Meet Trever Jayne, President of the Iowa Small Library Association (ISLA). Trever graciously accepted the gavel at the Fall 2021 ISLA Meeting held during the Iowa Library Association Conference. Trever is eager to share his passion for small libraries. Let’s get to know him better.

While earning his degree in English Literature at Grand View University, Trever began working part-time at Adel Public Library (APL) and has never looked back. After a brief stint at another metro area library, he became assistant director at APL in 2015. He became Vice President/President elect of ISLA in 2019 and currently serves as president. He earned his endorsement in Library Management from the Stare Library of Iowa in early 2020 and has been director at APL since December 2020.

Trever is a former foster-parent and single father to four adopted children. With three of his children now grown, his house is relatively quiet with only his 13-year-old son and their cat.

When not at work, Trever can be found on his front porch drinking tea and reading a book while avoiding housework.

Whether you’re a first-time Iowa Library Association member or you’re renewing your membership, consider joining the ISLA Subdivision for an additional $5.00. This is a worthy investment!
ISLA Awards ARSL
Conference Scholarship

We have a (grateful) winner!

Tracy Clair, Youth Services Librarian at Ely Public Library penned the award-winning essay which earned her a $500 ISLA Scholarship to the Association of Rural and Small Libraries Annual Conference held in Reno, NV in October 2021. Tracy enjoyed pressing her luck with the slot machines but found the conference sessions to be a sure thing! Let Tracy tell you about her experience.

Thank you to ISLA for the scholarship to attend the 2021 Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) conference. The opening keynote focused on how we, as small libraries, can be agents of positive change and present social justice and social change into our communities. This can be done with item selections, programs presented, and how we interact with our community.

My favorite program focused on customer service and how important it is to treat all patrons and customers equally. Do you have employees who disappear when certain patrons show up? We need to remind our co-workers that all patrons deserve kindness, polite help and equitable service expectations. This can be done by role-playing situations with staff and discussing how to handle difficult patrons in a way that always puts kindness to the customer at the forefront.

Other sessions that I found useful included topics on teaching children skills while doing storytime, keeping in mind mental health of employees during the difficult times of the pandemic, and how to make your library think like a business thinks regarding library services and communication.

Plan ahead! The ARSL 2022 Conference will be September 14-September 17 in Chattanooga, TN!
On December 15, an EF-1 tornado ripped through the small town of Rudd, IA reducing the Rudd Public Library to rubble. Library Director Shelly Sharp kindly offers an emotional retelling of the events of that night, and beyond.

“The experience has been heart wrenching. There was nothing we could do the night of the tornado. The city had lost power and water, and there was a gas leak near the library. The streets were littered with debris and downed power lines.”

Shelly also talked about the morning after. “When I saw the library, it broke my heart and the hearts of many patrons within the community and beyond.” However, Shelly and others got right to work, salvaging what they could before the building was deemed unsafe to enter.

“We have currently set up a small library within the City Hall in Rudd.”

Looking ahead, Shelly remains hopeful. “We have dreams to rebuild, location still to be determined. The Library Board and I are making a ‘wish list’ of items and services we would like to include in our new facility. We hope to come back bigger and better.”

Iowa Small Library Association members across the State share in your sorrow and hope that your dream to rebuild comes true.
What Keeps This Group Together Is a Mystery

Small Iowa libraries have always included lively book discussion groups on their programming agenda. *While Others Sleep* offered at Hiawatha Public Library is a mystery book club that has endured for years.

Hiawatha Public Library launched *While Others Sleep* in 2006, and though the group has undergone changes, its members are still sharing their love of a good whodunit today.

Retired school teacher and Hiawatha Library patron Donna Schlampp saw the program advertised at its inception and encouraged her friend Cindy Andersen to join her. They both still attend 16 years later, along with 8-10 amateur sleuths each month.

“When we started, we would set up tables and chairs. We soon realized this was too much work, so we abandoned the tables. Since then, we sit in a round, chairs only, each month,” laughed Donna.

Donna and Cindy agree that *While Others Sleep*’s longevity stems from its different approach. Cindy said, “Rather than everyone reading the same book each month, we instead focus on an author. In that way, each individual gets to discuss the title they read. This leads to a lot of crossover discussions from title to title. Additionally, so many mystery authors are known for more than one character or series. Our method encourages group members to try something new.”

Early on, Donna assumed a leadership role. She started book club by presenting an author history and providing everyone with one or two questions that should be considered when discussing titles. This worked well but 5 years ago, Donna decided, “I’m too old for this!”

Now, January’s gathering is a potluck. Attendees read whatever they prefer. Then, each group member picks a monthly author. It is then that member’s responsibility to lead the discussion about the author that they have chosen. This keeps everyone on task and gives each member ownership. This has worked well for everyone.

*While Others Sleep* meets the first Thursday of each month from 2:00-3:00 pm at Hiawatha Public Library. Adults 18+ are invited to join in as the works of Allen Eskens are up for healthy debate on February 3.