1979

Maine Governor's White House Conference on Libraries 1979

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Maine Governor's White House Conference on Libraries
Background

On April 13, 1979 Governor Joseph E. Brennan signed a proclamation calling for a Maine Governor's White House Conference. Governor Brennan declared 1979 as the Year of the Library and asked that the conference "seek the opinion of the public at large to bring about further improvements in library programs and services."

The Maine Conference was one of 56 state and territorial conferences to be held in preparation for a national White House Conference on Library and Information Services. The national conference took place November 15-19 in Washington, D.C. and will "develop recommendations for the further improvement of the nation's libraries and information centers and their use by the public..." 

Planning

In the spring of 1978 a Steering Committee named by the State Library began planning for the Maine White House Conference on Libraries. The Steering Committee was composed of representatives from the Maine State Library, Maine Library Commission, Maine Library Association, Maine Educational Media Association and the Maine Regional Library System.

A Citizens' Planning Committee of 31 Maine citizens was also organized. The Steering Committee and the Citizens' Planning Committee decided on the format and structure of the Maine conference.

The goals set by the Committees were:

- to involve Maine citizens in addressing the issues and needs for improved library service.
- to focus public awareness on libraries and on their importance in Maine life.
- to review and evaluate existing library programs and services in Maine and make recommendations for their improvement.
- to select and prepare the Maine delegation for participation in the National Conference.
Regional Meetings

Regional meetings were organized with the grass root intention of bringing people together to talk about libraries and library related issues. Meetings were held in 26 locations. Most were held with advance publicity and with humanities scholars present. The total attendance of all the Regional meetings exceeded 500, over half were librarians and trustees. Five conference issues were derived from the regional meetings. They were:

- Access
- Technology
- Cooperation
- Funding and the Political Process
- Public Relations

On February 22, 1979 on all of the public television stations in Maine (five in number) a simultaneous and live broadcast of a two hour television version of the regional meetings was shown. In addition to the participants "in studio", many calls were taken from viewing groups and individuals from all parts of the state, including those communities where regional meetings did not occur.

The purpose of the program was to bring the regional meeting opportunity to communities where "in person" regional meetings could not be held. The program was seen statewide through the four stations of the Maine Public Broadcasting Network of the University of Maine and WCBB in Lewiston-Augusta-Portland. The program was itself a MPBN concept.

Delegates

Over 300 Maine citizens applied to be delegates to the Maine White House Conference on Libraries. It was the job of the Delegate Selection Committee to involve a cross section of the state's population. Based on the Maine Register, a list of non-library groups, associations and institutions was developed. A nomination form was adopted, one for non-library and one for library/trustee citizens. A profile of the state was established to determine county representation based on population for geographical balance and types of individuals based on sex, age, ethnic background, handicapped and vocation.

Final selection of the delegates was made by the Nomination Committee on March 6, 1978. 100 delegates were selected. In accordance with the Federal stipulations, two-thirds of the delegation (67) were citizen delegates selected according to the profile guidelines. The remaining one-third were library related delegates selected by library region and were divided into public libraries (10), school libraries (10), academic libraries (3), special libraries (4), and trustees (6).
State Conference

The Maine White House Conference on Libraries was held at Jewett Hall, the University of Maine at Augusta from April 17 to April 19, 1979. The 100 delegates were divided into 5 workshop groups of 20 delegates. Careful consideration was given to the makeup of the 20 person groups so that the delegate balance was maintained with no age group, geographic section or type of library user, or library being over represented. There were 5 concurrent sessions for each of the 5 workshop groups. Each group had the opportunity to discuss all 5 of the conference issues derived from the regional meetings. There was a moderator, a recorder, and a resource person (each an expert on the given topic) for each issue.

Overall there were 25 workshops in which 54 resolutions were presented. At the plenary session on April 19th, 7 additional resolutions were made. Similar resolutions were then combined by the Resolution Committee for a total of 50 resolutions.

All the people who supported every step of the Maine Conference had a strong desire to achieve positive results and see their resolutions enacted. Maintaining this newly established oneness of purpose becomes a top priority for follow-up for the Maine State Library, the Maine Library Commission and the individuals named to promote and develop follow-up activities.
Exhibits

Although the workshops and the resolutions were the main purpose of the conference, a two day exhibit was an essential part of the conference success. From 75 to 100 people from libraries or library related programs all over the state helped prepare and set up the exhibit. Posters from the in-school poster contest “How Libraries Light up your Life” hung as a backdrop in one section of the children’s exhibit area at the Learning Resources Center. In another area, paper mache models of the Three Bears listened along with children to stories or watched as children climbed some stairs for arts and crafts activities and left with felt bookmarks. A large orange plastic man sat reading a huge WHO'S WHO adjacent to the room where films went non-stop for any young viewers interested. School libraries demonstrated among other things their videotaping and filmmaking possibilities. The Indian Project Pride Program demonstrated their cultural sharing and enrichment program for the Indian and white communities. Many public libraries had information tables where they displayed not only samples of their services but highlighted the diverse activities they had sponsored in their community. Other exhibits focused on adult services and guides to sources of legal information. A replica of the Portland Public Library's intown bookmobile, which visits senior citizens, nursing homes and jails, was also on display.

Special libraries at the Correctional Center, the State Prison, and Mental Health Institutes, as well as libraries working separately or linked with the state program to help the blind and physically handicapped were there with samples of books, on-disc magazines and cassettes as well as braille.

High school and post-secondary libraries were not excluded. One voc-tech library could be viewed on a video cartridge recorder. Maine’s industrial and business libraries were also on hand to explain their special functions and the Portland School of Art library demonstrated how a private college library has become part of the interlibrary loan system.

Though the focus was on what is going on in some of our libraries, and with a little ingenuity could be going on in all Maine libraries, new forms of technology also had their place. Examples of NELINET, MEDLINE, NEW YORK TIMES INFORMATION BANK and DIALOG were operating for participation and viewing. A career education computer was also available for those plotting their futures. Outside the exhibit building a Maine State Library Bookmobile was parked so that everyone not familiar with this service could climb aboard and talk with the bookmobile librarian while marveling at the 3,000 books inside.

Two special programs for children of all ages were staged in the auditorium at UMA. Over 250 people on both April 17 and 18 attended the Children’s Theater of Maine enactment of vignettes from Maine History and also the “Flood of Creatures” based on a book by Maine author, Dahlov Ipcar, and produced by a group from Bath, Maine. These productions were funded by a gift from “Mr. Paperback”, a book and magazine distributor and by a grant from the “Maine Arts and Humanities Council”.

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State Winners of the Governor's White House Conference Children's Poster Contest

Vickie Woodard, Grade 2

Alan Bull, Grade 9

Mark Merfeld, Grade 7

Judges: Dahlov Ipcar, David Brooks, Margaret York
Maine Governor's White House Conference on Libraries
RESOLUTIONS APPROVED BY THE DELEGATES
IN PLENARY SESSION
April 19, 1979

Recommended for nationwide implementation:

1. Library services shall be free to all.
2. The people shall have the right to free and unfettered access to the resources of the Federal libraries and information centers.
3. All library services shall be available at hours convenient to needs of the patrons.
4. Every library shall have a telephone.
5. Toll-free telephone service should be established for individuals to call libraries.
6. Books-by-mail should be expanded and publicized.
7. Bookmobile services for children as well as for adults should be maintained and expanded.
8. The use of varied library systems of information retrieval should be encouraged through demonstrations and continuing education courses for all citizens.
9. Information should be provided in the format most appropriate to the needs of the user.
10. Borrower privacy shall be protected by safeguards built into circulation and information processing systems.
11. Cooperation among all libraries for access to all resources, print and non-print, should be continued and extended.
12. Workshops should be conducted for librarians and trustees to remove barriers to cooperative efforts at all levels.
13. School and public libraries in each community should cooperate as much as possible, sharing resources and facilities.
14. Cooperative efforts should not be a substitute for strong local support of public and school libraries.

15. Educational systems should incorporate in the curriculum, K-12, a program for the development of library skills.
16. Elementary schools should have libraries staff by qualified librarians/media specialists.
17. The public library board of trustees shall be representative of the community.
18. Libraries should support ethnic cultures with appropriate materials and services.
19. Libraries shall provide support and facilities for literacy programs.
20. Libraries shall provide special materials for the handicapped.
21. Physical access to all existing buildings shall be provided for all users.
22. Library services should be tied in with non-library outreach programs.
23. Every library shall periodically survey the library needs of its community.
24. The library share of the financial pie should be publicized: campaigns should be undertaken by library officials and related groups to make the public and government officials aware of the financial problems of libraries.
25. State and national library agencies shall increase advertising on national networks and shall seek funding for public television programs encouraging the use of libraries.
26. Shared staffing among libraries should be encouraged to increase library service.
27. Volunteers should be used to enhance and expand library services; organized in-service training programs should be instituted for them.
28. Publishers should be encouraged to improve the quality of paper and binding for the long-term preservation of books.
Recommended for State and Local Implementation:

29. A statewide borrower's card should be made available immediately.
30. Citizens of all ages shall have access to all services of the Regional Library System.
31. All types of libraries within the Regional System should cooperate to avoid duplication of resources and to save money.
32. The Regional Library System should undertake a campaign to convince librarians, trustees and patrons to join the System.
33. A union list of all materials in Regional System libraries should be funded and developed, should be accessible to all residents of the state, and should eventually become part of a national network.
34. The State Library and the Regional Library System shall provide full time leadership in an ongoing public relations program to promote awareness of library resources and services.
35. The State Library shall conduct regional programs of instruction in public relations and market research for librarians and trustees.
36. The State Library should employ a grant writer.
37. The resources of the State Library should be substantially increased in order that it may carry out its mandated functions.
38. An accredited graduate library/media school should be established within the University of Maine.
39. The University of Maine shall offer a continuing education program in library science and a training program for media specialists.
40. Compulsory courses in library and media use should be added to the curricula of Maine teacher training programs and should be required for teacher certification.
41. The Library Commission and the State Librarian should join with the Commissioner of Education and Cultural Services in planning and funding a long term program of developing libraries in the public schools of the State.
42. The Maine Library Association and the Maine Educational Media Association should conduct courses/workshops on political awareness for librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries.
43. Participants in the Maine Governor's White House Conference, librarians, and library trustees shall make a concerted effort to support full funding for L.D. 166.
44. Position papers should be developed for use in lobbying for L.D. 166 and future library legislation.
45. The State Legislature should continue to increase the per capita allotment to support effective library services to the citizens of Maine.
46. Space should be provided on the Maine State Income Tax form to allow one dollar ($1.00) to be allocated toward the support of the libraries in the State.
47. The Regional Library System shall coordinate the development of compatible technological services.
48. A directory of all library equipment, such as microform readers/printers, AV equipment, and computerized information retrieval systems in Maine libraries should be published and distributed.
49. Strong in-service educational programs should be implemented to make Maine librarians and educators aware of and able to use available technology.
50. A community which accepts State funds for construction of a school media center should be required to provide the funds for adequate staffing of that facility.
The Maine Governor's White House Conference on Libraries wishes to thank the following businesses, communities, libraries and individuals who made financial contributions.

Auburn Public Library
Books 'N' Things, Schuyler Mott
N. H. Bragg & Sons
Cape Elizabeth, Town of
Central Maine Power
Depositors Trust
East Millinocket, Town of
Ellsworth, Town of
Great Northern Paper
Guy Gannett Foundation
Houlton, Cary Library
Jay, Town of
Kingfield, Town of
Limerick, Town of
William Locke
Maine Broadcasting System
Monson, Town of
Naples, Town of
New England Telephone
Northport, Town of
Oakland, Town of
Orient, Town of
Orland, Town of
Phillips, Town of
Phippsburg, Town of
Pleasant Ridge Plantation
"The Quoddy Tides"
Scott Paper Company
Vernon Shaw
Seboeis Plantation
Smithfield, Town of
Smyrna, Town of
Sorrento, Town of
South Thomaston, Town of
St. Albans, Town of
Stetson, Town of
Steuben, Henry D. Moore Library
Swans Island, Town of
Turner, Town of
West Forks Plantation
Winslow Public Library
Woodville, Town of
John C. Vaughn
Weld, Town of

Maine Libraries offer:

- over 5,000,000 books
- over 2,000 16mm films
- the information resources of the state's academic libraries
- computerized access to over 100 technical data bases
- 212 public libraries
- 418 school libraries
- 21 libraries in academic institutions
- scores of libraries in hospitals and businesses
- a strong state library with
  - 7 bookmobiles
  - 1 books-by-mail program
  - a film collection
  - a collection of materials for the visually and physically handicapped
- WATS lines and TWX networks for inter-library searches.
Maine’s National Delegates

Don Bouchard, Poland Spring
Bill Caldwell, Damariscotta
Ed Chenevert, Portland
Michael Cyr, Fort Kent
Vladimir Drozdoff, Cooper
Richard Gross, Lewiston
Katy Perry, Gardiner

Maine’s Alternate Delegates

Vivian Dow, Belfast
Gary Nichols, Palermo
Larry Spiegel, Gardiner

Post-State Conference Activity

All delegates and planning committee members have been placed on the Maine Library Association mailing list. They are invited to attend all MLA functions including the MLA annual conferences. At the June 10-12 MLA conference one program was completely devoted to the White House Conference.

Each of the 3 regional library districts are inviting planning committee members and delegates to all district council meetings. Resolutions have been studied at the district level and implementation is expected.

The New England caucus was held on September 16 and 17 at Durham, New Hampshire and provided an opportunity to discuss New England Regional concerns.

All delegates are receiving copies of Downeast Libraries, a MLA publication, to keep them informed of statewide library concerns.

Maine Governor’s White House Conference Delegates

Donald L. Abrams, Waterville
G. Richard Adams, Ellsworth
Beverly Ann Albert, Frenchville
Paula A. Allen, South Portland
Edith J. Anderson, Penobscot
Merritt Anderson, Stockholm
Avis M. Armstrong, Caribou
Katherine E. Arno, Farmingdale
Elizabeth Arno-Fectau, Mount Vernon
Karl Beiser, Millinocket
Jean Bernier, Limestone
Betty J. Billings, Stonington
Eunice Blanchard, Lewiston
Willard H. Bonner, Brunswick
Donald E. Bouchard, Poland Spring
George S. Bournakel, Auburn
Ernest Bradbury, York Beach
Marion F. Brown, York
Nancy Bryant, Smyrna Mills
Andrew A. Buswell, Ashland
Hector Caraballo, Portland
Doris V. Chapman, Portland
Paul G. Charbonneau, Rockport
Priscilla H. Chervenski, Kittery
Minnette H. Cummings, Hampden
Bynn C. Currier, Skowhegan
Robert Roy Leon, Detroit
Genie A. Libby, South Portland
Mary Litwinetz, Old Orchard Beach
Rosalind T. Loisel, Gardiner
Virginia Look, Addison
Paula G. Lopin, Lincoln
Anne MacArthur, Dover-Foxcroft
Sally MacAuslan, Naples
Marcia McGee, Ellsworth
Richard McKeen, South Windham
Julie Mais, Oakland
Bernice Manuel, Monticello
Carrie J. Martin, Winterport
Kathleen J. Masters, Nobleboro
Angela Meister, Litleton
Jean E. Miller, Van Buren
Lena Muldoon, Portland
Mark Nutilal, South Windham
Harry L. Olmstead, Limestone
Philip Pan, Lewiston
Elaine M. Peverly, Kittery
Martha Pawle, Falmouth
Kirk T. Pau, Winthrop
John P. Ray, Bath

Patricia Reef, Portland
Glen A. Riley, Belfast
Theresa P. St. Pierre, Auburn
Vera Sawtelle, Sidney
Michael P. Cyr, Fort Kent
Clarissa T. Damon, Auburn
Luthera B. Dawson, Thomaston
Mary Louise B. Debenham, Waterville
Constance J. Depew, Orono
Vivian Dow, Belfast
Vladimir Drozdoff, Cooper
Beverly Dunst, Rumford
Samuel M. Dyer, Oxford
Cynthia J. Edson, Bangor
Sheila English, Acton
Mary Fake, Lewiston
Ellen Fifield Penlason, Danforth
Althea W. Fish, Dxbfield
Allen Flint, Farmington
Raynna B. Genetti, Auburn
John D. Griffin, Auburn
Donald Hale, Portland
Jean Haskell, Pownal
Joan Hayden, Yarmouth
Merton G. Henry, North Windham
Rose M. Hickey, Cumberland Center
Stanley R. Howe, Bethel
Susan A. Hummer, Bath
Marsha Hunt, Gardiner
Audrey K. Hutchinson, Cumberland Foreside
Evelyn H. Johnson, Oakland
Linda Lachance, Yarmouth
Susan A. Shank, Dexter
Vernon L. Shaw, East Holden
Dorothy Shoobs, Westbrook
Richard P. Sibley, Jr., Waterville
Mary B. Skinner-Conley, Freeport
Lawrence A. Spiegel, Gardiner
Carol D. Stewart, Presque Isle
Donna D. Strachan, Machias
Jean Tannich, South Portland
Margaret Thibeault, Lewiston
Louise Tracey, China
Joanne Waxman, Portland
Deena R. Weinstein, Dexter
C. Paul Wight, Old Orchard Beach
Frank P. Wood, Springvale
Joan C. Woodcock, Bangor
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Maine's National Delegates and Alternates

Seated, left to right: Richard Gross, Vivian Dow, Katy Perry and J. Gary Nichols. Standing, from left, Vladimir Drozdoff, Donald Bouchard, Michael Cyr, Larry Spiegel and Edward Chenevert.