

Special Edition

# Fine Print

APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY

FRIENDS OF APPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY, INC.



*After 32 years of service, a library icon retires. This is a special commemorative issue of Fine Print for a man who has dedicated his life to serving the entire community, and its Library... Terry Dawson.*

## “Terry’s passion doesn’t end with the Library”

~ Tim Hanna, Mayor of Appleton

I enjoy working with people who are passionate about what they do. And that’s why I’ve enjoyed working with Terry during my time as Mayor of Appleton. Terry’s passion for libraries has helped him lead the Appleton Public Library to becoming recognized as one of the best in the State of Wisconsin.



But Terry’s passion doesn’t end with the Library. He also has a passion for the community as evidenced by his active leadership and commitment to organizations promoting growth and development as well as awareness in the City. He has been a tireless advocate for Downtown Appleton and the Library’s role in a vibrant downtown. He has also positioned the Library as a partner in promoting community values through programs with the Appleton Area School District, the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, and the Building for Kids among others.

Terry’s passion also shines as a founding organizer of Toward Community - Unity in Diversity promoting awareness and acceptance of all members of our community. From diversity circles to community presentations the Library has become the place where many important community conversations have begun.

But the nice thing about passionate people is that their passion doesn’t go away when they decide to retire! So as we wish Terry a happy retirement, I suspect that he will continue to be an important part of this community for many years to come.

### Reflections

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## A Proud Daughter's Reflections

~ Gillian Dawson, Librarian & Daughter

As a patron of the Library since birth, a former citizen of Appleton, a librarian myself, and Terry Dawson's daughter, I have seen the impact he has made on the Library and the community throughout my life. I've watched the library grow and expand, watching and hearing about the new outreach programs and partnerships that it was making in the wider Fox Cities, such as the Fox Cities Book Festival. While my father didn't make all the changes or form all the bonds himself, he as an administrator helped to make the Library a place that these things could be done. The support and backing of the administration is sometimes the thing an organization needs for individual employees to develop wonderful new programs.

My father instilled a love of books and libraries in me at a very early age. He inspired me to go forth and become a librarian, and he never tried to hold me back, whether I announced I wanted to go abroad for a year in high school, or when I decided to move across the country to become a Young Adult Librarian in a small town in Virginia. His work and the work of the other staff at APL continues to inspire me to strive to better connect between the library and the community, and to keep looking for new ways to better serve our patrons.



## The Man Behind the Desk

~ The Rev. Will Bloedow, APL Board Member and Retired Pastor

In 1978 I met a man sitting behind a desk ... the Reference Desk to be exact, at the Appleton Public Library. His name was Terry Dawson. Soon after our first meeting our paths crossed again as we both served on a United Way Allocations Panel.

Throughout the years, Terry has been sitting "behind the desks" in many places in our community, metaphorically speaking. Terry is and has been a true servant leader as the Director of the Appleton Public Library. He has led the library into the technological world. He always carries the most up-to-date technology in his pocket!

Since Terry began his tenure as a city employee, Appleton residents have steadily increased their use of a new library and one addition. For over sixteen years I have served as a member of the Appleton Public Library Board of Trustees and witnessed Terry's qualities of leadership. Sitting behind the "desk" of our boardroom table he has communicated with us and enlightened the trustees on library law, the intricacies and challenges of working with budgets, mayors, city councils and other municipal departments. Terry has defined the word FAIR in a deep and caring manner. His knowledge has caused us to sit in awe. Many times we were encouraged, and at other times we were redirected as to what is correct procedure and policy. Terry has brought out the best in all who have served on the Board of Trustees throughout the years. Terry has been involved in more community groups that I have the space to list.



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*The Man Behind the Desk - continued from pg. 2*

Rotary has been one vehicle that has led to numerous community focus groups he has been involved in. As a member of the Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, he has been a teacher and youth leader, choir member and currently is co-chair of the building expansion project. The Green Apple Folk Society, The Druid's Table and other musical groups have been vehicles through which he has given expression to various genres of music.

Terry is a person of deep commitment and compassion to his family, his friends, his work, his co-workers, his faith and the world seeking to live out his creed of justice in the world. We have all benefited from his passion to enrich lives as he has shared his leadership of the library.... a place of discovery, enrichment and acceptance. I wish you well, Terry, as you pursue your "new future". Thank you for being such a good friend and influence for all in our community. Happy Retirement!

## "Leading by Example"

~ Barbara Kelly, Executive Director Fox Cities Online & Past Assistant Director APL

In 1981, at the urging of a good friend who was a librarian, I volunteered at the brand new Appleton Public Library. For a few months I led tours of the new building, answered directional questions for patrons at the front entrance, and helped out with some routine tasks in the Circulation department. I got to know some of the staff, including Terry Dawson, who was the new head of the Reference department at the time. When a part time un-benefited job as a Library Assistant in Reference became available, Terry interviewed me briefly and offered me the job - things were easier in those days.

One of the first interactions I recall, as I was being trained to work on the Reference desk was when I presented him with a question I thought only I would know the answer to because my husband is a mountain climber. "What point on the earth is the farthest from the center?" I asked. Terry brushed it off, and continued to try to teach me about the phone system, and the forms we used to count questions, and the customer service ethic, etc. "No, really. I bet you can't answer this" I said. "Where is the point farthest from the center of the earth? It's NOT the summit of Mount Everest," I hinted. I was sure I had him stumped and he was trying to pretend otherwise. Finally, on about the third time I asked him he looked at me, I think he may have rolled his eyes, and walked away into the reference book stacks. He returned seconds later with a reference book in his hand - I think it was the *Guinness Book of World Records*, open to the page where it identified the summit of Mount Chimborazo in Ecuador as having that status. Then he continued with his instruction and training. I was a bit humiliated, but I learned that a good Reference Librarian can find the answer to almost any question very quickly, and I think that is when I decided I wanted to be one.



For the rest of my career as a librarian Terry was always at least one step ahead of me, teaching me, leading by example. His commitment to good library service has been unshakable, and our community is the better for it. His understanding of public library issues is recognized statewide. APL is widely recognized as one of the best public libraries in Wisconsin, in large part because of Terry's leadership. I am proud to have worked with him, and I wish him well in his retirement.

## “He should be the library director, I said to myself.”

~ Terry Bergen, Executive Director The History Museum at the Castle

In the late 1980s, Terry Dawson, then Assistant Director of the Appleton Public Library, accompanied Director Jerry Pennington to a City Council budget meeting. Mayor Dorothy Johnson had cut the Library Board’s materials budget and Terry spoke to the council of the need to reinstate the funds, explaining the importance of the materials to the patrons of the library and to the library’s mission. I was serving on the council at the time and I remember thinking how effective he was at political persuasion (he changed Dorothy’s mind and the budget was reinstated). But I was wrong. It wasn’t political acumen; it was passion for the library’s mission and an ability to compellingly articulate the library’s importance to the community. He should be the library director, I said to myself. After 20 or so years, it is plain that Terry fulfilled his potential as a leader. Under his personal collaborative and inclusive leadership style, the library has flourished and in turn, so has our community.



## “Appleton has certainly benefited from Terry’s passion for education and community.”

~ Jennifer Stephany, Executive Director, Appleton Downtown Inc.

Appleton Downtown Inc. is so very grateful for the countless hours and endless support Terry Dawson has so generously shared with our organization. Terry has been an active part of Appleton Downtown Inc. as a member of the Economic Development committee, Board of Directors and as an officer on the Executive Committee. Terry’s support for Downtown extends far beyond his volunteer hours. He and his wife Marsha are strong supporters of Downtown; you will often find them participating in our events as well as dining and shopping in Downtown businesses. Appleton has certainly benefited from Terry’s passion for education and community. Terry we thank you for sharing your time and talents with our organization and for helping make Downtown Appleton a center for learning and culture.



## Terry Dawson: “In coming together, we learn from one another.”

~ Peter Gilbert, Friends of Appleton Public Library President  
& Director of Seeley G. Mudd Library, Lawrence University

Around the Fox Cities, we all know Terry Dawson as an excellent librarian, community leader, raconteur, man about town – and a modest guy who brings people together. You won't be surprised to know, then, that Terry has a statewide reputation for those things as well.

Some examples:

When I was Wisconsin Library Association (WLA) president in 2003, it was one of my great pleasures to attend a city council meeting to present the Library of the Year Award to Terry on behalf of Appleton Public Library. In true Terry fashion, he asked the Library Board of Trustees who were in attendance to come forward to accept the award. In accepting the award, Terry noted, “This award recognizes the terrific support we receive from our local community, as well as the dedicated efforts of our staff and volunteers. We are proud to accept on behalf of the people of Appleton.”



Terry was elected the 2005 President of WLA. WLA has about 2000 members from all kinds of libraries all over the state. It's a pretty big deal and requires being an advocate for public, academic, special, and school libraries of all sizes and locations. Terry's take on that: “We need to work together to help each other out...we are part of a larger community with a shared purpose. We can help each other out and we do.”

Way back in 1998, Terry was awarded the MCI Wisconsin Cybrarian of the Year Award. At that time it was said that he has been a leader in the use of computer technology to provide access to information and library services in the Fox Cities. MCI cited Terry's expertise, knowledge and dedication to the community. Terry noted, “This award is really recognition of a community effort...” and then went on to thank the staff, the Board, the Friends, the Foundation, and OWLS. Incidentally, the award included a donation from MCI toward library materials AND one year of dial-up access to the Internet. Talk about high tech!

Terry's blog, The New Cybrary, has been required reading for Wisconsin librarians since he started it in 2006. The blog is a thoughtful mix of current events, advocacy, and analysis. Many of his posts talk about the “power of collaboration” with others in the community, the “amazing work” of the library staff, and the “hard work of dedicated volunteers.” It's never about Terry; it's about the community, the library and (especially) the people who work there and the people who support it.

One of Terry's rare personal posts talks about his love for public libraries and especially for APL: “I was looking for something broader, more encompassing and inclusive. I found it at the Appleton Public Library.”

In looking for something more encompassing and inclusive, Terry has brought those same values to the Fox Valley and to the whole state. And for that, we're grateful.

# What Terry Dawson Means To The Community

~ The Rev. Roger Bertschausen, Senior Minister Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship

Terry Dawson means so much to the Fox Cities community. Of course his visionary and skilled leadership of the Appleton Public Library has made an enormous contribution, but this is not the only way Terry has contributed. He has dedicated himself in so many other ways, too, to building a stronger and more compassionate community.

I have been privileged to see Terry's work in the community up close in three different settings. The first is my congregation: Terry has been a deeply dedicated volunteer in many different capacities at the Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. Among other things, he has sung in our choir and served on our Governing Board. He has been a beloved teacher in our religious education program. Currently he co-chairs our building expansion committee and is a youth group adult leader. Maybe more importantly, he has offered a helping hand and a listening ear to people in need in the congregation, and he has shared deeply the questions and insights of his spiritual journey. I always treasure the wisdom I hear from Terry in his responses to my sermons.

The second place I've seen Terry's work in the community is in Toward Community: Unity in Diversity. Terry has been a stalwart member for many years. Among other things he's led the group, he was a key person in the creation of our cultural film series, and he created our website. Maybe more importantly, Terry lives out a deep commitment to understanding and appreciating diversity in both his professional and personal life.

Third, Terry is a member of the Rotary Club of Appleton, a club to which I also belong. Once again, Terry is not only an active member of the group; maybe more importantly, he lives out the principles of Rotary including "service above self."

I am so grateful for Terry's remarkable contributions to my congregation and our community. Both would be so much poorer without Terry Dawson. Thank you, Terry!



## FINE PRINT

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**Editor: Michael Kenney**

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Outagamie Waupaca Library System

# Reflections

~ Rick Krumwiede, Director Outagamie Waupaca Library System

I've known Terry for many years, meeting him on his first day of work at the Appleton Public Library. I have so many good memories of working with Terry that I'd need to write a book to include them all.

I first became aware of Terry's terrific reference skills when the library employee based trivia team, the Infomaniacs, participated in Lawrence University's trivia contest. I particularly remember playing all night in the old library. I was impressed with Terry's command of the reference collection. It was also my first glimpse into Terry's knowledge of the arcane, obscure, and trivial. I remember thinking that "he certainly knows a lot of weird stuff." And that hasn't changed.

Terry and I have spent lots of time traveling to meetings and conferences together. We've traveled across the country, around the Midwest, throughout the state, and across town. That's given us lots of time to talk, and talking is how I discovered how passionate Terry is about everything in his life, from libraries to his family.

Terry and I have always shared an interest in new technologies, and he's regularly mastered them long before me. Few people remember that Terry and I were once in business together. Our company, MicroCircus, produced software for Apple //e computers. Our most successful product was a program that Terry wrote, *Where the Rainbow Ends*, which was used by at least 30 libraries nationwide in their summer library programs. We learned lots, but mostly we learned that we were not destined to be the Jobs and Wozniak of the library world.

One of the things that I've appreciated most about Terry is his commitment to Appleton Public Library's role as the resource library for OWLS. His first concern is always about what the resource library can contribute to the system, rather than about what it can get from the system. Terry also believes that if one library in the system becomes stronger, we're all stronger. Given Terry's commitment, it's not surprising that during his tenure, APL and OWLS have had the most productive relationship of any resource library and system in Wisconsin.

I have the greatest admiration and respect for Terry. To me he is the consummate librarian, always valuing the provision of good library service above all else. Terry has made a difference, and I will miss him.



# Terry through the years



# Happy Retirement Terry!