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BE A MEMBER, GET A MEMBER

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## Report from your AWSL Chair

By Jaime Healy-Plotkin, Cataloger, Wisconsin State Law Library

Last Fall I [introduced myself](#) to this group as your new vice-chair. Your elected chair Nell Fleming had to reassess her time priorities and has stepped down from her position so I am stepping into that role. I am happy to use my organizing skills to pull together our group of special librarians. However, I would like to point out that we are all asked to volunteer, whether on boards, projects, gatherings at work, for our profession, and for our families. Nell's decision to take care of herself is a reminder to all that it is ok to think about our self-care and assess when to say yes and when to hold back. There is a limit on our time and you have to find the right balance to your priorities.

Is this the right time for you to step up? AWSL is looking for someone to add to our board. The vice-chair position is a three year commitment that filters to chair followed by past chair on our board. We also have a secretary position which is only a one year commitment. Amy O'Shea has ably filled that position for many years and would be happy to pass it on to another. Let us know if you have an interest in serving Wisconsin's special librarians.

WLA is recruiting for new members. Are you are a current member and do you know other librarians who are not members of WLA? Ask them to join. Do you work with a librarian that used to be a member of WLA but has not renewed? Ask them to join. Do you know someone from library school that went on to a position not in the traditional library setting but could

benefit from membership in WLA? Ask them to join. Our professional association will grow stronger with a more diverse crowd when we combine with individuals using their library and information skills in different ways. WLA has put together [this helpful resource](#) stating the benefits of joining with the five main points of “Connect - Belong - Learn - Lead - Advocate” and you can easily share it with others. Lisa Abler, our AWSL past chair, is an example of a professional with a library degree not working in a library. Carrie Doyle, another AWSL past chair, is advocating for special librarians on the WLA membership committee and we are all trying to help out on this recruitment effort. So I encourage you to reach out and ask others to join WLA and AWSL.

At our spring business meeting, we talked about possible plans for a summer library tour and a summer social. We have a wonderful event planned in Madison at the UW Law Library. See the Mark your calendar feature below. Also, if you would like your library (or yourself!) to be featured in this newsletter, let us know. Representatives from AWSL also plan on attending the iSchool orientation at the end of the summer in order to reach out to the students coming into the profession. Speaking of more proposals and plans, AWSL is looking ahead to the WLA conference in LaCrosse, October 23-26, with several members having submitted proposals for programs including Kris Turner at the UW-Madison Law Library and myself with a colleague from the Wisconsin State Law Library. Remember that AWSL offers a scholarship to attend the conference. Please consider putting in an [application for the opportunity](#) to see the programs focused on special libraries, a special library tour, and the chance to network with our librarians at the conference.

I am excited to be working with our group of special librarians and I look forward to seeing our membership grow with more energy and focus.

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## Report from your WLA Board Liaison

By Kris Turner

Happy Spring to all you AWSLers out there! The WLA Board is currently in one of its busiest sessions yet, focusing on bringing membership and conference attendance back up and planning out ways to make WLA more inviting to younger librarians.

As many of you know, we are working with a deficit budget right now. To help counter that, the WLA Board is going back to basics – we plan on updating and refreshing our website and communication plans. I am lucky enough to be serving on the Communications Working Group, which is already in the process of examining what works and more importantly, what

does not work with the website and the communications within WLA. We will be working with the company that maintains our website (Memberclicks) to freshen up the page and along with that, create more effective ways to communicate from member-to-member and across groups as needed. I am very excited with our gung-ho team and I am optimistic that we will have some great new resources available to members soon. If you are interested in helping out, I more than welcome it! We can always use more driven and creative types to help make the website more usable and to get WLA talking again!

In other news, WLA is looking at a membership drive! As you may have heard, WLA has a “Be a Member, Get a Member” contest going on now, where active members are eligible for a \$500 travel gift card if you get a new member to sign up. It’s a great incentive, but remember that we also want our community to keep growing so we can be stronger together. Special Librarians especially need our group to stay strong since we work in such unique libraries. If you know of a colleague elsewhere in Wisconsin that is not a member of WLA, ask them why they aren’t a member (or why they stopped being a member). Maybe we can convince them to return. I am happy to speak with anyone that may be on the fence and discuss the possibilities and potential of WLA and the benefits that membership brings.

WLA is also reaching out to future librarians and future leaders. In August, the 2nd annual Leadership Institute will take in Madison. This is a great opportunity to sharpen your leadership skills and meet like-minded librarians. There are even chances to win a scholarship to attend. I was able to speak with the leaders last year, and it was great to get to know the numerous future leaders of our profession and WLA. In addition, WLA has also created a new categorical division: Special Interest Groups – these fleet of foot groups are meant to be easier to create (and take-down) than regular divisions or roundtables and serve as a way for members to quickly form groups for hot button issues and topics. Two SIGs on the grow are the ischool student SIG and the Community for Open Wisconsin (COW) SIG. These groups are filled with people passionate not just about libraries in general, but for young librarians and open resources across Wisconsin. You can find out more information about these SIGs (and more!) on the [SIG page of the website](#).

It’s a busy spring, but a hopeful spring. While there is a lot of work ahead for WLA, I think we can do it. I have rarely seen a group so motivated to keep an organization so vital and strong. If you would like to join us or volunteer in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me.

## Report from the WLA Membership Committee

By Carrie Doyle, Head of Acquisitions and Serials, University of Wisconsin Law Library  
608-890-4575, Carrie.doyle@wisc.edu or carrie.awsl@gmail.com

I'd like to give a brief report on the activities of the WLA Membership Committee. The newly-reconstituted Membership Committee is chaired by Nyama Reed, Director of the Whitefish Bay Public Library. We meet once month by phone to hear Nyama give updates from the WLA Board and to discuss plans and projects for the coming months.

To start, we were given five main tasks:

- 1) Use overall theme to promote WLA membership growth initiative (theme is Giving Your Passion a Voice)
- 2) Work on creating a non-member librarian contact list
- 3) Develop "Welcome" materials to introduce new Library Directors to WLA
- 4) Set-up and staff a membership table at WAAL, WAPL and WLA Conferences
- 5) Present a Member Orientation session at WAPL and WLA Conferences (we missed the session submission deadline for WAAL but will try again next year).

I was able to attend the WAAL Conference last month and I enjoyed talking with attendees about membership in WLA. Traffic at the membership table, which was located next to the registration table, was a little slow once everyone had picked up their registration packets so we volunteers mingled with attendees during breaks and handed out copies of the Get-A-Member contest flyers. We also chatted up WLA to non-members. It was a good way to remind myself of all the reasons I belong to WLA – and a good way to meet many nice librarians!

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns you would like me to relay to the rest of the Membership Committee. And don't forget the "Be A Member, Get A Member" Campaign. You could win a \$500 Southwest Airlines gift card!

## AWSL report on the 2017 WLA Conference

By Carrie Doyle

### Apps and Beyond at the 2017 WLA Conference

Kris Turner, AWSL Liaison to the WLA Board, presented a fast-paced and informative session entitled “Apps and Beyond: Technology to Enhance Your Library and Help Your Patrons” at the 2017 WLA Conference. The room was packed, Kris was firing questions at the audience and then chucking candy at the first person to answer. It was all very exciting and fun. And we discovered new and old tools and apps and got a taste of how they work. Tools covered included those for interactive teaching, improving productivity, coding, creating, and staying secure online.

The PowerPoint presentation from Kris’ presentation are available [here](#) on the WLA website in the section for Wednesday, October 18. The slides are not nearly as entertaining as Kris himself, but they do give ideas for URLs, browser extensions and names of apps to check out and put to good use.

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## AWSL member joins the Awards and Honors Committee

By Anne Moser

Anne Moser has been asked to serve as an AWSL member on the WLA [Awards and Honors Committee](#). Marge Loch-Wouters, WLA President, reached out across the aisle to include a special librarian representative on the committee. Anne encourages all AWSL members to keep an eye out for the nominations call soon and to consider nominating one of our star members for a much justified acknowledgement of the work we all do for our profession and for our libraries. Awards and honors will be given at the WLA conference in October.

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## Meet the State Agency Libraries

By Jaime Healy-Plotkin

State agency libraries exist in all three branches of our state government. The Legislative Reference Bureau serves the legislative branch, the Wisconsin State Law Library serves the judicial branch, and several state agencies within the executive branch maintain libraries. Some are open to the public and have online catalogs to point to their resources. As is the

case for many of our special libraries, there used to be more state agency libraries staffed by more librarians. We are small and mighty and allow access to information on very focused collections.

Depending on schedules and availability, the state agency librarians meet around six times a year to network and learn together. At our most recent meeting, the Wisconsin State Law Library hosted a group of about a dozen professionals as we watched an April snowstorm come down. We chatted about the library world, state government, shared information about upcoming professional development opportunities, and watched a demonstration of the Wisconsin State Law Library's new microfiche scanner. At past meetings, librarians have shown off their library locations, showcased a project such as an update to a digital collection or website, and trained on outreach of our resources.

The following is the list of the state agency libraries, their websites, and their locations.

- [Dane County Law Library](#)  
Dane County Courthouse, 215 S Hamilton St, Room L1007 Madison WI 53703  
Open to the public
- [Legislative Reference Bureau](#)  
1 East Main Street Suite 200 Madison WI 53703  
Open to the public
- [Wisconsin Historical Society](#)  
816 State Street, Madison, WI 53706  
Open to the public
- [Wisconsin State Law Library](#)  
120 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd Madison WI 53703  
Open to the public
- [Wisconsin Dept of Public Instruction Resources for Libraries and Lifelong Learning \(RL&LL\)](#)  
2109 South Stoughton Road Madison, WI 53716
- [Wisconsin Veterans Museum Archives and Research Center](#)  
3rd Floor, 30 W. Mifflin St. Madison, WI 53703  
By appointment only

- [Wisconsin Department Of Transportation Research and Library Services Unit](#)
- [Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds](#)
- Other librarians who have recently participated in the meetings: Wisconsin Department of Justice Legal Research Librarian, South Central Library System Multitype Library Services representative, and the librarian from the U.S. Western District of Wisconsin Federal Court.

## Special Librarian Travels... to Armenia

By Jaime Healy-Plotkin



(Source: <https://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/europe/armenia/>)

I spent my Spring Break this year in Armenia. Armenia is probably not the first place we think of when looking for a place to escape the long-stretching winter in Wisconsin as it is a landlocked country with no sunny beaches, no major theme-parks, and most people have to ask “where is Armenia?” Located next to Turkey, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, Armenia is roughly five times smaller in size than Wisconsin. I had the privilege of joining my husband on his third and final deployment through his work to Yerevan, Armenia. The Wisconsin State Public Defender, working on a project funded by the United States Department of State



[International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau](#), visited the Republic of Armenia to provide technical and capacity building assistance to the Public Defender's Office. You can read more about his initial trip in this article in [Inside Track of the State Bar of Wisconsin](#).

Armenia has a population of around three million people. However, according to the Office of the President of the Republic of Armenia: “There are more than ten million Armenians living in Armenia, Artsakh and the Armenian communities across the globe, that is, the Armenian Diaspora. The Armenian Diaspora was formed throughout the centuries as a result of the loss of Armenian statehood and the establishment of foreign powers, the massacres of Armenians and the Genocide of 1915. Today, there are Armenian communities in more than 100 countries all over the world and the majority of them are in the Russian Federation, the U.S.A., France, Georgia, Syria, Lebanon, Argentina, Canada, the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as other countries.” [Link](#). You can read more about the Armenian Diaspora in this [2014 article from the New York Times](#).

Armenia is the first country to have adopted Christianity as its state religion. Its borders have fluctuated over time due to various foreign invaders and is drastically smaller than the time of Ancient Armenia including the loss of its country’s symbol, Mount Ararat, to Turkey. The most recent changes took place during its time as part of the Soviet Union, but Armenia declared its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

During my time in Yerevan, the capital city, I had the pleasure of walking the wide streets of this European-feeling city. And, as most librarians do on vacation, I found a book-focused tourist location and took a tour of the [Matenadaran, the Scientific Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts](#). For an entry fee of 1,000 dram, roughly \$2, I was able to view many historic texts, some with jewel-encrusted and ivory binding, original printings from the 16th to 18th centuries, and an exhibit on Polish literature. I also had the opportunity to walk through the [History Museum of Armenia](#) and see the [world’s oldest shoe](#), which dates to around 3,500 BC. I particularly enjoyed the collection of traditional Armenian dress and textiles with its rich colors and elaborate patterns.

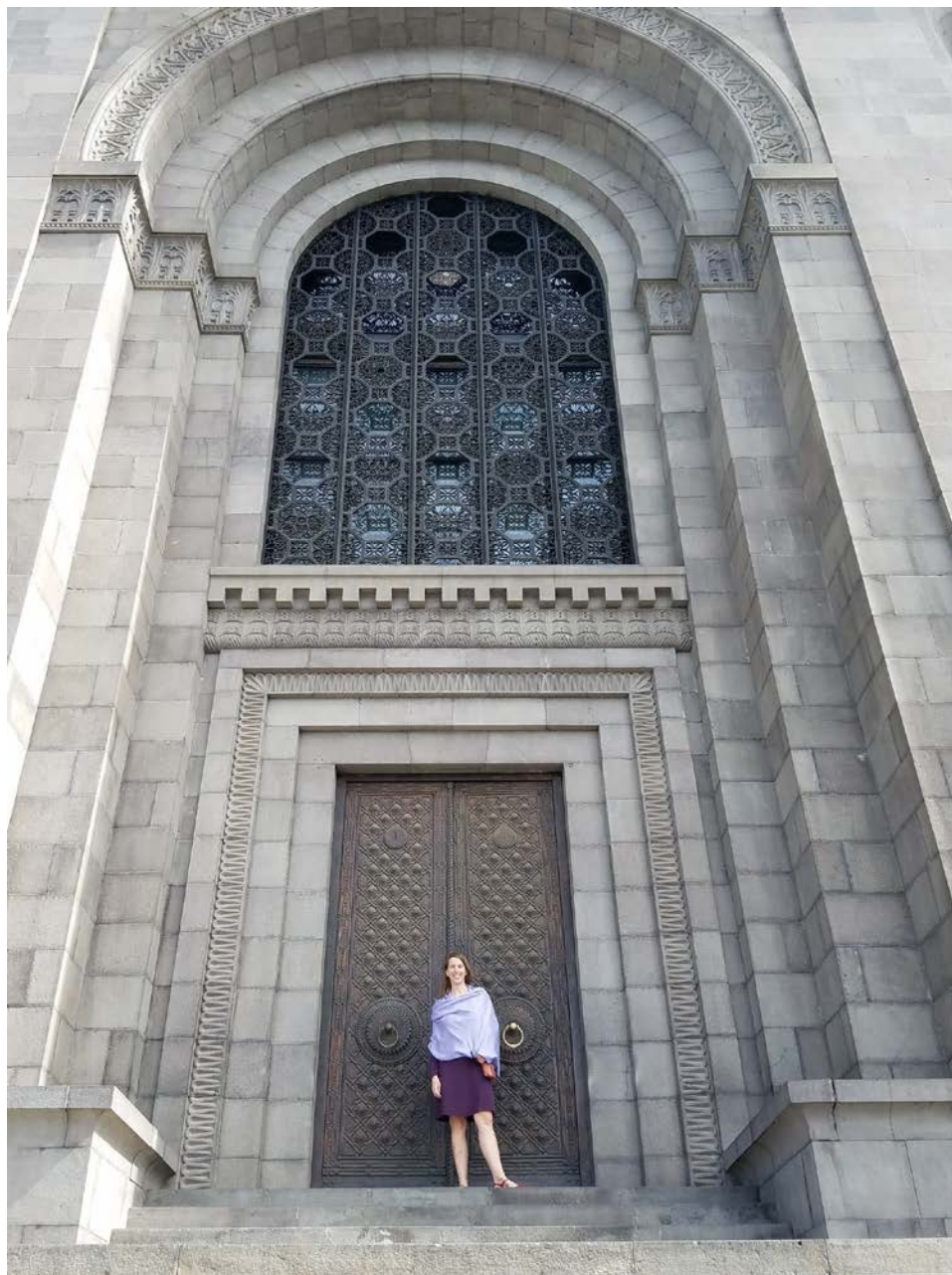
The Armenian alphabet was created in 405 AD by Mesrop Mashtots, a name remembered by tourists as the main thoroughfare in Yerevan holds his name. Even with my background in French, I was not able to wrap my head about the [38 characters, the written language, or pronunciation](#). However, the Armenians acknowledge that their word for thank you, Shnorhakalutyun (շնորհակալություն) is too complicated so they typically simply say the French word merci. I got that one down! We brought back a copy of the Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets translated into Armenian along with some Armenian alphabet flashcards for my seven year-old daughter. Maybe she will help me learn.



It was truly a great trip and I honestly never thought I would say that I had the opportunity to visit Armenia.



*I am standing outside the 21st Library Branch in Yerevan across the street from the National Assembly of Armenia. You can learn more about the Yerevan municipality libraries at their website: <http://www.isahakyanlibrary.am/index-eng.html>*



*Outside the Matenadaran, the Scientific Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts.  
(<http://www.matenadaran.am/?id=127&lng=4#.Ws-Dj2rwaHt>)*



(Caption on next page)





*Colorful texts on display at the Matenadaran, the Scientific Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts.*



*Mount Ararat, according to the Book of Genesis is where Noah's Ark landed, is the symbol of Armenia, although it is now physically located in Turkey, and is seen here from the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex. (<http://www.genocide-museum.am/eng/index.php>)*

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## Special Librarian Travels.... To Libraries of Course!



*Oshkosh Public Library. Photo by Carrie Doyle.*



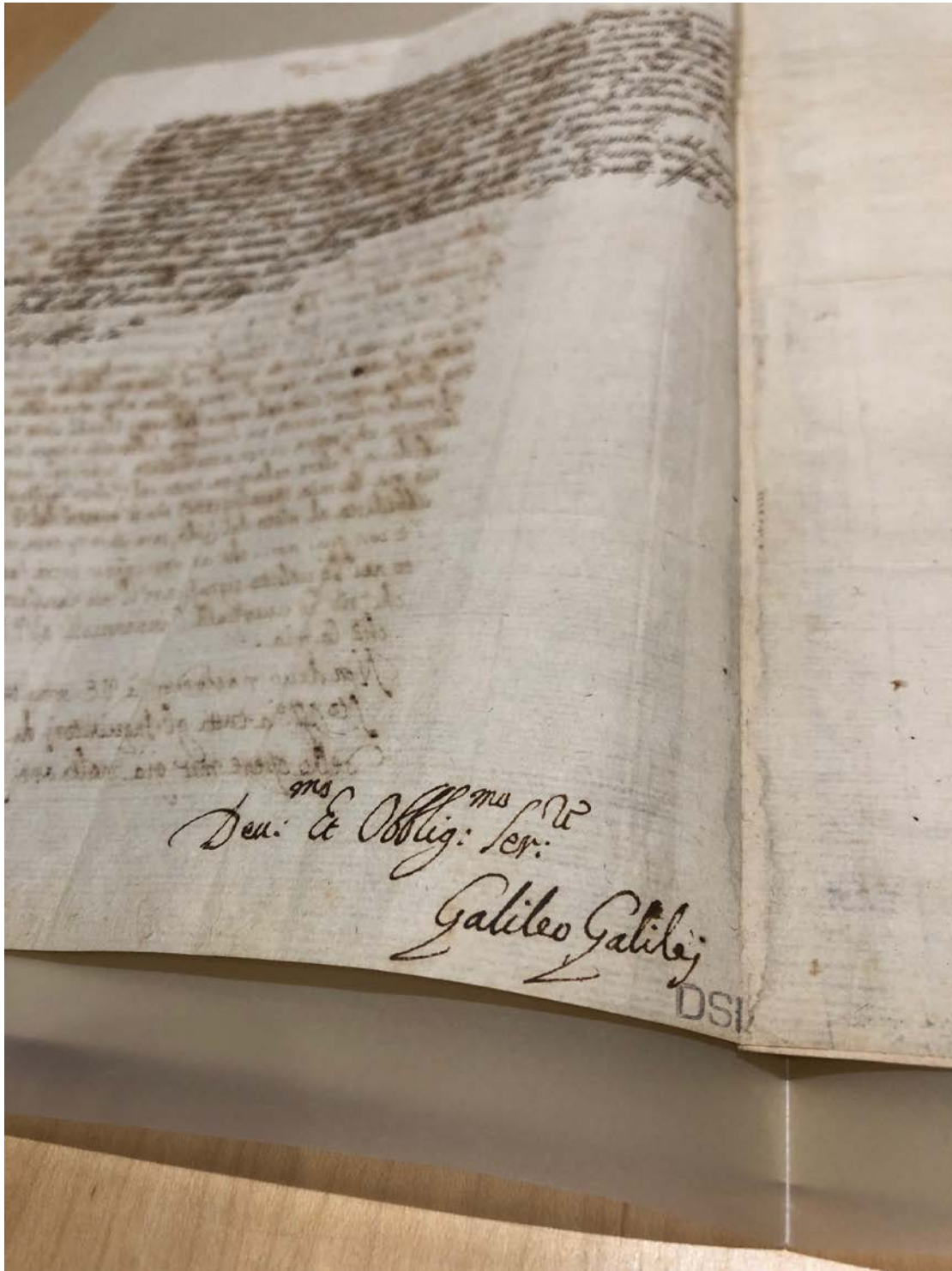
*Spokane Public Library. Photo by Carrie Doyle.*



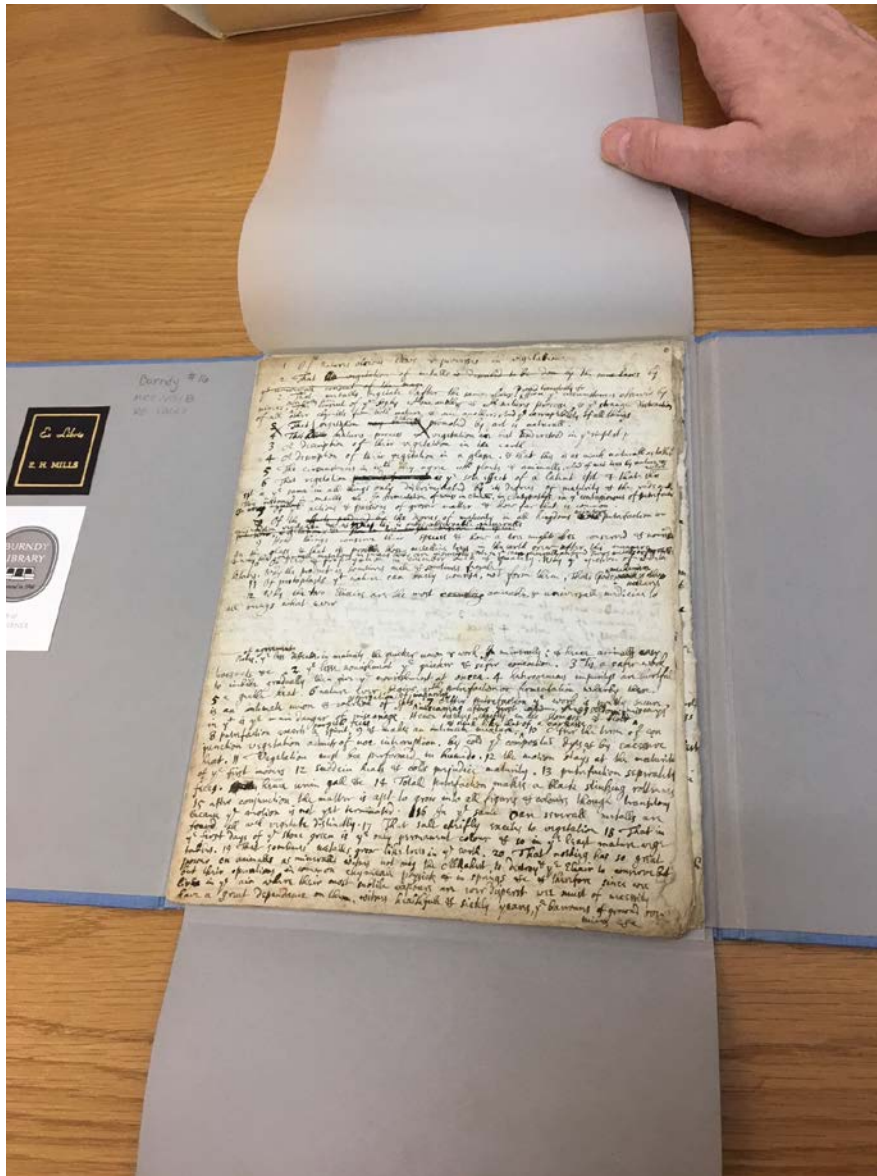
The following images are from Anne Moser, Wisconsin Water Librarian at the UW-Madison of pictures taken on her recent travels to Washington DC for the International Association of Marine and Aquatic Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMSLIC) regional meeting. All photos are by Anne and were taken at the Dibner Library of the Smithsonian Institution.



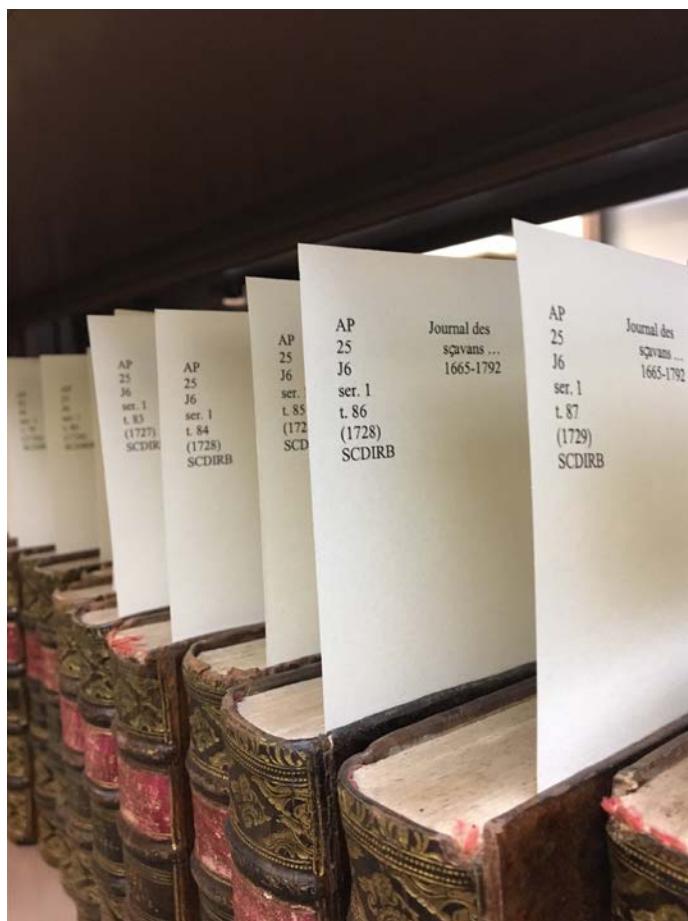
*The Entrance to the magic rooms.*



Yes, that is Galileo's handwriting. Notes from late in his life.



Not to be outdone by Galileo, these are notes in Isaac Newton's handwriting (#NotAFake)



*First printed scientific journal.*



## Mark Your Calendar!

### AWSL Presents a Tour of the UW Law Library in Madison

When: Wednesday, August 15. Tour will take place between 4:30-5:30 pm. Social will begin immediately following the tour.

Where: Meet between 4:15-4:30 in the atrium of the Law Library building at 975 Bascom Mall in Madison. Following the tour, we will walk to the Memorial Union Terrace for the social (~5-10 min walk).

Watch your email inbox later this summer for instructions on how to RSVP for the tour.

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## Your AWSL Board

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## BE A MEMBER, GET A MEMBER

For more information, see the [WLA website](#).



**BE A MEMBER,  
GET A MEMBER.**

***& FLY!***



Starting March 1st, when you refer a new member to join the Wisconsin Library Association you enter a drawing for a chance to win a Southwest Airlines Giftcard value \$500 to use for any of their destinations. Visit [www.wisconsinlibraries.org](http://www.wisconsinlibraries.org) for more information.