



# WRapper Newsletter

WMRLS Services are provided through state funds administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC)

## Effect of Elimination of the State Income Tax on WMRLS and Libraries

by John Ramsay, Regional Administrator, WMRLS

People have been asking about the impact on WMRLS and its member libraries if Ballot Question 1 passes on Election Day, November 4, and is implemented by the legislature. This question calls for the repeal of the state income tax, phased in over a two year period.

In response, this action would be disastrous for libraries, the most detrimental action ever threatened. It is almost definite that it would eliminate the six Regional Library Systems, the State Aid to Public Libraries program, access to statewide databases, State and federal grants, and library services for the blind and disabled. There would be no staff at the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) to administer grants for the Public Library Construction program. The automated networks, like C/W MARS, would be severely weakened without any offsets for their telecommunications costs, no grants to upgrade their systems, and member libraries unable to pay annual membership fees. In short, Question 1 would put an end to all the important advances in library services and interlibrary cooperation that have evolved over the past century.

On September 5, the MBLC voted the following statement:

*Be it resolved that as the primary stewards of library service for all residents of the Commonwealth, the Board of Library Commissioners opposes Question 1 on the basis that its enactment would have a severe impact on all types of libraries in Massachusetts and would result especially in an overwhelming and wholly destructive loss of public library services that are fundamental to the educational, social and economic well-being of all residents of the Commonwealth.*

The Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) has joined forces with the “Coalition for Our Communities,” a wide-ranging network of organizations that has joined together to fight Question 1. The Coalition’s Website is <http://votenoquestion1.com>. In an email to the statewide library lists, MLA “urges its membership not only to Vote No on Question 1, but also to take steps to educate others about the impact that this initiative would have on library service in their communities and statewide. MLA will be advocating against this referendum, and also urges its members to take a personal interest in this cause and do the same.”

The Western Massachusetts Field Leader for the Coalition for our Communities is Pam Schwartz, 413/219-5658, [pschwartz@coalitionforourcommunities.org](mailto:pschwartz@coalitionforourcommunities.org)

Let there be no doubt that Question 1 would be extremely bad for libraries and the people of the Commonwealth.

***If Ballot Question 1 passes it would be disastrous for libraries, the most detrimental action ever threatened.***

September | October 2008

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## **Technical Services Roundtable Meets October 7**

*by Jeremy Goldstein, Supervisor of Technical Services, Berkshire Athenaeum, Pittsfield*

You are invited to our next Technical Services Roundtable meeting, at 10 am on Tuesday, October 7. It will be held at the North Adams Public Library. Carolyn Platt, of the Jones Library in Amherst, will lead the meeting. Please RSVP and send agenda items to Carolyn at [PlattC@joneslibrary.org](mailto:PlattC@joneslibrary.org). I look forward to seeing everyone in October.

## **South Hadley Library Friends Sponsor Book Fair**

*by Joe Rodio, Library Director, South Hadley Public Library*

The Friends of the South Hadley Public Library held their second annual Scholastic Book Fair at the end of August. Just under \$600 was raised for their support of library programs and services!

## **Reading Makes Cents in Chicopee**

*by Barbara Pronovost, Children's Room Associate, Chicopee Public Library*

Juvenile and Young Adult patrons were given the opportunity to "read off" late fees this summer as participants in the library's Wild Reads Summer Reading Program. Our new concept "Reading Makes Cents" allowed our young readers to erase late fees on their records while they read for summer reading. A half hour of reading earned a dollar off their fines. The program was well received as approximately 250 children colored paper watches to represent the hours spent on this activity. We plan to make "Reading Makes Cents" a part of future Summer Reading Programs.

## **Pittsfield Reads: *To Kill A Mockingbird***

*by Meredith G. Cochran, Taconic High School Librarian, Pittsfield*

This fall, the entire community of Pittsfield, the Berkshire Athenaeum, all six secondary schools, Berkshire Community College and the Barrington Stage Company among many other partners, is celebrating **To Kill a Mockingbird**. The Office of Cultural Pittsfield has received a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) BIG READ grant to effect a spectacular community read of Harper Lee's classic novel. Along with the all-important reading of the book, the Barrington Stage Company will be performing the play during the month of October. Freshmen from the local high schools will be attending the play as well as reading the book. There will also be a big screen public showing of the Gregory Peck movie, and a screening of the documentary, **The Two Towns of Jasper**. We are excited about all the programming and very thankful to the NEA and the BIG READ.

## **Re-Establishing A Thirteen Year Tradition: Arms Library's Third Friday Prose And Poetry Series**

*by Laurie Wheeler, Director, Arms Library, Shelburne Falls*

After a one-year hiatus, the popular once-a-month Open Prose and Poetry reading series resumes at the Arms Library in Shelburne Falls. When the series began in 1995, it took place in the upstairs of the library, and was attended by poets and writers from as far away as Vermont and New York State. The program was moved to the lower meeting room after several years, but will be reinstated upstairs this September.

This local treasure of a program was launched by Shelburne writing teacher, Genie Zeiger. The series provided a place for writers to share with each other and with a listening audience.

The re-instated program will be run according to the original practice of allowing five minutes to each reader. Writers will sign up when they arrive and the first twenty people will read.

## **Breaking It "Dawn" at the West Springfield Public Library**

*by Mia Cabana, Assistant Youth Librarian, West Springfield Public Library*

The sudden calm that settles in the library after the end of the summer reading program can be downright unsettling. On the one hand, it's so nice to have a few moments to breathe; on the other hand, it can be eerily quiet. Fortunately book buzz among our teen patrons was still at a fever pitch, thanks to the publication of the fourth installment in Stephenie Meyers' Twilight Saga, **Breaking Dawn**. We decided to celebrate this enthusiasm with a "release party", although our party fell after the book's weekend release on August 2. Many of those who attended had finished reading **Breaking Dawn** over the weekend, and it was a nice chance to get together and chat about the books, and to prolong the excitement a little longer. Events included trivia from the three previous books in the series, the chance to write fan-fiction (on black paper with silver pens for increased awesomeness), and Twilight-inspired collaging. There was also a costume contest, the prize being a mix CD of music that Meyer's lists on her website as inspirational in writing the series. Everyone who attended also got to choose "Team Werewolf" or "Team Vampire" stickers to wear, and bookmarks proclaiming "I'd rather be immortal." Participants were happy to leave their collages on loan, and they are now decorating our teen space.

## **Shades of Stockbridge Returns on October 19**

*by Barbara Allen, Curator, Stockbridge Library*

Once again the ghosts of past Stockbridge residents will congregate at the Stockbridge Library for their second annual reunion. They invite living, breathing residents and visitors to join them between 7 and 9 pm on Sunday, October 19 for an evening of historical gossip and spirited discussion. Early author Catharine Sedgwick will return as well as Cyrus Field of transatlantic fame. It is expected that they will be joined by Andrew Carnegie and ten other illustrious guests. The Gentleman Bandit may visit too. Earthly visitors may merely eavesdrop or they may actually speak with the apparitions if they wish. There is a suggested donation of \$5. This fundraiser will benefit the library's historical collection.

## **Helping Others to Help Themselves via Summer Reading**

*by Kim Perez, Children's Librarian, Lilly Library, Florence*

This summer, the Lilly partnered with Heifer International in order to have the participants of Wild Reads @ Lilly Library learn a little about the wider world and how they could help other kids like themselves. For each minute the children read, they earned \$.01 towards an animal to be donated by them to Heifer. To help the young readers make the connection between the animal and how it helps a family in need, the library also hosted a number of farmers who visited the library with the animals they raise.

In the end, between the kids who participated and private donations, Lilly Library patrons raised a total of \$1,686.30 for Heifer International. Provided to others in need here at home and around the world were: 2 goats, 2 sheep, 5 flocks of ducks and geese, 1 hive of bees, 1 heifer, 1 trio of rabbits, 1 pack of tree seedlings, 1 water buffalo, 1 pig, and 4 flocks of chicks ! Bravo to the patrons, both big and small, of Lilly Library!

## **Blandford Library Budget Crisis Averted**

*by John Ramsay, Regional Administrator, WMRLS*

Following up on our report in the last issue of **WRapper**, we are pleased to announce that the Porter Memorial Library in Blandford will not have to close this year. An election was held on August 25 to override Proposition 2 ½ for the town budget. It passed by the slimmest of margins, 2 votes! The library was considered by many to be the issue that tilted the election in favor of the override. Congratulations to the library and the people of Blandford for supporting the need for its public library!

## Borrow a Ukulele at the Forbes Library!

by Faith Kaufmann, Information Services Librarian/Head of Arts & Music, Forbes Library, Northampton

Have you always wanted to learn a musical instrument, but didn't know where to begin? Now you can borrow a ukulele and instructional DVD from Forbes Library! Joe Blumenthal, owner of local music store Downtown Sounds, has donated the traditional Hawaiian instrument for circulation to library patrons. "Because the ukulele is small, relatively inexpensive and relatively easy to play, it's an ideal instrument for someone who thinks they might like to start playing," says Blumenthal. "The circulating ukulele at Forbes will give people the opportunity to give it a try." The ukulele is enjoying a resurgence in popular music, lately featured in western Massachusetts folk group The Mammals, and seen on stage with Elvis Costello and YouTube phenomenon Jake Shimabukuro. For more information, contact the Forbes Arts & Music Department at 413/587-1013.

## UMass Amherst Libraries Host Annual Social Change Colloquium

by Leslie Schaler, Library Communications, UMass Amherst Libraries

The UMass Amherst Libraries' Department of Special Collections and University Archives will sponsor the fourth annual social change colloquium on October 28 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm in the Cape Cod Lounge, Student Union, at UMass Amherst. Featured speakers will include journalist Parker Donham and activist Junius Williams. The event is free and open to the public.

## Highlights of Summer Fun at the Chicopee Public Library

by Anne Gancarz, Community Services Librarian, Chicopee Public Library

We've had an eventful summer at the Chicopee Public Library. Highlights were as follows:

- ⚙ **New website** – The Chicopee Public library unveiled its new website this summer. The new website is the creation of our Electronics Resources Librarian Jennifer Hawkes. Check it out at <http://www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org>.
- ⚙ **Farmer's Market** – The Chicopee Public Library took part in the summer-long farmer's market sponsored by the Valley Opportunity Council. Anne Gancarz, the Community Services Librarian, kept a sale table full of books and library promotional materials to keep the community connected.
- ⚙ Our first ever official **Adult Summer Reading Program** this year included book talks, music, an art class and movies. Carol Lynne Bagley, the Senior Reference Librarian, coordinated this new addition to the library. Although only 40 adults officially registered, many more participated in the various events and activities.
- ⚙ **A visit from the CSPAN campaign bus** made our parking lot the center of attention on August 6 with free tours of the bus and promotion of CSPAN's coverage of the 2008 presidential race.

For up-to the minute news from WMRLS and our member libraries, visit our

WMRLS-One-Blog

Many Voices ~ One Blog

<http://wmrls.blogspot.com/>

## Continuing Education Calendar

# November 2008

For complete information and registration instructions visit the WMRLS Continuing Education website  
<http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/events.cfm?curOrg=WMRLS>

### **Rural Library Sustainability**

*2.5 Hour Self-Paced Online Continuing Education Workshop Beginning Saturday, November 1*

This online course identifies seven areas of interest critical to sustaining public access computing in the library; overviews the value of using an action plan for implementing strategies and activities; and demonstrates how to create (and successfully implement) an action plan.

### **To the Moon & Beyond: Planning for the 2009 Summer Reading Program**

*Friday November 7, 2008 ~ 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM*

This interactive roundtable will feature an idea share on outer space themed library programs developed by NASA covering science information, resources, hands-on activities, and demonstrations developed specifically for librarians and after-school program providers to infuse into their programs with children and their families. Shelley Quezada, MBLC Consultant to the Unserved, is the workshop leader. Location: WMRLS Conference Room

### **Best New Books for Elementary & Middle School Readers**

*Wednesday November 12, 2008 ~ 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM*

Don't have time to read all of the recommended new titles for your students? Join Patricia Keogh, retired children's librarian and teacher of children's literature, to hear about books your young readers will love. She will talk about some of the new books that elementary and middle school children won't be able to resist. Location: Palmer Public Library

### **Online Collaboration with Wikis**

*Friday November 14, 2008 ~ 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM*

Using Google Sites as our model, participants of this workshop will work together to create a wiki, discuss the how's and why's of effective wiki collaboration, review best practices, and preview Wiki How-To Guides, Videos, and PowerPoint presentations. Janet Eckert is the workshop leader. Location: Chicopee Public Library

### **Services to People with Disabilities and How to Fund Them**

*Wednesday, November 19, 2008 ~ 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM*

Libraries have always been proactive in serving users with disabilities. This population (estimated at 20% of the population by the U.S. Census) can be a moving target as the demographics have changed. Graying baby boomers and youngsters with cognitive difficulties have transformed the way libraries need to provide services. How do you juggle all of these demographics and still provide a broad range of services with diminishing revenues? Mare Parker-O'Toole, Consultant for Information Technology at NELINET, Inc. and long-time disability advocate will talk about these issues and offer some ideas, some solutions and some resources. She will also talk about how to use the upcoming LSTA grant opportunities to serve your all your users across a spectrum of abilities

### **Online Continuing Education: At Your Convenience**

One of the many benefits of WMRLS membership is free admission to WebJunction's online library continuing education workshops. The WebJunction course catalog—<http://www.webjunction.org/catalog>—covers a wide range of topics and is continually updated. Consult the WebJunction Course Catalog and complete our WMRLS Online CE Registration Form — <http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/events.cfm?curOrg=WMRLS>—to receive a WMRLS coupon code that will enable you to take a course for free. You will have access to the course that you select for one full year.

