

Editor's Column

My first PNLA Conference was in Eugene, Oregon, in 2006. I had developed a workshop on productivity which eventually became my first book, and got the dreaded “late last day” slot. I was worried that I would be presenting to an empty room; however, I had a full house of library workers eager to learn and discuss, going through the exercises I provided and staying late to talk about technology tools and best books on the topic. I was a relatively new librarian and new to the region, but still at this conference that was a two-day drive from my home I saw familiar faces from my home state and friendly faces that I didn't yet know but would develop into some very strong professional connections. Many of the fondest PNLA memories I have stem from the planning and execution of the centennial conference I worked on as Vice President, alongside Mary Lou Mires, the longtime Montana rep.

PNLA's annual conference provides a wealth of learning experiences across the spectrum of librarianship. As an academic librarian on the tenure track I always learned something new and worthwhile, directly applicable to my work, usually each day of the conference if not a few times a day. As a frequent presenter, I can vouch for the readiness of those attending the PNLA conference to learn and discuss. It's much more fun to present for a conference where attendees are ready to engage with you rather than marking time for professional development requirements.

The learning experiences loop directly into the vaunted PNLA social atmosphere—usually when I mention my affiliation with PNLA people say, “Oh, Corks and Cans!” These events and the overall atmosphere of fun provide conference attendees with an unparalleled opportunity to connect and network with professional colleagues in a wholly unique way. This makes the learning and presenting much more enjoyable and memorable.

The conference issue of the Quarterly allows those of us who were present to relive some of the learning that took place, as well as invites those who weren't present to also benefit from what was shared. I hope these articles help you make connections and plug you into our regional network of library professionals.

The next PNLA Conference will be in Kalispell, Montana, August 1-3, 2018. If you feel inspired to contribute directly to our next conference, either as a presenter or as an attendee, please check out the call for proposals at the end of this issue, right before the call for the Fall issue of the Quarterly. I hope to see you there!

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