is only marginally related to library visitation," and also that "voters who see the library as a 'transformational' force as opposed to an 'informational' source are more likely to increase taxes in its support."

Donna Dziedzic, Naperville Public Library Director and Illinois Library Association President, remarks that "the OCLC study was a whack upside my head." Dziedzic continues, "The finding that library usage doesn't translate into library support really startled me. Like many libraries, we have tremendously positive satisfaction ratings from our users. Each user survey bowls us over with our patrons' appreciation of library programs and services. Yet, despite our efforts, it has proven nearly impossible to get users to actively support the library at budget time. While I refuse to rule out the possibility that our users can join us as active advocates, I am shifting my focus."

TOOLS

With advocacy firmly in the hands of trustees and administrators, shifting the focus of advocacy efforts from our everyday customers to our community stakeholders and local legislators requires a few tools.

A great tool is the Return on Investment Calculator, a resource provided by North Suburban Library System. "It has really taken off," shares Judy Hoffman, Marketing Communications Specialist at NSLS, "and is being used at the local and system level throughout the state and beyond." According to Anna Yackle, Public Library Liaison at NSLS, "We launched it in the summer of 2007. We [Mary Witt, Alan Minarik, Ian Baaske, and Yackle] did it because we love libraries, know what true assets they are, and wanted to share that with the world. We started hearing from people all across the country almost immediately. It has remained a popular and well-used feature on our Web site with both the general public and libraries using it." Access the calculator at <http://www.nsls.info/roi.x>. (For background information on Return on Investment studies,

[continued on page 8]



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see <http://www.ila.org/advocacy/impact.htm>. Since 2005, ILA has collected information on the topic and has been exploring the possibility of conducting a similar study in Illinois.)

Marketing Manager Rhonda Massie, Bloomington Public Library, agrees: "The Return on Investment Calculator isn't just an interesting tool for those who find number crunching stimulating. In this economy, the calculator serves as an easily accessible reference when the public library is called upon to prove its worth. Making the calculator accessible on your library Web site will only allow more people to be enlightened about the enormous benefits you're providing." Massie also used the calculator to create the library's annual report, an easy-and-quick to-read tri-fold that speaks lawmakers' language: money and how well it's spent for the benefit of the community.

There are more tools to come. Lee Logan, Alliance Library System Consultant and Continuing Education Director, is chairing a newly formed Advocacy Committee for ILA to work with the Public Policy Committee. He says, "The advocacy group's charge is to implement the ILA legislative agenda, develop an annual advocacy plan, identify advocacy best practices, build partnerships, and develop advocacy education and materials.

"So far the group is brainstorming and working on ideas to educate legislators and decision makers, as well as involve the library community and its users, by employing current technology to facilitate efforts. Concepts being developed include a statewide legislative district advocate network; a toolkit with templates, models, and samples on how to educate legislators; and summaries of current key issues." The goal is to make advocacy easier for all of us, by providing a variety of creative and flexible resources in one location, easily accessible from a computer.

Of course, any tool used must lead to conversations — frequent, ongoing conversations. "There are so many ways to build that relationship," says McGroarty.

For Logan, advocacy isn't a conversation in a foreign language; it's the language of living, one we all use everyday to influence each other. "Have you ever tossed your restaurant choice for lunch into the mix and then proceeded to talk about why it was a good place to go? Welcome to the world of advocacy," says Logan. "Kids do it, significant others do it, seniors do it, we all do it. It's all about getting to know those who touch your life and educating them on how they can make your life better.



Advance your library's service to children and your professional knowledge with an exceptional online course from the **Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC)**.

The summer session will begin on July 20, and run four to six weeks, depending on the course. Registration is open now until July 6.

Course fees are \$95 for personal ALSC members; \$145 for personal ALA members; and \$165 for non-members.

Courses are run using Moodle, a virtual learning environment.

For more information visit the ALSC Web site at: www.ala.org/alsced

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“It’s all about getting to know those who touch your life and educating them on how they can make your life better.”

A legislator, with all due respect, is no different than any other person who has an influence on your footpath in the world. It’s a matter of understanding what is really important to you and how you tell that story.”

Dziedzic has started a library board alumni group. “These individuals continue to be active and influential in our community and still care a lot about our library. We have begun meeting and communicating with this group for the express purpose of having them well informed, empowered, and ready to speak on the library’s behalf to our city council.”

“One way to build a relationship that I’ve found successful is making READ posters,” shares McGroarty. “My initial visit to a legislator’s office is to take the photo for the poster. This provides an opportunity for general discussion. I find clues to personal and professional interests by the photos and plaques in the legislator’s office, and I start a conversation on something that’s of common interest. For example, I’m a board member for my county health department and saw some plaques on related fields on the walls of a legislator. I learned the legislator’s mother was a key member of the county’s health department — it made for a bit of bonding. Then, I share about library systems and what

we do. Once the READ poster is created, I find an occasion to make a presentation. This can be either at a story hour or special gathering with other librarians from many libraries in that district.”

McGroarty also uses the power of the short, handwritten note or card successfully by sending appropriate holiday greetings and congratulatory notes after successful initiatives and elections.

The key to successful advocacy is simple: start advocating. Something is better than nothing.

VISION


The vision of the Illinois Library Association includes advocacy: “The Illinois Library Association is indispensable in leading efforts in library advocacy and collaboration, and serving as a springboard to innovation and excellence in library services.”

Trustees and administrators: does your library’s vision statement include advocacy? Write it in — make the time — as these are the days for advocacy. **ILA**

Top Ten Marketing Tips for Advocacy and Public Awareness

- 1) **Develop your message.** Remember the who, what, how, and why when fleshing out your message. Who is going to be on the receiving end of your message? Think about what you want someone to remember after seeing or hearing your message. Make sure the “how” of delivering the message doesn’t overshadow what you want the message to say. Consider why you are sharing this message. Why now? Your message needs to be clear and succinct with each word carefully chosen and the whole message crafted with a purpose.
- 2) **Stick to the script.** Once you have got your message worded just right, use it. You have probably spent a considerable amount of time focusing in on the content of your message. Don’t wander as you deliver the message — remember to stay on task and deliver the message you planned. Don’t allow questions to distract you from your original message. To be effective, wrap your answers around the original message.
- 3) **Get everyone on board.** Coach everyone on the message. Make sure that everyone connected with your organization, from the shelvers to board members, from the circulation clerks to the library-friends, all know the message and become comfortable delivering it to everyone they meet — in the library, in the community, and to the stakeholders.
- 4) **Share the message.** Once the preparation work is finished, you are ready to communicate with your stakeholders. Your stakeholders are going to vary, based on your organization type. They are going to be library users, board members, taxpayers, management, legislators, community groups, friends, etc. You must present your message with confidence and remember to stay focused. You have a message; share it. Know what the opposition will say and be ready with answers and counterarguments.
- 5) **Walk the talk.** If your message is that you need additional funding to remain open and staffed, don’t replace all of the workstations in the library with top-of-the-line computers and laptops. You will have lost the battle before you began. Remember that actions speak louder than words.
- 6) **Invite your stakeholders to the library.** When was the last time that the mayor or the president of the company visited your library and saw what you do? Invite your college president or school superintendent to the library for a special media event, perhaps something during National Library Week. If you can get press or media coverage of the event, they WILL come. Have a user of your library give your stakeholder a tour of the facility and chat about why the library is so important.

- 7) **Get to know your stakeholders.** The stakeholders are the people that make decisions about the library. They are different for each type of library. Learn all you can about them. Know about their interests, hobbies, families, background, etc. Try to discover how the library can become indispensable in one of those areas. For instance, your legislator has a special needs child and he supports and votes for legislation that provides something for children with special needs. To get that legislator's attention, show a connection between your library and services for special needs children. How do you support that group of users? Is there something you would like to offer to that group that the legislator could help with? Use your knowledge.
- 8) **Don't just contact the stakeholder when you want something.** Contact your stakeholder for a special event, a birthday, a lunch date, etc. Don't just call to ask for funding or for support on legislation. Send the legislator a clipping from the local paper with a note or a congratulatory card on winning a reelection or receiving an award. It's amazing what a short, handwritten note will do for you in the future.
- 9) **Build partnerships.** No one can do it all alone. Working with local groups like the garden club and the Chamber of Commerce can open doors that otherwise would remain closed. Tell these groups what the library can do for them. Don't make promises that you can't keep, but share with them the collections and services that would be of particular interest to that group. For instance, offering to host a breakfast meeting or after-hours event for the chamber is a great opportunity to present the library's business collection, databases, and services to the members.
- 10) **Don't rest on your laurels.** Sharing your accomplishments and awards with stakeholders is important, but don't live in the past. You need to demonstrate your value today and in the future if you want to continue to exist. Keep looking for innovative services, creative programs, and new trends that you can adapt to your library.

To share your innovative marketing tip, visit the ILA Marketing Committee's Web site: <http://illinoislibrariesmatter.wordpress.com>, your inspiration station for marketing ideas. 




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Transition & Reflection: Frankfort Public Library District's Decision to Go Dewey Free

Some of you may have felt the spark ignited by the Maricopa County, Ariz., Library District when they announced the elimination of the Dewey Decimal System and adaptation of BISAC (Book Industry Standards and Communications developed by the Book Industry Study Group) at their new Perry Branch Library. At the Frankfort Public Library District, we not only felt the spark but allowed it to ignite. In April 2008, we initiated the phasing out of the Dewey Decimal System from our adult collections. There are many reasons why we undertook this project, all with the ultimate desire and hope to provide greater accessibility to our nonfiction materials.

BEFORE DEWEY FREE

Our library was involved in various projects from 2005 to 2007, preparing for a referendum and library building project; remodeling our circulation, media, youth services, and new materials areas; and transferring our CD collection from Alpha-Numeric System for Classification of Recordings (ANSCR) to a genre-based classification system. Additional projects included participation in a community survey and the customer-focused library project. The latter was funded by a grant sponsored by the Metropolitan Library System, which

brought in EnviroSell, a research and consulting agency for commercial environments that integrates the analysis of layout, merchandising, and operations. Aimed at promoting better customer service, the results of the EnviroSell study showed that patrons often came to the library without a specific title in mind and 75 percent of patrons visited the library for leisure. Quite unexpectedly, results from the density maps (a tool for tracking patron movement) showed little patron activity in the adult nonfiction collections; patrons were not browsing the stacks. The question then became how best to serve our patrons by making these underutilized spaces and collections more accessible and browsable. The answer to this dilemma came much quicker than we had anticipated.

In March 2008, Library Director Detlev Pansch (now at Barrington Area Library) and Melissa Rice, head of adult services, attended the Public Library Association (PLA) National Conference at which the Maricopa County Library District presented on their new Dewey-less Perry Branch. While listening to the presenters discuss the process and results of eliminating DDC, going Dewey-less didn't seem so much of a stretch of the imagination. In fact, we had been on that path for the last few years as the above projects and survey demonstrate. A few weeks later, the department heads and director met to discuss the concept. The result was a unanimous decision to forge ahead and go Dewey Free.

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TRANSITION

Once the decision was made to undertake this project, we assumed roles as project coordinators. We initially reviewed similar projects such as the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library's "Neighborhoods" concept, read all available research on Dewey-less systems, and contacted staff at Maricopa County Public Library. Unlike the Perry Branch, which was an opening day collection, the challenges we faced included converting an existing 30,000-volume nonfiction collection and working within the confines of fixed shelving. Since we had no other model to reference, we thought that documenting our steps would be useful for other libraries interested in tackling a similar project. Additionally, we wanted to keep staff and patrons informed about upcoming changes and the project's progression; therefore, we created a blog, <http://www.deweyfree.com>. Working with our head of graphics and online communications, two logos were created to promote the project and the blog. The logos, intended to be positive and humorous, are of a black dot, named Dewey de Frankfort, chained to books with the caption "Free Dewey." We placed the logos on our library's Web site, staff t-shirts, and promotional buttons. Future logos may feature a "free" Dewey lounging at the beach (travel), riding a bike (transportation), or playing baseball (sports).

The most exciting aspect about going Dewey Free was the freedom to redesign collection layouts. No longer restricted to a numerical order, we moved popular collections closer to the front of the library and combined similar collections. For example, high circulating collections like gardening, cooking, and home have been moved from the west side of the library to the east side closer to the circulation and entrance areas. Combined collections include home, previously four Dewey ranges, and travel is now housed next to languages.

After our layouts were completed, we created taxonomies for gardening and cooking, the first two collections to be converted. We compared the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC), Maricopa's taxonomy, and Book Industry Standards and Communications (BISAC) to develop our own taxonomy.

The process of creating taxonomies is a collaboration of several staff members from reference and technical services. Prior to our monthly Dewey Free Committee meetings, five or more taxonomies are drafted. At the meeting, all committee members are encouraged to discuss the new taxonomies and suggest changes. Each person is responsible for converting one or two collections that month. During the conversion process, a taxonomy is often altered based on the materials in that particular collection. We may not use all subject headings in BISAC and some subjects are combined. What we have discovered is that our taxonomies are largely based on our collections, the materials purchased to fit the needs of our community.

The lack of a numeric code allows staff to make suggestions about where books are classified. Dewey numbers are intimidating and seem "official" for nonprofessional staff. For example, when we converted the music collection, we needed to decide between using "Genre" and "Style" as a subcategory heading. We initially liked "Style" but ended up with "Genre." Why? Our cataloger, a musician, asked her family, also musicians, "Where would you look to find books on Punk or Jazz?" They all said "Genre." Our process truly allows for bottom-up suggestions and discussion. We believe decoding the system provides all patrons, regardless of educational, social, or cultural background, equal footing as they walk through the collections. Connecting numbers to subjects is no longer necessary, as words and intuitive or common terminology have been substituted for call numbers. Therefore, we hope that patrons are encouraged to walk through the stacks and browse our collections in a more user-friendly environment.

REFLECTION

Will a Dewey Free classification system work? We don't know definitively, yet, but we see the benefits of this individualized system in our library. After all, Dewey, the Library of Congress, and many other systems were attempts to improve the

classification systems of their era. As of this writing, we have only converted 80 percent of our adult nonfiction collection. Once our conversion is complete, we will step back, celebrate the project's completion with our staff members who have worked diligently on this colossal project, and analyze patron response and circulation data.

Is this an attempt to become a bookstore? Well, we're not in the business of selling information and content, but we want to encourage patrons in our library to feel the way they feel when they are in bookstores — enjoying the browsability of materials and utilizing our space to gather with friends and colleagues. Qualities we do have that some bookstores do not is exceptional customer service, a connection to our community, reliable and free WiFi, and visible labels on materials that help guide patrons through a collection. There are elements that customers respond to in a retail setting and we believe that libraries need to recognize those elements and adapt them to their own library and community.

Should libraries eliminate Dewey? There is no right or wrong answer, but we hope librarians are encouraged to evaluate whether or not their library should or shouldn't make changes

to stay relevant to their community. We are not selling a new system. We are simply attempting, like all other libraries, to make the best decisions with our patrons in mind.

For more information about the Dewey Free Project, please contact Melissa Rice, e-mail: mrice@frankfortlibrary.org or Joanna Kolendo, e-mail: jkolendo@frankfortlibrary.org. **ILA**

Resources

Book Industry Study Group: <http://www.bisg.org>

Frankfort Public Library District: <http://www.frankfortlibrary.org>

Frankfort Public Library District's Dewey Free Blog:
<http://www.deweyfree.com>

Customer-Focused Library Grant:
<http://www.mls.lib.il.us/consulting/envirosell.asp>

Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library:
http://www.tscpl.org/dewey/comments/why_do_we_dewey/



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The Sampler



Surprisingly, no tweets, wall writings, or tags were used in the creation of this article. Simple e-mail and telephone were the vehicles used when we spoke with Omar Wasow, a technology expert who spends a significant amount of time demystifying Internet tools and social media on TV and in radio segments on shows such as NBC's *The Today Show*, CNN's *American Morning*, and National Public Radio's *Tavis Smiley Show*. When you speak with the co-creator of BlackPlanet.com, the guy who spent twelve episodes with Oprah tutoring her on the potential of e-mail and other Internet tools in segments titled "Oprah Goes Online," you might expect tech-centric-only communication.

Wasow is not that kind of guy. Rather, at age 38, he is an entrepreneur, a technology theorist, and Ph.D. candidate in African American studies and Government at Harvard. He will be the keynote speaker at the 2009 Illinois Library Association Annual Conference in Peoria on Wednesday, October 7, 2009.

Newsweek named Wasow one of the "fifty most influential people to watch in cyberspace," and *People* called him the "Sexiest Internet Executive." *Successful Meetings* named him one of the "Twenty-one Top Speakers for the Twenty-first Century."

In a wide-ranging interview, Wasow provided us with a glimpse of what we may hear during his keynote presentation.

"There are opportunities for libraries to own space that are playgrounds for the mind," said Wasow, when speaking about one university medical library that suddenly had a lot more floor space after a number of journals became available online. "Technology changes real estate. To libraries that have been organized around managing the stacks, digitization means that the physical space will evolve in very profound ways and create a lot of opportunities." He listed social interaction and/or quiet space as great uses, adding, "There aren't a lot of spaces to reflect away from Blackberries, Internet, and television."

The son of teachers who was born in Kenya and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Wasow calls himself one of the "pong generation," coming of age when cheap home-based video games became widely available. He explained that his parents recognized that he was fascinated with computers. They made what turned out to be a very fortuitous choice for him. They did not buy him an Atari, but an inexpensive Vic 20, a computer that allowed for programming.

"Their choice opened a whole world for me in that I started programming and making my own games and it gave me a different relationship to technology than a lot of my peers who continued to love playing, but never took that leap to being creators," Wasow explained.

Entrepreneurship is another element of his personality that Wasow identifies as homegrown, especially by his mother, an early childhood educator. He remembers his mother taking him to a museum where her clever question to him would be, "What would you do differently if you were running this museum?" He explained that his mother invited him to think of himself as a co-equal, with important ideas to contribute.

Entrepreneurship and participation became key elements in Wasow's future. During and after college, the fascination for providing the audience with the power to participate and to create impacted his work. For a year, he worked for a nonprofit teaching entrepreneurship to high school dropouts — in particular, to ex-drug dealers, trying to motivate them to get their GEDs, encouraging them to use their enterprising skills for good.

In 1993, Wasow decided to start his own business with the creation of an online community, bringing together a diverse multicultural community of New Yorkers and giving the audience a voice. He laughs that this concept is ubiquitous now with Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, and almost every site seeking to engage the visitor with participation. However, he reminded us that at this time, the story of the Internet was being told in terms of the Internet Super Highway, with a passive relationship to information, where linking to encyclopedias was a thrilling interaction.

Wasow co-created BlackPlanet.com in 1999. The site eventually became the destination of more than three million people a month. In 2002, the *New York Times* wrote of the then 31-year-old entrepreneur:

"He enthusiastically points out the features of BlackPlanet.com: the message boards, chat rooms, personal Web pages and, more recently, a chance to find romance and jobs. The home page constantly tells visitors how many have logged on to the site."

Wasow believes libraries can become more like today's cyberspace — participatory, engaged, and creative spaces. He says that technology is powerful when the audience gets to engage.

[continued on page 18]

However, “gee whiz look at all these magical things we can do with technology,” is not a Wasow stance, as he admits that he reacts badly to what he terms “techno-utopianism.” He always wants to ask the question, “What problem are we trying to solve?” and he believes libraries are very much part of the solution to many questions in the future, using both high tech and low to no tech.

“Libraries shouldn’t try to out google Google,” Wasow added. “What libraries bring to the table is unique. To my mind, one of the great strengths of a library is its role as a kind of thoughtful center in the community. In an era where we don’t have as many of what some people call third spaces — not work, not home spaces — libraries play an important role as those kinds of community centers.”

In addition, Wasow believes that libraries are in the transformation business, enabling and assisting individuals to become different people over time by interacting with the library through information, classes, and programs. He sees a core library mandate in this age of searching online to be training customers to grasp a little sense of library science knowledge themselves so they will be more active participants in the acquisition of information.



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Wasow also believes that libraries are still critical to providing access.

“One hypothesis was that Internet access would get so cheap that everyone would have it. It has not turned out to be the case. Libraries are a very important gateway, an on ramp, to the Internet, and that is likely to be true for years to come,” said Wasow.

Another fundamental library mission that Wasow stressed as continuing to be of utmost importance is encouraging a passion for reading in very young children. He helped to found a charter school in his neighborhood and reports that every student is engaged in reading and has a goal number of books. He also believes that technology can be truly beneficial for language acquisition and that customizable ESL software, such as that created by Imagine Learning, makes kids think that they are playing games when they are really learning language skills.

“Computer-based learning fascinates me,” said Wasow. He added that libraries can complement schools as a place where people build literacy skills using computer-based tools that are not labor-intensive. He extolled technology’s virtues, stating, “Computer-based learning feels like play, is as substantive as a very good class, and adaptive to specific needs of the student.” Even as he spends most of his time working on his graduate classes, he continues to explore the possibilities for quality software to be made available to those on the other side of the digital divide.

Wasow terms Twitter a “global watering hole,” but he confesses that he has “not really gotten the Twitter bug,” remaining a little cautious about the exuberance over this rapidly growing technology. However, he does admit that it has evolved in ways that are remarkable even in the last year, calling it a “global message board for the entire Web.”

As a broadcast medium, Wasow said that Twitter and Facebook should be staples for library promotion, keeping followers, fans, and friends apprised about upcoming events. He said, “They are a low-cost broadcast with the capacity to keep engaged patrons even more engaged.” He said that the social media channels have to be monitored from a defensive stance as well. He referred to a recent restaurant-themed YouTube video put up by pranksters showing workers doing unthinkable things to pizza before delivering it to unsuspecting buyers. He said that it caused quite a problem for the featured company.

With new social media and virtual spaces being created almost as fast as new Twitter accounts, we wondered whether Wasow was worried about people suffering from too much connectivity. “No,” was his simple answer, adding that we’re just at the stage with technology where we are learning the right etiquette. “While we all know the proper behavior at a wedding or dinner

party, people don't know yet what to do when people we haven't met want to be friends on Facebook." He expresses confidence that we will ultimately learn how to manage.

"I have a friend who is incredibly tech savvy who has a rule that the computer gets turned off at 9:00 P.M.," explained Wasow. He is friends with another couple that steadfastly enforce a "no Blackberry at the dinner table" edict.

Wasow commented on a variety of tech-related topics during two recent appearances on NBC's *The Today Show*. Last February, he discussed online etiquette with Lester Holt. He described Facebook's evolving protocol, explaining the difference between writing on walls versus writing to someone's inbox, when

"defriending" might be required and why people love to answer "twenty-five random things about me." He said that the use of forwarding is much like the old chain letters from another era.

During a January appearance, he discussed the topic of Barack Obama becoming "the first Internet president" with Matt Lauer. He noted that Obama's addiction to his Blackberry was "speaking to a whole generation of people" and about how much power there is in collecting thirteen million e-mail addresses.

Wasow traffics in tech, but his thinking is much broader. He is an ideal choice to engage an ILA audience about transformation in libraries and how libraries can help transform people. Make plans to attend the "in person" discussion this October. ■▲



Current Read

- *Disrupting Class*
by Clayton Christensen

Favorite books ("I don't really have favorite books. I do have books that have shaped my thinking and which I often give as gifts. Here are a few recent ones.")

Non-fiction

- *The China Study: The Most Comprehensive Study of Nutrition Ever Conducted and the Startling Implications for Diet, Weight Loss and Long-term Health*, T. Colin Campbell
- *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, Carol S. Dweck
- *Culture of Honor: The Psychology of Violence in the South*, Richard E. Nisbett and Dov Cohen

Fiction

- *Lolita*, Vladimir Nabokov
- *Invisible Man*, Ralph Ellison

Favorite podcasts or blogs

- <http://www.marginalrevolution.com>
- <http://www.dynamist.com>
- <http://flowingdata.com>

Heroes

- Frederick Douglass
- W. E. B. Du Bois
- Ida B. Wells-Barnett

Most recent downloaded album

- *Cookin' with the Miles Davis Quintet*

Favorite new technology

- Digital SLR camera

New tech gadget with huge potential

- "For libraries, I like the Kindle, although I wish it handled PDFs better."

Cell phone ring

- Birds chirping

Favorite inventions

- Fire, wheel, keyboard

Hobbies

- Running, biking, being outside

Most used tech devices

- Mac Book Pro
- Palm Treo 755
- Digital camera

Sally in Libraryland

Indian Trails Public Library District is at the tail end of six months of celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. Many interesting programs have been offered, and many patrons have celebrated with us. There have been snacks and treats of all sorts, and commemorative shirts, and an attractive bookmark.

Historical photos have been posted on the walls — none of us were there when the Wheeling Women's Club opened the first library in a 20' x 30' frame building. Approximately one hundred of us inhabit our current 45,000-square-foot building. We've read the history — in the course of those fifty years, we have had three directors: Ray Deutsch, Ken Swanson, and Tamiye Meehan.

You know how it is: all logic aside, some part of your brain assumes that how things are is how they always were, and always will be. That delusion has been particularly difficult to sustain with Tamiye Meehan as our director for the past twelve years. Changes have come at us thick and fast pretty much from the moment she walked in the door, and now she's lobbed us another one: she's retiring.

Although her announcement was unexpected, that her last day is the last day of our fiscal year was less of a surprise, once my eyebrows resumed their normal place on my face, and I thought about it. She has wrestled with the best use of the budget every year, and probably nothing has been more challenging than trying to keep us afloat — and moving forward — in the current economy. So of course she would want to put that period — or possibly exclamation point — at the end of a budget year.



She has made contributions to the larger library world. Unless you joined that world two weeks ago, you will remember that she served a term as president of ILA, and before that, Treasurer; she's a Synergy mentor, ran for ALA Council, and has chaired several ILA and ALA committees, among other things. And she challenged the rest of us to do the same. When you see a lot of Indian Trails participation at ILA's Annual Conference, or Reaching Forward, you are seeing her influence. I will admit that the first time I presented a program at the Public Library Association conference and realized she was in the room, it startled me — but she's been present for nearly every conference program I've presented since, and I will kind of miss seeing her there in the future!

Tamiye has not been one of those warm fuzzy directors you hear about, and a lot of lucky people have never had reason to see her softer side. But any time a staff member has been in the hospital — starting about two weeks after she came onboard — she’s popped in for a visit. (When it happened to be me, she showed up bearing chocolate.) Staff can have a lot of real-life crises in twelve years, and every time she has asked what the staff member needs and found a way to get it to them, even if a lot of people didn’t realize the impetus came from her. She has paid her respects and shown her support at wakes and funerals. While never losing sight of her role as director, she has supported all of us who realize our library family can be as important a part of our lives as our actual families.

Families of any sort are complicated, of course. There are cousins you love and uncles you can’t stand, and when somebody new joins the family, they bring baggage of their own.

And, as someone pointed out to me, when the director leaves after being around long enough for all of us to be used to her, it’s a lot like when your parents get a divorce, no matter how amicable. There are concerns — spoken or not — about what is going to happen next. And, as that same person pointed out to me, it’s further complicated by the fact that in the library realm, almost immediately after the divorce you get a brand new head of the family, and you have to blend even before you’ve gotten used to the previous head being gone.

The library, of course, will go on. I could find no documentation indicating that any public library folded because a director left, ever. We’ll get a new director, and some things will be very different, and some will be exactly the same. The staff uncertainty at this point is that we don’t know what will be which. At the most basic level, the child still just below the surface in many of us thinks, “But what’s going to happen to ME?”

We didn’t know Tamiye from Adam when she took over, and the library has not only continued to function, we’ve moved forward in some interesting ways. I have no doubt the same will be true with our next director. Fifty years from now, while Indian Trails celebrates its

one-hundredth anniversary, perhaps Tamiye and I will be rocking on the porch of the home for over-the-hill librarians (women live a loooong time in my family, and Tamiye expects to be there, too), dark chocolate and wine at hand, trading tales of our travels. I hope she’ll know that she prepared us well for the future that looks so uncertain to us now.

So I hope she enjoys her retirement as much as she expects to, and sends us the occasional postcard from whatever exotic locales she finds herself in, and finds a way — as she plans — to continue to contribute to the world of libraries. If you see her coming toward you, be prepared to be challenged to accomplish something outside your comfort zone. And know that she wouldn’t ask you if she didn’t think you could do it, even if you don’t think so.

Thanks, Tamiye!

Tamiye stories? New director stories? Share them!
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

2009 ELECTION RESULTS

VICE PRESIDENT/PRESIDENT-ELECT



416 Gail Bush,
National-Louis University, Skokie

399 Phyllis Self,
Western Illinois University, Macomb

Gail Bush will begin her three-year term on July 1, 2009, running through June 30, 2012.

Board of Directors (a three-year term beginning July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2012). One candidate from each pairing was elected in accordance with the ILA bylaws as amended at the 1998 ILA Annual Conference.

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE:



520 Terry Cottrell,
University of St. Francis, Joliet

270 Milfred Moore,
Trustee, Matteson Public Library

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE:



445 David Hamilton,
Consortium of Academic and Research
Libraries in Illinois (CARLI)

358 Jeffrey Owen,
Hayner Public Library District, Alton

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE:



427 Sheree Kozel-La Ha,
Homer Township Public Library District,
Homer Glen

389 Paula Moore,
Arlington Heights Memorial Library

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE:



453 Rebecca Teasdale,
Schaumburg Township District Library

362 Mary G. Adamowski,
Orland Park Public Library

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE:



415 Don Roalkvam,
Trustee, Indian Trails Public Library
District, Wheeling

391 Marc Gartler,
Harrington College of Design, Chicago

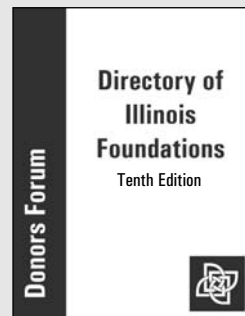
This was the fifth year that ILA experimented with electronic voting. In 2009, with 2,477 personal members eligible to vote: 834 voted (**34 percent**), breaking down to: 762 electronic (2,004 eligible electronic voters or 38 percent) and 74 paper (473 eligible paper voters or 16 percent). In 2008, the response rate was **34 percent**.

As a point of comparison, in the 2009 American Library Association (ALA) election, with 56,069 eligible to vote: 13,125 voted (**23.41 percent**), breaking down to: 12,610 electronic (26 percent) and 500 paper (6.62 percent). In the 2008 ALA election, with 59,141 eligible to vote: 17,089 voted (**28.90 percent**), breaking down to: 15,655 electronic (32.52 percent) and 1,434 paper (13.04 percent)

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Year	Ballots returned	Total personal members	Percent of membership
2009	834	2,477 personal members	34 percent
2008	839	2,459 personal members	34 percent
2007	613	2,457 personal members	25 percent
2006	648	2,453 personal members	26 percent
2005	472	2,462 personal members	19 percent
2004	727	2,330 personal members	31 percent
2003	742	2,403 personal members	31 percent
2002	787	2,481 personal members	32 percent
2001	817	2,456 personal members	33 percent
2000	914	2,532 personal members	36 percent
1999	982	2,471 personal members	40 percent
1998	1,110	2,489 personal members	45 percent
1997	886	2,262 personal members	39 percent

ILLINOIS LIBRARY DAY

The event was sponsored by the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI), Illinois Library Association, Illinois Library Systems Directors Organization (ILSDO), Illinois School Library Media Association (ISLMA), Illinois chapter of the Special Libraries Association, and Illinois State Library.

Registration Numbers for Illinois Library Advocacy Days

2009	142
2008	209
2007	338
2006	581
2005	259
2004	337
2003	346
2002	352
2001	313
2000	358
1999	no event
1998	no event
1997	no event
1996	83
1995	86
1994	153
1993	175
1992	211
1991	284
1990	unknown

NATIONAL LIBRARY LEGISLATIVE DAY

Illinois again had the largest delegation attending National Library Legislative Day on May 12 in Washington, D.C.

Registration Numbers for National Library Legislative Day

2009	53
2008	52
2007	76
2006	68
2005	62
2004	58
2003	49
2002	68
2001	81
2000	76
1999	90
1998	78
1997	73
1996	62
1995	58
1994	60
1993	59
1992	46
1991	50
1990	50

Attendance by the ten most populous states: California 23; Texas 16; New York 12; Florida 3; Illinois 53; Pennsylvania 8; Ohio 19; Michigan 7; New Jersey 21; and Georgia 4. Total attendance was 410. Two states—Hawaii and North Dakota—had no one attending the event. The Illinois delegation represented 13 percent of the total attendance.



Local Libraries,

Local Advocacy

I have been a librarian — or a librarian-in-waiting — for almost as long as I can remember. As a little girl, I spent my after-school hours in the local public library where my mother worked, and my summers riding in the bookmobile that served the citizens who lived in the beautiful foothills of Appalachia, in southeastern Ohio. Our bookmobile visited the little towns out in the county, as well as very remote homes without electricity or running water, and even a prison camp. The only “economy” I saw exchanged were books and conversation, and I learned at a very young age that libraries belong to everyone and are a great equalizer.

It was about that same time in life that the political bug bit me. The library afternoons often were followed by a good sit in front of the TV with my father, watching the evening news, presidential debates, and political dissections. I don’t imagine I understood much of what I was hearing, but I knew it had to be fascinating stuff to keep my father so engaged.

So, I suppose it is not a wonder that I find myself in the somewhat unusual position of being not only a librarian but also a member of the Bloomington City Council. I have served on my city council for more than ten years, representing a ward that has a rich blend of people of all stages of the economic scale — not so unlike the mix of people my mother served on the bookmobile so many years ago.

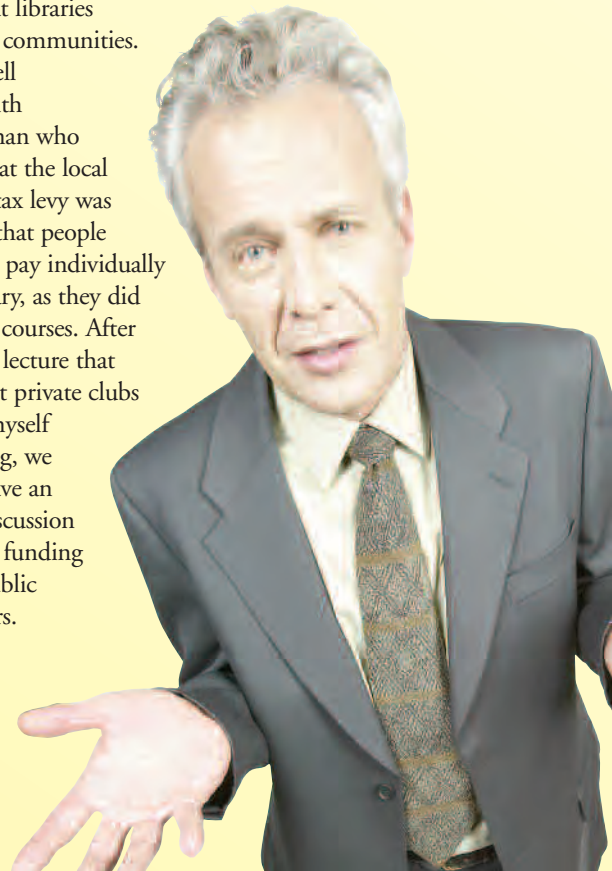
It is in this dual role of librarian and politician that I reflect on the significance of advocacy for all of us involved with libraries — trustees, administrators, taxpayers, and users. As a collective group, we believe that knowledge is power, and that access to knowledge belongs to all people, regardless of age, education, or economics. We take that message to our communities in many ways: through quiet outreach, through our actions, and through our work.

The role of advocate has taken on increasing significance in the face of our stalled economy. Regardless of the kind of library we work with or for, we all recognize that financial resources are at a premium. In a municipal setting, public safety and trash collection can come far higher up on the ladder of importance

than the local library. In the academic or corporate setting, the money expended on library collections and staff may seem less urgent in the face of other pressures. Yet, we know that the pressures for our libraries to perform well and serve many are often significantly higher in difficult economic times. The return on investment for our libraries is HUGE and as advocates it falls on us to tell the library story with passion and strength.

It is from my dual footing in municipal government and in libraries that I reflect here on the many effective ways I have encountered strong positive advocates for our libraries in Illinois, and how people connect most effectively with the policy and decision makers. My observations on effective advocacy include the following:

- **The squeaky wheel does get the grease — but you need to tell the story of why the wheel matters.** Without context, the wheel is only a wheel. The value of libraries is obvious to you and me, but not to many others who don’t understand the return on investment that libraries provide to our communities. I remember well a discussion with a fellow alderman who felt strongly that the local public library tax levy was too high, and that people should have to pay individually to use the library, as they did to use the golf courses. After I delivered my lecture that libraries are not private clubs and unglued myself from the ceiling, we managed to have an informative discussion about why the funding structure of public libraries matters.



- **Listening is the other half of communication.** Obvious? Yes. Easy to forget? Yes. While we are telling our story, we need to remember to listen to the questions, skepticism, and any opposition that might be trying to flow our way. Aldermen and other government officials come with their own set of experiences that inform their work. As I learned in my exchange with my city council colleague, not everyone shares my values, and I needn't be smug about my own. I had to take time to hear his point of view and his questions, because he was indeed reflecting perceptions about libraries in my community.
- **Engage the media.** Libraries have profound stories to tell. We transform lives. Everyone loves to hear good news and do we have it, in spades! Hearing the successes and the needs from the people who benefit the most is very compelling to our communities and helps spread the enthusiasm and support to the citizens whom aldermen serve.
- **It's the economy, stupid.** Bill Clinton had this one right. For most policy makers, it comes down to dollars and cents, and where the value lies. It's pretty easy to see why a community should employ a police officer. Keeping people safe in their homes and on the streets makes sense to everyone. Our value as libraries is not so transparent. And yes, I have heard others in city government say, "If they want to read, they can go to Barnes & Noble," as well as administrators during the course of my academic library career note that "they can find it all on Google anyway, so why pay to license content?"

So how do you talk to a city council member about the value of libraries? Take some time to listen for the life experiences and values of the policy maker you are talking to. This often leads to great conversations about libraries, and your engaged listening often will open the door to communication far faster. Aldermen get asked for things all the time — sometimes we can deliver, and sometimes we cannot — but we do like to find reasons to say yes, and to be able to support that decision to our constituents. Having short and compelling facts that reflect your library's character and needs not only makes you a stronger advocate, it also makes your alderman a smarter decision maker. **ILA**

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