

2014 Lakefly Literary Conference Report

Promotions

Lisa Voss promoted the conference on “Good Day Wisconsin” and Ruth Percey and committee member Dixie Jarchow appeared on “Oshkosh Today.” Last year’s survey results indicated most people learned about the conference either from a writers club or through the library so the focus was primarily on promoting the event to writing clubs and through social media. Many of the speakers promoted their upcoming appearance at the event. A library volunteer submitted the event to statewide, local and other relevant Calendars of Events. In addition, press releases were sent to regional media and several promotional emails were sent to 2013 attendees.

Writing contests

Four writing contests were held, with a total of \$1000 in prize money generously donated by the Friends of the Library. The contest was open to residents of Wisconsin, with a deadline of April 1st. There were a total of 50 entries submitted by 38 people. The contest committee judged the entries and hosted an awards ceremony during a formal lunch at the conference on Saturday, May 10th. Twelve people won an award; 10 of the winners attended the luncheon/awards ceremony.

Pre-Conference Events

Award-winning novelist Hallie Ephron held an author visit at the Library the evening of Thursday, May 8th. Prior to the program, the Library held a raffle drawing for dinner with Ephron. Oshkosh patron Kara Peters was the winner and she joined Ephron, Oshkosh native/children’s writer Carolyn Lesser, Library Board member Kathy Birmingham, two conference volunteers and three library staff for dinner at The Roxy .

The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Bookstore sold books at Ephron’s appearance at the library (as well as at other events associated with the conference). Library board members assisted at the author visit; Lurton Blassingame greeted people in the lobby, and Alex Hummel introduced Ms. Ephron. Attendance was approximately 29 people.

Lakefly Literary Conference, May 9 and 10

The conference began at noon on Friday, May 9. Workshops were held until 4 p.m., at which time speakers and volunteers met at a private room at Beckett’s for an informal meal, which was followed by a public Author Reception under the dome of the Library.

The Author Reception was from 6 to 8 p.m. Speakers were contractually required to attend the event; library staff, conference committee members and volunteers attended as well. Several conference participants who were staying at the hotel also came to the reception.

It was an enjoyable time; one of the authors played some original music on his guitar, and the Friends of the Library volunteers served refreshments. Unfortunately, few members of the public attended the event so the committee is considering tweaking it next year by adding a ceremony to award the writing contest winners instead of the Saturday luncheon.

The conference resumed at 7:30 Saturday morning and wrapped up at 4 p.m. that afternoon.

Attendance:

63 Participants attended the conference, including 6 walks-in (no-walk-ins in 2013)

16 Speakers

4 Guests

11 Volunteers

2 Photographers

Total attendance = 96 / Total attendance in 2013 = 96

The Best Western Waterfront Premiere Hotel reported a total of 39 people/28 rooms occupied during the event.

Financial Report:

Revenue (to July 24, 2014)

\$2,875 Friends of the Library (\$1025 for contest prizes; \$1850 for speaker/photographer stipends; Friends approved up to \$3000)

\$2,690 Conference Registration Fees

\$3,018 Drexler Trust Fund (Library Board approved up to \$3344)

\$2,175 OPL Promotional Materials budget line for Printing

TOTAL = \$10,758

Expenses (to July 24, 2014)

\$1,025 Writing contest prize money

\$1,850 Speaker/photographer stipends

\$3,172 Convention Center – rental fee, food costs (including formal lunch)

\$1,559 Hotel expenses for speakers

\$ 464 Airfare for Hallie Ephron

\$ 225 Refreshments for Author Reception

\$ 128 Cost of url for Lakefly Writers Conference website

\$ 2,175 Printing by Winnefox Library System

\$ 120 Online reservation software

\$ 40 Dinner at The Roxy

TOTAL = \$10,758

Conference Review

This year the Conference Committee used an online registration service, and 32 of 36 people surveyed the registration process as great or good.

UW-Oshkosh Bookstore sold books at all the events. There was a problem with getting enough copies of Hallie Ephron's books to sell, which Ephron was not happy about. I spoke with the manager of the

bookstore and we're going to bump up the ordering process so in the event they are unable to get copies of a particular book, the author can be notified ahead of time.

A speaker canceled at the last minute but we were able to promptly assign a substitute.

Exit surveys were mostly favorable; 34 of 36 said they were likely to return in 2015. Suggestions for 2015 included healthier snacks during the breaks and names of possible speakers. The biggest issue among participants was a faulty thermostat in one of the break-out rooms that Convention Center was not able to fix. Overall, everything went very well and attendees were very complimentary as they left the event Saturday afternoon.