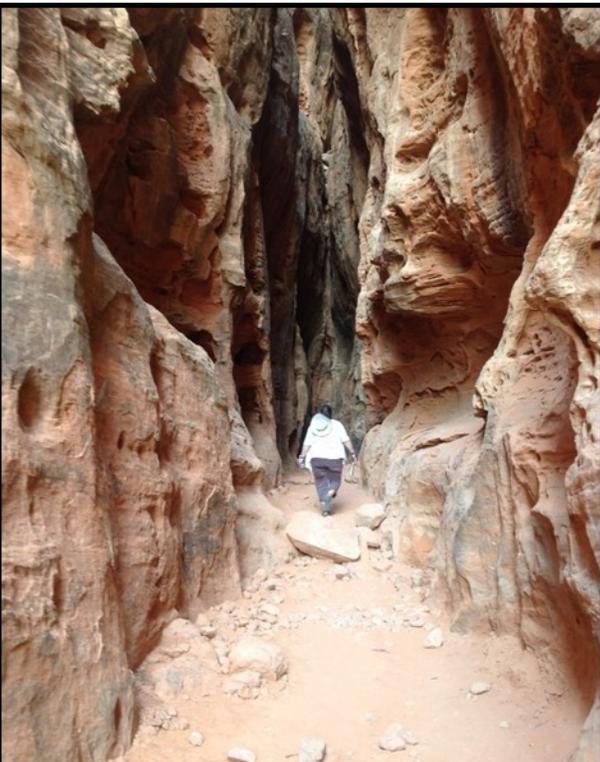


LIBRARIES ELEVATED - EVERYTHING FROM ARSL TO ZION  
2017 ARSL Annual Conference



Jenny Jochimsen

## Jenny Jochimsen ARSL 2017 Report

Find one good thing in each day and you will find your passion. This was the message the conference's first keynote speaker, Jill Nystul, author of "One Good Thing" imparted on the librarians seated before her at the Association of Rural and Small Libraries 2017 conference in St. George Utah. Passion for the field of librarianship was the connecting thread among individuals from all over the country. Attending the speeches and learning sessions, as well as interacting with fellow librarians helped grow the passion I feel for the profession of librarianship. It was very difficult not to find many good things throughout the four days the conference was held. Besides the wonderful learning opportunities, there were daring experiences, beautiful scenery, and friendly faces. For instance, I went on an adventure ATVing tour in the Utah desert, hiked in 100 degrees weather to have my picture taken in "Jenny's Canyon", and had great conversations with librarians from South Carolina, Nevada, Idaho, and many more places.

The first learning sessions I attended was focused on how to better use social media to market libraries. One hint was to look at new movie posters to learn upcoming trends in graphic design. According to my presenter, designs in 2018 will be sporting duo chromatic themes and images overlaid with eye catching filters. These trends can be used in flyers advertising libraries and library events to give them an extra eye-catching pop. She emphasized showing people and staff on the library's social media's posts to help patrons feel a connection to the library. Adding polls in posts that ask patrons to respond will encourage them to interaction. Ask favorite patrons or volunteers to share library events or posts on their own social media page to improve outreach, as messages coming from a third party holds more weight. The presenter also strongly encouraged organization of marketing with use of a schedule. Events should be planned out at least 3 months in advance, the type of advertisements known, and when and where they need to be sent out listed. Resources mentioned in this presentation were Cava, Social Sprout, Hootsuite and Evernote.

Another presentation of note was "It's Not Bragging If It's True! – Communicating Library Successes with Key Shareholders". The speaker, the state data coordinator for Utah Libraries, lead with the saying, "Libraries are like mayonnaise". His message was that libraries, like mayonnaise, are a staple in peoples' life. However, many people don't think about mayonnaise or libraries until they are needed. He said to remind shareholders that libraries are pillars of communities, businesses will come and go, but the community library doesn't leave. People also have their "brand of mayonnaise". This is the mayonnaise that they think of when they think of mayo. They have this set brand due to good advertising by the brand's company. Library's need to have their name out in the community in many different forms: flyers, newsletters, newspapers, social media, ect. The more plastered the community, the better the library's ability to share its message, purpose, and need. Another key note of the secession was to never repeat a negative.

Restating a negative comment cements the ideal in minds. Even if the negative is false, use positive language when correcting the misconception. For example, someone has heard that the library spends too much money on R rated DVDs. The counter would be that the library prides itself on providing a diverse collection and meeting the entertainment needs of all of its library patrons. The last point of the session was to always end communications with a call to action, an explicit appeal to your audience to take a specific action. A good call-to-action is clear and direct, asks your audience to act quickly, focuses on benefits for your audience, and is customized for each person.

The last session I attended was entitled, "Elevate your Reach". It was presented by a librarian who holds a passion for serving the homebound and those in nursing homes, a population often under looked. She implemented a book bundle program which enables her to provide not only library materials to these community members but also activities to engage and entertain them. The bundles consists of four library items bagged together. The items are all marked with the same colored dot and placed in a bag with matching color. All book bundles are kept in a large tote of around fifty bags. Items in the bags include picture books, games, large print books, magazines, music, DVDs and crossword books. The tote is kept at the nursing home and rotated out with new items on a monthly basis. When the presenter visits the nursing home to switch out the tote she schedules a half hour to hour activity for the nursing home residents. Picture book story time, oldies music, spa days, simple crafts, and therapy animals were among the activities she mentioned.

Interacting and networking with my fellow librarians was a main highlight of the event. I recommend to future attendees to spend some time with fellow WVLS members as well as talking to librarians from around the county. The WVLS librarians are the ones most able to offer in person help and support. I had never flown before and so asked my fellow WVLS attendees for a travel buddy. Kim from Greenwood took me up on my request and showed be the ropes of traveling. Cara from Neillsville asked if I would be interested in going on an ATVing adventure, and that turned into the highlight of the trip. I sat with Julie from Thorp at many of the conferences meals and we had some good conversations. I am looking forward to the next VCat meeting where I get to see these individuals again.

So many good things were found at the ARSL conference. I had my first flight. I went ATVing on sand dunes. I went swimming in an outdoor pool under the stars. I got to be a kid again and rode a carousel for a dollar. I got to try Hawaiian Food. I was brave and had my first picture taken with an author. I got to play board games with a fellow bunch of geeky librarians. I have new ideas to try in my library. I made new friends. Thank you for letting me go to ARSL 2017 conference and experiencing these very good things.