WLA Conference Guide & Report - Procedures/Planning for the 2015 WLA/MPLA Joint Conference

Report by Stephen C. Boss, MPLA Representative/Conference Steering Committee Chair – WLA/MPLA 2015 Conference

Conference Steering Committee

- **Stephen C. Boss** - SBoss@uwyo.edu
- **Richard Landreth** - lig2me@gmail.com
- **Laura Grott** - lauragrott@gmail.com
- **Rosanne Latimer** - rlatimer@uwyo.edu
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- **Jamie Markus** - jamie.markus@wyo.gov
- **Tina Wortham** - tina.worthman@wyo.gov
- **Sarah Smith** - ssmith@lccc.wy.edu

Conference Advisory Team

- **Maggie Farrell** - Farrell@uwyo.edu
- **Lesley Boughton** - lesley.boughton@wyo.gov

Action Items – MPLA Representative & WLA/MPLA 2015 Conference Chair

- **Note**: Completed action items for the 2015 conference are noted in **GREEN** in the report below. Action items that are work in progress (WIP) or **Pending** are noted in **YELLOW**;
- I am using the conference planning documentation as a report and am adding information to it that will help conference planners in the future;
- Conference Steering Committee members toured facilities and picked a venue for the opening reception;
- Opening Reception Committee is in place (Jamie, Tina, Stephen, Rosanne);
- Laura, Richard and I have been working on the conference contract for Little America with Wendi and Judy with MPLA;
- I have been keeping Wendi and Judy appraised of our conference planning. They are getting copies of these reports;
- Logos were designed by Nancy Marlatt of UW and the committee voted to accept one of the design submissions. Thanks Nancy for your hard work on this;
- Pre-Conference promotional materials have been designed and ordered by Nancy and Rosanne for the promotion of the 2015 WLA/MPLA joint conference more than a year in advance – these materials will be used to promote our conference at the 2014 AZLA/MPLA joint conference in November.
• Extra marketing materials will be used to promote the conference -- packets of these materials will be sent to Wyoming County Libraries for distribution;
• You will be able to review the marketing materials in Casper;
• Richard, Maggie and I plan to attend the AZLA/MPLA conference this November;
• Next steps for planning will be discussed in detail at the WLA Conference in Casper

Conference Committee(s)

Most of the Conference Steering Committee has been filled for the 2015 conference:

• WLA Vice-President/President-Elect, Program Committee Chair
  • Laura Grott - WLA Executive Secretary
  • WLA Communications Advisor
  • Continuing Education Librarian, Wyoming State Library
  • 3 at-large members appointed by the WLA President
    • Sarah Smith, Laramie County Community College, Data Analyst, IR
  • Richard Landreth, WLA President
  • Stephen Boss - Conference Chair for next year’s conference
  • Rosanne Latimer, UW Libraries, Office Associate
  • Nancy Marlatt, UW Libraries, Area Public Relations Coordinator
  • Jamie Markus, Wyoming State Library, Library Development Manager
  • Tina Wortham, Wyoming State Library, Publications and Marketing Manager

WLA Conference Steering Committee:

We will work on brainstorming and filling the sub-committees for next year at the conference in Casper. - WIP

• Meeting Rooms - Equipment and Technology
• Hospitality, Transportation and Gifts
• Special Events and Entertainment (All members worked on this Sub-Committee)
• Meals and Catering
• Evaluation and Monitoring
• Corporate Contributions and Gifts
• Communications and PR/Communications Advisor
• Program Committee (WLA Vice-President chairs this committee)
• Awards Committee (This committee does their own thing. You just have to track them!)
• Exhibits, WLA Executive Secretary
Conference Committee Responsibilities

Conference Chair

The Conference Chair attends executive board meetings to submit budget, theme, logo, and plans.

- Conference Chair shall prepare a separate budget for conference will be submitted to the WLA Executive Board. The WLA Executive Secretary assists with this.
- The Conference Chair shall sign all conference contracts. - Reviewing Contract with Laura and Richard seeking input from MPLA (Judy & Wendy) - WIP
- Establishes timelines and agendas, and chairs meetings of the committee.
- Encourages program committee to solicit ideas for conference programs from Interest Group leaders and the general membership.
- Assists in identifying keynote and other major speakers, such as authors luncheon speaker.
- Assigns presentation times for all conference programs and activities in coordination with the conference program committee chair.
- Provides speaker information to other conference committee members in order to arrange for publicity, hospitality, etc.
- Assures that WLA fiscal policies are followed, consulting with the executive secretary concerning questions about handling of conference revenues or expenditures.
- Establishes a high level of communication between and among the committee.
- Exercise quality control over all printed matter having to do with promoting the conference.
- Start early and communicate firm deadlines.
- Insure that WLA Executive Secretary sends thank you notes to appropriate businesses.
- Do not list session rooms in program. Publish a separate list of rooms/sessions to hand out at the registration table.
- Ensure the final program is published to the conference website.
- Submits final conference report to the WLA Board.
- Say Thank You: Write a letter of thanks for donation.
- Say Thank You: Acknowledge donors in conference program.
- Say Thank You: Immediately after conference send another letter of thanks. This may seem like overkill, but corporations are just like people who appreciate receiving thanks for their efforts in producing a successful event.
Communications Chair

- Depending on circumstances, either designs and implements or arranges for the design and implementation of all conference communications. If the chair has access to in-library graphics and printing capabilities the chair may be able to work with library staff. Most frequently they will contract for design and printing services.
- Responsible for designing the conference logo, designing and printing the conference program, and incidental printing ranging from room assignments to posters thanking vendors.
- for sponsoring conference programs and activities.
- Publicizes the conference to WLA members.
- Prepares and submits publicity for local newspapers, television, radio, and WLA website.
- Arranges for local coverage of the conference.
- Works closely with all committee members to determine signage needs and wording.
- Produces signs.
- Assures that the logo appears on all conference communications.
- Establishes a firm communications schedule for the conference committee, identifying deadlines for receipt of information as well as anticipated dates for media releases, etc.
- Work with WLA webmaster to design conference website.
- Assists in proofing all conference communication.
- Arranges for printing and delivery of conference program.

Meals and Catering

- Recommends menus for all conference and pre-conference meals, as well as receptions.
- Provides meal choice and cost information to the Executive Secretary and Conference Chair.
- Works with hotel catering or other vendors to supply meals, receptions, and other meal events.
- Arranges with hotel catering to handle special dietary requirements.
- Arranges for counts to be recorded at each meal event.
- Provide estimates and final numbers for each catering event to the hotel contact, meeting catering deadlines.
- Be sure that catering is aware of programs that may impact their service staff.
- Pre / post conferences – either a beverage break, sometimes breakfast or lunch.
- Provides time schedules for delivery of food and beverages to breaks and receptions.
- Arranges for liquor license, if needed.
- Arranges for collection of meal tickets.
- Arranges signage with Communication person.
- Evaluation, monitoring and hosts.
- Develops, distributes, and compiles results of the conference evaluation.
• Makes sure that the evaluation is distributed to all conference attendees and published to the conference website.
• Arranges to have hosts available at all programs to assure smooth running of the program.
• Prepares an information sheet for hosts and assigns responsibilities to each host.
• Hosts will present speaker with gift upon completion of program.

**Corporate Contributions/Gifts**

• Seeks financial support for conference events such as receptions, and for operations such as program printing.

**Meeting Rooms, Equipment and Technology**

• Responsible for checking the physical arrangements of the meeting rooms prior to each meeting.
• Ensures there is a computer, projector, speaker and screen in each session room, as well as the ballroom.
• Don’t think you have to do it all yourself. Create a “Technology Squad” to be on-call during the conference.
• Sets up equipment and troubleshoots problems during conference in coordination with conference site staff and the “Technology Squad.”
• With approval from Conference Chair, may rent equipment from the hotel or a local supplier as well as supply equipment from local libraries.
• Provides for security of equipment and return of equipment.
• Works with conference site to arrange PA systems where needed.

**Hospitality, Transportation and Gifts**

• Gathers information about the local area for use of conference registrants such as lists of recommended restaurants, maps, local attractions, guidebooks and activities.
• Ensures speakers coming from the airport have transportation and that those speakers are welcomed by a committee member at the hotel.
• Provides gifts to thank speakers for their participation (suggest $5 or so)
• Arranges to get gifts to hosts before program begins.
• Assist communication chair to in soliciting hosts.
• Monitors local info table to ensure everything is available.
Special Events and Entertainment

- Some members of the Conference Steering Committee are on the Opening-Reception Sub-Committee. The group plans fee and non-fee entertainment events for the conference, i.e. opening reception.

- Opening Reception Sub-Committee Members
  - Jamie Markus
  - Tina Wortham
  - Rosanne Latimer
  - Stephen Boss

- Opening Reception Preparation Activities
  - Assemble an Opening Reception Committee; - DONE
  - Arrange to tour facilities for the reception as needed; - DONE
  - Cheyenne -- Venues Visited (See following pages) – DONE
  - Make a venue recommendation – DONE
Here are the venues we visited.

**Historic Governors’ Mansion**

http://wyoparks.state.wy.us/Site/SiteInfo.aspx?siteID=23

**Notes:** The Historic Governors’ Mansion is a nice facility. The committee felt that the indoor venue was too small and using the outdoor venue would require an event tent. There was also concern about the weather. This venue would be a great venue for a breakout session from the main conference. The venue has a nice, intimate indoor conference style meeting room with kitchen.
Historic Governor’s Mansion – Showing the Carriage House Reception Venue & Patio

Carriage House Reception Venue & Patio
Carriage House Conference Interior

Carriage House Conference Kitchen
Notes: The Cheyenne Depot and Museum is a great facility for an opening reception. Located right downtown, the venue offers a lot of great space for receptions and also has the Cheyenne Depot Museum, a museum dedicated to train travel and local history. The committee liked the venue very much but decided to go with the Cheyenne Frontier Days – Old West Museum because WLA held their opening reception there last time and the group thought that attendees would welcome a change. If it is financially feasible, the group decided to rent the Cheyenne trolley and thought that conference attendees might enjoy the opportunity to eat downtown and view the Cheyenne Depot after the opening reception at Frontier Park Old West Museum.
Cheyenne Depot & Museum – Reception Area

Cheyenne Depot & Museum - Interior
Notes: The committee felt that the Cheyenne Frontier Days Old West Museum in Frontier Park would be a nice place for the opening reception. There was a large open area (site of the annual art sale) that could be used for the reception. Guests would be able to view the collections while on-site. The staff was very friendly and helpful.
Old West Museum – Central Rotunda Exhibits

Old West Museum – Exhibits
Old West Museum – Exhibits

Art Exhibit/Conference Area
The Opening-Reception Sub-Committee recommends that the **Frontier Park – Old West Museum** be the venue for the Opening Reception.

**Other Pre-Conference Notes/Recommendations:**

- WLA seems to have charged between $10-$15 for most receptions. Tina and Jamie will go with the lower amount and consider our starting budget roughly $2,000. (200 attendees x $10).
- As a base budget we will start with $1,000 and build from there. The caterers the group have in mind were able to scale up for the last library reception and based the menu off of the true budget (based on fees collected) about three weeks before the last reception. We estimate that will be able to secure the Venue and Caterer for around $1,000. That will provide us with a location and very basic food and a cash bar.
- Transportation and additional food options will add cost, but I don't think they these additional items are out of reach even without vendor support.
- Tina and Jamie (will be able to offer up better numbers in August (aka, after Cheyenne Frontier Days).

**Pre / post Conference Activities**

- Pre / post conferences may target a specific library audience or may be of general interest to the library community.
- Pre / post conference planners need to coordinate with the Conference Chair in order to select any pre-conference meals, and arrange for equipment, facility set-ups, etc.
- Pre / post conference planners need to submit information to the Executive Secretary for the registration packet and to the Conference Committee for.
- Certain pre / post conferences may lend themselves to CEU or other school district credits. It is the responsibility of the workshop planner to determine if this is possible and make appropriate arrangements.
- Pre / post Conference are self-supporting. If enough people don’t sign up and pay the extra cost for the Continuing Education program, it will be canceled before the conference.
- Pre / post conference planners and the Conference Chair will agree upon the minimum number of registrants needed to break even. Approximately two weeks after the close of conference early registration, planners should be able to project whether the number of registrants will be sufficient to pay costs or whether to cancel.
- Pre / post conference planners are encouraged to seek outside funding to defray cost of workshops.
- The conference registration form will include information about the pre / post conference, including registration and meal costs.
General Conference Information:

- All general conference programs are paid from conference revenue.
- Different registration fees may be set for different classes of registrants such as: members, non-members, students, trustees, etc.
- For purposes of registration, WLA members are those with paid up dues at the time they register for conference.
- Full registration refunds less $10 can be made if written notice is received by the registration chair seven days prior to the conference. If notice is received by end of the conference, a 50% refund less $10 processing fee can be granted.
- Persons wishing to hear a single program must register for that day of the conference. Persons wishing to hear a program that is part of a meal function must register for that day of the conference at least and pay for the meal. Invited Awards Banquet guests may be exempted from the registration fee to attend that one function.
- The exhibit chair will be the Executive Secretary and at the Executive Board meeting in December, the Board will set the fee for exhibits for the upcoming conference.

Questions to consider when developing the conference theme

- Will the theme encourage program topics that will relate to all types of libraries?
- Will it support the gamut of library interests, including librarians, library technicians, other paraprofessionals, trustees and friends, both new and experienced?
- Will it provide for a balance between pragmatic learning, intellectual stimulation, controversial subjects, as well as opportunities for social opportunities?
- Does it allow for a variety of formats including panels, lectures, and audience participation?
- Does it present opportunities to involve both local and national speakers?
- Can exhibitors use the theme to showcase their services or products?

Conference Theme: The Conference Steering Committee develops the conference theme and logo. The Conference Chair then takes it to the WLA Board.

2015 WLA/MPLA Conference Theme Recommendation

“Changing Libraries in the New West”
Results of the vote for the theme

Steps Taken:

- Solicit them ideas from Steering Committee Members and interested parties such as the Dean of Libraries @ UW and the Wyoming State Librarian. - DONE
- Setup a “Poll Anywhere” poll to have Steering Committee Members vote. (See the vote polling above.) - DONE
- Announce the theme to the Conference Steering Committee. - DONE
- Seek approval from the WLA Executive Board. - WIP
Nancy Marlatt has worked on designing a set of logos. These logos have been reviewed by the Conference Steering Committee. – DONE

Once we have some copy to show committee members, Steve will share them and will seek commentary. – DONE

The committee conducted two rounds of voting. - DONE

The winner was logo number 2.
Conference Logo Design Contest – The Five Options

Number 1
Conference Pre-Marketing

- Nancy, Rosanne & Steve are working with UW Library Administration on developing some marketing materials featuring our theme and to be developed logo, which will be taken to the AZLA/MPLA Conference later this year. We looked at samples of post-it notes and bookmarks. These items are on order. – DONE

- A promotional sign/banner has also been made. This sign/banner will be used at the WLA/MPLA table promoting the joint conference. – DONE

- We will bring the banner, bookmarks and post-it notes to the Executive Meeting. – WIP

- If any of these materials are left over from the AZLA/MPLA Conference, they will be made available to the Wyoming County Libraries as promotional materials for the 2015 conference. – Pending

- If the promotional materials are successful, we could order additional batches to be handed out at the 2015 conference. – Pending

- Laura Grott suggested that we take the logo and have T-Shirts made. People could place their order and pay for the shirts when they sign-up for the conference. We can discuss this while we are in Casper. – Pending
WLA Conference Timeline

- 2 years ahead: Appointment as Conference Chair is made. Sit in on current conference steering committee. - **DONE**
- 1 year ahead: Establish theme and logo for conference. (Remember your committee is ready to work!) Have something ready to present at conference business meeting, encouraging program proposals for the following year. - **DONE**
- November/December: find a keynote and author for luncheon. Remember, you can always write into the contracts that these people also give an extra “session” as well as book signing, etc.
- January: solicit programs using the electronic form on the WLA website to make proposals
- January/February: Think about the number of tracks for program sessions plus time for vendors. Check with Executive Secretary as she works with vendors. You will need to know when these vendor sessions are. Remember they are no conflict sessions.
- February: Set number of tracks of programming plus time for vendors.
- February: Work with Executive Secretary to have registration costs and vendor costs ready for
- WLA Board meeting. Don’t forget to write the report for the Board!
- March 1: Program proposals are due. Vice –President and the programming committee now gets to work to select programs.
- May 1: deadline for program decisions: This is a must! I let this slide, don’t do that.
- May 1-15: With assistance of VP, fine tune the schedule so contracts can have at least a date on them.
- May 15: All session contracts go out. We sent/received all contracts electronically. It worked very well. Send contracts to non-paid presenters as well.
- June 15: all contracts returned. Make it earlier if you can.
- June 30 – July 6: publish the program schedule and registration form to the WLA Conference website. At the very LEAST this should be proofed by communications.
- Early July: Conference Chair needs to have an article ready for the Outrider and WLA newsletter promoting the conference. This date depends on a number of things, so if you can have it ready earlier that would be best.
- August: Make sure you have a date set for publishing/printing your conference programs (Don’t forget the Conference-at-a-glance). Suggest no later than August 15.
- Early September: Print Conference program.
- Week before conference: Print room/sessions assignments to hand out at the registration table.