

MPLA Board Report
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ST-12 – Wyoming

Wyoming Library Association (WLA) / MPLA Joint 2015 Conference Planning

I reported previously that the Wyoming Library Association (WLA) was looking for a location in the state to host the 2015 joint Wyoming Library Association (WLA)/MPLA conference. I had been in contact with several venues who would like to host the meeting. I received inquiries from the Hilton Garden Inn & UW Conference Center in Laramie. In July I visited a venue in Grand Teton National Park and met with Levi Thorn who is the Director of Sales and Marketing with the Grand Teton Lodge Company. Levi oversees two properties in the Jackson/Grand Teton area including the Jackson Lake Lodge.

During the recent WLA conference held in Casper, Wyoming, the Executive Board decided that while the venue looked great however the costs for the participants would be high. We decided to investigate holding the 2015 conference in Laramie at the Hilton Gardens Hotel or in Cheyenne. The venue in Laramie offers a good, solid base for the conference. With the addition of a conference center by the University of Wyoming (UW), the opportunities look to be promising. Laramie is the home of UW, with museums and other cultural attractions for conference goers.

UW will be building a new conference center that will be open in September/October of 2014 directly across the street from the Hilton. It will be called the Gateway Center. This meeting space could potentially complement the space in the Hilton Gardens. The building, called the Marian H. Rochelle Gateway Center, will feature a multi-use location with a state-of-the-art technological infrastructure, small and large meeting rooms, and public and social event spaces.

The center will also include museum-quality space to commemorate the history of UW with pictures and displays and exhibitions that honor the impact of UW on Wyoming, the renowned alumni and friends who have supported Wyoming's university, and the noteworthy traditions of the institution. The story of Wyoming's energy industry will also be told through displays and interactive technology in tribute to Marian Rochelle's gift and to energy's importance to the state.

QUICK FACTS

- The Marian H. Rochelle Gateway Center will be located at the corner of 22nd Street and Grand Avenue and is scheduled to open in the fall of 2014.
- It will encompass more than 60,000 square feet.
- Public spaces include small and large meeting rooms, as well as interview rooms for Career Services, a ballroom, and special meeting rooms for private receptions and entertaining notable visitors.

Wyoming Library Association 2012 Annual Conference

The WLA 2012 Annual Conference was held in Casper, Wyoming at the Parkway Plaza Hotel and Convention Center from September 26th through September 29th.

The conference was attended by 246 WLA members. WLA has a total membership of about 300 people. A large majority of the WLA membership attended the conference.

Slides and presentations from the conference programs are available at the following URL.

<http://conference.wyla.org/2012/>

The conference ran smoothly and this year the sessions were varied and were very well presented. My colleague, Debbie McCarthy and others who planned the conference did a great job in putting together a very professional conference.

Michael Stephens was the keynote speaker. His presentation was on “The Hyperlinked Library: Trends, Tools, and Transparency”. He discussed library services and specific service opportunities and technologies that librarians can make available to end-users. He talked about how patrons are already actively participating in technology in libraries and went into detail on how libraries and patrons can co-create technology-based communities. He stated that chaos and disruption can and will happen and that chaos can be good for libraries. Technologies, getting technology to work and training people how to use new applications can be messy. Too often librarians believe that technology and other library initiatives should be perfect before they are rolled out. He said that librarians need to allow these initiatives to become part of the business of libraries even though things may not be perfect.

Later that morning I also attended Stephens’ presentation on “Hyperlinked Libraries: Emerging Tech and Emerging Trends.”

The conference ended with the popular session called “What the Tech is That?” This session focuses on new technologies and technologies that can be used by librarians to improve service and inform patrons. The handout that lists all of the new technologies covered by the session can be found at the following url.

<http://wlanewtechinterestgroup.pbworks.com/w/page/56929852/2012%20Tech%20Showcase>