

June 2017

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REPORT FROM YOUR CHAIR

By Lisa Abler, AWSL Chair

Hello, AWSL members! I want to extend a warm welcome to you as we head into summer. With the beautiful weather comes news of upcoming AWSL activities, plus a review of recent events.

This report is my first official communication with you as chair, and I want you to know I am excited to be in this position, to be able to participate in the WLA, and to meet, interact, and share ideas and experiences with so many wonderful people...all of you special librarians! This opportunity is especially meaningful to me as a “deeply embedded” librarian of sorts—my job is as a research scientist studying benign prostate disease at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Thanks to my current role in AWSL, I am benefitting from new relationships, as well as fresh perspectives and chances to learn about the challenges and joys of information wrangling from a library-focused, rather than lab-centered, view. I am looking forward to the year to come!

This past October, the WLA Annual Conference was held at the Potawatomi Hotel and Casino in Milwaukee. AWSL was well represented at the successful event, as I detail in “‘Better Together’ with Special Libraries: An Overview of the 2016 WLA Annual Conference.” We are delighted to feature an article by AWSL’s WLA Conference Scholarship winner Ellen Faletti, a first-year student at the iSchool at UW-Madison, who highlights her conference experiences. Further, AWSL offered its traditional special library tour during the conference, visiting the American Geographical Society Library, housed at the UW-Milwaukee. Read (and see!) more about this event in this issue.

Our members have been busy with much more than the WLA Annual Conference, however. Also in this newsletter, learn about a brief history of AWSL, an overview of an international meeting of Aquatic and Marine Science librarians hosted by the UW-Madison's Water Library, and news from the WLA board.

The board is utilizing the longer days to plan and prepare for our summer and fall events. Our summer tour will explore the UW-Madison's Law Library. Look for event details coming soon. We are also planning outreach events to library students at the iSchool at UW-Madison (formerly, School of Library and Information Studies, or SLIS), and are hoping to extend our outreach to students at UW-Milwaukee's School of Information Studies (SOIS) as well this year.

Thank you to all who contributed or will be contributing to AWSL events and the newsletter in 2017. We appreciate your efforts and dedication! If you are interested in becoming involved in AWSL, please contact us! We have a wonderful time working together, we always learn something new and we would love to turn more colleagues into friends by collaborating through AWSL. In the meantime, find your favorite sunny (or shady) spot, grab a refreshing beverage and take a few minutes to relax while catching up on AWSL's activities.

Best wishes for an outstanding summer,
Lisa Abler

REPORT FROM YOUR WLA BOARD LIAISON

By Kris Turner, AWSL Board Liaison

I'm excited to represent AWSL as your liaison. This is my first year on the WLA Board, and it has been educational, interesting and engaging. It is great to better connect with other groups, the executive staff, and our WLA presidents as they all work hard to make your WLA membership worthwhile.

The biggest news coming from WLA is the Leadership Institute, which will be held from August 9-11 in Madison. This is the inaugural institute, and one that is designed to create and forge new leaders for libraries of all types across Wisconsin. This will be an intensive and highly productive institute, and one that I suggest you look into if you are hoping to become a library leader, or want to further hone your leadership skills. You can find more information about the Leadership Institute and apply for a position by visiting the Institute's webpage.

Another change within WLA is the announcement of a new kind of group within WLA: Special Interest Groups, or SIGs. Special Interest Groups are designed to combat the problem of divisions and roundtables that grow stagnant over time as their objectives are completed or as members move on to other projects or groups. SIGs can pop up more easily, fade away as needed, and complete their tasks without have to worry about official duties that may slow down the creative and collaborative process that WLA groups are designed to foster. SIGs are beginning to form now, and if you may think that a group you are a member or (or an idea that you had) would be a candidate for a SIG, please feel free to contact me!

One new group that is developing within WLA is the Student Task Force. This Task Force is made up of I-School (and soon) SOIS students who are hungry to get involved and make their voices heard. We probably all remember being the young Library School graduate who was ready jump in and make a difference, and it is great to see that WLA is providing an outlet for these students to make changes and become a part of the WLA structure. Each year, AWSL reaches out to students at both the I-School and SOIS to attend the conference by applying for our scholarship. Some of these students that are now involved in the WLA Student Task Force first became aware of WLA while speaking with AWSL reps, and have now become more involved. Thanks to everyone for getting out there and speaking with the librarians of tomorrow!

Finally, don't forget that the WLA annual conference will be held at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells from October 17-20. I hope to see more AWSL-ers there this year, either attending or presenting. One of the best parts of being a WLA member is the chance it provides us to get together, talk about challenges facing our unique and 'special' libraries, and help out! Become a part of the community in AWSL by joining us at our meeting, during a social hour, or attending our sessions. As your Board Liaison, I am able to take any concerns that you have straight to the board and provide you with feedback and, hopefully, answers. If there are any questions about AWSL, the Conference, or WLA itself, I am happy to answer them - just ask me! I look forward to hearing from you all, and seeing you soon. Have a great summer!

A SHORT HISTORY OF AWSL AND REFLECTIONS ON TODAY

By Carrie Doyle

carrie.awsl@gmail.com, 608-890-4575

History of AWSL

Compiled by Mary Galneder, 1992

Revised by the 1997 Executive Committee

The Association of Wisconsin Special Librarians (AWSL) officially became a Division of the Wisconsin Library Association at WLA's Annual Business Meeting in 1986.

Prior to 1984 when the Special Libraries Round Table was formed, members of the Health and Rehabilitative Services Section (which was dissolved at the October 1983 WLA conference in LaCrosse) were the only special librarians represented by a unit in WLA. Early in the 1980's, however, other special librarians realized that if they wished to have a voice in future library developments, including legislation establishing multi-type library systems, working within the WLA would enable them to present a united front. Twenty-five members signed a petition to form the Special Libraries Round Table. By-laws were accepted in the fall of 1983.

The Special Libraries Round Table met at WLA for the first time at the 1984 annual conference. The purpose of the Round Table was "to provide an opportunity for discussion and exchange of ideas for persons interested in the welfare of special libraries." The Round Table also planned to "...have an opportunity to participate actively in the formation of library policy and programs in this state." By-laws for the Round Table were drafted by a group of librarians including: Barbara Arnold (UW-Extension), Craig Booher (Institute of Paper Chemistry), Karen Bratz (Schreiber Foods), Sharon Hoeper (Mercy Medical Center), Cheryl Lamb (James River Corp.) and Carol Ryan (Foth and Van Dyke). The by-laws were accepted at WLA's Annual Business Meeting in 1983.

As interest in the Special Libraries Round Table grew, membership in the Health and Rehabilitative Services Section dropped below the number considered sufficient to maintain a unit of WLA. The WLA Board of Directors, acting on a recommendation by the Committee on Organization, decided that a merger of the Health and Rehabilitative Services Section and the Special Libraries Round Table would be in the best interest of both units and WLA. The merged unit would be called the Special Libraries Round Table because that name covered a broader scope. An early project of the Round Table was to compile a list of potential members using membership lists from selected organizations and other sources. It may have been the first time that a statewide list of special librarians was compiled. Those on the list were invited to join the Round Table.

At the 1984 meeting, plans were also made to schedule a joint meeting with the Wisconsin Chapter of the Special Libraries Association during the next conference. SLA members who did not belong to WLA were invited to attend the conference at the WLA member rate. That meeting established a tradition of cooperation between WLA and SLA that culminated in the joint production of the Directory of Wisconsin Special Libraries, 1990.

The conference in Milwaukee established a pattern which includes tours of special libraries in the area and presentations which reflect the interests of special librarians. The library tours offer members an opportunity to see what other special libraries are doing and how they are arranged. Tours and programming at WLA's Annual Conference provide opportunities for informal contact with other special librarians.

Since its inception, the Special Libraries Round Table, and its later incarnation of the Association of Special Librarians, has offered programming at WLA's Annual Conference. Programs have included a DIALOG troubleshooting workshop, an introduction to the online catalog at UW-Madison, management techniques for

students or part-time employees, implications of electronic information distribution to the library community, and management strategies for the one-person/minimal staff library. A round table discussion on issues important to special librarians was held with Guy St. Clair, 1991-1992 President of the Special Libraries Association as the main speaker. Programs have been co-sponsored with the Wisconsin Association of Academic Librarians, the Automation Section, the Administration Round Table, the Document Services Section, and the Reference and Adult Services Section. An innovative program idea at the 1989 conference gave participants an in-depth look at one special library, the Wisconsin State Law Library.

At the 1986 WLA Annual Business Meeting, Special Libraries Round Table members voted to seek Division status if WLA changed its unit structure. They also decided that the name of the division would be the Association of Wisconsin Special Libraries (AWSL). The changes, which were approved at WLA's Annual Business Meeting, resulted in WLA Divisions representing the four major types of libraries: public, academic, school and special. Library trustees also have Division status.

1987 was the first year for the Association of Wisconsin Special Libraries as a Division. In addition to representing special librarians and providing a unified voice in WLA and Wisconsin, AWSL officers focused on keeping members informed about and involved in AWSL activities and increasing membership to broaden support for AWSL programs. Articles pertaining to AWSL have appeared in the WLA Newsletter. Other avenues for publicity were also explored. 1987, a recruitment brochure was revised and mailed to members and those who did not renew their memberships. Occasional letters from the Chair kept members informed of AWSL activities until 1990, when a newsletter written by the AWSL Chair was initiated. Although AWSL members did not feel that they were ready to organize an entire spring conference, a one-day meeting was scheduled in April 1989. The meeting featured a tour of Highsmith and Spacesaver companies in Fort Atkinson. Twenty-five members attended. Another spring meeting was planned at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse in 1990 but had to be canceled due to low registration.

Perhaps the major accomplishment during AWSL's short history has been the publication of the Directory of Wisconsin Special Libraries, compiled by AWSL in cooperation with the Special Libraries Association, Wisconsin Chapter, October 1990. Ann Boyer, AWSL member, chaired the Ad Hoc Directory Committee and edited the directory. Approximately 650 questionnaires for the Directory were mailed. The published Directory described 320 collections. One copy was distributed free to each member of AWSL. The Wisconsin Chapter of SLA purchased copies for their members. The remaining copies were sold through WLA at the WLA store during annual conferences.

1990 was an especially good year for AWSL. It has a 15% growth in membership, the highest of any WLA Division. The growth was credited to the membership mailings and newsletters. In 1991, the AWSL Publicity Committee solicited help from a graphic artist and came up with a couple of designs for a Division logo. The Executive Committee voted on the designs and the logo was incorporated into the masthead of AWSL News in the Spring 1992 issue. The design was also printed on some canvas tote bags, which were sold to AWSL members and other WLA members at the WLA store at the annual conferences.

During its relatively short history, AWSL has offered special librarians a voice in the greater Wisconsin library community. It has presented programs on its own and jointly sponsored with other WLA Divisions on a variety of topics of interest and use to special librarians. It has offered an opportunity for special librarians to see many different special libraries and to meet formally and informally with other special librarians. It has represented viewpoints of special librarians within WLA. With the publication of the Directory of Wisconsin Special Libraries, it made communication among special librarians easier and recognized the need to cooperate with the Wisconsin Chapter of the Special Libraries Association. It has established a solid foundation for future growth and development.

Reflections on today

One of the more interesting items that can be found in the three-ring binder that gets passed to the incoming AWSL chair at the start of their tenure is an article written in 1992, and revised in 1997, entitled the History of AWSL. We thought it would be good idea to share the history with the wider AWSL membership.

I have some thoughts:

- The librarians who started AWSL sure did accomplish a lot in a short period of time
- They did, as the article states, establish a solid foundation for future growth and development. AWSL is still chugging along today, offering opportunities for communication, learning and networking with other special librarians
- As our colleague Anne Moser would say, AWSL is small but mighty!
- The fact that AWSL is still here and kicking is due to the librarians who have stepped up over the years to offer their talents and time in service of AWSL
- The [Directory of Wisconsin Special Libraries](#) is available at a few UW-Madison libraries
- The [Directory](#) is a wonder. I can't imagine how much time and effort it must have taken to compile this directory. Kudos to all who worked on it
- Another kind of amazing thing is how many libraries are listed in the [Directory](#). I would guess that any such directory published today would be slimmer
- As in the early days, AWSL needs to work to increase membership. The dwindling of the number of special libraries makes it all the more important for remaining special librarians to band together to support each other

- Current members need to step up to lead AWSL forward. There are many ways to do so including running for office, helping to plan conference programs and recruiting new members
- The work load will not be overwhelming and you will gain more than you give. You will learn a lot a lot AND have fun along the way
- Please contact me if you have ideas for increasing membership or for increasing participation in AWSL. Better yet, please contact me if you are willing to help do the work of keeping AWSL mighty.

Please contact Carrie Doyle, AWSL Member to get involved.
carrie.awsl@gmail.com, 608-890-4575

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL WLA CONFERENCE

By Lisa Abler

“Better Together’ with Special Libraries: An Overview of the 2016 WLA Annual Conference”

WLA celebrated its 125-year anniversary at 2016’s successful Annual Conference, held at Potawatomi Hotel and Casino in Milwaukee this past October. Coalescing under the theme “Better Together,” participating libraries, librarians, staff, students and companies met with a common interest in mind: exchanging conversations, ideas and stories in support of Wisconsin libraries and the residents who utilize them.

Highlights included keynote addresses presented by John McGivern, best known as host of Around the Corner with John McGivern, an Emmy award winning PBS series profiling Wisconsin communities; and Dawn Logsdon and Lucie Faulknor, who shared clips from their film-based project about American public libraries, Free for All. Both presentations emphasized the critical importance of storytelling, as did this year’s One Conference, One Book selection, Jennifer Morales’ Meet Me Halfway: Milwaukee Stories.

These presentations reinforced a known and accepted tenet within libraries: that story telling offers a window into shared human experience. In turn, the speakers and their works reminded us that stories provide an accessible and effective means to demonstrate that there are more similarities between us than differences, to herald the incalculable value of institutions that are free and open to all, and to illustrate the connections within communities.

AWSL had its own stories to share, as we presented three conference programs, all on the same day! Anne Moser, AWSL’s newsletter and web coordinator, gave a spirited and engaging overview of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)-related kits developed at UW-Madison’s Water Library. Designed for children ages three through nine, each kit introduces components of the scientific method by exploring

different water science themes through stories, songs and activities. These kits are available for checkout through the Water Library (<http://waterlibrary.aqua.wisc.edu/for-parents-and-teachers-and-librarians/our-stem-kits/>).

AWSL's other conference programs included insights and suggestions for building a digital repository by Kris Turner, Past Chair, as well as an introduction to approaches librarians can take to help researchers meet funder requirements in grant applications and in the lab environment by Lisa Abler, Chair. Kris' case study in repository creation demonstrated how this type of resource celebrates community history while also serving to market the contributions and connectedness of your library to that community. I enjoyed enthusiastic audience participation during my program, which provided a glimpse of the ways in which researchers interact with data, an introduction to data management best practices, and a short list of the invaluable benefits good data management can provide in terms of data accessibility for the lab, the broader research community, and the public.

AWSL also held a business meeting and hosted a tour during the conference. During our business meeting, I took over as chair, Kris Turner transitioned to Past Chair and Nell Fleming, librarian for the Wisconsin School for the Deaf in Delavan, stepped into her new role as Chair Elect. Our outgoing and incoming Board Liaisons (Carrie Doyle and Kris, respectively) reported on upcoming WLA events and initiatives, including information about the inaugural Leadership Institute, slated for August 2017, and formation of a new Student Task Force to encourage student involvement in and collaboration with WLA. Tour highlights are provided elsewhere in this issue.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Annual Conference on AWSL's behalf, whether by organizing, presenting or attending programs and events. Your efforts are much appreciated and make our division better, together!

AWSL TOURS THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY AT UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE By Lisa Abler

In keeping with its popular tradition of hosting a special library tour during the WLA Annual Conference, AWSL invited conference attendees to explore the American Geographical Society Library (AGSL), housed at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Jovanka Ristic, AGSL's reference librarian, greeted our group of 19 and began the tour with a presentation that provided an overview of the library's history and a summary of its holdings. Originally formed in the 1850s as part of the American Geographical Society of New York, this library and map collection was created to support distribution of geographical and statistical information and to maintain holdings of maps and charts. The

library soon became renowned for its resources. By diligently working to expand its collections, the library cemented its reputation as an invaluable tool for research.

Eventually, however, it became clear that the AGS could no longer support its library. A national search began to find a suitable new home for the collection. The staff and resources at UW-Milwaukee made an excellent fit and so, in 1978, the AGS holdings were donated to the university. The collection was carefully packed up, loaded onto trucks, and escorted from New York to Wisconsin under heavy security.

The AGSL has continued to thrive at UWM. Today the library houses over 1.3 million items, the oldest original of which is a map dating from 1452. The collection comprises maps that cover the world, both land and sea, as well as a host of thematic maps that feature an impressive range of physical factors; navigational charts from agencies like the Federal Aviation Administration and nautical charts from many foreign countries; atlases that date back to the 15th century; over 120 globes, including several of historical value; aerial photographs and image collections that focus on Polar exploration and the Western US; plus pamphlets, books, journals, and geospatial data. 3,000 of the library's 520,000 maps and 100,000 of its 625,000 photos are available online, and more high-resolutions images are being added. Further, for those with a particular interest or specific research question, print or full-resolution digital copies can be ordered from the AGSL.

Following Jovanka's presentation, our group was given the opportunity to tour the library individually. Participants eagerly jumped at the chance to explore the vast collection and its fascinating holdings. Displays located throughout the library featured many of AGSL's unique, valuable or intriguing items, offering rich rewards to those who embarked on a self-guided walking tour. In addition, several attendees sought reference help for specific questions they brought with them to the AGSL.

As our tour drew to a close and participants began boarding the bus, they enthusiastically discussed interesting discoveries they had made while probing the collection. Everyone agreed the trip had been a smashing success and many of us wished for more time to investigate other aspects of the collection. Hopefully, our readers will be inspired to explore the AGSL themselves, online or in person.

On behalf of AWSL and all the tour attendees, I would like to thank the AGSL staff for planning and preparing displays, and willingly and happily answering questions as we walked through the library. In particular, I would like to thank Jovanka Ristic for her time, efforts and presentation, which ensured this tour was not only possible, but also educational and enjoyable.

Images from our visit to the AGS Library are included at the end of the newsletter.

REPORT FROM THE 2016 WLA AWSL SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

By Ellen Faletti

The 2016 Wisconsin Library Association Annual Conference was the first library conference I ever attended. I was excited, nervous, and curious to see what I would learn. Being able to attend WLA within the first few months of starting graduate school was a great look into the work librarians do in the real world, and a confirmation that this was the right field for me.

My decision to pursue a degree in Library and Information Studies did not stem from my love of reading nor from my desire to work in a public library. In undergrad, I primarily focused on museums. I knew I wanted to pursue a career in cultural institutions, which is how I found myself at the iSchool at UW-Madison. However, being in a program where others had experience working in libraries, I was intimidated.

Before starting the program, I felt drawn to special libraries. They seemed to cater to my career goals of working in unique cultural institutions. Part of the appeal of the MLIS degree is the many ways I can use the degree. My interests of law, art, and social justice aligned together in the field.

The WLA Annual Conference was an eye-opening experience. I attended sessions that covered a variety of libraries – from public to academic to special libraries. The breadth of topics covered excited me too – from digitization to research assistance – I no longer felt intimidated nor like an “outsider” to the library world.

Perhaps my favorite parts of WLA were the tours of the Milwaukee Art Museum archives and the American Geographical Society Library at UWM. Ultimately, I would love to work in an art museum library, so visiting the MAM’s library and archive was a great introduction to the working atmosphere. Likewise, the AGS Library tour tugged at my historian and material culture heartstrings. The vastness of the collection was amazing, and to be able to look at the collection was a memorable experience. I think my favorite object was a Braille globe – but all the globes in different languages was fascinating! The visit sparked in me an interest to work at the Robinson Map Library here on campus!

I am thankful for the AWSL to give me the opportunity to attend the WLA Annual Conference. It was a memorable experience, especially at the beginning of my librarian career, and I feel encouraged to continue to pursue my goal of being a special librarian.

WATER LIBRARY HOSTS INTERNATIONAL MEETING

By Anne Moser

A unique group of librarians recently spent some time on the UW-Madison campus for their first conference in the Great Lakes region. Librarians who specialize in aquatic (freshwater) and marine sciences form the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers and they held their

regional conference in Madison on May 16-19. The theme of the conference was “Great Lakes, Great Libraries.”

It was the first time in their 27 year history that the regional meeting was held in a freshwater state. Anne Moser, senior special librarian with the Wisconsin Water Library co –hosted the meeting with Alisun DeKock, another Great Lakes librarian from the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago.

The regional group, called SAIL, is comprised of libraries on the East Coast and in Great Lakes communities of the U.S. and Canada, along with several foreign countries including Bermuda and Panama. Approximately 25 librarians will be at the Pyle Center came to hear presentations by their membership on innovative library practices as well as to learn about the science of local watersheds. SAIL members presented on recent projects related to digital asset management, managing big data, and ways to communicate and translate scientific information.

Scientific speakers included Jake Walsh from the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Center for Limnology, discussing Lake Mendota and his research into the invasive spiny waterflea. Wisconsin Sea Grant’s David Hart spoke on his project of an integrated approach to addressing bluff erosion along Lake Michigan. From the Shedd Aquarium, Garrett Johnson, described the Shedd’s environmental and education efforts in the Great Lakes. With a nod to the intersection of art and science, UW Art Professor Sarah FitzSimons presented on how water has infused her work.

YOUR AWSL BOARD

AWSL Chair

Lisa Ablar

Assistant Scientist, UW-Madison

llablar@wisc.edu

608-213-8358

AWSL Chair-Elect

Nell Fleming

Librarian/Archivist, Wisconsin School for the Deaf Library, Delavan, WI

(262) 728-7133 voice/TTY

(262) 394-1216 Video Phone/VP

nell.fleming@wsd.k12.wi.us

AWSL WLA Board Liaison

Kristopher Turner

Reference and Technology Services Librarian, UW-Madison Law Library

(608) 262-7238

kris.turner@wisc.edu

AWSL Secretary

Amy O'Shea

Online Librarian, Broadview University

aoshea@broadviewuniversity.edu

(608) 830-6936

AWSL Web Editor and Newsletter Editor

Anne Moser

Senior Special Librarian, UW - Madison, Wisconsin Water Library

akmoser@aqua.wisc.edu

(608) 262-3069

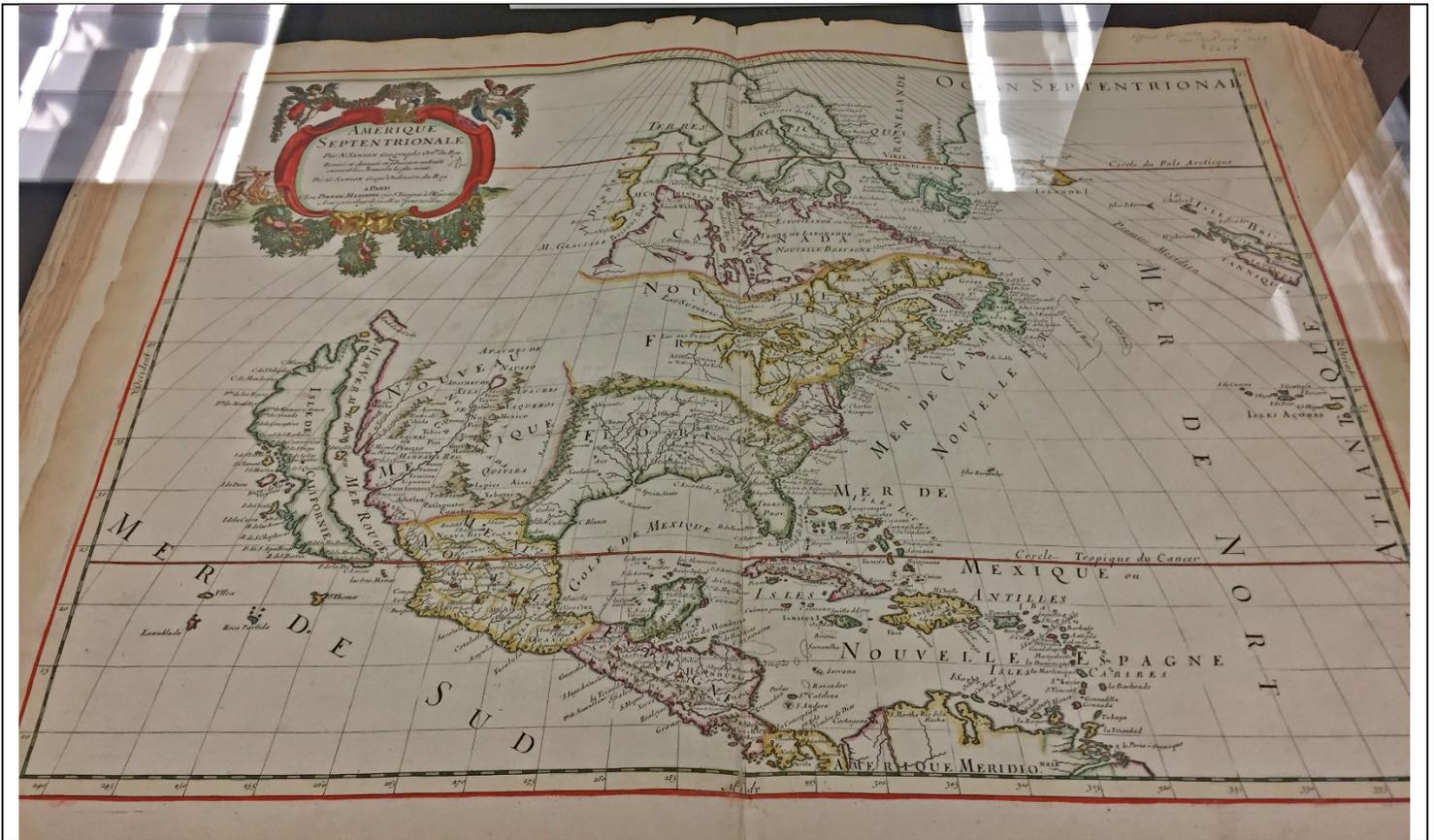
IMAGES FROM AGS LIBRARY AT UW-MILWAUKEE



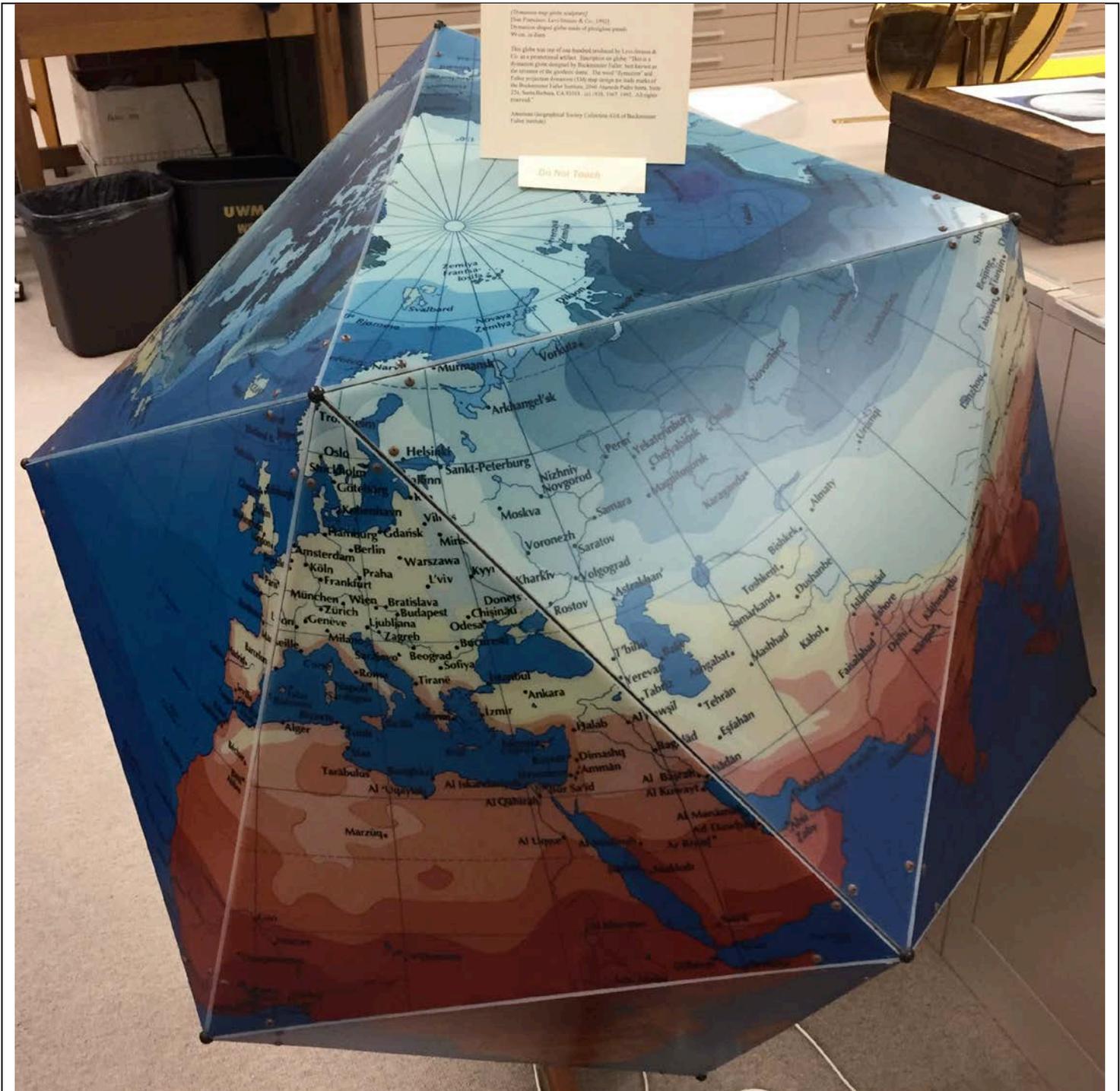
The “Man of Commerce” map (1889) depicts the resemblances between railroads, the arteries of commerce, and the arterial system of man; and between the Great Lakes, a commercial system, and the vital human organs.



A baseball-cum-globe of the earth.



AGSL's holdings include historical collections that were created centuries ago, such as this map that dates from 1678 Paris. The oldest map in the library is Giovanni Leardo's MappaMundi, charted in 1452.



Among AGSL's displays are several interesting and unusual items, such as this globe designed by Buckminster Fuller. Levi-Strauss & Co. produced one hundred such globes as part of a promotional campaign in the 90s.



A planetary globe in which Pluto lives on (!). Globes can be used to depict far more than a map of the earth, and the AGSL collection includes a range of special purpose, thematic, lunar and celestial globes.



The AGSL is a cartographer's visual delight, with myriad atlases, charts and books on display, such as the globes and wall maps seen here.