WVLS Staff Event Report
Tech-a-Talk-a, Library System Peers

This year, four members of the WVLS Technology Team: Ann Mroczenski, Anne Hamland, Chris Heitman, and Inese Christman attended the August 18th "un-conference" in Stevens Point known as Tech-a-Talk-a, organized each August by some of the technology staff at South Central Library System. Gus Falkenberg of Indianhead Federated Library System, a joint leader in the WVLS/IFLS Technology Resource Sharing partnership now formalized and operating as LEAN Wisconsin (LEAN WI). Tech-a-Talk-a is a peer group of Library System Information Technology professionals in Wisconsin. The group meets once a year in person, and maintains an email group for questions and information sharing between systems throughout the year.

This year the agenda was similar to those from previous years. The day kicked off with a round-robin of introductions, offering everyone a chance to share new goings-on within their respective systems. It then led into presentations which took the group up to lunch. The lunch period offered an opportunity for individuals to catch up with either other on topics of acute interest. After lunch the group divided into "breakout" sessions to allow those with differing areas of focus to discuss General Technology or ILS related topics. The breakout sessions are left up to the groups to self-direct, and range from discussing major projects in the works to brainstorming new ideas for service improvements.

People then come back together for a large group discussion to ask and answer questions, share information about projects, and discuss happenings at the State and Federal levels which may be affecting technology operations for all or most library systems in Wisconsin. This is followed by a final round-robin session giving everyone one more opportunity to raise a question yet unasked or which came up during the course of the day, or to share stories or information which hadn't yet been discussed.

Our own Inese Christman was a presenter as well as Ryan Claringbole, the Technology Consultant for Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction. Inese presented on the new Historical & Local Digital Collections Committee established by the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC). Ryan gave a "mini State of the State" presentation, discussing Electronic Collections, the Public Library System Redesign (PLSR) project, the Coding Initiative in Public Libraries, and the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant program.

WVLS IT Director, Joshua Klingbeil was able to receive verbal briefs from the WVLS attendees regarding an overview of their respective experiences. The Tech Team will be meeting on Wednesday, August 24th to more thoroughly review the attendees' respective outcomes from the un-conference.