

WiLS 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

WiLS is a non-profit membership organization that facilitates collaborative projects and services to save members time and money and to advance library service, primarily in the state of Wisconsin. While most of WiLS' 523 members are libraries, we also work with cultural institutions, government agencies, and other non-profits to develop partnerships and projects.

This report of activities from July 2015 through December 2016 shares WiLS' mission, values, governance structure, strategic directions, services, project highlights, fiscal year finances, and our 2017 strategic directions.

We welcome your [questions and feedback](#).

WiLS MISSION

We believe libraries, cultural institutions, and their partners make the world a better place.

We build relationships and provide services so they can do more with their time and money.

We help our members turn ideas into action.

WILS ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

We work in the best interest of our members.

We take their missions very seriously, and we only do work that supports them.

We are optimistic about the future of our members.

Our members have always overcome challenges, and they will continue to do so in the future. We encourage problem-solving through engagement and creativity among our community.

We are sincere.

We are genuinely honest with ourselves and others. We are reflective about who we are as an organization and how we can improve service to our members.

We promote innovation.

We guide the efforts and broadcast the outcomes of members' experimental endeavors, and we model innovation through our own organizational practices.

We respect and value our members' time as we do our own.

We strive to find ways to work smarter and more efficiently for our members.

We believe that we're all in this together.

We are a part of the ecosystem that supports the community of our members. We benefit from the community and the community benefits from us. We believe that we succeed together.

WILS GOVERNANCE

WILS is governed by a [thirteen-member board](#) of representatives from WILS members. Representatives are chosen by represented consortia or by the general membership, depending on the seat. Board members serve three year terms.

The WILS Board is advised by an eight person [Finance Committee](#), made up of members of the board, WILS staff, and citizen members.

WILS members also have the opportunity to participate on workgroups and committees. The Cooperative Purchasing Advisory Committee (CooPAC) provides guidance for one of our major service areas. Workgroups are formed to help with various events and with other short-term projects.

WILS STAFF AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

WILS staff works in a project-based structure, utilizing staff strengths and capacity according to each project's unique needs, rather than drawing on a previously-established hierarchy. In this way, WILS can be responsive to project partners and flexible to accommodate all the projects we work on.



Stef Morrill's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium
Conference WLA Session on ILEAD
Technology Tableau

Non-Work Thing Rubix Cube snake, learning about land conservation,
waiting tables at friends' restaurant

Animal Woodpecker

Some of our staff work on nearly every project.



Stef
Executive
Director



Tom
Financial
Manager



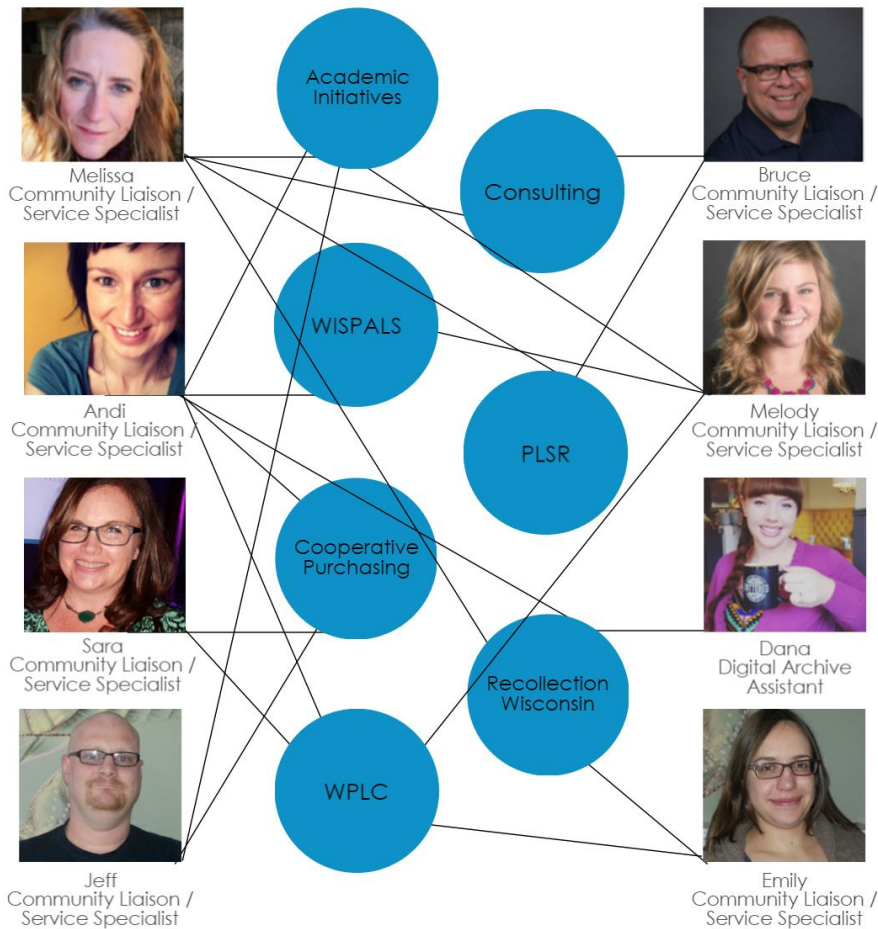
Lisa
Financial Support
Specialist and
Administrative
Coordinator



Becky
Financial and
Administrative
Assistant

The rest of our staff works on the various projects like this.

It's a little messy, but we like it that way.



Lisa Marten's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project
WiLS Community
Chronicle

Conference
WEMTA

Technology
Smartsheet

Non-Work Thing
Going to the Wilderness
Resort with my best
friend's family

Animal
Kitties!

WILS STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS: 2015-2016

Based on guidance from membership, staff, and the board, WiLS established the following strategic directions for 2015-2016:

Explore adding a position with expertise in academic libraries for planning and consulting services

Melissa McLimans joined the WiLS staff from UW-Madison and has been helping us think about services for academic libraries. She's facilitating our Academic Initiatives group, and providing needed expertise.

Research and develop a plan for collecting and sharing member information

We are interested in collecting more information from members, especially about electronic resources and experimental projects. We've been working with CooPAC on some ideas for cooperative purchasing, and will continue to work toward this goal.

Develop a new plan for WiLS events/educational opportunities

WiLS staff and Board developed a new mission and purpose for WiLS educational events. This new plan has led to the Good WiLS Ambassador program, which sends a WiLS member to resource sharing events in the Midwest to learn and come back and share in a webinar. We have also begun to partner with existing events, particularly in the area of resource sharing. We'll continue to experiment with other models for education and events based on this new mission and purpose.



Melody Clark's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project Site visits with members

Conference WiLSWorld 2016!

Technology Tableau

Non-Work Thing A visit to Concord, MA to visit where Louisa May Alcott, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Henry David Thoreau once resided.

Animal My pooch, Hilde

WILS SERVICES

WiLS supports its mission to serve members through four core services: Cooperative Purchasing and Projects, Consortium Management, Consulting, and Events and Education. Each section below explains the service, highlights examples of that service from the last year, and gives examples of other projects and initiatives WiLS has undertaken or is undertaking in that area.



COOPERATIVE PURCHASING AND PROJECTS

WiLS' cooperative services bring together groups with common goals to accomplish their work more efficiently and with broader impact. WiLS saves libraries time and money by managing the complete life cycle for electronic content purchases through its [Cooperative Purchasing Service](#).

Traditionally, WiLS has offered two areas of products through its Cooperative Purchasing program: electronic resource subscription services and discounts on direct order products such as furniture, barcodes, and other library-related items.

WiLS has expanded its vendor partnerships by revisiting current agreements and negotiating agreements with entirely new products and services. An example is the newly-branded Demco Software which incorporates three products: Boopsie, Evanced, and Wandoo Reader, all of which are outside the traditional cooperative purchasing opportunities available through WiLS. Through generous discounts and coordinated customer service, WiLS is able to offer these products at prices that allow our members to afford them for their libraries.

WiLS grew participation in the Cooperative Purchasing Service from both members and vendors from July 2015 through June 2016.

	New	Total
Member Organizations	11	423
Subscriptions	370	2946
Vendor Partners	8	113
Databases	72	774



Jeff Brunner's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project
WiLS 2016 Fall Classic

Conference
WLA 2016

Technology
Tiddly Wiki

Non-Work Thing
Teaching my daughter to ride her bike

Animal
Elephant



CONSORTIUM MANAGEMENT

Part of WiLS' mission is to build relationships so our members can do more with their time and money. One way we achieve this goal is through consortium management. While forming a consortium is a great way for libraries and organizations to partner to provide ongoing services and



Sara Gold's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project
Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium

Conference
WEMTA 2016

Technology
Podcasts

Non-Work Thing
Throwing my daughter a surprise birthday party for her 13th birthday!

Animal
Dog, horse, and cat

resources to their members and communities, the reality of needing to manage the day-to-day business and operations of the consortium can be overwhelming. Often, the partners involved in a consortium don't have the staff time to provide these services, and this is where we can help.

In November of 2015, WiLS began managing [WISPALS](#), a consortium of eleven Wisconsin technical college libraries. WISPALS "advances the teaching and learning missions of its member institutions through sharing information and creating collaborative and financially responsible solutions to common challenges." The consortium provides members with shared access to integrated library systems and promotes the exchange of knowledge. WiLS provides the consortium with meeting and project management, strategic planning guidance, ILS administration, website and communications services, cooperative purchasing facilitation, and financial agency services.

In addition to WISPALS, WiLS also manages [Recollection Wisconsin](#), a collaborative project to help partners digitize and share their unique local content online; the [Wisconsin Public Library Consortium](#) (WPLC); [Infopass](#), a Milwaukee area resource sharing initiative; the Horticulture Library Consortium, a group of

horticulture institutions with a shared ebook collection; and the [Wisconsin Schools Digital Library Consortium](#) (WSDLC), a newly-created collaboration to bring digital materials into K12 schools.



CONSULTING

A key piece of our mission is that we help our members turn ideas into action, and one way we do this is through our consulting services. Typically, a member will contact us and ask for some help with a project. We work with the member to get a clear understanding of what they are trying to accomplish. Then, we work with the library to develop processes and a plan to do the project. We are involved in the project as much as the member wants us to be, providing project management and expertise as needed. If WiLS doesn't have the knowledge on staff to effectively carry out the work, we enlist experts from within our library community to provide the best possible outcome.

WiLS provided consulting services to more than 30 WiLS member organizations this year in the areas of strategic planning and library service assessment and improvement.

Strategic Planning and Facilitation

WiLS provided strategic planning services for 18 libraries across the state. Our planning process continues to evolve and improve as we work with more and more communities. Through community engagement strategies and other data and information gathering and analysis we continue to develop budget-appropriate processes that best meet the needs of the libraries we help. In addition to helping libraries develop their strategic plans, our work with the L.E. Phillips Memorial Library in Eau Claire included helping them prioritize and develop project plans to implement the activities they are pursuing to reach the goals in their strategic plan. Assistance with prioritizing and implementing strategic plans is something we'll be offering more libraries as we continue to develop our strategic planning service.

We also provided process and facilitation expertise that led to the first merger of two public library systems since systems were formed in Wisconsin in 1971. With our process development assistance and



Bruce Smith's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project Wisconsin Public Library System Redesign Project
Conference PLA 2016
Technology Tableau
Non-Work Thing A trip to Italy
Animal Elephant

facilitation, the Joint Merger Committee of Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System and Eastern Shores Library System began discussions at the beginning of 2016 to explore a merger of the two systems. After numerous meetings of the Joint Merger Committee and internal system merger committees, the two systems agreed to merge and become the Monarch Library System effective January 1, 2017.

Library Service Assessment and Improvement

Another area in which WiLS supported members in 2015-2016 was by helping libraries assess their current services and offering suggestions for improvement. Some examples included conducting a community survey for the Door County Library in order to provide background information as the director planned to retire and assessing automated materials handling design and workflow for the Kenosha Public Library.

Wisconsin Public Library System Redesign Project

This year, WiLS has been working hard on the [Public Library System Redesign \(PLSR\)](#) process, a community-based project to consider how to best provide public library system services in Wisconsin.

WiLS is the PLSR project manager, helping to design and manage the overall process. We think about, write, and disseminate communications. We coordinate nine workgroups that are considering different services areas, such as continuing education, technology, and so on. We work very closely with the Steering Committee that leads the project on behalf of the Department of Public Instruction.

We are immensely proud to be part of this project. It has the potential to completely change the landscape of public library systems in the state, and we have been inspired and humbled by the commitment of the nearly 100 people from the library community who are involved in this process. They are single-mindedly focused on creating the best possible public library service in the state, and have approached this work with positivity and a spirit of community that we don't think you will find everywhere in the country. It has reinforced how great it is to be part of the library world in Wisconsin.



Melissa McLimans's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project

Karl Junginger Public Library strategic plan

Conference

WAAL

Technology

Wordpress

Non-Work Thing

Trip to the Rockies.

Animal

Dog



EVENTS AND EDUCATION

In support of our mission to serve members, and to drive the library field forward, WiLS hosts professional development events to connect and educate members of the community, build relationships, foster collaboration, solve problems, and introduce and build upon innovative ideas impacting members. WiLS draws on a variety of expertise to plan and produce these events. Planning workgroups are made up of WiLS members, and meeting or session topics are driven by member input whenever possible. Programs and workshops are led by experts from WiLS staff, the member community, and professionals from business, education, and the broader library world.

In 2015-2016, we hosted our regular yearly events: [WiLSWorld](#) in the summer, six [Regional Community Meetings](#) in the fall, and [Peer Council](#) in late spring. WiLS also co-hosted the 2016 Upper Midwest Digital Collections Conference with Minitex and RAILS, working with OCLC as a sponsor. In addition, WiLS hosted a virtual event with UW-Madison to help academic libraries implement ACRL Frames into their instructional services. This year, WiLS decided to discontinue support for the yearly ILL Conference to focus on our existing services. In order to continue to support our members in resource sharing, WiLS devised the Good-WiLS Ambassador program to provide scholarships for members to attend interlibrary loan conferences in the Midwest. In exchange, the scholarship winners report back to WiLS membership on what they learned through a free webinar. So far, this program has funded two interlibrary loan staffers to attend two conferences: the Midwest Interlibrary Loan Conference and the Minitex Interlibrary Loan Conference.

WiLS staff also participated in and presented at a number of other educational and library-related events through the year, including the WLA Annual Conference, WAPL, WAAL, the Wisconsin Local History & Historic Preservation Conference, WEMTA, Technology Days, the Upper Midwest Digital Collections Conference, the Wisconsin/Illinois Innovative Users Group, and DPLAFest.



Andi Coffin's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project

WiLS Community Chronicle

Conference

Library Technology Conference 2016

Technology

Airtable

Non-Work Thing

Going to the Twin Cities Book Festival

Animal

Otter

WILS ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT: 2015-2016

REVENUE

Cooperative purchasing sales	\$8,873,390.83
Cooperative purchasing member fees	\$ 82,467.00
Interest/Amex reimbursement	\$77,014.59
Event revenue	\$21,621.00
Consortium management	\$182,045.45
Consulting services	\$158,940.25
Cooperative projects	\$37,675.00
Total	\$9,433,154.12

EXPENSES

Cooperative purchasing materials	\$8,549,341.32
Staff (with travel / CE)	\$644,750.05
Event expenses	\$11,179.68
Project expenses	\$65,624.55
Other expenses	\$91,370.64
Total	\$9,362,266.24

NET INCOME **\$70,887.88**



Tom Klement's Favorite Stuff from 2015-2016

Project Keeping the numbers straight!
Conference WLA Annual Conference
Technology My phone
Non-Work Thing Our annual family trip to Eagle River
Animal Horse

LOOKING FORWARD

Each year, WiLS undertakes a member-focused planning process to identify strategic directions for the upcoming year. The following strategic directions have been identified for 2017, and work on them is underway now:



**Becky Collyard's
Favorite Stuff from
2015-2016**

Project

Checks and payables

Non-Work Thing

Camping and hiking out west for two weeks!

Animal

Shark

Undertake a process to gain understanding and to start conversations around digital preservation.

Storage and preservation of digital assets, or the lack thereof, is an issue that impacts all our members. This year, we will start working toward shared solutions for digital preservation for our members by convening discussions about digital preservation to understand needs, to formulate a plan for collaborative digital preservation in the state, and to determine our role in that initiative.

Share opportunities for members to participate in open access initiatives, and participate in initiatives ourselves.

Open access is a key issue to our academic members, and we want to help support them in moving this issue forward. We will discover and share information about educational opportunities and open access initiatives, work with publishers to offer lower

rates on open access fees, and discuss joining organizations that support open access to express our support and facilitate our learning to share with the WiLS community. We will facilitate conversations around the topic when possible.

Continue to develop our planning and consulting services by capitalizing on our existing work and developing potential areas of expansion.

WiLS has developed a reputation for providing strategic planning processes for public libraries that fit within the library's budget and recognize the unique needs of each library. Through this work, we have developed our own process for planning, and, in 2017, we will investigate new ways to utilize this

process in different ways to benefit members. We will consider new areas of service based on feedback from these planning processes and known member needs, including consulting around tools for managing time, tasks, and internal communications.

Expand our knowledge of using data.

We know that using data is an area of need of members, and it's also an area of need for WiLS. In 2017, we will invest time in growing staff knowledge about collecting, analyzing, and presenting data to not only allow us to provide better service, but also provide us with a roadmap for educating members around this important topic.

Learn more from inside and outside the state...and then share!

We want to be able to share innovative ideas and products that may help our members. To do so, we need to learn more from both inside and outside of the state. Inside the state, we want to continue to learn what our members are doing well, and we want to expand this effort to be more proactive in capturing and sharing those stories. Outside of the state, we'll be rethinking which events we attend and our goals at those conferences to maximize the benefit to our members. We'll also be deliberate in talking with our peers around the country to learn more about how they work and what they are doing to look for potential partnerships and directions that will benefit Wisconsin. We'll also be thinking about how we share this information to the community and try some new things to spread what we're learning, including webinars that feature members and vendors.

Continue to look for ways to engage community members not yet engaged with WiLS.

While we provide services to many libraries in the state, there are staff members within those institutions, along with institutions that do not receive services from WiLS, that are not aware of WiLS and the services we provide. We will continue to look for ways to engage those individuals, including



**Emily Pfothenhauer's
Favorite Stuff from
2015-2016**

Project

Recollection Wisconsin
and DPLA

Conference

Digital Library Federation

Technology

Thinkific

Non-Work Thing

Renting a cabin on a lake
in the Northwoods for a
week.

Animal

Owls



**Dana Gerber-Margie's
Favorite Stuff from
2015-2016**

Project

Listening to War

Conference

Local History Conference

Technology

My hands

Non-Work Thing

My husband and I went on our honeymoon to Ireland and the UK, two years after we got married!

Animal

Cats, obviously

expansion of our newsletter focus, connecting with library schools to engage students, and identifying and reaching out to libraries that do not currently participate in WiLS.

Continue to improve internal operations and how we work.

We're always looking for ways to do things better and to improve our member experience. While this is an ongoing process rather than a unique initiative for 2017, we include it on the list to emphasize its importance and to share some of our plans for 2017. Specifically, we will make at least annual contact with all general members, improve virtual meetings both for ourselves and the consortia we manage, learn more about the tools we use every day and share that knowledge with members, and investigate platform enhancements or replacements to improve MyWiLS.

STAY IN TOUCH!

We welcome the opportunity to hear what you're doing, share what we're doing, and pass along information from the community that serves your efforts. You can stay in touch with WiLS through these various channels:

- [Subscribe to our weekly newsletter](#), This Week at WiLS, to hear updates on our work and from the community, and musings on the world at large. Or, you can read the [archives](#).
- [Subscribe to our brand-new monthly member newsletter](#), the WiLS Community Chronicle, which shares WiLS news, cooperative purchasing service updates, our monthly interviews with vendors and members, upcoming funding and learning opportunities, member news, and much more.
- Check out our [website and blog](#) for all things WiLS.
- Follow us on [Facebook](#).
- [Contact us](#) directly.

WiLS deeply appreciates the hard work and input of its
staff, board, committees, and members.

Thank you for being part of our community!