

Change your mind and the rest will follow: Beyond Hope Conference 2009

By Mari Martin. [for the Prince George Public Library]

The Prince George Public Library welcomed delegates to its bi-annual **Beyond Hope Library Conference, June 8th & 9th 2009 at the Prince George Civic Centre**. Attracting librarians, library staff and trustees from academic, public and school we offered a program filled to the brim with hands-on database workshops, children's programming, cataloguing updates and our popular table topic discussions. According to participants, highlights of this year's conference included the opportunities to socialize and connect with colleagues who face similar challenges in their libraries; hands on database training sessions, getting updated on changes to AACR2/RDA and web 2.0 tools and online research. Our Keynote speaker this year was **Linda Cook, CEO Edmonton Public Library** who shared her personal experiences as a leader and mentor and commented on the skills she acquired on her leadership journey.

Presenters from the North:

PGPL staff developed a number of sessions specifically for the conference. As a library, one of our most popular regular Adult programs is *Facebook for Adults*. Teen Librarian, **Amy Dawley** presented *Facebook for Newbies and Library staff*. Her session dismantled fears about Facebook, talked about what you needed to know to protect your privacy and how Facebook can be used by the library and its customers. **Patricia Gibson**, Collection Development Librarian presented Reader's Advisory workshop *From Good to Great*, hot on the heels of her presentation to the North Coast Library Federation. This session provided tips and tricks for

having an excellent RA interview, search tools and pathfinders which all helped library staff gain confidence in suggesting reading material to all customers with ease.

Marc Saunders, Public Service Manager talked about the Prince George Newspaper Digitization Project. Prince George Public Library, Geoffrey R. Weller Library at the University of British Columbia and College of New Caledonia Library are currently collaborating on a project which has already digitized 70 years of local Prince George newspapers. Marc discussed practical steps in setting up the project, some of the challenges and choices made to hopefully ensure long term success. Children's Librarian **Becky Stark** and Reader Advisor Assistant **Evelyn Lee**, tackled picture books for older children in their session *Between Thomas and Twilight: new ideas to interest older kids*. Children's programmer, **Ingrid Edenshaw** helped new children's programmers turn 2 stories into 10 in her workshop on preschool patterning. A number of our colleagues from UNBC Library have recently attended library school programs online. This session organized by **Deb Nielsen** and **Paul Burry** included a lengthy discussion with those interested updating or expanding their skills with library formal education. **Kealin McNabe** and **Willow Fuchs**, Reference and Instructional Librarians, Geoffrey R. Weller Library, UNBC having been utilizing Meebo and Elluminate software to reach out to distance students at UNBC. They are examining the ways they are conducting references in hopes of closing the gap in offering better quality reference services to those learning at a distance.



Other great sessions

We also welcomed a number of presenters from the lower mainland. **Deb Thomas** presented a very interesting session on flexible library design. Deb discussed plans and implementation for the new Kingsway Branch, Burnaby Public Library. She demonstrated how flexibility is being built into shelving, furnishing and spaces to ensure that the library can grow with its community and the changing nature of libraries in general. A very popular session for the northern crowd was *2.0 Toolkit: new tools for library websites* presented by **Kay Cahill** and **Cecily Walker** from Vancouver Public Library. Participants were particularly interested in how to integrate new web tools into their everyday work while not dramatically increasing their workloads. In a very helpful session for librarians, **Aleha McCauley** from the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre demonstrated tools and tricks to help smaller libraries support local business interests through search assistance. We learned that northern libraries can't get enough of cataloguing sessions when **Carol Elder** from Langara's Library and Information Technology program, gave presentations on RDA and a basic MARC refresher. Sessions on navigating government and legal websites were also very popular. Marion Smith presented sessions on Statistics Canada. Janet Freeman and Drew Jackson from the Courthouse Libraries BC presented a very entertaining and competitive *Legal Jeopardy* session helping library staff learn to use ClickLaw more effectively. **Ryan Vernon** and **Stephen Blasser** from BC CILS (BC College and Institution Libraries Services, Langara)

presented a session on using DIY accessibility options utilizing open source software and inexpensive hardware to help accommodate library customers with disabilities. Public Library Services Branches staff **Ene Haabniff** and **Kyle Armour** offered sessions on Webjunction and Canadian Newstand. Trainers from Ebsco hosted overflowing hands on workshops for Novelist and Ebschost databases. Sessions on Askaway, Google Toolkit and Yoga helped round out the conference. A special thank you to the staff of the Geoffrey R. Weller Library who hosted this year's fun and prize filled Pub Night.

Thank you!

We would like to thank our sponsors: *British Columbia Library Association, Association of British Columbia Public Library Directors, Irving K. Barber Learning Centre at University of British Columbia, North Central Library Federation, and United Library Services* for their continued support of continuing education for northern libraries.

Questions?

- Email : beyondhope@lib.pg.bc.ca.
- Join us in 2011!

Mari Martin is the new Branch Manager at Courtenay Branch Vancouver Island Regional Library and the former Coordinator of the Beyond Hope Conference.

