

# FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN LIBRARIES' NEWSLETTER

## Fall 2005

c/o David and Judy Beine, Co-Presidents 2005-

[www.cheesestate.com/friends/](http://www.cheesestate.com/friends/)

**Greetings** to all our **FRIENDS** throughout Wisconsin – We are an organization that we hope will be a conduit to a discussion of all issues involving libraries in Wisconsin. While there are internet sites to visit and associations galore within the library world, we do need to unite in interest, be lobbyists if you will, to keep the standards of our libraries free and open to the public. There are important issues affecting all of our communities and sometimes libraries get the short shrift. Keep in touch with us, and talk to your legislators. See the Legislative Day sign-up form at

<http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/day/documents/registration.doc>

**MINUTES FROM THE FALL MEETING** following the Wisconsin Library Trustees' luncheon at Wisconsin Library Association convention, Oct. 27, 2005. Friends' meeting took place at the La Crosse Public Library.

The meeting was called to order by Past-President Sr. Mary Ellen Paulson at 2:20 pm. A moment of silence followed for all the deceased members of Friends.

1. The Mission Statement was then read by all the members from the minutes of the last fall annual meeting in Lake Geneva, WI. It is: "THE FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN LIBRARIES is a volunteer organization made up of loyal FRIENDS groups and individuals throughout the state who are committed to:
  - Advocating for library funding and legislative support on the national, state and local level.
  - Serving our members as an umbrella group for networking and disseminating information.
  - Helping FRIENDS OF LIBRARY groups become established and succeed.
  - Sharing the importance of libraries and their services by being the link between the library, the community, the trustees and the staff."
2. A rendition of the theme song was sung.
3. The minutes from the fall 2004 Lake Geneva meeting were distributed by Carole Edland, Secretary. Joanne Smith moved that they be accepted and Terry Dawson seconded the motion. It passed with all in favor.
4. The Treasurer's Report by Joanne Smith as of 10/25/05 was read to all with copies distributed. Balance on hand of \$876.13.
5. Those present included Terry Dawson, 2005 WLA President from Appleton, Sr. Paulson, West Allis, Sr. Paula Jarosz, West Allis, Judy Haugen, Coon Valley, Rachel Berg, Coon Valley, Bonnie Joske, Kewaunee, Diane Fay, Cotuit, MA, Joanne Smith, Sussex, WI, Dale Montgomery, La Crosse, Pat Connell, La Crosse, Sandy Secress, La Crosse and Carole Edland, La Crosse, Secretary.
6. Past-President Paulson noted that she sent letters to all 17 federated districts with thanks for serving them for the past 9 years as president and offered to help any one to set up Friends groups. Coon Valley and Hillsboro have taken advantage of her offer.
7. Dale Montgomery, Treasurer of the La Crosse Friends, was invited to speak by Carole Edland on money issues and fundraising for FOLL. Lately the funds, derived mainly from book sales and the Bookshop, runs about \$30,000 to \$40,000 a year. All the money goes to the library for their needs.

8. Sr. Paulson invited everyone to share ideas of what their Friends were doing and how they were earning money for their respective libraries. Ideas included: a community-wide free ice cream and brownie social along with the chance to see an old fashion fire truck, various garden and gardening projects, quality luncheons, auctions, fashion shows, "Plant, bake and treasurer" event, sharing of flower bulbs or plants, book sales, e-bay for better books and inviting people to use the library resources more often. La Crosse offers Friends membership that includes their library card. Yearly fees are \$50.00 and a life membership is \$500.00. They have proved quite popular.
9. Terry Dawson was invited to speak about the WLTA, that is the Wisconsin Library Trustees Association. Friends have been invited to attend their Thursday lunches at WLA since we have become affiliated. WLTA has about 400 members but many are not active. They are interested in expanding their membership with groups like ours. Much discussion followed and much will need to take place before any decision can be made. Friends do not want to lose its unique identity in the literary circles. Terry Dawson (WLA President), Lisa Strand (WLA Executive Director), Joanne Smith (Friends Treasurer) and Judy and David Beine (new Co-Presidents of Friends), met to discuss details of the possible relationship. This will need to be discussed at the spring meeting. Perhaps the name Wisconsin Library Advocates would be more inclusive and meaningful instead of WLTA. It could be an umbrella for the groups. Much more discussion and thinking will need to take place before Friends will take action.
10. Joanne Smith stated that 12 letters to a congressperson on a particular issue could cause that person to vote the way the writer desired. This might be quite an advantage on a worthy matter.
11. The spring Friends meeting will be in Shorewood, North shore Library, on April 29, 2006. Included to the agenda should be the fee for groups going from \$25.00 to \$15.00 a year and the WLTA/Friends discussion.
12. Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm, with Joanne Smith moving we adjourn and Sr. Paula Marie seconding. All in favor.

Refreshments and tours of the library followed. Submitted by Carole Edland, Secretary.

**Co-President David Beine's Statement: To join forces -- A collaboration between Friends, Trustees, Librarians and other advocates with the Wisconsin Library Association -- or not.**

On Wednesday, October 19, your co-presidents, David and Judy Beine, met with Lisa Strand, Executive Director of Wisconsin Library Association, of Madison, and Terry Dawson, President of the Wisconsin Library Association and Director of the Appleton Public Library, to discuss the relationship of the WLA and Friends. This was a meeting to explore whether we, Friends, should *merge, or be adopted, if you will*, into the WLA umbrella organization, similar to the Trustees' relationship with WLA.

Simply stated, it is the opinion of your co-presidents that the WLA can only *benefit* Friends more than Friends can benefit the WLA.

- (1) Friends have very limited financial resources and find it very difficult to raise funds from within the membership. WLA has financial assets and the proven ability to raise funds. Difficulty in obtaining financial support from the Friends membership is understandable. Most individual and group members find it more agreeable to channel their contributions to their local library.
- (2) WLA has a paid and experienced administrative staff (and office facilities) that can only enhance and complement anything that FOWL would initiate. At present all of the communications are generated by your co-president, Judy Beine, in her home at her leisure. Both she and David are strictly volunteers. While volunteers can be very effective for specific jobs such as a one-time

events, we all know running a state-wide organization, as vital as Friends should be, is not really feasible.

(3) WLA is experienced in running a state-wide organization and events for that organization.

Would we be sacrificing Friends to the WLA? Hardly. Actually, as far as we can discern, the melding of Friends into the WLA will be almost seamless. And, we are certain that what Friends does best will continue in the future even more efficiently. DB.

***American Library Association's Welcome on its Issues page*** - Through its advocacy efforts, the ALA strives to communicate the importance of libraries and librarians to our democratic society, to improve library funding and influence public policy about libraries and information-related issues, to increase public awareness about the role and importance of libraries and library workers in every community, and ultimately, to turn passive support of libraries and librarians into educated action by stakeholders.

***A SUCCESS STORY*** - We are happy to report that voters in John Steinbeck's hometown of Salinas, Calif., voted to raise a half-cent tax to fund their libraries and other essential city services. We were stunned about this time last year to learn that Salinas' three libraries would close in the wake of an \$8 million deficit. In 2003 alone, there were more than 450,000 visits to Salinas' libraries and 528,685 items checked out. Several local fundraising efforts sprang up in response, raising enough funds to keep the libraries open about 33 hours per week in recent months. Contributions topped \$800,000 over nine months, and while donations came primarily from local residents and businesses, funds also were received from 20 states, Canada and Luxembourg. In February 2005, a delegation of national and state library leaders traveled to Salinas to survey the situation and share technical assistance, advice and information to support Salinas in its effort to rally for and sustain locally library services. The American Library Association also conducted a national media outreach campaign to highlight the situation and raise awareness of library funding issues nationwide.

Don't let this happen to your library--



***Hurricane Katrina*** -- Over 100 school libraries and 25 public libraries were damaged or destroyed beyond repair, and a number of academic libraries lost major portions of their collections. On Nov. 4, 2005, the American Library Association announced it had raised more than \$100,000 through its Hurricane Katrina Library Relief Fund to help rebuild libraries in the ravaged Gulf Coast region. A recent contribution of \$10,000 from the Copyright Clearance Center helped bring the total over \$100,000. More than 1,000 ALA individual and corporate members have contributed to the fund. On October 31 the main library and several branches of the New Orleans Public Library reopened four hours a day to provide limited services. Patrons and visitors were able to access the Internet and software from designated computers, as well as return library books and use copiers and fax machines. Other branches still await reopening. To make a tax-deductible donation to the ALA Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund, or to learn more about relief efforts, visit <http://www.ala.org/katrina>.

## ↑ **Library Use Increasing -- No Surprise** ↑↑↑

Wisconsin's public libraries continued to increase the level of services and technology provided to the public, with little or no growth in library income and staffing levels, according to final 2004 data. Public library circulation surpassed 56.8 million items, an increase of nearly 4 percent over 2003. User visits to libraries increased to almost 32 million. Interlibrary loans, the key indicator of resource sharing among libraries, continued to show a large annual increase growing to 4.8 million, a 17 percent increase over 2003. Meanwhile, library staffing remained at 2003 levels and total library service expenditures increased only about 2.5 percent.

“Public libraries support life-long learning and are essential to the strength and health of our state,” noted State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. “Wisconsin’s public libraries and library systems are to be commended for continuing to cost-effectively provide all Wisconsin residents with high levels of library service, including BadgerLink, which provides access to more than 700 newspapers and 11,000 magazines. Wisconsin’s public library systems have strong programs of service for their member libraries, ensuring that Wisconsin residents have equal access to informational materials required to do coursework, meet curriculum needs, or pursue personal and business interests regardless of where they live or their special needs or circumstances.”

Public library use has grown at a much faster rate than Wisconsin’s population. While the state has gained only 3.2 percent in population since 2000, library circulation has increased 21.5 percent and the number of Internet-connected public use computer terminals available in libraries has grown by 64 percent. A grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation supported the distribution of 743 personal computers and servers to 235 Wisconsin public libraries and branches in 2003. The grant will continue to provide technology training through 2006. All public libraries now have Internet connections, and almost all of them provide high speed Internet access. Informational databases, such as those provided statewide through BadgerLink, are available to all state residents through their local library as well as in homes, schools, and workplaces.

The most recent statistics available from the National Center for Education Statistics (2003) place Wisconsin first in interlibrary loans per capita, eighth in circulation per capita, and ninth in public library visits per capita. An estimated 57 percent of Wisconsin residents, about 3.2 million people, are registered public library users.

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“I think it fruitful in the extreme, because the library gives nothing for nothing, because it helps only those that help themselves, because it does not sap the foundation of manly independence, because it does not pauperize, because it stretches a hand to the aspiring and places a ladder upon which they can only ascend by doing the climbing themselves. This is not charity, this is not philanthropy, it is the people themselves helping themselves by taxing themselves.” Andrew Carnegie.

## Friends across the State and US

Friends of Libraries U.S.A. FOLUSA has shared our name and address with other states and as a result we have received newsletters over the last few months from Hawaii, Connecticut, Minnesota, and Tennessee

- Hawaii Friends had their 58<sup>th</sup> annual book sale and set a record at \$150,000. 7000 boxes of donated materials were sorted to yield 3200 boxes of books for the sale. Their Friends are blessed with 30 year round volunteers!
- Connecticut – Friends celebrated 25 years of supporting and enhancing their libraries. Their newsletter includes business-card type ads from their corporate sponsors.

And from Wisconsin – Sheboygan, Crandon, Appleton, Oshkosh, Waukesha, Monona and Shorewood have shared their newsletters with us.

- Crandon's Margaret Pieplow wrote, "We are a small town with a small library, but it's a new and beautiful building. We do what we can to keep things moving." Crandon has a population of 1,857 in Forest County and is approx. five square miles. Their activities for the year included a used book sale at Kentuck Days and Art in the Square. Crandon Friends also created a dragon and castle entrance for the children's reading program entitled Dragons, Dreams and Daring Deeds. The children enjoyed performers doing juggling, magic, and fencing during the six-week summer program. Sounds to me like the Crandon population has put their priorities in the right place! Thank you, Margaret, for sharing your newsletter.
- Oshkosh patrons can pick up their own holds.
- Waukesha boasts it is the busiest single site library in the state, having a total circulation of 1,616,292 items in 2004 and already reached the million mark on August 9 in 2005.

### *Cedarburg Library Featured in Children's Book*



Cedarburg resident Renee Graef has illustrated a new children's book--"B is for Bookworm." The book was written by Anita C. Prieto.

The cover has a picture of the children's area of the Cedarburg Public Library because the illustrator says "It just looked nice and cozy." A neighbor of the illustrator is pictured on the "S" page, which also has a mural from the library in the background. Other local individuals are found on seven other pages. The "K" and "Z" pages contain pictures of librarians from Westlawn Elementary School in Cedarburg. The book further explains the inner workings of libraries, such as how they keep track of all the volumes and how many miles worth of books are in the Library of Congress. From Eastern Shores' *The Library Connection*, Vol. 25, No. 10, Oct. 2005.

**NOTE** We will feature your Friends' good news in future issues. Please send us your electronic/digital versions with web address in an email, or mail your hard copies to.

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Reminder – April 29, 2006 Spring Meeting at Shorewood Public Library.

# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION – FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN LIBRARIES

Send to:

FOWL Treasurer Joanne Smith  
W264 N7130 Thousand Oaks Drive  
Sussex, WI 53089

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Group or Individual?  
Circle one

Affiliated with \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Library

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_, WI, \_\_\_\_\_ Zip

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Day or evening?  
Circle one

Email \_\_\_\_\_ PLEASE PRINT!

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to cover annual membership dues (April to April)

- Check one    \_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$7.00  
                  \_\_\_\_\_ Group \$15.00  
                  \_\_\_\_\_ Business or sponsor \$50.00  
                  \_\_\_\_\_ Life Membership (individuals) \$100.00

Please pay dues by the Annual Meeting each Spring. Thank you for your support.