

OWLS Director report

January 16, 2020 OWLS Board of Trustees Meeting

Library Legislative Day

Library Legislative Day is scheduled for Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at the Madison Concourse Hotel. System and library trustees are strongly encouraged to attend. This is a great opportunity to tell our legislators about the value of library and system services. Please see the January issue of Trustee Tale for “A Beginner’s Guide to Library Legislative Day.”

Wild Wisconsin Winter Web Conference

The Wild Wisconsin Winter Web Conference is a state-wide web conference developed by the Nicolet Federated Library System and supported by 15 other library systems in Wisconsin since 2013. Trustees are welcome to participate in this series of webinars. Details are here:

<http://www.wildwiscwinterweb.com/>

More OWLS Libraries go Fine Free!

At the turn of the new year, the Kaukauna Public Library announced they would be going fine free and waiving past fines. The Waupaca Area Public Library just went fine free for children and will also waive existing fines on children’s accounts. The Scandinavia Public Library has been fine free for most materials for several years, and the Clintonville Public Library and Sturm Memorial Library in Manawa have been fine free for children. The fine free trend is gaining momentum across the country, with several major library systems, including Chicago Public, making the transition to fine free recently. Learn more about why libraries are eliminating fines in this TEDx Talk by Dawn Wacek of the La Crosse Public Library: https://www.ted.com/talks/dawn_wacek_free_is_key_library_fines_and_access.

WPLC and Macmillan Ebook Embargo

[Excerpted from <https://ebooksforall.org/>] Beginning November 1, 2019, Macmillan Publishers implemented a new policy that allows libraries—no matter the size of their city or town—to purchase only one copy of each new eBook title for the first eight weeks after a book’s release. This embargo limits libraries’ ability to provide access to information for all. It particularly harms library patrons with disabilities or learning issues. One of the great things about eBooks is that they can become large-print books with only a few clicks, and most eBook readers offer fonts and line spacing that make reading easier for people who have dyslexia or other visual challenges. Because portable devices are light and easy to hold, eBooks are easier to use for some people who have physical disabilities.

An ALA petition demanding #ebooksforall has collected more than 240,000 signatures. Wisconsin has a statewide OverDrive collection organized by the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC, <https://wplc.overdrive.com/>). OWLS is a member. The WPLC Board, Digital Library Steering Committee, and Collection Development Committee all voted in December to implement a partial boycott of Macmillan.

As of December 23rd, all Consortium and Advantage selectors, have been advised of the following:

- The WPLC and any Advantage accounts will not purchase any new Macmillan ebook titles.
- The WPLC will continue to purchase audiobooks and copies of currently owned Macmillan ebook titles needed to fill holds.
- WPLC will work with OverDrive to remove Macmillan titles from curated lists and browsing collections in Wisconsin's Digital library.

Most if not all selectors weren't purchasing embargoed Macmillan titles before December 23rd anyway, but it's good to have an official position from WPLC.

APL Compliance Plan

Appleton Public Library has begun implementation of the compliance plan approved by the OWLS Board last year with the goal of submitting their 2019 annual report to the state by the statutory deadline of February 29, 2020. Director Rortvedt has sent notice to the City of Appleton Finance Department reminding them of the deadline and the importance of remaining in compliance. Further, the Appleton PL Board of Trustees has modified the date of their February board meeting to occur on Tuesday, February 25th. Late submission of the 2018 annual report was due to late receipt of financial data regarding health insurance claims, which is out of the control of library staff. Nevertheless, I appreciate APL's efforts to meet the deadline this year.