



2025-2026 YEAR IN REVIEW

*Recollection Wisconsin is built on a simple idea:
Wisconsin's history comes from and belongs to everyone.*

Since 2005, [Recollection Wisconsin](#) has partnered with libraries, archives, museums, and historical societies across Wisconsin to bring their collections online and keep them free and open to anyone.



Our Mission

Recollection Wisconsin connects cultural heritage institutions statewide to preserve, promote, and facilitate digital access to Wisconsin's rich history through collaboration and shared infrastructure.

Since receiving its first dedicated state funding in July 2023, Recollection Wisconsin has operated on \$300,000 per year, a modest sum by state budget standards, and put it to work building something substantial. That investment has grown the collection to more than 800,000 digital records, expanded our network of content partners to 272 organizations representing history from all 72 counties, and launched a digitization internship program that has trained 17 graduate students while adding thousands of new items to the freely available public platform. We've done this work as careful stewards of taxpayer dollars, eliminating fees for content partners along the way so that participation is accessible to organizations of all sizes.

This Year in Review covers a busy year and a half for Recollection Wisconsin. Our [graduate student internship program](#) continues to grow, with four new projects already set to begin this fall. Thanks to a partnership with UW-Madison's iSchool Capstone Course, we now have a foundational design ready to guide improvements to the Recollection Wisconsin website's look, feel, and accessibility for all kinds of users. Through the [Culture Keepers Collective](#), we brought digitization training to the 2026 Culture Keepers Gathering and began piloting [Traditional Knowledge Notices](#) in partnership with the [Digital Public Library of America](#) (DPLA) and [Local Contexts](#), while a statewide Newspaper Think Tank brought together library systems, historical organizations, and academic partners to begin envisioning a centralized home for Wisconsin's digitized newspapers.

None of this is possible without the partners who trust us with their collections, the state and grant funding that sustain our work, and the advocates who show up when it matters most. That includes you!

We're proud of what a modest, steady state investment has already built, and we look forward to what could come next with successful advocacy and funding growth: more content partners, more student interns, and a plan to bring Wisconsin's digital preservation infrastructure under one roof so smaller libraries and archives don't have to navigate it alone.

Thank you for being part of this work. Here's to many more years of preserving Wisconsin's history!



Our Vision

Recollection Wisconsin envisions a connected future preserving all voices through the visibility and exploration of the rich and complex history of our state.

Welcome from Nyama Reed, Steering Committee Chair



As Chair of the Recollection Wisconsin Steering Committee this past year and as a member of the Foundations Working Group, I have had the pleasure of taking part in many wonderful discussions about the value and impact of digitizing our local history collections. As we all know, digitization helps expand public access to these collections while also helping preserve the condition of the original items. Recollection Wisconsin is all about telling the stories of our communities and our state: stories of local heroes, leaders, families, and so much more. Thank you so much for being part of this effort to preserve and share these stories.

This year, our network of content partners grew in a meaningful way. We welcomed more than a dozen new content partners into Recollection Wisconsin, and several of our existing partners added new collections to their holdings. Each new partner and each new collection brings more of Wisconsin's history online, filling gaps and inviting more communities to see their own stories reflected in our shared digital record.

The Digitization Initiative also continued into its next chapter this year. Another cohort of graduate students partnered with local history organizations around the state, building on the strong foundation set by the first round of placements. These students bring fresh energy and technical skill to organizations that might not otherwise have the capacity to digitize their collections while gaining hands-on experience that will serve them well in their careers. It has been a pleasure to watch this initiative grow and to see the relationships it builds.

I have had the privilege of serving on the Foundations Working Group this year, and it has been some of the most important behind-the-scenes work Recollection Wisconsin has undertaken. The working group's charge is to comprehensively review and refine the mission, vision, scope, purpose, and values of Recollection Wisconsin and its governing bodies, ensuring these foundational elements align with the current needs, goals, and aspirations of the consortium

and its member organizations. We have met every other week since March 2024. With the mission, vision, and values completed in 2024, this year the group turned its attention to governing structure. We have been developing a matrix of responsibility that clarifies the roles of the Governing Board, the Steering Committee, and project managers, work that will give Recollection Wisconsin a clearer and more durable framework as the consortium continues to grow.

None of this happens without the people who show up meeting after meeting, project after project, to keep Recollection Wisconsin moving forward. I am grateful for the continued trust of our content partners, the enthusiasm of our student digitizers, and the thoughtful work of everyone serving on our committees and working groups. There is still much to build, and I look forward to being involved with Recollection Wisconsin for years to come.

*-- Nyama Reed, Director, Whitefish Bay Public Library
and Recollection Wisconsin Steering Committee Chair*

“The project team has been by far the biggest factor in RW’s success, and the Wisconsin history community owes them a debt of gratitude.”

- Recollection Wisconsin Governing Member

Expanding Access to Local History Collections



Many Wisconsin libraries, museums, archives, and historical societies hold remarkable collections that tell the stories of their communities. Often, the challenge is finding the time, staff capacity, and expertise needed to digitize and share those materials. At the same time, graduate students need opportunities to apply what they are learning in real-world settings.

The [Recollection Wisconsin Digitization Initiative](#) (RWDI) helps bridge that gap!

The initiative pairs graduate students with cultural heritage organizations across Wisconsin. Through paid internships, students and host sites alike gain hands-on experience with digitization, metadata creation, and digital collections management while helping organizations expand access to local history resources.

Over the past 18 months, our initiative has supported 17 graduate student interns and 17 host sites from around the state:

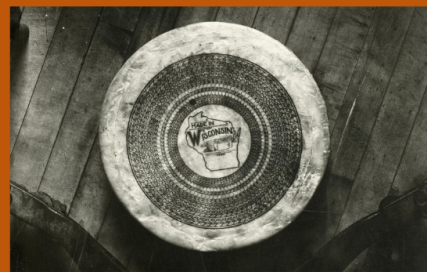
2025 Host Organizations

Milwaukee Art Museum
Menomonee Falls Public Library
Middleton Area Historical Society
Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design
Racine Public Library
Tomah Area Historical Society & Museum
America's Black Holocaust Museum

2026 Host Organizations

Farnsworth Public Library (Oconto)
Whitewater Public Library
Madison Area Technical College
Gateway Technical College
Northcentral Technical College
Wisconsin Library Association (with
Middleton Public Library)

Recollection Wisconsin Core Value



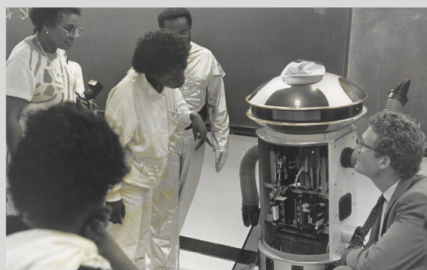
Wisconsin Identity

Our work reflects Wisconsin's dedication to education, collaboration, and community, emphasizing that the state's history is a vital part of its future. Inspired by the Wisconsin Idea, Recollection Wisconsin aims to promote the public good.

Content digitized in 2025 included photos of [the first Black Little League organization in Milwaukee](#), the [Frank O. King archive](#) (creator of the Gasoline Alley cartoon), photos from the artist [Guido Brink's archive](#), historic photos of [Middleton](#) and [Menomonee Falls](#) communities, and photos from designer [Brooks Stevens' archive](#). Read more details about each of these collections later in this report!

In 2026, student interns digitized historic [Whitewater postcard collections](#), [Oconto area school yearbooks](#), campus history materials documenting vocational education and student life at [Madison Area Technical College](#) and [Gateway Technical College](#), and historic [Wisconsin Library Association newsletters and conference programs](#).

Recollection Wisconsin Core Value



Innovation

Recollection Wisconsin continually seeks new ways to enhance services to better support our mission and vision.

The initiative was recently featured in the June 2026 WiLSWorld Shorts webinar, [Building Successful Student Internships: Lessons from the Recollection Wisconsin Digitization Initiative](#).

During the panel discussion, program participants shared insights about creating meaningful internship experiences.

Demand for the program continues to grow; four projects are already set to launch in fall 2026. More than a dozen Wisconsin organizations are currently interested in hosting future interns. This strong interest reflects both the need for digitization support and the value of creating hands-on learning opportunities for future library and information professionals.

For more information about the program or becoming a 2027 host site, visit the [Recollection Wisconsin Digitization Initiative](#) website.

"This is an AMAZING program, and I am so glad that we're able to be a part of it. Our student intern was wonderful and has a bright future ahead of her. The entire process and the support that you provide is exceptional."

- Spring 2026 Recollection Wisconsin Digitization Initiative Host Site

Partnerships with Wisconsin Native Nations

Recollection Wisconsin's relationship with Wisconsin's Native Nations is grounded in respect, reciprocity, and the sovereignty of Native communities through our ongoing partnership with the [Culture Keepers Collective](#), a community of practice supporting Indigenous cultural heritage workers across Wisconsin's Tribal Nations.



Attendees of the 2026 Culture Keepers Gathering in Waaswaaganing (Lac du Flambeau, WI).

At the [2026 Culture Keepers Gathering](#) at Waaswaaganing (Lac du Flambeau, WI), Recollection Wisconsin brought our digitization expertise to a training session for 25 attendees, [funded](#) through an OCLC/WebJunction IMLS grant. The session covered equipment, workflows, file storage, and the practical realities of protecting cultural materials when working with outside institutions, lessons learned from years of supporting Recollection Wisconsin's own content partners and specialized for Indigenous cultural heritage workers. That partnership also drew on Recollection Wisconsin's expertise this year through a digitization equipment grant: Recollection Wisconsin worked directly with Wisconsin's Native Nations to identify the right equipment for their needs and manage the purchasing process so Nations could focus on the work itself rather than procurement.

Recollection Wisconsin Core Value



Representation

Recollection Wisconsin aspires to preserve the diverse voices, perspectives, and community histories that reflect the full scope of Wisconsin's heritage.

Recollection Wisconsin is also bringing its collections and infrastructure to a national conversation about how Native cultural heritage is represented online. Through a DPLA grant in partnership with the Rights Statements Working Group and [Local Contexts](#), we're piloting the addition of [Traditional Knowledge \(TK\) Notices](#) to a collection identified through Recollection Wisconsin. We will work alongside project partners to test how TK Notices can give Native Nations more control over how their cultural materials are described, accessed, and shared.

"I'm new(er) to archives and digital collections and am grateful for this opportunity to learn with colleagues from across the state! Thank you for offering this!

- Learning Group participant

Toward an Improved User Experience of Recollection Wisconsin



As the audience for Recollection Wisconsin grows and diversifies, our presence online should rise to meet the need and challenge of serving all our users well. Creating a refreshed website also opens the door for us to make important improvements to not just the look and feel of the site, but also to the user experience and accessibility of both Recollection

Wisconsin's resources and the historical collections from our content partners.

In the spring of 2026, we were gifted with the opportunity to work with Leah Goldblum, via UW-Madison's iSchool Capstone Course, on improving the user experience and accessibility of the Recollection Wisconsin website for its upcoming redesign. Leah's hard work, keen eye for user needs, and creative problem-solving have left us with an excellent foundational redesign to implement with a web developer when the time

Recollection Wisconsin Core Value



Access

Recollection Wisconsin champions public access to a wide array of cultural heritage primary source materials.

comes. We are hopeful that the pathways she has created for disparate Recollection Wisconsin users - educators, students, researchers, and content partners - will get people to the content they seek quickly and easily, maybe even with a little delight!

A Collaborative Future for Wisconsin Historical Newspapers

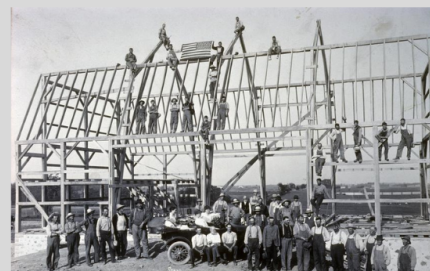


Historical newspapers are some of the richest resources available for local history research, but in Wisconsin, access to digitized newspapers has long been scattered across a patchwork of platforms, each with different access points, ownership structures, and search tools. In September 2025, Recollection Wisconsin convened a Newspaper Think Tank to bring together public library system representatives, local history organizations,

academic library and IT staff, Wisconsin Historical Society staff, and Recollection Wisconsin and WiLS project managers to start repairing that fragmentation.

The goal of the conversation was to envision a long-term solution: a centralized Wisconsin newspaper portal that could give the public, researchers, and cultural heritage organizations a single place to search and access digitized historical Wisconsin newspapers. However, access is only part of the equation. Many organizations across the state have newspapers they want to digitize and share, but no central place to put them once they're in digital form, and no clear guidance on how to digitize them well in the first place. Think Tank discussions ranged from digital storage and metadata standards to the practical needs of organizations trying to get started and the everyday users, genealogists, and researchers who would ultimately benefit.

Recollection Wisconsin Core Value



Collaboration

Recollection Wisconsin works to strengthen the statewide cultural heritage network by collaborating with our partners, drawing on and amplifying their talents and expertise.

The Think Tank's participant connections didn't end when the day did. Attendees formed the Wisconsin Newspaper Advisory Network, a standing group that will continue to weigh in as planning develops. The conversations from that day, along with input gathered from WPLC's Historical and Local Digital Collections Committee, became the foundation for [a white paper](#) outlining possible next steps and a tiered approach to the work ahead. WPLC and Recollection Wisconsin project managers and partners statewide continue to examine possible next steps.

Investing in the Future of Recollection Wisconsin

Recollection Wisconsin Core Value



Stewardship

Recollection Wisconsin manages our resources in a careful and responsible manner so that Wisconsin's history is safeguarded for future generations. We prioritize the sustainability of our operations, considering environmental, community, and financial impacts of our work.

Every two years, Recollection Wisconsin's state funding is up for renewal in the biennial state budgeting process. The funding was seamlessly renewed in the 2025 budget, and as we look toward the 2027-2029 biennium, we're preparing to make the case for increasing that funding. We'd like you to be part of that effort!

Since receiving our first dedicated state budget line in July 2023, Recollection Wisconsin has grown the collection to more than 800,000 digital records representing all 72 of Wisconsin's counties, increased our content partners from 250 to 272, launched a digitization internship program (the Recollection Wisconsin Digitization Initiative), and eliminated all content partner fees. We've done this work as careful stewards of taxpayer dollars. The program continues to expand, with more organizations choosing to participate each year.

This biennium, we're asking the state to build on that investment so we can grow to meet the needs of Wisconsin organizations, researchers, educators, and curious citizens. The proposal will include:

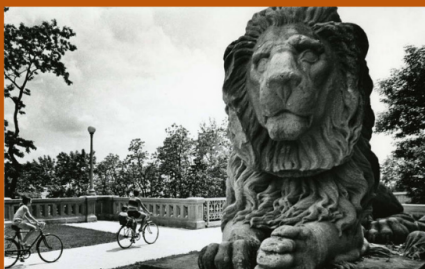
Increased capacity for digital services. A significant portion of the increase request is dedicated to expanding the project's capacity for the technical work that underpins

everything Recollection Wisconsin does, including metadata aggregation, systems administration, and digital preservation infrastructure. Increased capacity will result in the ability to bring in collections from a wider range of platforms, room to take on future technological initiatives and innovations, and faster onboarding for new content partners,

Expanded funding for the Recollection Wisconsin Digitization Initiative, our digitization internship program that has already placed 17 graduate students with local history organizations across the state in the last two years. Growing this program means more host sites, more students gaining real-world vocational experience, and more Wisconsin history coming online.

Bringing PreserveWI under Recollection Wisconsin's state budget line. PreserveWI, our shared digital preservation partnership with WPLC and APTrust, is running on time-limited federal grant funding that will end in early 2028. Moving to state funding means continuity for the ten library systems already relying on it and room to bring in more organizations that need affordable, trusted digital preservation infrastructure.

Recollection Wisconsin Core Value



Integrity

Recollection Wisconsin acts with integrity, guided by the principles of transparency, honesty, fairness, and respect for the communities we serve.

Regardless of the outcome for this funding increase request, our day-to-day operations are secure. Thanks to the advocacy and support of partners like you in past budget cycles, Recollection Wisconsin isn't facing an existential risk if this increase doesn't come through. Our current funding level is quite likely to continue. Either way, Recollection Wisconsin will keep serving Wisconsin's libraries, archives, museums, historical societies, and the communities that rely on them. An increase will allow us to build additional capacity, build our digitization workforce, and build a more sustainable structure for Wisconsin's cultural heritage.

We know that legislators will want to hear from the people and organizations doing this work in their own districts. In the coming months, we'll be reaching out to content partners, host sites, and friends of Recollection Wisconsin to ask for your help telling that story, whether that's a letter of support, a conversation

with your representative, or simply sharing how Recollection Wisconsin has made a difference for your organization. Stay tuned; your voice matters!

Support for IMLS



On March 14, 2025, President Trump issued an executive order that would have eliminated the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the only federal agency dedicated to supporting American museums and libraries.

Without IMLS, Wisconsin's libraries, museums, and cultural organizations would lose millions of dollars in funding supporting digital projects, public access to historical records, and hands-on training for library staff and students.

Since its inception, Recollection Wisconsin itself has relied on IMLS support to expand access to Wisconsin's history and provide critical training for those who safeguard it. Without IMLS, these key efforts would not have been possible:

- Enhancing Digital Collections Stewardship training (2023 – 2025) provided no-cost training to 60+ participants on digital stewardship.
- Community Archiving Workshop (2019–2021) on audiovisual preservation and digitization, including three traveling A/V kits for film and audio preservation, which continue to be used statewide.
- Curating Community Digital Collections (2017–2019) provided 16 library students and 14 host institutions with hands-on digital stewardship training during semester-long practicum internships.
- Early IMLS-funded support provided foundational funding to establish and sustain Recollection Wisconsin. Without it, the program wouldn't exist today.
- The Digital Public Library of America was the recipient of IMLS funds in 2012 to pilot a hub program, which set DPLA up to be the national digital collections infrastructure it remains today.
- More than 15% of the collections in Recollection Wisconsin were created with IMLS funding.

These grants don't just support history; they preserve stories, identities, and voices that would otherwise fade away. Public investment in cultural heritage ensures that future generations can learn from that preserved past.

In April 2025, Recollection Wisconsin joined libraries, archives, and museums statewide and nationally in advocating for IMLS. In order to stop the elimination of IMLS and protect access to Wisconsin's rich cultural heritage, we urged Recollection Wisconsin users and partners to contact their federal representatives and tell them that Wisconsin values its history and the institutions that preserve it.

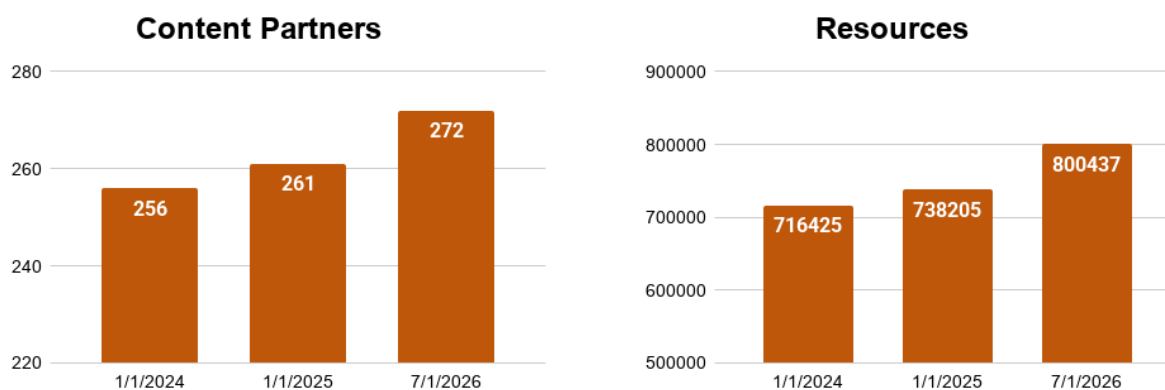
As of this writing, in August 2026, the IMLS remains a primary source for funding and support to libraries and archives nationwide.

Cultivating Community

The Recollection Wisconsin program is made possible by and provides benefits to hundreds of organizations across the state that participate at many levels:

- 272 [Content Partners](#) contribute their historical resources to the collection
- 6 organizations anchor our [Governing Board](#) and provide valuable in-kind contributions: Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Milwaukee Public Library, and Marquette University
- 13 members of our [Steering Committee](#) guide collection growth and maintenance

Since our last report in February 2025, we welcomed new content partners from 14 Wisconsin organizations.





America's Black Holocaust Museum, founded in 1988 by one of the only known survivors of a lynching in the U.S., Dr. James Cameron, builds public awareness of the harmful legacies of slavery and Jim Crow in America and promotes racial repair, reconciliation, and healing. [Their digital collection](#) shares letters, journals, news articles, photographs, and postcards documenting history in Bronzeville, including the Beckum-Stapleton Little League.

Belleville Public Library's [collection](#) focuses on the history of the French immigrant settlement in the Belleville/Montrose/Exeter area as they began arriving in the 1850s through the 1920s. The collection currently contains documents and postcards but will grow to include photos and other historical materials.

Bridges Library System's [Community Voices of Jefferson and Waukesha Counties collection](#) aims to build connections between people by preserving their stories for future generations to enjoy. The collection consists of nearly 200 StoryCorps-style interviews on a wide range of topics, from military service to farm life to education and more.

Edgerton Public Library's [digital collection](#) showcases issues from the 1885-1886 Wisconsin Tobacco Reporter. This weekly newspaper was devoted to the interests of the state's tobacco industry, one of Wisconsin's earliest and most enduring specialty crops.

Fond du Lac Public Library contributes two small but mighty collections to Recollection Wisconsin. Browse [city directories](#) ranging from 1857 to 1905 and [plat books and atlases](#) from 1893 to 1956 to explore the rich history of the community.

Hedberg Public Library provides [this collection](#) of oral interviews and transcripts with General Motors employees, union members, and others involved in Janesville's manufacturing history, recorded as part of Janesville's Bicentennial Oral History Project in 1976.

Jacobsens Museum houses exhibits and artifacts collected by Danish immigrant Jens Jacobsen, along with his own crafts. [The museum's digital collection](#) focuses on the

earliest items displayed by Jacobsen, including wooden models of ships, wooden decorative 'scroll work,' museum visitor books, schoolbooks, drawings, photographs, and letters.

Menomonee Falls Public Library's [digital collection](#), from the Maude Shunk Local History Room Archives located in the library, contains photographs, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, government documents, and postcards from the 1850s until present day. The collection documents the people, industries, families, schools, churches, and cultural events important to understanding the area's local history.



Middleton Area Historical Society presents this [growing collection](#) featuring historic photographs and postcards of businesses, buildings, people, and events in Middleton and the surrounding area.

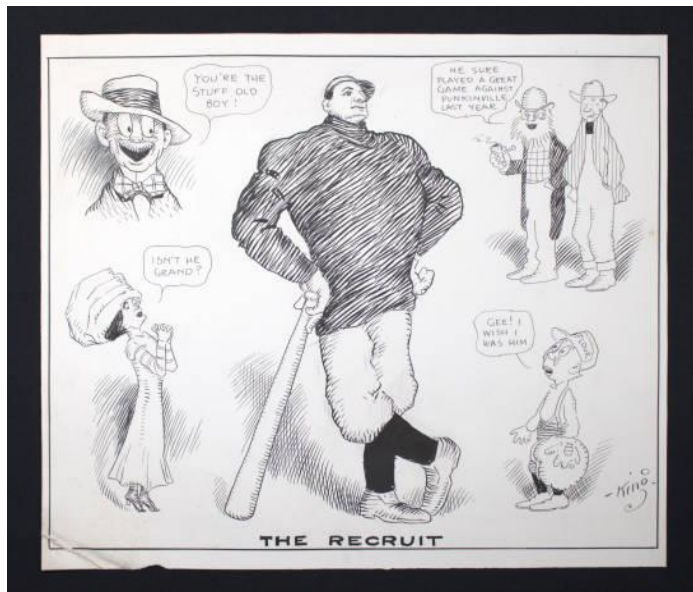
Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design's [Guido Brink collection](#) contains ephemera concerning the life and artwork of Midwest artist and educator Guido Peter Brink (1913-2002) in addition to the art collection endowed to the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design from his estate.

Montello Public Library, via Winnefox Library System, provides this [digital collection](#) of Montello High School's excellently named Granite Hilltopper yearbooks from 1940 to 2018.



South Central Library System's [new digital collection](#) features editions of SCLS' newsletters for member libraries as well as images, brochures, annual reports, and interviews with former and current staff.

Sun Prairie Historical Library & Museum's [digital collection](#) shares manuscripts that document the history of Sun Prairie and surrounding areas. This includes petitions and other records of the Village of Sun Prairie Board of Trustees, directories and telephone books, a scrapbook of the Sun Prairie 20th Century Club, as well as data sheets from an environmental study of bird nests at Sun Prairie's Patrick Marsh from 1948 through 1951.



Tomah Area Historical Society and Museum's [Frank O. King Collection](#) features a selection of original cartoons, sketches, correspondence, photographs, and memorabilia from Frank O. King, the creator of the comic strip Gasoline Alley. This digital collection offers insight into King's creative process and the cultural impact of his work, providing a unique window into the history of 20th-century American comics and daily life.

These new partners, along with growing contributions from existing partners, helped enrich the Recollection Wisconsin collection with more than 62,000 additional resources, bringing the total resources to over 800,000. We are honored that so many Wisconsin organizations continue to want their valuable collections in Recollection Wisconsin.

Reaching Out to Our Community



Staff from Recollection Wisconsin are always seeking opportunities to connect to potential partners and users. We attended nearly a dozen conferences and events, exhibiting or presenting at five of them, spreading the word about the free support we offer for both sharing historical collections and for exploring Wisconsin's history. These events included the Wisconsin Council for Social Studies Annual Conference, the Midwest Archives Conference, two Culture Keepers

Convenings, the Wisconsin Historical Society Conference, the National Digital Stewardship Alliance Digital Preservation Conference, the Wisconsin Library Association Annual Conference, the Digital Public Library of America Summit, the Rare Books & Manuscripts Section Conference, and a virtual WiLSWorld Shorts webinar.

Updates from the Digital Public Library of America

Since 2016, Recollection Wisconsin has served as a Service Hub for the [Digital Public Library of America](#) (DPLA), the national network that makes participating states' digitized collections discoverable to researchers, educators, and the public far beyond their home states. That partnership has been a valuable one, extending the reach of Wisconsin's libraries, archives, museums, and historical societies to a national audience for nearly a decade.



In March, DPLA and Cleveland Public Library [formally announced](#) a partnership to transfer leadership of DPLA's national digital archive program. Backed by \$3.25 million from four foundations, Cleveland Public Library has taken over fiscal sponsorship of the national aggregation as of July 1, 2026, with a Steering Committee forming to guide development of a new vision for the platform and a search underway for new program leadership.

Recollection Wisconsin Core Value



Adaptability

Recollection Wisconsin builds relationships by meeting organizations and individuals where they are, adapting to the unique needs of each partner, and offering relevant, responsive guidance to ensure their digital projects thrive.

Like many of DPLA's Service Hubs, Recollection Wisconsin has spent the past two years taking a close look at what continued participation should look like going forward. Our Governing Board and Steering Committee have been gathering input from peer organizations, researching independent discovery platform options, and having conversations about what will best serve Wisconsin's collections and the people who use them. That work is ongoing.

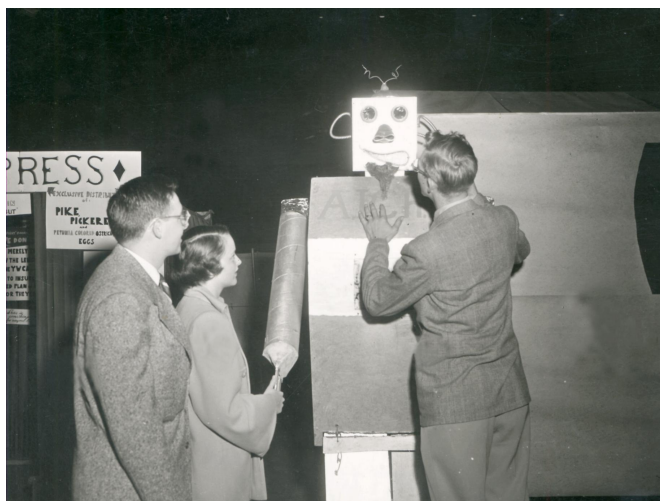
In the meantime, Wisconsin's collections remain fully accessible through Recollection Wisconsin, and our commitment to keeping them freely available to the public hasn't changed and won't. Whatever path we land on, whether that means continuing as a DPLA hub, transitioning to a new national partnership, or building more of our own

independent infrastructure, our priority is the same: making sure Wisconsin's history stays easy to find, well cared for, and open to everyone. We'll share more as decisions take shape.

Looking Ahead

Platform Research

In alignment with efforts to increase Recollection Wisconsin's flexibility and independence, we are currently investigating a new platform for the Recollection Wisconsin aggregated collection. We hope to find a tool that replicates the features of our current platform but is also more accessible to users and provides detailed reporting so we can better understand how Recollection Wisconsin is used and



how we can grow. We also look forward to more options for us to curate the collection, highlighting, showcasing, and combining resources to create a deeper understanding of our content partners' collections and, by extension, Wisconsin history.

PreserveWI



PreserveWI, Wisconsin's statewide digital preservation program, is moving into its next chapter. Digital preservation – the long-term, monitored storage of digital cultural heritage materials – is an essential but often underfunded part of any digitization program, and PreserveWI exists to make it achievable through shared statewide infrastructure. This collaborative initiative between Recollection Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Public Library Consortium (WPLC) is transitioning

Wisconsin's preservation infrastructure away from mirrored servers hosted at South Central Library System (SCLS) and LEANWI and into [APTrust](#), a trusted consortium-based digital preservation service hosted at the University of Virginia and in continuous operation since 2012. The transition represents a long-term investment in a sustainable, shared digital preservation ecosystem for Wisconsin's digital cultural heritage.

The next phase builds directly on years of foundational LSTA-funded work by the [WPLC digital preservation workgroup](#), which included piloting workflows, testing infrastructure, and onboarding participating library systems. That knowledge and experience will carry forward into PreserveWI's work with APTrust.

In this next phase, Recollection Wisconsin serves as the central administrator, managing day-to-day operations and contributor support, while WPLC provides governance and strategic oversight. APTrust membership officially began July 1, 2026. Training for the first cohort of participating library systems is already underway, with the remaining systems coming on through the fall, and full operational launch is on track for the end of 2026.

Accessibility

While the deadlines to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act [have been extended](#), Recollection Wisconsin continues to work to ensure our digital collections, and the collections of our content partners, are as accessible as possible to people of all abilities.

We've obtained and shared Accessibility Conformance Reports for CONTENTdm, the platform that we provide to content partners so they can make their local collections available to help them demonstrate compliance.

We have also supported content partners' creation of Accessibility Statements as a way to show users that they care about equitable access to their digital resources and shared examples to draw on. Accessibility Statements, placed on individual records or in the footer of an entire website, let users know what work has been done to improve accessibility or the status of the accessibility of the digital content, including VPATs or Accessibility Conformance Reports. Importantly, it can also share steps users should take if they find something in a collection hard to use.

But we still have a lot of work to do. We continue to work with DPLA, the provider of Recollection Wisconsin's aggregator platform, to advocate for accessibility documentation and improvements. Additionally, a key goal of our upcoming website redesign is not just to enhance user experience but also to improve accessibility so that anyone who is interested can discover Wisconsin history through Recollection Wisconsin in ways that work best for them.



Stay Connected to Recollection Wisconsin

- Subscribe to the Recollection Wisconsin [newsletter](#).
- Check out our [blog](#).
- Follow us on [LinkedIn](#).
- Consider volunteering as part of our Steering Committee of digital collections practitioners and users. The call for nominations opens every year in May.
- Use our [contact form](#), email us at info@recollectionwisconsin.org to get in touch, or contact us individually. We'd love to hear from you!



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Acknowledgments

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Content Partner Image Credits

Page 1: [Women's Athletic Association - Indoor Inter-Class Archery Contest Date](#), 1932-1933. UW-Stout.

Page 2: [Looking through binoculars](#), ca. 1960. UW-Madison.

Page 5: [Cheese wheel](#). UW-Madison.

Page 6: [Students grouped around a robot](#). UW-Parkside.

Page 7: [Celebrating all cultures and nations at UW Richland](#), 2013. UW-Richland.

Page 8: [Public access signs](#), 1955. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Page 9a: [Reading the Tribune](#), ca. 1948-1952. South Wood County Historical Museum.

Page 9b: [Stephenson Brothers barn-raising](#), 1916. UW-Madison.

Page 10: [Family welcoming home Tom Black Feather. n.d.](#), 1945 - 1950. Marquette University.

Page 11: [Lion bridge](#), 1972. Milwaukee Public Library.

Page 14: [Stanley Crouch at Podium](#). America's Black Holocaust Museum.

Page 15a: [Chidren with calves](#), 1915. Menomonee Falls Public Library.

Page 15b: [Broadway Gardens walkathon - Middleton. Wis.](#), 1934. Middleton Area Historical Society.

Page 16: [The recruit](#). Tomah Area Historical Society and Museum.

Page 17: [Making Friends](#). South Wood County Historical Museum.

Page 18a: [Squirrels](#), 1968. UW-La Crosse.

Page 18b: [Mechanical man](#), 1950. UW-Madison.

Page 19: [Canning](#), 1948-1952. South Wood County Historical Museum.

Page 20: [Woman stands on open drawer to reach upper shelves in drugstore](#), 1947. UW-Madison.