

WVLS Staff 2022 WAPL Conference Report

Name: Jamie Matczak

1. What was the title of a session you attended? Taking the Show on the Road, Presented by Sarah Kyrie, Director of the Argyle Public Library

- **What two things are you taking away that you heard or do you think are most important?**

1) That libraries don't need massive budgets to do creative programming.

The Argyle Public Library is a small library (900 square feet) with a budget of \$34,000. They do not have the budget or the space to do a lot of programming in the library, yet they have taken the library "on the road" to other businesses or have created partnerships. There are 8-10 businesses in Argyle, and Sarah said "we want them all to be invested in the library."

Partnerships should also be utilized. Sarah offers honorariums to speakers, and most times they do the program without a fee.

Libraries should take advantage of community members willing to help. Sarah talked about a patron who LOVES building campfires. Anytime the library has an outdoor program in cold weather, he donates the firewood and offers to build one.

2) Libraries are mobile.

Sarah talked about the town having a summer concert series. While the performers were doing sound checks, she spread out a blanket and did a 10-minute storytime to occupy the kids. She also had books on-hand, and a tablet for kids to check out. Take the library with you!

- **Were there any key websites the presenter shared or resources that people should check out?**

UW-Madison has a program called "[Badger Talks](#)," which does outreach to community members. The website states: *It is our goal to bring the University to you to help spark ideas and conversations on topics important to your community. Whether you want to hear about the history of the Ice Age Trail, learn about the history of Ragtime music, discuss changes in the dairy industry, or get updated on the latest ground-breaking health care research being done on campus, we can find a speaker for you.*

The Argyle Public Library has utilized this service to bring programs to the community.

Sarah also noted that programs on birds/birding are always well received.

- **What was the audience reaction to this session? What kinds of feedback was given?**

The session was very informative and well received. Participants were amazed at the programs this small library was able to do. Questions were asked about program costs. Sarah is passionate about libraries, and that passion and energy came through in the presentation.

2. What did you enjoy most about the conference?

I enjoyed seeing colleagues face-to-face and revisiting past connections. The attendance for the conference was around 220 people, and it felt like a great size of people given this was the first in-person WAPL Conference since 2019. Because I work at WVLS remotely, I also enjoyed having dinner on Thursday evening with WVLS colleagues. It was an excellent conference!

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Name: ACHRAF BEN KHALIFA

1. What was the title of a session you attended?

Infinite Tech Questions...litty-Bitty Working Space, Presented by Teresa Schmidt, Director of the Mercer Public Library

- **What two things are you taking away that you heard or do you think are most important?**

- Libraries need more technology education and programs
- Change in libraries or in general is inevitable
- Libraries need to be cautious about relying on volunteers for technology help
- Librarians should not offer to enter personal information on phones/tablets on behalf of patrons

- **Were there any key websites the presenter shared or resources that people should check out?**

Teresa shared her [library's webpage](#) that has technology resources for teaching. [This innovation website](#) was also shared.

- **What was the audience's reaction to this session? What kinds of feedback was given?**

The audience was interactive and excited about the information given during all the sessions, especially this one. A lot of questions were asked during the presentation.

2. What did you enjoy most about the conference?

I liked meeting new friends, and seeing old colleagues in-person was a great plus. It was nice to exchange knowledge and learn more about the different libraries around the various systems in Wisconsin.

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Name: Marla Sepnafski

1. What was the title of a session you attended?

“Dreaming Big in a Small Library” by Rib Lake Public Library Assistant Director Krista Blomberg

- **What two things are you taking away that you heard or do you think are most important?**

Krista’s gentle encouragement for colleagues (any library, large or small) to think boldly, dream big and imagine the possibilities for their spaces and their services. Don’t let fear be a barrier.

Krista’s sage advice to all who attended that help and support are always available. All one has to do is ask.

- **Were there any key websites the presenter shared or resources that people should check out?**

Websites were not shared during this presentation.

For resources, Krista mentioned people and library- and community-related groups she relied on for each of her “Dreaming Big” projects – new literacy space in the library, new outdoor shelter/programming area, partnership with Village Book Builders, and the library’s infomercial video.

Krista suggested that colleagues contact their library’s system for support and brainstorming, their director/supervisor/library board/funders for feedback and approval, and to reach out to community members and business, local and elsewhere, for additional support and project vetting.

Being resourceful, and willing to communicate big, bold ideas with those who will offer honest feedback was key.

- **What was the audience reaction to this session? What kinds of feedback was given?**

Based on the number of people who attended the session, there was a lot of interest in this topic.

Krista presented with enthusiasm and authenticity, and shared information helpful to *any* size library. Presenting how dreaming big led to doable and highly successful projects was very compelling.

Her stories were inspiring, and several attendees asked questions and shared feedback at the end of the session.

Her session certainly aligned with the WAPL Conference theme of “Infinite Possibilities”!

2. What did you enjoy most about the conference?

Attending relevant sessions and catching up with highly regarded colleagues and friends *in-person* rather than *virtually* was a wonderful change from continuing education experiences offered over the last two years!

The conference seemed to be well attended, and the Pewaukee venue was easy to navigate. The minibus WVLS chartered for the conference made for convenient, comfortable, and affordable travel.

It was a stimulating conference, and I am grateful to have attended. It was time well spent.

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Name: Brenda Walenton

1. What was the title of a session you attended? Project Management Lifecycle: Plan for Every Possibility, Presented by Brittany Larson, Library Director at Muskego Public Library

- **What two things are you taking away that you heard or do you think are most important?**

- 1) Does the project need to happen? Though there are many good ideas projects take a lot of time and manpower, so it is always important to ask yourself if the project needs to happen. Talk with all the stakeholders and make sure everyone is on board. *I have learned that sometimes you do a lot of work to get something only to find out that it was a waste of time, and you end up regretting the investment. I think if I would have come at it from the way this was presented, I would have figured that out before I made the investment.*
- 2) Do you think you will be able to get your project funded? Do your homework before you ask for funding. Go to the meeting prepared with a lot of information that shows your project is needed and how it will benefit the people that will use it – if you don't have good documentation, you may find that the funder will say no. *Coming from a different funding background this process to me would be very daunting to have to explain why I need a new roof or new carpeting let alone asking for something that to the funding source could seem frivolous.*

- **Were there any key websites the presenter shared or resources that people should check out?**
Nothing specific shared, but she did talk about the importance of project tracking and showed us an example of process.

- **What was the audience reaction to this session? What kinds of feedback was given?**

The group was very receptive to the topic and wanted to know where she found the time do all the steps especially when she was doing multiple projects. Brittany was a good speaker and entertaining so I think the audience would have enjoyed the presentation even if wasn't as informative.

2. What did you enjoy most about the conference?

I enjoyed stepping out of my normal and hearing about how things work in the library world. Though finance and human resources can be very similar to any other agency the program part is very different and it is important to understand the program part to be able to do my part better. I also enjoyed getting to know my co-workers and board president on a personal level.