

The

LAMPLIGHTER



*a monthly electronic newsletter of the
Wisconsin Valley Library Service
August 2006 Volume XLIII, Number 8*



DIRECTOR'S MEMO

I'M ON A MISSION...

I was driving down to Madison the other day to a WLA Foundation Board meeting when the idea occurred to me that it would be wonderful if every library in the WVLS service area contributed to the Campaign for Wisconsin Libraries in 2006 (and, of course, every year thereafter).

Could that really happen? I don't see why not. I'm hoping that you will join me in this 'mission.'

For instance, a library community could 'get credit' for contributing to the Campaign for Wisconsin Libraries if...

- (a) any person on the library staff contributed any amount
- (b) any person in the community contributed any amount
- (c) the library board itself voted to donate on behalf of its library
- (d) the Friends/library support group of a library (or any individual member of that group) donated any amount to the Campaign
- (e) the library board decided to assign a percentage of its 'fine' money or meeting room fees to the Campaign (at least during one week or month a year)
- (f) a business in that community donated dollars directly to the Campaign or gave an item or service to be auctioned off at the Foundation auction at the fall conference of the Wisconsin Library Association (funds from that auction go to support Foundation projects)
- (g) gifts were made to the Campaign in memory of someone or to honor the service of someone
- (h) dollars were given to mark a special event like someone's birthday, or work anniversary date, a special event at a library such as a milestone library anniversary

You get the idea.

Please ask your library board and/or Partners group and/or individuals to give something (\$1...\$5...\$10...\$25...\$50, etc.) to help support this Campaign.

I invite you to join my mission. It doesn't matter how much you give...what matters is that you care enough to recognize that libraries deserve to be valued and supported financially at an adequate and consistent level and that we desperately need to promote libraries in the eyes of those who fund them... and that we aren't able to do this as individual libraries but maybe we can if we band together.

You have all heard me talking about the Campaign for Wisconsin Libraries (a project of the Wisconsin Library Association Foundation Board). It's a project to try to raise \$100,000 every year to promote the value of libraries of all types in Wisconsin.

For more information on what the Campaign is about, go to the Campaign web site at www.wisconsinlibraries.org

Those of us who work in and for libraries know how important we are in the lives of those we serve but many others (many of those who fund libraries) don't understand why brick and mortar library buildings have value anymore now that a person can find the answers to ALL of their questions on the Internet. What? You don't believe that? What are you doing to change that perception? How about sending a few dollars to the Campaign?

So far, dollars from the Campaign for Wisconsin Libraries have been used to produce radio spots, magnets, buttons, brochures, and pencils with the message "Support Wisconsin Libraries - Keep us all in a better state." In addition, Campaign dollars have also hired a part-time student intern to work on Campaign tasks and have paid for ads in publications of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and the League of Wisconsin Municipalities.

Based on a suggestion from the WLA Foundation Board, the DLTCL staff submitted an LSTA 2007 grant proposal for \$50,000 for a study to determine the economic value of Wisconsin libraries. While we're not sure yet if that grant will be awarded, if it is, that information will really be helpful when we talk to our funding sources at all levels of government and to corporate donors. Up to \$30,000 in Campaign dollars will probably be used to help fund the research for this grant and to disseminate/promote the study results. These are examples of the kind of ways we can support libraries if we work together.

The main purpose of this "Support Wisconsin Libraries..." message is to encourage individuals, groups, and businesses who think libraries are important to give money to the Campaign so that enough money can be raised to ultimately fund a position whose responsibility it will be to promote libraries of all types all across the state...using promotions that are already available (through ALA, PLA, etc.) as well as creating new ones. The day will be coming when major businesses in the WVLS area will be contacted and asked to help support this Campaign. When 'THE ASK' is made to these potential corporate sponsors, it would be a much stronger request if the 'asker' could say that all of the libraries in our service area (as well as their support groups) have already committed financial support to the Campaign for Wisconsin Libraries.

Very few libraries have enough staff expertise to do a good job of promoting the value of our libraries to various funding sources. Very few libraries can afford to hire someone to do a professional promotion job - not to mention paying for media time, printing costs and distribution, etc.

But together... we can, indeed, "Support Wisconsin Libraries."

If you are willing to give something, please send it to the WLA office at: 5250 E. Terrace Drive, Suite A1; Madison, WI 53718. Send a note with your donation asking that it be used for the Campaign for Wisconsin Libraries and that it be credited to the WVLS area.

Thanks.

-- Heather Eldred

2nd

NORTHWOODS CONFERENCE

for

Library Friends, Supporters & Volunteers



Saturday, September 30, 2006

8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Rothschild Village Hall Community Room

Rothschild, WI 54474

The Friends of the Marathon County Public Library and the staff of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service are sponsoring a fall conference where library friends can share ideas and jumpstart local efforts to support public libraries. Some of the topics to be covered in this conference include:

What to do BEFORE, DURING & AFTER a Book Sale

- **BOOK DEALERS** – *How do they fit in? Do they get treated differently or like every other customer?*
- **BOOK SALE LEFTOVERS** – *What do you do with them?*
- **LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION** – *Where is the best place to have a sale? What is the best time to have a sale? How do books get to the location?*
- **PRIVILEGED ACCESS TO BOOKS** – *Who gets privileged access and what are the procedures?*
- **ON-GOING BOOK SALES** – *What is involved? Who keeps the shelves filled? What about selling books online?*
- **SALES TAX ISSUES** – *What are the legal requirements?*
- **MARKETING THE BOOK SALE** – *How do people learn about your book sale? How do you report book sale revenues – to whom and why?*
- **SORTING & PRICING GUIDELINES** – *Do you need to sort? How much can you charge? What are others doing?*

Other Fundraising Suggestions & Ideas

GARDEN WALKS...SILENT AUCTIONS...BUS TRIPS...IN-HOUSE STORES...& MORE!

CONFERENCE COST - \$10.00

This fee includes handouts, beverages, snacks and a box lunch

If you have questions or comments or need special accommodations to attend this conference, please contact Marla Sepnafski at 715/261-7252.



To register for the **NORTHWOODS CONFERENCE for Library Friends, Supporters & Volunteers**, mail completed registration and a check for \$10.00 (made out to Wisconsin Valley Library Service) to:
Marla Sepnafski; Wisconsin Valley Library Service; 300 N. First Street; Wausau, WI 54403

Name _____ Library _____

Telephone No. _____ Email _____ Amount Enclosed _____



REGISTRATION DEADLINE: September 15, 2006



Nearby hotels:

Rodeway Inn - 904 Industrial Park Ave. - Mosinee 1-800-424-6423 - \$73.00

Stoney Creek Inn - 1100 Imperial Ave - Mosinee 1-800-659-2220 - \$79.00

To get a 10% discount, mention that you are attending the Northwoods Conference for Library Friends, Supporters & Volunteers.

WLA UPDATE

FRIENDS OF WISCONSIN LIBRARIES JOIN FORCES WITH WLA

At their annual meeting April 29th, members of the Friends of Wisconsin Libraries voted to dissolve FOWL and join forces with the Wisconsin Library Association. Despite concerns about getting lost in WLA, the leaders of FOWL felt that the support of a larger association with paid staff would benefit Friends throughout the state. The move allows Friends to focus on supporting libraries through their local organizations, rather than managing the activities of a statewide organization.

WLA's immediate Past President, Terry Dawson, had met with FOWL leadership twice in 2005 to discuss how such a transition might take place. Also in 2005, the Wisconsin Library Trustees Association, a division of WLA, voted to change their name to Wisconsin Library Trustees & Advocates, in order to make it clearer that all library supporters are welcome to participate in their activities and leadership positions.

In 2006, WLA President David Weinhold communicated with FOWL leadership about opportunities in WLA after the WLA Board approved new membership rates for Friends. Specifically, in 2006, all existing FOWL members will receive a full year of WLA membership at no charge and reduced 2006 WLA Conference registration fees. They will also receive discounted renewal rates for their second year of membership.

In addition, new members who join in 2006 will qualify for special rates. Library-based Friends groups will be able to join WLA at the nonprofit membership rate of \$50, rather than the current rate of \$75. Individuals will be able to join for \$20 for a full year of membership, rather than the regular rate of \$32. New members will also qualify for discounted 2006 WLA Conference registration fees.

As part of WLA, Friends will be represented on the board of the WLTA. As members, Friends will be supporting WLA's legislative agenda to improve funding to libraries of all types and pass important library legislation in the next biennium. They will also qualify for current institutional and individual membership benefits, such as free membership in up to 3 units; a subscription to the WLA Newsletter, and reduced fees on spring conferences.

WLA will be promoting the new membership to current FOWL members and to prospective Friends of the Library groups throughout the state via emails to library directors and direct mailings to Friends' Presidents. If you would like more information about Friends' membership in WLA, please contact Brigitte Vacha, Membership Services, at vacha@scls.lib.wi.us or 608/245-3640.

YOUTH MATTERS

SING BILL HARLEY'S TUNE TO PROMOTE YOUR LIBRARY!

Singer, songwriter Bill Harley wrote a special song just for the ALSC's (Association for Library Services to Children) *Kids! @ your library*® public awareness campaign. Performed at the recent ALA Conference, this lively, catchy tune captures the essence of just how much there is to see and do at the library! Four versions of his song are now available online for you to download and use in your community at <http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/projectspartners/KidsSong.htm> The website also includes a lyrics page and sheet music.

For more information on ALSC's **Kids! @ your library**® campaign, visit <http://www.ala.org/kids> --Laura M. Schulte-Cooper; Program Officer, Communications; ALSC (pubyac listserv; 7/6/06)

CONSIDER PURCHASING THESE TITLES!

VOYA's PERFECT TENS

According to the June 2006 issue of *VOYA*, "only the most extraordinary books qualify for the *Voice of Youth Advocates*' highest ratings of 5Q for literary quality and 5P for teen appeal." Of the 1,183 books reviewed in the 2005 issues of *VOYA*, the following ten books represent the quintessential young adult books for the year:

Sex, Puberty and All That Stuff: A Guide to Growing Up by Jacqui Bailey (Barron's, 2004; 0-7641-2992-9)

Hello, America by Livia Bitton-Jackson (Simon & Schuster, 2005; 0-689-86755-7)

Rebel Angels by Libba Bray (Delacorte, 2005; 0-385-73029-2)

Invisible by Pete Hautman (Simon & Schuster, 2005; 0-689-86800-6)

Day of Tears: A Novel in Dialogue by Julius Lester (Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2005; 0-7868-0490-4)

The Riddles of Epsilon by Christine Morton-Shaw (Katherine Tegen Books/HarperCollins, 2005; 0-06-072819-1)

Tales of Horror by Edgar Allan Poe (Knopf, 2005; 0-375-83305-6)

Finding Lubchenko by Michael Simmons (Razorbill/Penguin, 2005; 1-59514-021-2)

The Daily Show with Jon Stewart Presents *America (The Book): A Citizen's Guide to Democracy Inaction* by Jon Stewart with *The Daily Show* Staff (Warner, 2004; 0-446-53268-1)

What I Call Life by Jill Wolfson (Henry Holt, 2005; 0-8050-7669-7)

("The Perfect Tens: The Top Ten Books Reviewed in *Voice of Youth Advocates* in 2005"
<http://pdfs.voya.com/VO/YA2/VOYA200606PerfectTens.pdf> ; *VOYA*; June 2006; <http://www.voya.com>)

INFO TO GO

IT'S NEW!

ALA'S JOBLIST

Seeking a job in library and information science and technology? Looking for the right person to fill a job? If so, check out the American Library Association's JobLIST (<http://www.joblist.ala.org/>), a comprehensive new one-stop-shopping employment website for jobs in library and information science and technology.

Unveiled at the Annual Conference in June, JobLIST is a joint project of *American Libraries* magazine and *C&RL News*, which is published by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). The goal of

this collaborative venture according to ACRL Executive Director Mary Ellen Davis, is to make JobLIST the number-one source for jobs in library and information science and technology. JobLIST will:

- Allow job seekers to search through current job advertisements by job title, employer, state, salary range, and other criteria.
- Post job seekers' resumes so that employers will be able to search for and contact job seekers.
- Offer job seekers a "tips and tricks" section with links to web pages and websites dealing with employment issues in library and technology fields.

While free registration to access certain portions of JobLIST is required, there is no fee for job seekers. Anyone visiting the site will be able to view the job ads. For more information, visit the JobLIST website at <http://www.joblist.ala.org/>.

(edited from *American Libraries*; June/July 2006)

FIRST EVER!

NATIONAL FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES WEEK, OCTOBER 22-28

Friends of Libraries groups *now* have their very own national week of celebration! The Friends of Libraries U.S.A. (FOLUSA) is coordinating a national Friends of Libraries Week October 22-28, 2006.

The celebration offers a two-fold opportunity to celebrate the Friends. Use the time to creatively promote your group in the community, to raise awareness, and to promote membership. This is also an excellent opportunity for your library and Board of Trustees to recognize the Friends for their help and support of the library.

FOLUSA has some sample publicity materials to help you promote National Friends of Libraries Week in your community on their website at <http://www.folusa.com/sharing/national-friends-week.php>). Check it out!

(*American Libraries Direct*; 7/26/06)

OVER THE COUNTER



CREATE YOUR OWN CELEBRITY READ POSTERS!

Wouldn't it be great to have children, teens and adults in your community promoting the love of reading 24-hours a day, 7 days a week? And wouldn't it be great to implement this PR campaign with a minimal amount of time and expense?

If you think so, you should consider purchasing the new product from ALA Graphics called **READ CD 2**, which provides you with the tools to make eye-catching Community/Celebrity READ posters for your library. The **READ CD 2** contains several exciting pre-designed READ posters and bookmarks as well as a selection of graphics, fonts and backgrounds for those who wish to create their own. Available for \$149.00 (ALA Member is \$134.10), the **READ CD 2** is available for non-profit, promotional use only. Also, you must have Photoshop to use the layered files.

For more information, visit the ALA Online Store at http://www.alastore.ala.org/SiteSolution.taf?_sn=catalog&_pn=product_detail&_op=1957.

(*American Libraries Direct*; 7/26/06)

NEW RESOURCES FOR RURAL LIBRARIES!

The Committee on Rural, Native and Tribal Libraries of All Kinds recently released tools to help small libraries (primarily with populations under 10,000) conduct advocacy and outreach efforts in their communities. The new initiative was developed in collaboration with the American Library Association (ALA) Office for Outreach and Literacy Services and The Campaign for America's Libraries.



One of the resources is a bright orange pamphlet titled "A Small but Powerful Guide to Winning Big Support for Your Rural Library." Available online at www.ala.org/rural under Advocacy, this guide is full of key talking points and examples of what real rural librarians have been doing. Also available at this site is a companion online toolkit with

a sample action plan and outline, customizable publicity materials, promotional ideas, tips and strategies, and best practices. (edited from *Marketing Library Services*; July/August 2006)

GRANT UPDATE

APPLY FOR A 2007 NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK GRANT

Libraries across the United States are invited to apply for the \$5,000 Scholastic Library Publishing National Library Week Grant, which will be awarded to a single library for the best public awareness campaign incorporating the 2007 National Library Week theme, "Come together @ your library®."

The grant, in support of libraries, is sponsored by Scholastic Library Publishing, a division of Scholastic, the global children's publishing, education and media company, and is administered by the Public Awareness Committee of the American Library Association (ALA). **This year's application deadline is October 16, 2006.** National Library Week is April 15-21, 2007.

All proposals must use the "Come together @ your library®" theme, which incorporates The Campaign for America's Libraries' "@ your library" brand, on any and all promotional and publicity material supporting National Library Week activities. Guidelines for using the brand are available on the campaign Web site at www.ala.org/@yourlibrary under the "download logos" section.

A grant application form and guidelines are available on The Campaign for America's Libraries Web site at www.ala.org/@yourlibrary/nlwgrant. Information also is available from the ALA Public Information Office. Telephone: 800-545-2433, ext. 4020. E-mail: mhumphrey@ala.org.

The winner will be notified and announced at the 2007 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Seattle. Information on last year's winner, the Maricopa County Library District in Phoenix, Ariz., and the winning application can be viewed at www.ala.org/@yourlibrary/nlwgrant. (ALA news release; 7/11/06)

GRANTS AVAILABLE FROM THE BARBARA BUSH FOUNDATION FOR FAMILY LITERACY

The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy has announced its 2007 national grant competition. The foundation's grant-making program seeks to develop or expand projects designed to support the development of literacy skills for adult primary care givers and their children. Eligibility requirements, application guidelines and answers to Frequently Asked Questions may be found at the foundation's web site at <http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com>. **Applications are due Friday, September 8, 2006.** (from *Children's Event Organizer*, newsletter of the Lakeshores Library System and MidWisconsin Federated Library System; 7/19/06)

FROM HITHER & YON

TEN RULES FOR NEW LIBRARIANS

Following is a short, cautionary list of things to ponder in a Library 2.0 world (or whatever you choose to call it) as new grads hit the streets and start their first jobs (edited from "Tame the Web: Libraries and Technology"; a weblog by Michael Stephens;

http://tametheweb.com/2006/06/ten_rules_for_the_new_libraria_1.html):

1. **Ask questions** in your interviews. Hard questions like "How many projects are on the library's list right now?" or "What is the technology planning process like here?"
2. **Pay attention** to what the librarians who are interviewing you say about their users. Are they dismissive, bothered by them and their presence in the library? Run away!
3. **Read far and wide** and immerse yourself in culture, pop and otherwise.
4. **Understand copyright** and the Creative Commons.
5. **Use the 2.0 tools**, not because it's cool, but do it as one way to harness the collective intelligence of our profession.
6. **Work and play nice** with each other at your jobs, at conferences and in those places where information professionals gather. This isn't a competition or a contest. It's not all about you, new grad...It's about the user. And creating services. And being the best librarian you can be.
7. **Manage yourself** in a professional way but don't forsake fun, wonder, curiosity or play....Do not be that person in the meeting that says "I didn't have time."
8. **Avoid technolust**. Technology worship is a trap.
9. **Listen to the seasoned librarians** you encounter. They know things. Good things. Listen and they may form your future decisions and planning. Learn from every conversation, meeting or water cooler chat.
10. **Remember the Big Picture**. Don't start 5 new HOT technology-based services without the foresight to plan how they will continue (and then flit on to the next thing). Understand budgeting, staffing and governing forces.

WEB SITES OF INTEREST (tourist traps on the information superhighway!)

CHILD AND FAMILY WEBGUIDE <http://www.cfw.tufts.edu/>

A directory that evaluates, describes and provides links to hundreds of sites containing child development research and practical advice. Topics are selected on the basis of parent recommendations; covering all ages from early child development through adolescence. From Tufts University, the goal of the WebGuide is to give the public easy access to the best child development information on the web.

(RefDesk site-of-the-day, 7/18/06)

CHRISTY AWARDS <http://www.christyawards.com/>

The Christy Awards are a new Christian fiction award to recognize novelists and novels of excellence in several genres of Christian fiction. The award is named in honor of one of Catherine Marshall's novels and to honor her contribution to the growth of Christian fiction. A list of participating publishers is at <http://www.christyawards.com/publishers.html>

(Newsflashes, newsletter of the Indianhead Federated Library System; 7/26/06)

HOW DO I? ... CAN TOMATOES http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/can3_tomato.html

This is the time of year when vegetable growers harvest tomatoes. This site, by the National Center for Home Food Preservation at the University of Georgia, provides instructions for preparing canned tomatoes, tomato juice, tomato paste, tomato sauce, ketchup, salsa, and other tomato products.

Included are charts showing suggested processing times at different elevations and associated canner gauge pressures.

(*LII New this Week*; Copyright 2006 by Librarians' Index to the Internet; 2/16/06)

PODCASTING @ THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON

<http://engage.doit.wisc.edu/podcasting/>

This is a helpful site for information on podcasting, including what it is, teaching and learning with podcasting, examples of podcasts, how to create and deliver podcasts and additional resources on podcasting.

(*NewsFlashes*, newsletter of the Indianhead Federated Library System; 7/11/06)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 15 – **WVLS Library Advisory Committee meeting** – Horace Mann Middle School, Wausau – 9:30 a.m.

August 24 – **WVLS Executive Committee meeting** – Marathon County Public Library – 9:30 a.m.

September LIBRARY CARD SIGN-UP MONTH – At the start of the new academic year, organize a campaign to remind parents, teachers, and kids that a library card is an important back-to-school supply. For ideas on promoting library cards, and making them the most valued and used card in every wallet, visit <http://www.ala.org/ala/pio/otherinit/card/librarycard.htm>

September 11 – Libraries are invited to participate in the September Project, an international initiative among libraries to use the 9/11 tragedy as a way to revitalize democracy in America. The September Project site at <http://www.TheSeptemberProject.org> includes resources, program ideas and a map of all participating libraries. (edited from the *Monday Memo*, newsletter of the Arrowhead Library System, 6/19/06)

September 16 – **WVLS Board of Trustees meeting** – Marathon County Public Library – 9:30 a.m.

September 20-21 – Northwest Wisconsin Children's Book Conference – Telemark Resort & Convention Center - \$95 – 6.5 CEUs – details are at http://www.telemarkeducation.com/bookconference/invite_sitemap.htm

September 20-24 - The Wisconsin Library Association Foundation is sponsoring a tour to New York City. The group will fly to New York on Midwest Express on September 20 and return on September 24. The cost, which ranges from \$719 to \$1,249 depending on accommodations, includes airfare, ground transportation, four nights at the Hotel Edison, one theatre ticket and a \$25 gift to the WLA Foundation. For additional information, contact Rebecca Roepke, Director of the Cudahy Family Library, at 414-769-2246 or rebecca.roepke@mcfls.org

September 21 – **WVLS Reference Workshop** – details forthcoming.

September 23-30 – Banned Books Week – “It’s Your Freedom We’re Talking About, Celebrating Your Freedom to Read” is an opportunity to conduct or sponsor positive educational programs demonstrating the harm of censorship. The BBW website has a sample *proclamation* and *opinion column announcements* (<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bbwlinks/librarians.htm>) and sample *audio public service announcements* (<http://www.ala.org/bbooks/psas>) that libraries may edit and adapt for use locally. Also, a *BBW Press kit*, that includes three full-color posters, the List of Books Challenged or Banned in 2005-2006, 100 bookmarks, and one Banned Books Week button is available for \$35 at <http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bbwkit/bbwkit.htm#bbwkit>.

September 30 – **2nd Northwoods Conference for Library Friends, Supporters & Volunteers** – Rothschild Village Community Room (Rothschild, WI) - \$10 -details about the conference and how to register are provided above, or visit the WVLS web site at <http://wvls.lib.wi.us/Workshops/workshop.html> - registration deadline is **September 18th**.

October 22-28 – NATIONAL FRIENDS OF LIBRARIES WEEK – for more information, visit <http://www.folusa.com/sharing/national-friends-week.php>

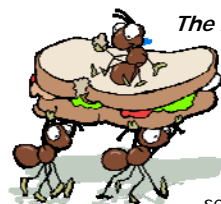
October 31-November 3 – **2006 “Making Connections” WLA Conference** – Kalahari Resort and Convention Center, Wisconsin Dells – more information is available at <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/conferences/2006/>. Please make room reservations at the Kalahari by calling 1-877-525-2427 at your earliest convenience. Conference room rates are \$99 and there is a deposit policy of one night plus tax at the time the reservation is made. (edited from *WLA E-News*; 6/9/06)

ATTENTION: Wessler Scholarships are available to cover some/all costs associated with attendance at reference and/or interlibrary loan continuing education events. If interested in becoming a Wessler Scholar, contact the WVLS office (715/261-7250) for more information. The application form and more information are available at <http://wvls.lib.wi.us/About/wessler.htm>

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“I am still determined to be cheerful and happy, in whatever situation I may be; for I have also learned from experience that the greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our dispositions, and not upon our circumstances.”

*-- Martha Washington
(Thought-of-the-Day; 7/01/06)*



The Lamplighter is a monthly electronic newsletter of the Wisconsin Valley Library Service. Contributions are welcome!

Back issues are available at <http://wvls.lib.wi.us/Newsletter/newsindex.htm> Note: Web links in past issues are not checked for currency and may no longer work.

When the most recent issue becomes available, readers are alerted by a notice posted to WISPUBLIB, or sent an email.

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Wisconsin Libraries
Keep Us All In A Better State