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## Search continues for state librarian position

The Iowa Commission of Libraries continues its search for a state librarian to replace Mary Wegner, who retired at the end of 2013 after 12 years in the post.

The job of replacing her began in August and the search committee identified several good applicants. After a number of interviews and public presentations by candidates, the search committee recommended and the Commission accepted a candidate who, as negotiations were beginning, accepted a position with another library system.

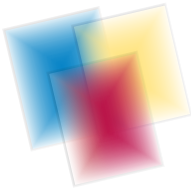
The Commission then named Barbara Corson as Interim State Librarian, and formed a new search committee led by Dale Vande Haar, a Commissioner and head of the Des Moines Public Schools Library System. The new committee was designed to include more representatives from public libraries of various sizes. Committee members are:

- Commissioners Larry Marquardt and Tom Martin;
- Public library directors Greg Heid (Des Moines), Nancy Trask (Winterset), and Nathan Clark (Emmetsburg and Ruthven);
- Academic library director Rod Henshaw (Drake University);
- Iowa Library Services (IaLS)/State Library staff: Jet Kofoot, IaLS North Central Consultant, and Jay Peterson, IaLS Consultant, Des Moines office.

The turnover in membership and other factors somewhat altered the gender makeup of the committee despite attempts for more balance.

After their initial meeting, the search committee felt that while there were a number of very good candidates, the overall number of applicants was uncomfortably small. Accordingly, the committee recommended to the Commission that the services of a search firm be used. The Commission approved this and an RFP is being drawn up. Based on responses to the RFP, the search committee will recommend a firm to the Commission. The firm selected will then coordinate the search which will again include opportunities for members of the Iowa library community to be involved. As details become clear, they will be published so that the library community will continue to have a voice in this critically important search. The search committee and the Commission are hopeful that the search will be an expeditious one and a new state librarian will be in office by July 1, 2014.

Commission Chair Dan Boice expressed his thanks to members of both the first and the second search committees for their diligence, as well as to Barbara Corson for her willingness to take on the significant responsibilities of the interim post.



## Corson named Interim State Librarian

Barbara Corson, Interim State Librarian, has 28 years of experience in a variety of libraries. She has been at Iowa Library Services since 1999 and has served 12 years as Program Director for Library Services.

Corson earned a Master of Library and Information Science degree from Rosary College and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Iowa State University. She is an Iowa native, but has lived and worked on three continents and enjoys travel and new adventures.

Said Corson, "I enjoy working with Iowa librarians from all types of libraries and I welcome the opportunity to serve as Interim State Librarian."

## New, improved trustee handbook debuts

Library staff and trustees can now print individual chapters of the new edition of the online [Iowa Library Trustee's Handbook - 2014](#).

Nancy Medema, Program Director, Library Support Network, spent weeks updating the information from the 2009 edition. Several others on staff helped proof and prepare the document for the web.

The IaLS Advisory Panel suggested that staff not spend thousands of dollars printing copies, but instead make it easier for people to print just the pages they need.

"The other benefit of this new online document is that it can be updated instantly when information changes," said Medema.

Iowa Library  
Trustee's Handbook - 2014



## Iowa libraries can go to the Edge

Want to make an impact on your library's community with technology? [The Edge Initiative](#) has officially launched and public libraries across the United States can now apply to participate. Libraries can use the Edge Initiative for free in 2014.

Through an easy to use suite of tools, Edge supports libraries in making strategic decisions and identifying areas for improvement. The Edge Toolkit gives libraries a look into their local data, from operations to partnerships and programming, to assess how their community is using the technology and how best practices can be put into place to align future growth and services with community priorities. It also provides useful resources to package and showcase the data to other community leaders.

### The three main parts of Edge are:

- Community Value: Digital literacy, digital tools and resources, and meeting key community needs;
- Engaging the Community: Strategy and evaluation, strategic partnerships and sharing best practices;

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## Iowa libraries can get the Edge

*Cont. from pg. 2*

- Organizational Management: Planning and policies, staff expertise, devices and bandwidth, and technology inclusiveness.

### **Benefits for libraries participating include:**

- An assessment tool that will help libraries assess and evaluate current services;
- resources with practical templates, tools and tips for improving the library's public technology services;
- case studies that feature examples of public libraries of all sizes using computers to meet community needs;
- reporting and presentation tools that help library leaders tell the story of how computers support the local economy, workforce, lifelong learning and a strong community; and
- training that will guide libraries in using their Edge results for planning, advocacy and outreach activities to enhance as well as build technology services.

The Edge Initiative was developed by a national coalition of leading library and local government organizations, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and led by the Urban Libraries Council.

## IaLS Advisory Panel names new chair, co-chair



*Doug Raber and Carrie Falk*

At its March 5 meeting, the Iowa Library Services Advisory Panel named Doug Raber, director, Marion Public Library, chair of the panel. He was nominated by past chair, Greg Heid, director, Des Moines Public Library. The new co-chair is Carrie Falk, Shenandoah Public Library.

Other agenda items for the day included a status report on the search for a new state librarian; a technology update from Alan Schmitz, SILO Coordinator; and a discussion about the Edge Initiative and a review of the new Public Library Trustee Manual from Nancy Medema. IaLS Consultants Jay Peterson and Alysia Peich provided continuing education updates.



## IMLS increases Iowa's funding for coming year

Interim State Librarian Barbara Corson was recently notified that the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) increased Iowa Library Services' budget for the coming federal fiscal year by \$52,353. The award is for \$1.8 million, which is used to support many of the programs offered by IaLS to libraries in the state and to pay salaries for some staff positions. There's no word yet on state funding for IaLS, but Governor Branstad proposed level funding for FY15 which begins June 30, 2014.

## Certification Update

Congratulations to the following public library staff certified for the first time through Iowa Library Services' Certification Program for Public Librarians.

**Kesha Christie**, Collins  
**Debbi Harris**, Graettinger  
**Monica Walley**, Denison  
**Tanya Wyckoff**, Bedford



## Librarians descend on Des Moines for meetings, ILA Legislative Day

Photos from the Iowa Library Association's Legislative Day, and a group photo of members of the Children's Librarians Advisory Council and the Teens' Librarians Advisory Council, all held in Des Moines on March 5, are now available on [IaLS's Facebook page](#).



*Andrew Stewart talks about the importance of libraries at the ILA "update."*

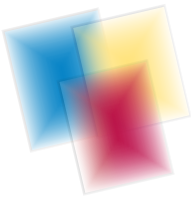


*Sen. Ken Rozenboom and Alison Ames Galstad, Coralville PL*



*IaLS Commissioner Dan Boice and Interim State Librarian Barbara Corson*





## News from Around the State



Twelve libraries in Dallas County are collaborating to host their first-ever Toddler Fest on April 12.

The libraries are partnering with several area agencies, including the Science Center of Iowa, the Dallas County Sherriff's office, and Blank Park Zoo. Activities include plenty of crafts, story times, visits with a princess, and airbrush tattoos. "This is a wonderful collaborative effort and good way to make the public aware of the many services libraries offer in regards to early childhood literacy," said Maryann Mori, laLS Consultant, Central District.

Participating libraries are in **Adel, Dallas Center, DeSoto, Dexter, Granger, Linden, Minburn, Perry, Redfield, Van Meter, Waukee and Woodward.**

The **Clear Lake Public Library** will celebrate its Quasquicentennial this year. Several special events and programs are planned.

The Fourth Street Book Club is named for the location of an early library as well as the present library building. The program's goal is to get participants to read and/or listen to 125 books between January 1 and December 15. A special reception will be held for participants who reach the goal.

Another special event takes place in June with the installation of the "Stories are Forever" commemorative sculpture on the library's front lawn. The sculpture celebrates all the children and their families who have used the library to connect with and explore their world over the past 125 years.

Other programs include a performance by storyteller Al Batt on April 14 and a visit by bestselling mystery writer William Kent Krueger on September 9. Krueger was recently honored with a nomination of his novel *Ordinary Grace* for the prestigious Edgar Award (named after Edgar Allan Poe) for best American mystery novel of the year.



Together, Jean Casey, **Clear Lake Public Library** Director, and Liz DenHartog, Assistant Director, have led the library through many changes but always kept meeting the needs of patrons first during their many years of service. Both will retire at the end of April.

They will be honored at a reception from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 22 in the library's downstairs meeting rooms.



In February, the **Knoxville Public Library** asked its patrons to expound on the statement “Why I Love My Library.”

“Everyone had great replies,” said director Roslin Thompson. “The books, movies, peace and quiet, friendly and helpful staff, Legos and the fact that it’s free were some of their responses.”

One lucky person’s name was drawn from all those who responded. Wayne Johnston, shown with Thompson at left, won flowers, a box of candy and a book.

The library also had a “blind date with a book” promotion, which was recently held in many Iowa public libraries. Readers were asked to trust the staff and check out a book sight unseen.

“Most readers checked out an author they had not tried before and liked the book,” said Thompson.

The **Spirit Lake Public Library** began its “1000 Books Before Kindergarten” program on March 1, 2013.

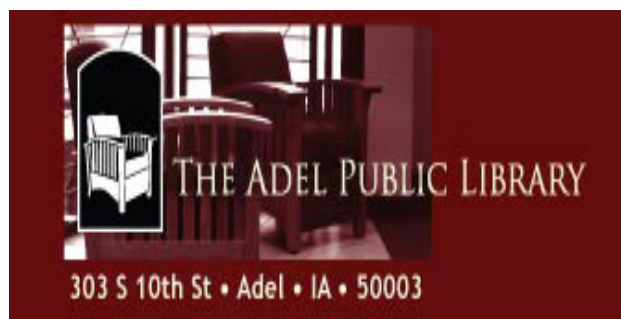
Families were going home with mountains of picture books on a weekly basis, according to library staff. By September, over 30,000 books had been read to 120 or more children who were signed up at that point. Iowa Public Television personality Dan Wardell was on hand in September to present book bags to the first group of 18 children who finished reading 1,000 books.

By January 2014, nearly 150 children were enrolled and had read nearly 35,000 books. Kids get a sticker for each 100 books completed and various small prizes along the way, culminating with a book bag bearing the program logo at an event this September. Many more children are well on their way or have completed the goal, said staff.



*From left, children’s librarian Ellen Williams with Dan Wardell*

**Adel Public Library** is sponsoring its second annual “How-To Festival” on April 5. Attendees will have a chance to learn how to do 19 things in four hours. Examples include everything from making origami to eating gluten free, from fire extinguisher safety to yoga. Vendors, including the library’s Teen Advisory Board, will provide food.



According to staff, it’s a fun way to get the community involved in the library as both presenters and participants. And a fun way of turning the whole library into a maker space.