

WVLS Post-Conference Report

Please note: This report will be shared with the WVLS Board of Trustees and posted on the WVLS website in an upcoming board meeting packet.

- 1. Please highlight three sessions from the conference. What were the session topics? Who presented them? What made these presentations effective and meaningful to you?**

Fines Free: A Year in Review

Fines free was one of my favorite sessions from the conference. It was presented by a panel of libraries, each with a different service population with the largest being Eau Claire Public Library. For a while now the Crandon Public Library has been tossing around the idea of fines free. Attending this session helped me identify some valid points to make when justifying the need to go fines free. I think showing the facts, figures, and successes from other libraries across the state might help change the mindset of what it really means to be “fines free”. One of the panelists at the conference commented that much to her surprise, after going fines free “the stuff came back, and the people came back.” I hope we see similar results.

How to Be an Indian in the 21st Century

This session was presented by Louis V Clark III who is a tribal member of the Oneida Nation near Green Bay Wisconsin. This presentation was relevant to me and my community because the city of Crandon is situated between two Native American reservations. Therefore, attending a session led by a Native American poet was a great opportunity to better understand the Native American experience. I also think attended this particular session because I believe strongly in bridging the gap between Non-native and Native American culture. This session provided some insight on some unique challenges Native Americans face that others do not.

At the Movies with Librarians

This session was presented by a panel of four librarians from Wisconsin libraries. One of the panelists was Sherry Machomes from Northern Waters Library Service. This program was beneficial to me because it was interesting to hear other’s perspectives on if certain books should be made into films. I also think it benefitted me because now I have a list of films based on books that will be coming out in 2020-2021. This is helpful because not all of the patrons who visit the library read—many check out DVDs. Maybe a good film would encourage a non-reader to check out the book the film was based on. If nothing else having

these upcoming films in my back pocket will assist me with collection development.

2. Please highlight a conference experience, other than attending a conference session. Did you talk to someone you didn't know at a session? Sit next to someone at a luncheon and have a meaningful conversation? Visit with an exhibitor? How did this experience affect your overall outlook of the conference?

While at the conference I met several of the vendors who I exclusively interact with virtually. It was exciting to be able to put faces with names. I also met two representatives from ProQuest. ProQuest published my master's thesis so that was a unique experience I might have not had if it weren't for attending the conference. The conversation about my thesis then transformed into a discussion on all the different things ProQuest does and how they are useful to libraries in a variety of ways. Meeting with these representatives in particular was special for me and made me realize that the "library world" is far reaching and that many different companies are useful to or have stake in libraries.

3. As a result of attending this conference, what three things do you plan on implementing at your library in the next six months?

Fines Free

After attending the conference, I presented a polished fines free proposal to my board which will be voted on in mid-November 2019. I used the information presented in the "Fines Free" session to support my plan. If the proposal passes the Crandon Public Library will be fines free on children's materials. If that goes well and the data shows that our materials continue to be returned the board will consider going fines free on all materials in 2021.

Makerspace Lab

I also got some interesting ideas about how to improve our Maker-space lab from "The Science of Play" session. This session focused on how libraries can integrate more STEM themes into programming for children. Right now, we have a Makerspace/STEAM lab with roughly 6-8 kits at a given time. There are some STEAM-related kits like a programmable toy mouse, Kinnex, and an Orbeez Sensory ball kit—but the WLA workshop gave me some ideas of other projects and materials we could include in our Maker-space lab.

Film Showings

The library currently does film screening for adults, adult book clubs, and children. The one demographic we are really missing is film screenings for teens. While at the “At the Movies with Librarians”, I saw a trailer for a film called *JoJo Rabbit* which I thought might be a great film for teens. We have struggled with getting teens into the library so trying a film screening is a new approach we are willing to try. When the film *Jojo Rabbit* comes out on DVD, I will give it a try!

4. What kind of support is needed for you to implement these three things? Support from your staff? Your Board of Trustees? Assistance from WVLS?

Going fines free is the only item listed that would require approval from the board and significant assistance from WVLS. If the board does approve it, I will look to WVLS for help with pulling necessary reports and changing our current settings within the Sierra software. The other two items listed, improving our Makerspace and implanting teen film screenings will likely only require support from the Crandon Public Library staff. If we work together and brainstorm these ideas, these two goals will likely become a reality.

5. How might your conference experience been improved to be more beneficial/impactful to you?

The conference overall was great. I came away with much insight and met many people from neighboring systems. The opportunities for networking were outstanding. I think one thing that could have made the conference more impactful to me is if there was at least one more session that focused on the Native American experience. Native Americans are very clearly underrepresented in many facets of our society, and libraries should not be one of those facets. The Crandon Public Library is striving to make conscious changes that ensure our space reflects our community. Therefore, it would be nice to have training opportunities or more sessions on Native American materials and the Native American experience. I

would suggest to the WLA planning committee that they find a tribal librarian who would be interested in telling her story and sharing her experiences at the conference in the future.

- *Stephanie Schmidt, Crandon Public Library*