

WVLS 2024 WLA Conference Scholarship Reports



From left to right: Leah Giordano, MCPL; Laurie Renel-Faledas, Crandon; Teresa Hall, Loyal; Murray Johnson, MCPL; Alice Sturzl, Laona; Andrea Bennett, Merrill



WVLS POST-CONFERENCE REPORT

Please note: This report will be shared with the WVLS Board of Trustees and posted on the WVLS website in an upcoming board meeting packet.

1. Please highlight three sessions from the conference.

What were the session topics? Who presented them? What made these presentations effective and meaningful to you?

- A. "The Root Down: An ADHD-inspired Presentation and Process to Know, Respect, and Connect Yourself"

Dave Delaney told us to know yourself, respect yourself, connect yourself, and love yourself. He was diagnosed with ADHD as an adult, after being a disruptive child; and reminded us that we are born with ADHD, but might not be diagnosed as early as we could be. I have known a number of people with ADHD, both adult and juvenile, and this presentation gave me a better understanding of the help that they are seeking.

- B. "Evolution of a Community Partnership"

Hannah Schraufnagel, Nicole Hardina-Wilhelm, Kristi Branchford, and Julie Roh from the Neenah Public Library told us about using story-time sessions with pre-school children, and senior citizens with dementia. Yes, the emphasis is on interaction between young and old. Multi-generational puppet shows, and activities, are scheduled on a regular basis.

- C. "Fact-Checking for Students: Resist Misinformation and Find Reliable Sources Online"

Nick Ostrem told us that media literacy includes the use of critical thinking, bias, branded content, advertising, and opinion. Students need to be taught what a reliable source is, how to fact-check, how to search, and how to avoid cynicism (as opposed to skepticism). In addition, students need to learn how to differentiate between fact and opinion; and how to determine the validity of a site.

- D. Our community library encompasses the needs of pre-school children, students (of all ages), adults, and senior citizens. I served all of these groups throughout my professional career. I will continue to do so while I am a local library-board member, and substitute librarian; and I needed to get-up-to-speed, because I was out-of-commission for a period of time.

2. Please highlight a conference experience, other than attending a conference session.

*Did you talk to someone you didn't know at a session? Sit next to someone at a luncheon and have a meaningful conversation? Visit with an exhibitor? How did **this** experience affect your overall outlook of the conference?*

- A. Yes, I did talk to someone I did not know at every session that I attended.
- B. Yes, I did talk to someone I did not know at every luncheon; and even at breakfast, and dinner.
- C. Yes, I did visit with the exhibitors. As a matter of fact, I was able to "renew auld acquaintance" with an exhibitor whom I had met way-back-when.
- D. I know that all of the inherent components in a conference need to be included, while working together to complete the package; and I felt that this was accomplished with the 2024 Wisconsin Library Association Convention. (Yes, I am glad that I was able to attend; and I thank you for allowing, and enabling, me to attend!)

3. As a result of attending this conference, what two things do you plan on implementing at your library in the next six months?

- A. I talked to Kari Preuss about "Why is the Librarian Paid Less than Everyone Else?" and I am going to work on getting our Local Public Librarian a decent wage. (We did request a modest wage in our budget for 2025, and it sounds like that request will be granted; but we need to keep working on that project in the future.)
- B. I talked to Bradley Shipps, Teresa Schmidt, and Shannon Schultz about "Library Board Appointments And Composition"; and I am going to work on getting our Local Library Board Trustees to understand the importance of the appointment that they have accepted, and to be more diligent in learning about the role of a Library Trustee.

4. What kind of support is needed for you to implement these two things? Support from your staff? Your board Of Trustees?

- A. I need the support of the trustees themselves to step-up-to-the-plate to take-care-of-business. The trustees need to

recognize the importance of their role within their library, and the director needs to recognize the importance of her role in the community. We all need to work together to maintain the public-library as an institution that is integral to a thriving community.

- B. I know that WVLS, and WLA, will assist in these endeavors; and, no, I am not afraid to ask them for help.

T H A N K Y O U !

WVLS Post-Conference Report

Andrea Bennett, T.B Scott Free Library (Merrill)

1. Please highlight three sessions from the conference.

What were the session topics? Who presented them? What made these presentations effective and meaningful to you?

Pacing Change, Not Racing Change. Presentation by Kevin Luebke. This session explored taking your visions and goals for the future, putting them into perspective, and prioritizing them in order of importance. The average person can typically handle up to three goals at any given time, so that is what we should strive for. Understanding ways to prioritize goals and creating and sharing your vision while working together as a team, is essential to being successful. We currently have two large projects beginning in our Youth Services department early next year. **This** session gave me the knowledge and tools to help create a more detailed plan and the steps needed to accomplish our goals as we tackle these projects.

Hello Book Seek? Goodbye Dewey! Developing an Alphabet-Based Cataloging System for Youth Nonfiction Collections. Presentation by Valerie Morris. One of our biggest projects for next year is reclassifying our juvenile nonfiction collection. To be more inclusive and make our collection more accessible, we are moving our nonfiction collection to front facing book bins and reclassifying them by subject. This is a huge, and daunting project, but one we have committed to accomplishing by next fall. After attending this session, I have a great list of subjects/categories to work with for classification purposes. I also left with some peace of mind knowing this is an attainable goal and, in the end, it will benefit our patrons, so it is worth the hard work.

Popping Pop Culture Programs. Presentation by Jessica Hodges. I enjoyed this session and came away with some great ideas for programming. Pop culture programs are always a big hit, but sometimes it's hard to know where to start. The presenter offered a host of ideas for various age groups and budgets. Attendees also volunteered some great programming ideas. Fellow librarians are always a great resource.

2. Please highlight a conference experience, other than attending a conference session. Did you talk to someone you didn't know at a session? Sit next to someone at a luncheon and have a meaningful conversation? Visit with an exhibitor? How did **this** experience affect your overall outlook of the conference?

After the Dewey reclassification session, I talked with two other attendees about this project. We are all planning on implementing this change and are looking for ideas and guidance. This discussion was extremely helpful. We discussed our takeaways from the session, what we thought would work and what would not, for each of our libraries. I came away with so many great ideas from this discussion alone. The biggest takeaway was a way to simplify the categories to be more patron friendly. Our fellow librarians are sometimes the greatest resource for new ideas.

3. As a result of attending this conference, what two things do you plan on implementing at your library in the next six months?

The nonfiction reclassification from Dewey Decimal numbers to subject categories is our biggest upcoming project. This will begin before the end of 2024 and hopefully, be completed before summer 2025. Our Youth Services Specialist, who oversees programming, is planning to implement at least one pop culture program. We are looking for some fresh and fun new programming ideas for 2025 so that is a great place to start.

4. What kind of support is needed for you to implement these two things? Support from your staff? Your Board of Trustees?

Support from our Library Director and **staff** is imperative to tackle such our large nonfiction reclassification project. Luckily both the Director and staff understand the benefit of this change and are supportive and willing to help. We also need the support of our Library Board. This change requires the purchase of new front-facing book bins, so we need approval from our Library Board to make this purchase and move forward.

When implementing new children/teen programs, YS staff support is imperative. Staff must work together to develop, organize, and implement new programs. As we all know, teamwork makes the dream work.

WVLS Post-Conference Report

Laurie Renel-Faledas, Crandon Public Library

1. Please highlight three sessions from the conference.

What were the session topics? Who presented them? What made these presentations effective and meaningful to you? Dave Delaney-Keynote: An ADHD Inspiration/ADHD life/his later in life diagnosis which completed the puzzle, his struggles, and his resolve. Effectiveness to me-the problems for the individual with this diagnosis (health). Health issues, prone to addiction, anxiety. Self-respect is key so you can teach others to respect and avoid the loneliness created from a lack of knowledge about your condition. Giving Great Service by Jamie Matczak-Great service never ends because you must assess your adherence to it often, and stick to the service standards while adjusting the vision for your patrons. Avoiding stereotypes and emotions while discovering what is realistic for those you serve. Make their day, use "and" and not but, do what is right, and hold yourself/your staff accountable. It is a privilege to help/serve our patrons. Popping Pop-culture with Jessica Hodges. Topics were many offerings: photo-op station, youth club with pizza and drinks, book or scavenger hunt, Perler bead crafts...I thought of a drop-in for teens with food and drink to read/discuss a graphic novel or using the school mascot at Storytime, and our City Police and the K-9 unit is now planned. I am also looking at a toddler Zumba class, with a certified instructor, who is willing to offer this for a few classes.

2. Please highlight a conference experience, other than attending a conference session. Did you talk to someone you didn't know at a session? Sit next to someone at a luncheon and have a meaningful conversation? Visit with an exhibitor? How did **this** experience affect your overall outlook of the conference?

I sat next to many people I didn't know, and this was purposeful, met a friend who works in a Madison area library, and listened for problem-solving conversation, new ways to help patrons with their needs, and spoke with an exhibitor who gave me new ideas for a possible update at our library in the future. There was not a session I didn't enjoy. I found new things to learn at each and will be experimenting, re-visiting my conference notes, and implementing many learned ideas in the near and distant future.

3. As a result of attending this conference, what two things do you plan on implementing at your library in the next six months?

I plan to use the Roleplay with staff and volunteers from Dr Alonzo's keynote session, Lessons from the Pando Forest. I plan to utilize communication, competence, and contract with these individuals to uphold the standards here, and to introduce a new

staff member (not hired) to these supportive ideals. I plan to teach what is right and to be transparent about my transparency because I will never make everyone happy. I will continue to involve my staff/board members and include them in as much of the “to do” list so as not to burn out.

4. What kind of support is needed for you to implement these two things? Support from your staff? Your Board of Trustees?

I need to hire a staff member to fill a position with fewer hours than we previously had. This new person will need training, and our staff will be able to assist with this as well as myself and WVLS. I need board members to support my connection with the city for budget and requests. I need the community to be supportive of our goodwill and continue to use our library as the community center/library it has become. Together we can accomplish most anything we set our minds to.

WVLS Post-Conference Report

Leah Giordano - MCPL

1. Please highlight three sessions from the conference.

What were the session topics? Who presented them? What made these presentations effective and meaningful to you?

Keeping Pace: Public Libraries and the Inevitability of AI

Presented by Zander Miller, Kenosha Public Library

This session offered valuable insights into the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential impact on public libraries. Zander Miller expertly explored how AI tools can be used to enhance library services, engage patrons, and streamline operations. Beyond discussing the benefits, Miller also addressed critical challenges, such as the risks of deep fakes and AI hallucinations, and their potential implications for information integrity and trust. The presentation was particularly meaningful because it combined practical strategies—highlighting real-life examples of libraries successfully integrating AI—with thoughtful discussions on the ethical concerns that come with these technologies. It was a timely and thought-provoking session, emphasizing the importance of libraries staying ahead of technological trends while remaining steadfast in their mission to provide reliable and equitable access to information.

JobPods: An Innovative Approach to Job Seeking

Presented by Danielle Zeamer, Brown County Library

I was already intrigued by the concept of JobPods before attending the session, and Danielle Zeamer did not disappoint. The presentation centered on a unique initiative that Brown County Library has piloted to support job seekers in a more personalized, flexible way. By setting up dedicated "JobPods," libraries can offer patrons private spaces equipped with technology and resources to aid in job searching, resume writing, and interview preparation. What stood out was the collaborative approach Zeamer emphasized, highlighting partnerships with local businesses and workforce development agencies. The session was inspiring because it showcased how libraries can adapt to meet the evolving needs of their communities, especially during times of economic uncertainty.

Overdue for Action: Naloxone and Harm Reduction Training for Wisconsin Libraries

Presented by Jess Morrow and Jordan Ramsdell, Harm Reduction Outreach Specialists

This session was incredibly eye-opening, providing detailed statistics on the current opioid crisis and how libraries can play a role in harm reduction efforts. Jess Morrow and Jordan Ramsdell outlined both the challenges and opportunities involved in implementing harm reduction resources at libraries. They emphasized the importance of libraries as safe, accessible spaces where community members can access potentially life-saving interventions without stigma. The practical portion of the session was especially impactful—attendees were provided with training and nasal and injectable naloxone kits, as well as fentanyl test strips, to take back to our libraries. This hands-on approach, combined with the comprehensive data shared, reinforced the value of libraries in addressing public health crises.

2. **Please highlight a conference experience, other than attending a conference session. Did you talk to someone you didn't know at a session? Sit next to someone at a luncheon and have a meaningful conversation? Visit with an exhibitor? How did this experience affect your overall outlook of the conference?**

One of the best parts of the conference outside of the sessions was reconnecting with a former employee who now works at another library. It was truly rewarding to catch up with her, hear about how she's adjusting to her new position, and offer some guidance. Additionally, I enjoyed reconnecting with many of the library directors I met during last year's Library Legislative Week—it was a great reminder of the wonderful leadership we have in our library system!

Other memorable highlights included a celebratory dinner in honor of Kris Adams Wendt, followed by the awards and honors ceremony the next evening, where Kris was inducted into the WLA Library Hall of Fame. It was very cool to be there to congratulate Kris, who continues to advocate for Wisconsin libraries.

3. **As a result of attending this conference, what two things do you plan on implementing at your library in the next six months?**

Harm Reduction: We now have Narcan available in the administration office to use in the event of an emergency. This is a crucial step in ensuring the safety of our patrons and staff, and I plan to explore additional resources to ensure we are prepared to respond effectively if an incident occurs.

JobPod: During the JobPod session, I connected with the team responsible for installing these resources in libraries across the state. I have committed to bringing a JobPod to MCPL, which will provide a dedicated space for job seekers to access tools and support in a private, tech-equipped environment. This initiative will align with our mission to serve the community by addressing job-seeking needs in an accessible way.

4. **What kind of support is needed for you to implement these two things? Support from your staff? Your Board of Trustees?**

No additional support is currently needed. We will explore resources to replenish naloxone supplies as needed to ensure we are always prepared. I will keep the Library Board informed on the progress of the JobPod installation as new information becomes available.

WVLS Post-Conference Report

Murray Johnson, MCPL

1. Please highlight three sessions from the conference.

What were the session topics? Who presented them? What made these presentations effective and meaningful to you?

“Hello Book Seek? Goodbye Dewey!” by Valerie Morris who made the youth services nonfiction collection at the Whitefish Bay Public Library more user friendly by using her own variation of the Metis system using to put the books in categories (i.e. Animals), but the process took about two years and needed in house collaboration with other departments and an increased processing budget. I always intend to keep the patrons needs ahead of my own and this system intrigues me, but it would take collaboration of multiple departments and a one-time increase in processing costs. So a thorough cost/benefit analysis would have to be done before I would undertake a project like this at my county library and it 8 branches.

“Dive Deeper into Lists and Collections with TeachingBooks” (for librarians on BadgerLink) by Susannah Gilbert. She gave a hands on presentation on how to create your own account and be able to make your own lists (i.e. Story Times, Readers’ Advisories, or to check how diverse specific collections in your library might be) and that bookmarks can be created with a QR code that patrons can scan to put the list in their phone. A free resource that I will be using more often at my library.

“Promoting AI Literacy in the Library” by Jodi Pierre who discussed the importance of librarians become familiar with the basics of AI to help patrons who may be using it or wanting to use it, especially text based AI. Discussed the positives and negatives text generating AI systems (i.e. ChatGPT) and gave three free webinars as good starting points to become familiar with AI. This was another very practical presentation that I will use and share with my library because as she stated, “AI is here and our patrons will be using it.”

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I met a young man, Simon, from the Waupaca Public Library and it was nice to hear his enthusiasm about his job in Youth Services and his passion for D&D. Also, spoke with the Baker & Taylor reps. One who educated me on VOX books and that their devices are easier on the book bindings and that their warranties are longer (18 months) than what Wonderbooks warranties are (1 year). The other rep, Curt, gave me a possible solution with the MANGA backorder problem with some the titles as he suggested to put them on standing order to insure they get to the library in a timely manner.

3. As a result of attending this conference, what two things do you plan on implementing at your library in the next six months?
 1. I would like to do a TeachingBooks training within my department to show my colleagues how to use the list creation function and how to convert those lists into bookmarks with a QR code.
 2. Share with my colleagues the three free webinars regarding AI and other bibliographical information that Jodi Pierre shared at her presentation.
 3. I want to get some popular Manga series titles placed on standing order with Baker & Taylor.

4. What kind of support is needed for you to implement these two things? Support from your staff? Your Board of Trustees?

For the first two I would have to get my manager's approval and for the third would have to go through support services.

WVLS Post-Conference Report

Teresa Hall, Loyal Public Library

1. Please highlight three sessions from the conference. What were the session topics? Who presented them? What made these presentations effective and meaningful to you?
 - a. *Making the most of the CCBC – Megan Schliesman and Merri Lindgren. I've heard about and seen lists of CCVC recommendations but never realized I could go right to the website to use filters to search for recommendations where we have needs to fill.*
 - b. *Reaching more readers with Libby – Kristin Laufenberg. With a 13% growth rate, wait lists grow to an average 76 days. This session helped me gain insight to how licenses work so I can better explain the wait to patrons and get them other items while they wait.*
 - c. *Popping pop culture – Jessica Hodges. Children program ideas are sometimes challenging. I'd never give thought to using pop culture characters. The ideas given ranged from hiring someone to using what you have on hand to set up a variety of stations for children to engage.*

2. Please highlight a conference experience, other than attending a conference session. Did you talk to someone you didn't know at a session? Sit next to someone at a luncheon and have a meaningful conversation? Visit with an exhibitor? How did **this** experience affect your overall outlook of the conference?
 - a. *While it may be considered a "session", the closing luncheon with Dr. Alonzo Kelly on connection was emotionally uplifting. Having experienced the fire loss, being able to spend the conference time with my WVLS colleagues was supportive to my wellbeing. His exercises of "I see you" were as humbling as the support. I was connected.*

3. As a result of attending this conference, what two things do you plan on implementing at your library in the next six months?
 - a. *As learned in the Libby session, in some systems, Libby checkouts count toward funding formulas. I'd like to know more details on this.*
 - b. *While I'm not ready to "Ditch Dewey" completely, the ideas presented in this session encouraged me to look closer at our collection to see where topics might develop for grouping subjects. Why are books on Civil rights and Women's suffrage not included with books on American history?*

4. What kind of support is needed for you to implement these two things? Support from your staff? Your Board of Trustees?
 - a. *The presenter and an attendee of the Libby session gave me their business cards. I need to reach out to them about Libby circulations toward funding formulas. Based on those conversations, I will reach out to county board or WVLS staff.*
 - b. *Staff conversations will need to happen as we discuss which topics our patrons will be interested in. I sat in on this session with Andrea from Merrill who is looking to do the same in their children's section. She will be another go to resource.*