



SLA

SASKATCHEWAN LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION

SASKATCHEWAN LIBRARIES CONFERENCE 2017

Evaluations: Delegates, Presenters, Exhibitors

Saskatchewan Library Association
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General Information

Committee Members:

CPC Executive:

Co-chair – Conference Manager – William (Bill) Sgrazzutti
CO-chair – Local Arrangements Coordinator – James Hope Howard
President – Michael Shires
Executive Director – Judy Nicholson

Committee Chairs and Members :

Volunteer Coordinator – Tasha Maddison
Program Chair – Regan Balfour
Program Committee – Nancy Kennedy (SLTA), Ann Liang, Lindsay Baker,
Conference App. Developer – Kimberley Hintz
Communications Chair – Carrie-Anne Prefontaine
Communications Committee – Catherine Hana

SLA Office – Judy Nicholson, Anne Pennylegion, Gloria Bearss, Carol Todd

Graphic Artist for Program Design, Posters, and Signage – Jeannie Straub (ODIDODI Designs)

CPC Handbook: <http://saskla.ca/about/articles-and-bylaws>

The 2017 Conference Planning Committee Handbook which attempted to update the conference planning process from the last handbook from 2009. Borrowing some of the concepts in a recent COPUL handbook, the Executive team attempted to merge the descriptions of the committee members, the input from the board, and the work of the staff into a comprehensive document. As this was a first attempt, revisions will need to be made. It is expected that this handbook will be adjusted each year to address the unique circumstances that emerge with each conference.

Recommended changes following the 2017 Conference:

Statistics from the 2017 Conference:

Category	Data	Notes
Stats On Conference		
Delegates	96	Evaluation for these categories was done as one survey – many presenters were also delegates, while a few were also exhibitors.
Presenters	23	
Exhibitors	15	
Sponsors	14	Revenue of: \$24,200
Prizes	25	
Banquet Attendees	118	
AGM Attendees	51	
MD Lecture Attendees	100	
Volunteers	29	
Stats on the Sched App		
App Users	17	
Personal Schedules Created	12	
Avg # of Sessions attendees added	15.83	
Avg session rating	9.6	
Feedback Collected.	8	

Feedback from the Evaluation Survey of Delegates and Presenters

Total Responses 35

Indicate to which organization you belong?

SLA - 29

SLTA - 1

SSLA - 1

SALT - 1

SHLA - 3

SCAA – 0

LASSP – 1

CALS - 3

MLB - 0

Other - 8

If you are a member of SLA, how long have you been a member?

Less than a year – 4

1-4 years - 11

5-9 years - 6

10-14 years - 5

15-19 years – 1
 More than 20 years - 2
 I am not an SLA member - 4

Which role describes your involvement in the conference?

Delegate - 26
 Presenter - 13

Feedback on conference components:					
	No comment	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Call for presenters & arrangements	9	0	0	16	9
Registration Process	5	0	0	10	19
Communications	2	0	2	15	15
Arrangements – local	0	0	6	10	18
Conference info	0	0	4	19	11
Conference app	9	2	7	8	8

Comments:

- Next conference, we should post a list of sessions that are taking place in each room for the day. That would help people to organize themselves. It is unfortunate about the app. It looked really good, so continue to use in the future.
- The Elk Ridge Resort was a fantastic and beautiful location. The lodging, food, and staff were excellent and the conference was well organized. I especially loved the conference mobile app!
- Only real concern was location, which while beautiful, may have deterred some people from attending due to Elkridge's room prices, particularly with this year's budget concerns.
- Better signage of the revised session schedules would have been helpful
- Disappointed the Aboriginal Storyteller was not there due to funding issues. Wifi was very slow so not great for downloads
- The conference had a bit of a sense of running on "island time" which might be a little frustrating for some but also seemed to work quite well so it's more of an observation than criticism.
- Would have liked brief session descriptions as it was hard to tell for some what the substance of a session would be by just the title alone. Conference app was great for updates but did not provide detailed information that I would have expected.
- The food was, for the most part, extremely salty. I am not on a salt restricted diet but found many items too salty to be palatable; this has never been an issue at other venues.
- It would have been helpful if the app was up-to-date with the changes made to the schedule.
- Everything was good but all I heard was dishes clashing against each other as they washed dishes right by the conference room.

- Sched is a very useful hands on tool to keep track of one's personalized schedule. The efficiency of the office staff in putting up signage, etc. I came at designated time to help with final setup for opening Mary Donaldson lecture and it was all done!! It was great to meet the faces behind the SK Public Libraries campaign. We need to continue to be strong advocates in support of our libraries.
- The mobile app was not updated consistently so people did not have easy access to a current schedule. It would have been helpful to have schedules posted around the facility for people to see. Also, during the AGM, agendas, etc. were not readily available for people. We (the Board) could have provided more documentation for delegates prior to the meeting. . This is something for the Board to address in the future.
- The location of this year's conference was unforgettable! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to "get away from it all", and enjoy an awesome conference!
- Location and facilities were excellent - lovely location for the conference. Meals were okay - empty trays at buffet by the time the last few tables were called. No water at tables after noon on Friday. Serving staff were pleasant and helpful when asked for help.
- The location was lovely but the service provided by hotel staff could have been improved. More sessions and presenters would have been great. Enjoyed the keynote speakers and plenary session.
- The conference was well run - kudos to all involved. I really liked the location and I think it allowed many people from the north who might not normally attend to participate. I would like to see it held in this location every three years, or so. The venue was hot. The reservation system for rooms was limiting. I liked the idea of the App, but it needed to be updated continuously.
- The lunch on Thursday was the weakest on the conference menu. Food ran out and people were waiting. However, hotel staff rebounded for all subsequent meals and food was delicious. I only counted a couple of staff for room and meals set up. This may have factored in with water not being refilled quickly during meals and for sessions.
- I thought some of the amenities in the cottages were only fair considering the deluxe price charged. The food wasn't great in the restaurant. Conference meals were average. Facilities were good. Plenty of seating.
- Great location in terms of having everyone together without too many distractions, the food was not quite to the standard I was expecting. Would have been nice to have a bit more space for the vendors.

Feedback on content of conference:					
	Did not attend	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Social Activities	7	0	2	13	12
MD Lecture and Reception	14	0		8	12
Keynote (Thurs)	7	0	0	7	18
Concurrent	6	0	2	17	9
Keynote (Fri)	6	0	2	14	12

Plenary (Save PL)	7	0	1	11	15
Awards Presentations	3	1	3	15	12
After Banquet Social	12	1	4	8	9

Comments:

- I loved the variety of social activities. I came home from the conference exhausted, but it was well worth it. Great opportunities to network.
- I felt because of the facility and location that there was more communication between delegates than ever before.
- The awards and banquet were excellent. We met several people at our table we did not know before the conference. The meal and company were great.
- For a little library conference the content was great.
- Only attended conference on Friday.
- destination conference was nice. No big city distractions, as is sometimes experienced when larger centre is hosting.
- Very well organized conference with engaging sessions. As a vendor I was only able to attend the session at which I was presenting but my impression from delegate comments was that the conference was a great success!
- I liked all of the sessions I attended. I am wondering if we need so many choices for sessions? It is always difficult to pick. I would be in favour of some sort of forum with a couple of rotating sessions/workshops that everyone would be able to attend and that would encourage discussion amongst delegates. (a format similar to the CLA forum in 2016)

Which sessions were most beneficial or valuable?

- The plenary was excellent. So happy that you added it! Nice to hear the individuals talk about budget cuts from their perspective.
- The presentations on advocacy/building relationships and social media.
- TD summer club, Plenary session - good background on events happening
- Any presentations related to makerspaces and programming. Also cultural sensitivity.
- I felt the most valuable to me were the "Save the Libraries" session as well as all the Kitty Pope sessions.
- Personally, I greatly enjoyed the panel discussion from the Save Saskatchewan Libraries folks, and the closing keynote from Michelle Brownridge. Both of those were particularly timely and useful to me, as a newer librarian.
- Summer Reading Program and Makerspace session
- Makerspace - I have already ordered my circuit kit.
- Advocacy was great.
- Kitty Pope's crisis management and I was really impressed with your capacity to pull together the Save SK libraries plenary on such quick notice!
- Facebook advertising

- Really enjoyed Kitty Pope's session on Managing a crisis in Libraryland as well as Michelle Brownridge's session on Online engagement.
- Lyndon Linklater was very good. Working on bringing him to our community to work his magic with staff, students and parents. Networking is invaluable.
- The collaboration session was an interesting format, and allowed for a variety of content. Very interesting!
- advocacy and technology sessions (Facebook advertising, social media) were relevant and appreciated. The sampler session on collaborations was a nice way to introduce a different projects and initiatives.
- Maker Spaces and the TD Summer Reading Program were the most valuable for ideas.
- I most valued the Lyndon Linklater session and his information regarding Treaties, etc. I also really enjoyed Christine Freethy's panel discussion
- Treaty Awareness and Reconciliation - Creative collaborations
- TD Summer Reading Club
- TD Summer Reading - the presenters were excellent
- I really like the Creative Collaborations Session - quick little summaries of work that has been going on around the province.
- I was glad that the Save Public Libraries plenary was organized and that conference attendees hopefully learned more about the different roles that key stakeholders played during the budget cuts campaign.
- Keynote Bill Waiser
- While mostly things I already knew about, it was really nice to hear directly from Alix Rae about CFLA.

What does SLA need to do better in future conferences?

- This was my first conference so I can't compare to any previous years but I really enjoyed everything that I was able to see and attend.
- Trying to attract a wider variety of presenters to get more people from Academic and Special libraries to attend.
- I feel they are doing a great job of planning considering they must rely on volunteers.
- It might be nice to have important things like conference announcements and important dates of registration posted on some more public forums? Because my Library is an institutional member, I didn't always get all of the information right away; it'd be nice to have alternate methods of staying in the loop. Also, it would be beneficial if the survey worked properly; I do not, in fact, work at a library classified as 'Other', but it won't for whatever reason, allow me to select 'Public' like I would prefer to do.
- Library development for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples within Saskatchewan
- Include an author or two - would be great for the school libraries and public libraries.
- Continue to seek out 'high level' presenters from elsewhere who might be able to bring fresh perspectives. I really enjoyed the conversations I was able to have during this conference. I'm not sure if that can be replicated in a setting with a larger group of attendees but it was a very unique and appreciated quality!

- Loved the venue and would encourage SLA to return but try to negotiate a better rate for accommodations.
- Can there be a way to pre-register an area of interest with the intent of networking to share or seek information? There are likely people attending who have shared concerns but do not find each other to be able to discuss. An informal sharing time, with a bit of pre-planning, would be great.
- Sampler session could have benefited from scheduled time for q and a -roundtables for special interest groups: school, special libraries, technicians etc. -mixers to encourage knowledge exchange and facilitated networking of delegates; buddy system of pairing someone new to conference/sector may be a way of encouraging new delegates to attend.
- Continue providing excellent workshops, speakers and connecting opportunities.
- The board needs to provide better access to AGM documents prior to and during the meeting. Also, daily schedules should be posted around the place in the event that people don't have access to the app (or it's not correct)
- Possibly offer a greater variety of sessions and presenters
- This conference had a more intimate and rustic feel due to the venue and location. This conference was very different which may more memorable in a positive way from others. I hope SLA can continue to balance having conferences in large and smaller areas around the province. The location will likely influence the number of delegates and types of library workers who can attend and that's ok. I was also extremely grateful for the strong sponsorship support! One caveat is to ensure that the hotel contract is thoroughly reviewed before signing. Attrition rates can be critical to the conference's profit margin.
- There were glitches in timing. The usual problems with technology. Although the setting is beautiful I didn't care for the Lodge very much. It is expensive even at conference rate and some of the amenities weren't very good.

Overall Opinion of 2017 Conference?

Best ever – 9

Excellent – 15

Good – 9

Fair - 1

Could have been a lot better - 0

No opinion - 0

Suggestions for Next Conference

- Anything related to special libraries, in particular health/medical
- very nice conference and carried off very well
- Focus on: Advocacy Marketing (especially free or cheap) Indigenous related materials, programming and/or cultural sensitivity Collections (see if the Dewey Divas and Dudes or a ULS rep or someone would come to talk current trends, upcoming releases, etc.?) Guest

librarians from other provinces for fresh ideas/outside perspective? Teen & Tween programming Partnerships with other community organizations

- I'd love to have a session that could discuss larger-scale collaborative projects that we could all lend our professional expertise to! I believe that there's room in the library scene in Saskatchewan for us to work together and pool resources and professional experiences to potentially do some really wonderful, amazing things; I think that drawing some of that out would be professionally rewarding.
- First Nation Communities Read (SOLS), CALS focus
- a wireless power point clicker to allow presenters to remotely change slides -a list of the food being served during meals
- Session ideas would be a session on the best graphic novels for your library. Shaun Tan was excellent as a storyteller and his graphic novel on The Immigrant was one of the first ones I had in my library. A few Sask. authors for an author talk would also be great.
- I know it can be difficult to attract speakers, but more session options would have been beneficial.
- You should have a first timers session (e.g. coffee) where the SLA president (some board members) welcomes them and encourage them to become members of SLA and what are the benefits of being an SLA member.
- Could there be a rural libraries panel with Branch Librarians presenting? How could those folks be encouraged to participate?
- Maybe someone representing school libraries and/or library technicians.
- Information about -organizing (school) libraries by genre keeping non-fiction print resources current while working within budget restrictions -logistics of maker-spaces. Organization, security and continuity for the half done projects, sharing strategies, storage, etc. Also maker-space awareness and selling the idea to "traditional library users" like staff, admin and community.
- I would be really interested in presenting a session on Slack at next year's conference as I think libraries and library networks could really benefit from this tool. Slack is a team communications tool that we have been using at Articulate Ink for over a year and it has completely revolutionized how we work and communicate with each other. You can find more information about what Slack is at these links: <https://slack.com/is> & <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RJZMSsH7-g> Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss further! Cheers, Michelle
- copyright and trademark sessions, continue advocacy sessions and technology
- Nancy Pearle... William Badke (Canadian from BC)
- Jim Daschuk University of Regina to speak on his indigenous research. Jim does a lot of public speaking and is very good. He could speak on his book Clearing the Plains and he is also working on a new book. Cara Bradley could speak on literacy. She has published on this subject.

Feedback from the Evaluation Survey of Exhibitors

Total Responses 5

Has your organization participated in past conferences?

- For several years - 4
- Only last year - 0
- First time -1

Did the Exhibitor & Sponsorship Prospectus provide enough information?

- Too much
- Enough - 5
- Not enough

Exhibitor Experience at the Conference				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Booth well-placed	5	0	0	0
Hall well-located	3	1	1	0
Set up / take down convenient	5	0	0	0
Access to power/internet acceptable	5	0	0	0
Open long enough	3	2	0	0
Sufficient opportunities to meet delegates	2	2	1	0
Good focus on exhibitors as part of conference	3	1	1	0
Lightning rounds well-organized	5	0	0	0

Comments:

- We very much enjoyed being at SLA this year. The only thing we noticed was that there was maybe less traffic than there might have been to the vendor's area because we were in a separate room. At previous library conferences I've attended the food/coffee breaks were held in the same space as the vendors, making it more likely that you'll get visitors to your booth. Of course, given the space constraints at the venue, this was most likely the only option.

What is your overall opinion of the 2017 conference?

- Best ever – 1
- Excellent – 2
- Good - 2

What does SLA need to do better?

- I would like to have more contact with Public Librarians.
- I don't know how you do it but every years seems to exceed the previous year. Thank you for all you do.

- I think, given the circumstances (the funding cuts announcement just before the conference), the organizers did a great job! Having the conference in such a beautiful setting was a bonus for everyone and a fitting way to celebrate 75 years for SLA.

Attendance Next year?

- Regina – May 2, 2018
- Regina – May 3, 2018
- Regina – both May 2 and 3 - 4
- Not sure but keep on list - 1
- I won't participate again
- Interested in 2019 conference