

Program Planning

INTRODUCTION

The Mountain Plains Library Association generally holds its annual convention in conjunction with the convention of one of its member states. This means that MPLA must work closely with the state association in all details of convention planning. If the procedures set up in this manual are in conflict with the practices of the local state association that is hosting a particular conference, the area of difference should be worked out between the MPLA Vice President/President-Elect and the local state conference chair with each reporting back to their respective boards.

MPLA will seek invitations from each of its member states to hold joint conferences. Every effort should be made to book conferences with states 4 to 5 years in advance. The MPLA Board will vote on the locations of the conferences.

Although the program planning is the responsibility of the Vice President/President-Elect, in actuality it is the President's program and should be based on the theme chosen by the President. All substantive plans should receive the approval of the President before being implemented.

PROGRAM PLANNING TIME LINE FOR VICE PRESIDENT

Twelve months prior

- Work with state association to set theme
- Sign letter or contract with hotel. This contract needs to be signed by the President.
- Contact library journals about conference

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- Write contract for convention for particular association
- Send originals to state for signatures

Eight - Twelve months prior

- Develop list of possible keynote speakers
- Contact possible keynote speaker
- Contact potential members to be on Program Committee

Ten - eight months prior

- Work with Conference Coordinator to determine how many sessions/workshops possible
- Begin developing budget for speakers
- Send Presenter Information forms to all program planners

Six months prior

- Collect budget information from Presenter Information forms
- Send Presenter Information forms to Conference Coordinator

Five months prior

- Write information for preliminary programs
- Discuss preliminary program schedule with Conference Coordinator
- Send information to MPLA Newsletter editor
- Get pictures of main speakers to give to MPLA Newsletter editor

Two months prior

- Contact Conference Coordinator about last minute changes
- Confirm travel arrangements for all speakers
- Contact Conference Coordinator about hotel and travel needs of speakers

One month prior

- Work with President to determine who will be sitting at head tables
- Notify Conference Coordinator of these names
- Determine theme for next year's convention
- Notify Conference Coordinator of any arrangement changes
- Prepare any necessary handouts

Two weeks - One month after

- Send thank-you notes to all presenters and keynote speakers.
- Review and summarize evaluations

One - Two months after

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

THEME & LOGO

One year in advance of the next convention, the MPLA Vice-President/President-Elect, the host state's Conference Chair(s), Conference Coordinator, Exhibit Chair, and Conference Treasurer should meet together to decide on a theme for the convention. Also at this meeting, the committee should decide on registration fees, exhibit fees, and exact dates of the convention. After the meeting the MPLA Vice President/President-Elect should notify the library journals providing dates, theme, and location.

The Conference Coordinator and Vice-president/President-Elect work on the logo for the conference. A digital file is then created and sent to Executive Secretary, Web Master, and all committee members (exhibits, publicity, and local arrangements).

MPLA/STATE CONTRACT

As soon as an agreement in principle has been made with another association to hold a joint convention, the Executive Secretary shall retype the standard contract for joint conventions with the appropriate changes for this convention. The contract should be signed by the appropriate MPLA officers and then forwarded to the cooperating Association for signatures. Sufficient copies should be distributed so that a signed original copy is available for each Association's records.

BUDGET

The MPLA Vice-President and the Conference Coordinator work together with the appropriate state officer to create the budget. The Vice-President keeps track of expenses for all speakers and the Conference Coordinator provides the LA figures (meals, hotel, local transportation, etc.). The budget may be reviewed two months prior to the convention to reflect more accurately the costs involved. The Conference Coordinator provides each board with the final figures at their next meetings after the convention.

The exhibitor fee is set by the Convention Coordinator, MPLA Vice President and the state association president.

HOTEL CONTRACT

A contract or letter should be signed by the hotel/motel and MPLA approximately one year in advance of the convention.

The contract should contain the following

Date of convention

Number of rooms to be held for convention with release date for rooms not needed

Statement of charges for convention facilities and number of meeting rooms available

Statement of VIP suite for use by MPLA President

Indication of complimentary rooms and how figured

Exhibit arrangements, including charges, web access, electricity, telephone lines, coffee or other drinks

Audiovisual Equipment available and charges for such equipment

Deadlines for count for meal functions.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The MPLA Vice-President is the Chair of its Conference Program Committee. The MPLA President shall appoint members to the Conference Program Committee. Members shall be representative of the different fields of interests and be from varying representative states. The Vice-President and the host state's Program chair(s) have final approval of all expenditures.

There may be pre-conferences held the day before the actual opening of the convention. These pre-conferences should be jointly agreed upon by the MPLA Vice-President and the host state chair. The time and place of these must be coordinated with the Conference Coordinator. All pre-conferences must be self supporting and independent of the overall convention.

SPEAKERS

The MPLA Vice-President in cooperation with the host state Chair(s) will arrange for a keynote speaker. Factors in determining the speaker should include conference theme, honorarium, and transportation costs. A banquet speaker should be arranged under the same factors; this speaker can be chosen by the Conference Coordinator instead.

PRESENTER INFORMATION FORMS

The Vice-President or the Conference Coordinator will provide presenter information forms for all speakers and meetings. This form will include name of speaker, address, phone number, title of speech, date of speech, honorarium, travel budget, requested equipment, room arrangement, size of expected audience, description of the program, and any other details that the Vice President or Conference Coordinator consider important.

The Vice-President will take the budget information from these forms and provide it to the Conference Coordinator for the final budget.

SPEAKER INFORMATION/BIOGRAPHY

The Vice-President and Conference Program Committee are responsible for providing biographical information about the speakers and pictures for the pre-registration newsletter. This information should be sent to the Vice-President at least five months prior to the convention. The Vice-President will prepare the information for the journal and send it to the editor.

PROGRAM PLANNING

The Vice-President and/or the Conference Coordinator put the program together from the Presenter Information forms. Items to be considered include:

Nothing can be scheduled against the MPLA business meeting

If possible, nothing should be scheduled against the state association business meeting.

Do not schedule a section's program and its business meeting at the same time. They can follow one after the other.

Try to make the programs scheduled during each session as broadly based as possible.

Schedule enough lengthy breaks each day to encourage viewing of the exhibits.

Any necessary changes should be made before the preliminary program goes to the newsletter editor for printing.

WORKING WITH MPLA VICE PRESIDENT

The Conference Coordinator works closely with the MPLA Vice-President to plan number of meetings in any particular time period and to work out details of such things as last minute changes in programs. Since the Vice-President sends the communications (generally e-mails) to the section and program chairs, give him/her all the LA information -- where to send hotel reservations, how to get extra meal tickets, and how to get repaid for expenses.

PUBLICITY

Send periodic updates to the state representatives, so they can send out conference information to their state's listserv.

Send press releases information to all state representatives to be put in newsletters.

Send information to library journals.

Work with Conference Coordinator to choose and highlight specific conference activities.

THANK YOU NOTES

Thank you notes should be sent to all presenters within two weeks of the convention if possible. This is the responsibility of the Vice-President.

CONVENTION COORDINATOR

The Convention Coordinator is responsible for the overall running of the convention. While committees do most of the work, the coordinator's job is to ensure that information goes to the appropriate people. By working closely with the MPLA Vice-President on the planning of the program, the Coordinator is able to make arrangements for last minute changes. During the last week or so, the Coordinator handles almost all the questions, since most have to do with arrangements.

I. COMMITTEES

A Local Arrangements (LA) committee can be set up to facilitate communication between organizations. It should have a member from each organization in addition to the Coordinator. One member also serves as the Treasurer. The committee meets several times (once a month or so) over the year and a half before the conference to do general planning, such as theme, exhibit and registration fees, committee appointments, budget considerations, and discussion of work to be done by each committee. Members discuss the registration and exhibit fees to be charged and make recommendations to the boards of the organizations. Each member serves as liaison to the other committees, so that the Coordinator does not have to attend all meetings of all committees.

It is very helpful to have a small committee that meets often to discuss general ideas and sound out new ideas. Notes from the LA Committee can be sent to the main program coordinator for each organization.

The committees that can be used are: Exhibits, Registration, Partners, Publicity, Meals, Tours & Entertainment, Hospitality, Program, A V Equipment, and Meeting Rooms. Descriptions of each committee's responsibilities can be found elsewhere in this manual. **YOUR CONVENTION MAY NOT NEED THIS MANY COMMITTEES**, but should include all tasks noted.

The Coordinator appoints all committee chairs (with suggestions from the other LA committee members) and most of the committee personnel. Descriptions of the committees include number of members needed. Each chair is encouraged to get additional volunteers at the time of the conference. If possible, assign committees before the previous convention (one year early), in order to give everyone a chance to observe a conference with a specific job in mind. This gives each of the committee members, as well as the committee chairs, a chance to decide what they want to do the following year.

If the committees have members from public, school, college, and/or special libraries for each committee, there are a variety of viewpoints in the planning of each committee.

Committee chairs should meet once as a group, to meet each other, review responsibilities, and have time to ask general questions. All other work is done by the individual committees.

The Coordinator should be familiar with details of each committee, to forestall problems and duplication.

General reports should be sent to the Coordinator from each committee about general work of the committee. The Coordinator then has the information for other committees and planners and can answer questions without having to do a lot of calling around.

II. BUDGET

The MPLA Vice-President and the Coordinator work together with the appropriate state officer to create the budget. The Vice-President keeps track of expenses for all speakers and the Coordinator provides the LA figures (meals, hotel, local transportation, etc.). The budget may be reviewed two months prior to the convention to reflect more accurately the costs involved. The Coordinator provides each board with the final figures at their next meetings after the convention.

III. WORKING WITH MPLA VICE PRESIDENT

The Coordinator works closely with the MPLA Vice-President to plan number of meetings in any particular time period and to work out details of such things as last minute changes in programs. Since the Vice-President sends the communications (generally e-mails) to the section and program chairs, give him/her all the LA information -- where to send hotel reservations, how to get extra meal tickets, and how to get repaid for expenses.

IV. HOTEL

The hotel generally prefers to work with one person for the planning. Cordial relations with hotel staff make all the difference for local arrangements people in making the conference go smoothly. During the convention itself, they work with the Chairpersons in charge (Exhibits, Meeting Rooms, Meals), but still need one person to make final decisions n i.e., Convention Coordinator.

Contracts: A letter of intent is signed by the MPLA Representative a couple of years before the convention to reserve the space for the necessary dates. This letter is often the only place where details such as free rooms are spelled out. A later letter of intent may be requested by the hotel to set some of the details; this is often handled by the Coordinator. If you don't do the contacting, be sure you have a copy of the letter.

A final contract is put together just before the convention. It spells out what is needed in every room, including room set-up, meals, water, and AV equipment that the hotel provides. Each hotel does it differently, so check to find out what they want. (See Meeting Rooms for more details)

During the first meeting with the hotel, review the planning process that the hotel needs, deadlines, the meeting rooms (size, shape, and set-ups), equipment that the hotel has available, and other general topics. In addition bring any questions that the committee chairs need answered.

The rooms that will be needed include:

- Large room which will seat all members for general sessions
- Place for luncheon and dinner meetings
(If same as above, you'll need time for room changes)
- Several rooms for programs and meetings
- Space for registration booth or desk
- Room for exhibits (preferably one that can be locked)
- Accommodations for speakers and presidents of organizations
- Room or suite for local people to use
(Place to house copy machine, computer, etc.)

One major problem with hotels is their habit of scheduling of rooms supposedly reserved for the convention. This can happen repeatedly during the time before the convention. I would suggest double-checking at regular intervals.

Plan at least two long meetings with the head of catering about food and the meeting rooms. If possible have your Meals Chair with you for these meetings. The food probably takes the longest to plan as there are lots of questions. Ask the hotel for advice about the menus; the staff is usually very helpful. The meeting on meeting rooms is centered around setup and changes (when the chairs in a room have to be moved or tables set up or taken down). Both of these meetings are essential as you need to understand the constraints of the hotel as well as explain your own needs.

After the evaluations are tallied, write a letter to the hotel with comments and suggestions. Send a copy of the letter and evaluation tally to the head of sales, with copies also going to the sales representative, caterer, and maintenance manager. This means that thanks go directly to the people who do the work.

V. OTHER DETAILS

LOGO

The Coordinator and Vice-president work on the logo for the conference. A digital file is then created and sent to Executive Secretary, Web Master, and all committee members (exhibits, publicity, and local arrangements).

Pre-registration information

The Coordinator gathers information on local arrangements for the pre-registration issue of the MPLA newsletter. This includes hotel information (specifically room registration forms) menus, tours, transportation, specific room assignments for the pre-conference, and information about the convention city. Most of this is put together by the LA committees; the Coordinator organizes it and makes sure that everything is covered.

Attendance at meetings during convention

The Coordinator should attend (or offer to attend) the Board meetings that generally take place the evening before the convention begins to report on the number of people registered, the number of exhibitors, make any announcements, and answer any questions of the Boards.

The Coordinator also gives a short report at the opening general session concerning room changes and any announcements and again at each organization's business meeting.

Evaluations

The Coordinator drafts the evaluation form and has the LA committee review it. It is then printed and included in the registration packet.

After the conference the Coordinator reads through the evaluations and tallies the responses. The questions can be open-ended which makes it more time-consuming to tally but gives more information on the programs. Copies of the final tally are sent to each president, to each LA committee chair, and to the hotel.

Certificate of Appreciation

Certificates of appreciation should be designed and printed before the convention, so they are available for the chairs to use. The Coordinator should send one to each committee member as well as the chairs, main hotel personnel, and any special volunteers. Committee chairs are encouraged to send them to the other volunteers and anyone who helped make the convention possible.

TREASURER

It is useful if the Convention Treasurer talks to the previous year's treasurer. This way useful hints can be exchanged, items such as rubber stamps passed on, and the new treasurer will be warned of potential problems.

The Treasurer should have a copy, and review, the agreement between MPLA and the state association(s) with the formula for division of convention proceeds.

BANK ACCOUNT

Open an interest bearing business account and/or purchase a certificate of deposit with the money from the seed money and the exhibit deposits, using the MPLA tax ID number (46-6014937). There may be service charges; see if it is possible to set up a different kind of account without these charges. Have at least 200 checks printed. This is typically done by the host state Treasurer. They should probably use their tax state ID if they have one.

Deposit all checks and cash promptly to earn maximum interest. Keep detailed records of all deposits as well as checks paid, as questions will come up later.

VOUCHER

Prepare a form to be used to pay all bills from committees and speakers. "Honorarium" should be added, although most know to put it under "Other". The treasurer should make out one form for each check written, which helps when confirming final expenses.

RECORD KEEPING

Records can be in a computer database. Work with REGISTRATION to find out what records they are keeping.

The minimum files needed on a database would be individual pre-conferences, post-conference, exhibits, meals, and registration fees. Registration fees must be categorized by each registrant's membership (MPLA, state association, both, neither). If there is room in the database, you might have an entry for the person, institution, total registration, and date received.

CONVENTION DUTIES

The treasurer works most of the convention at the registration Desk. Decide whether it is easier to do it by yourself or train someone else for this duty! Needed are a receipt book with carbons (used quite a bit), change, extra copies of the expense voucher, and the convention check book.

REFUNDS

There is no MPLA refund policy, as far as we know, so find out if the state association has one or work out one that is comfortable for you. You may refund registration if REGISTRATION is informed before the final registration date. You may also refund people who have last minute emergencies but only if they contact the Treasurer. Meals could be refunded up to 48 hours before the meal (usual time when you confirm the number with the hotel). You may chose to take other meal tickets later but give a refund only if you can sell the ticket.

No refunds should be given at the conference. Keep notes (a form would be very handy for this) and mail checks to people later.

FINANACIAL REPORT

The Treasurer works with the Convention Coordinator to prepare the final financial report. This includes verifying all bills paid, total number of registrations and meals paid, and any other expenses or income. The Coordinator presents the final report to the MPLA and state association boards.

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

RESPONSIBILITIES

- I. Design and print registration form
2. Organize registrations to get numbers for programs and find data by name of attendees
3. Collect materials for registration packets
4. Work with MEALS to have tickets for attendees
5. Work with EXHIBITS for door prizes
6. Have ribbons and/or buttons for identification

TIME LINE

Seven - nine months prior

- Design registration form
- Find typesetter and printer - get estimates
- Decide what will be in Registration packet

Five - six months prior

- Have registration forms printed
- Work with TREASURER and MEALS to set work flow for forms
- Order ribbons and/or buttons
- Set up program for organization of information
- Have two people familiar with program

Two - four months prior

- Plan format for name tags

One month prior

- Enter Registration forms coming in!
- Collect materials for packets
- Give preliminary numbers attending programs to ROOMS
- Give preliminary numbers attending meals to MEALS
- Compile Registration Desk schedule for volunteers

Two - three weeks prior

- Have Registration packets stuffed
- Give latest numbers to both MEALS and ROOMS
- Print name tags
- Organize materials for Registration Desk Print list of attendees (day before)
- Work with TREASURER to be ready for last minute registrations and meal sales

SIZE OF COMMITTEE

Three or four people + volunteers at convention

REGISTRATION FORM

The Chair should get together with the Treasurer and Convention Coordinator to determine what information is needed on the registration form. It should include: name, address, and phone number of registrant, organization membership, fees for convention and pre-conferences, fees for meals, dates for early registration and refunds, and name and address of Registration Chair. It can also include: menus and list of programs. The fees are set by the MPLA Vice President and other officers of the organizations. The meal costs are set by MEALS after working with the hotel.

After determining what is to go on the form, start work on the layout. MPLA usually photocopies the form to have it available for the registrant. If the form will be part of the pre-registration newsletter, turn in a clean digital draft of the form to the editor. If the form is to be printed separately, the committee must find a typesetter and a printer. The printed form is then sent to the magazine editor.

ORGANIZATION OF REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The information from the Registration form will be needed in a variety of ways. Whatever software program or method you decide to use, take the time at least 5-6 months before to set it up and work with it. Can it give you the information you need easily? If you take the time to work with it now, you'll have fewer surprises later. Have more than one person who is familiar with the software.

The kind of information that will be needed include: list of registrants, number attending each pre-conference (should have names as well), number attending each program, number attending each meal, and total number registered, with a break-down by organization. You'll need to provide this information several times during the month or so preceding the conference so that MEALS and ROOMS can make the necessary adjustments. The MPLA Vice President will need the numbers on the pre-conferences to make the decision of whether to have them. The question of how many total are in attendance will be asked several times during the convention itself, so be prepared.

Some of the forms will come in without the correct amount of money or the full information needed. One committee member should either e-mail or telephone each of these "problems". If money is due, decide whether it will be paid before the convention or at the Registration Desk. (Do not call on those forms that come back with no programs checked.)

After the forms are checked in and entered in the computer, the form and check are given to the Treasurer for deposit. The form then goes to MEALS and has the meal tickets stapled to it. MEALS or REGISTRATION add the necessary ribbons and put them in the envelopes. Most of the forms can be done at two sessions, with the latecomers done the night before the convention starts. The envelopes should be put in alphabetical order so all is ready to be handed out

REGISTRATION PACKETS/ENVELOPES

When people come to register they need the copy of their registration form, any tickets or special receipts, any ribbons for MPLA members and other board or presenters, and the general information that is given to everyone.

One way to handle this is to have general packets of information (usually in some large envelope) and #10 business envelopes with the copy of the registration form, meal tickets, name tag, and any ribbons needed. This means that the registration packets can be stuffed without having to put in specific materials. Seek out vendors to donate or sponsor all or part of this bag and packet.

Local arrangements collect information on the convention city from the Convention Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce. They also help collect everything in the month prior to the convention for the final stuffing. EXHIBITS ask for donations from exhibitors. Other things that are or should be in the packets: pad of paper, program, exhibit program, and information from MPLA and the state association about membership, evaluation forms, and the plastic holder for the name tag. Other useful items are pens, sharpened pencils, local maps, and brochures of current events.

RIBBONS

Ribbons are used to designate officers, presenters, exhibitors, and organization memberships. They need to be ordered with the tape on the front of the ribbon so that they will stick to the back of the name tag. There doesn't seem to be any set color scheme, but what has been used for the last several years seems to be:

Red = Board

Green = Presenter

Yellow = Exhibitor

Lavender or purple = Officer

The ALA ribbons are blue and should be provided by the ALA Membership committee. MPLA has maroon ribbons, which are provided by the MPLA state representative or Executive Secretary. Ribbons should be made available at the registration desk for members to pick up.

Have some way of identifying Local Arrangement committee members and volunteers. Buttons, ribbons, or pins have been used in past years. The city convention bureau may have buttons or stickers. Extra buttons should be made for volunteers working at REGISTRATION, EXHIBITS, and HOSPITALITY.

NAME TAGS

Name tags are needed for all registrants, presenters, and exhibitors. Some database programs can make easily read name tags or can be read by another program to make the tags. This is something to practice (at least two months prior) to ensure that name tags are easily made when needed.

REGISTRATION DESK

The Registration Desk should be in a highly visible area which can be locked or which has a room near it which can be locked. If you have the luxury of an enclosed Registration area, plan to bring in most of the supplies on the night prior to pre-conferences (including the computer) and just store them there.

At least four people should be working the desk at the busiest times. One should be the Treasurer or someone trained to handle the money. There needs to be a typewriter or computer available to make name tags (both for new registrants and for those which have been misspelled). The Convention Bureau may be able to provide helpers. They will know the layout of the hotel and can help with general questions. The Registration Desk needs to be manned by at least one knowledgeable person at all times.

Registration becomes the place for general information; so plan to have someplace for handouts. The room change or errata sheet should be handed out at the same time as the packet and envelope. All other handouts should be near but not on the Registration Desk. Other things that can be found at the Registration Desk include: stapler, tape, extra pencils, key to the convention headquarters, and notes for attendees. A message board is the easiest way to handle the latter. An emergency kit of band-aids, sterile gloves (for prevention of problems with blood-borne pathogens) aspirin, etc. is useful.

EXHIBITS COMMITTEE

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Contact & register exhibitors for convention
2. Organize setting up of booths and delivery of equipment
3. Print booklet of exhibitors with map (THIS IS OFTEN PRINTED AS APART OF THE CONFERENCE PROGRAM)
4. Work with exhibitors on door prizes or other events
5. Introduce exhibitors at some function of the convention
6. Represent Local Arrangements at any meeting of the exhibitors

TIME LINE

Seven - nine months prior

- Letter to prospective exhibitors
- Send copies of applications as confirmation
- Contact decorating company to ensure place on their schedule

Five - six months prior

- Second letter to prospective exhibitors

Two - four months prior

- Letter of confirmation to exhibitors
- Request additional information & give info on tickets
- Send exhibitors registration information
- Arrange security for exhibits (if not done by hotel)

One month prior

- Last date for exhibitors' registration
- Set up floor plan; give to hotel for electricity needs
- Prepare booklet of exhibitors

Conference month (two - three weeks before)

Find volunteers to serve as monitors
Work with exhibitors on door prizes
Prepare evaluation form for exhibitors

COMMITTEE SIZE

Needs at least two people, three better

CONTACTING EXHIBITORS

The first mailing to the list of prospective exhibitors should go out nine months prior to the convention. It should list dates, including an early registration date for exhibitors (no late penalty if in by this date), times the exhibitors should be aware of, fee and what that covers, and number of booths to be sold (if there is a set number due to space). The fee is set by the Convention Coordinator, MPLA Vice President and the state association president.

Accompanying the letter should be a fact sheet, giving location, cost, size of booth, contractor, schedule, drayage, set-up information, electricity, telephone, insurance, and security. Information on the hotel may be included, but room reservation forms are generally not sent out until the pre-registration magazine can be sent to the exhibitors. One question that should be asked concerns what other exhibitors they want to be next to OR (even more important) nowhere near.

A second letter soliciting prospective exhibitors should go out six months prior. This still leaves plenty of time before the early deadline. Exhibitors who came in after that date have to pay an additional fee per booth (\$50 in past).

Send copies of all exhibitor mailings to the contact person at the decorating company. If this isn't done, conflicting information may be sent to the exhibitors.

The contact person (usually the Exhibits Chair) should be prepared for phone calls' Exhibitors have many questions. It will make your job much easier if your institution will cover the cost of long distance phone calls for this activity. If not, keep accurate records of all calls so that you can be reimbursed.

A letter of confirmation should be sent to the exhibitors after the early deadline. This asks for information concerning the exhibit (for the booklet) and possible donations or advertisements. It also can give information about the banquet and breakfast; if so, a form should be included to order extra tickets. If the pre-registration magazine is done by this mailing, a copy should be sent with this letter. Otherwise it can be sent with the last letter.

The hotel will need to do a mailing to the exhibitors concerning electrical needs. They will need a list of the exhibitors with the correct name of the contact person. Find out how much time they need and how they want to handle last minute additions to the exhibits list.

After the final deadline date, take the map of the floor plan (usually done by the decorating company) and assign booths. Send this information with any last minute information to the exhibitors as soon after the late deadline as possible. You should plan on a few extra spaces when you do the final exhibit floor plan. There WILL be exhibitors who, for one reason or another, don't get their paperwork done and want to be added shortly before the convention.

You will also get requests for free space. Each library association putting on the conference should have some space (either a booth or table) for their materials. Other possible requests will come from the library schools in the area, ALA membership, Center for the Book, etc. Decide how many you can fit into the area and then choose by first come, first serve!

Some hotels ask that you provide security for the exhibits; others provide it and charge it to you. Find out which way the hotel wants to handle it.

DECORATING COMPANY

One member of the committee should be the contact person for the decorating company. Find out what the companies will do for you and for the exhibitors (as well as price) before you decide on the company. Then meet or talk with the company about details. They've been through this before and can give you a lot of help.

Be sure to get as many details and dates straight before you put together the fact sheet. Many of the details are handled by the decorating company, such as drayage and set-up, while others are handled by the hotel or phone company. Both the hotel and the decorating company have probably worked together before, so you can count on them to know what to do.

SET UP WITHOUT A DECORATING COMPANY

The person in charge of the physical set-up should meet with the hotel before the letter to the exhibitors goes out. The exhibitors and the set-up crew will need to know:

- 1) When will hotel accept shipments? What kind of identification needs to accompany shipments?
- 2) What arrangements need to be made for telephone or electrical hook-ups? What will be furnished in each exhibit space -- table (what size), chair, table covering, sign? Will there be a crew to help with set-up?
- 3) Will there be a crew or someone to construct or set up booths? (Is this done by the hotel or committee?)
- 4) Will the hotel (or committee) accept unaccompanied exhibits and set them up? If so, what is the extra charge for this service?
- 5) What are the dates and times for setting up and taking down exhibits?

Other areas to discuss with the hotel include space for the coffee for breaks, security for the exhibits at night, and how signs can be put up. The committee will be responsible for making a map of the layout and getting it to the hotel staff (for electrical hook-ups), and set up of exhibitors' social.

SET-UP TIME

It can be very helpful to have members of the committee in the exhibit hall during the set-up time. They work with the decorating company and the hotel representatives to answer questions and facilitate installation.

If there is no decorating company, the committee should plan to check on arrivals and set-up of unaccompanied booths, set up signs with the exhibitors' names, and generally be around to help with last minute jobs.

An exhibitor suggested that beverages be available for exhibitors during the time they're setting up. It would be a nice gesture, if the conference budget allows.

EXHIBITORS' BOOKLET

Decide if you want a "program" of the exhibitors with a map of their locations. The information can be solicited from the exhibitors when the confirmation letter is sent. There may still be some phone calls to make to confirm or get names of specific exhibitors but most will come in on these forms.

Start putting it together as soon as possible. Although not printed until the month before the convention, you can run out of time to get information. There isn't a lot of time between the final confirmation date, and when it needs to go to the printer. Remember to give your printer enough time to do it and still get it stuffed into the registration packets.

ADVERTISEMENTS/SPONSORSHIPS

MPLA has had individual companies cover such expenses as morning coffee and rolls, printing of program, etc.

This is in addition to asking for ads for the printed program. Some companies may contact you if they have done something in the past (for instance, EBSCO and the registration envelopes). You can ask other companies when you send out the confirmation letter.

DOOR PRIZES

Door prizes and how they are to be distributed are the decision of the Exhibits Committee, working with the exhibitors. In Nebraska there is one exhibitor who is elected to be the "head" man. This makes it easier to work out details for door prizes and other last minute organizational problems.

Exhibitors have two ways of giving door prizes. The first is to have sign-ups and drawings at their individual booths. Work with the exhibitors about when to have the drawings. Some conferences have done several throughout the day - such as during the regular breaks. Others have done them at one time, such as during the exhibitors social.

EXHIBITORS COCKTAIL PARTY

The exhibit fee includes \$10-20 to cover expenses for the party. Work with MEALS to plan the food and set-up.

EVALUATIONS

An evaluation sheet needs to be prepared and handed out to the exhibitors sometime during the convention. These comments are helpful in planning the exhibits for the following year. They should be tallied and passed on to the Convention Coordinator and to the Exhibits Chair for the next convention.

DONATION COMMITTEE

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Work with other committees in providing funding or in-kind services to get the work done with PROGRAM, REGISTRATION, and Convention Coordinator
2. Solicit "freebies" for registration packets and for use at convention
3. Produce certificate of thanks for use by Local Arrangements committees

TIME LINE

Seven - eight months prior

Meet as a committee to identify retail areas to canvass

Two - six months prior

Draft and send letter to local retailers, banks, etc.

Follow-up with personal calls

Contact Chamber of Commerce and Convention Bureau for brochures for Registration packets

Two months prior

Set up list of partners for thanks
Give list to PROGRAM for inclusion in program

One month prior

Help coordinate collection of all materials for registration packet
Produce certificate of thanks for Convention Coordinator

After convention

Send Thank you certificates to partners

SIZE OF COMMITTEE

At least two people on committee.

This work could be done by a combination of Convention Coordinator, PROGRAM member, and EXHIBITS member.

ADVERTISEMENTS/COUPONS REQUESTS

Letters can be mailed to retailers as early as 5 months prior to convention, soliciting ads for the program or coupons for the registration packet. Prices for ads are set by the PROGRAM committee. Follow-up calls are made by members of the local arrangements and PROGRAM committees. Personal contact is most successful but takes a lot of time. Some of the retailers prefer to give coupons for the Registration packets.

A letter can be sent to the exhibitors just after the early registration date. Often they are willing to buy full-page ads.

DONATIONS/IN-KIND SERVICES

The committee should contact the Convention Bureau and the Chamber of Commerce for brochures about the city and activities in the city. Make sure only one committee does this for Registration packet materials local arrangement committee collects all the materials together for the packets at one time.

In-kind services can include considerable printing and mailing by several of the libraries. Some of this will have to be paid for (at cost rather than printer's fee); the rest may be donated. Local office machine businesses, local libraries, and colleges have donated a copy machine and laptops for previous conventions. Often you have to provide the paper (which may be donated by a library). Find out which companies area libraries have business with - they are more likely to give free service. If you know someone in that library; ask them to make the call!

THANK YOUS

Check with the local arrangements committee and exhibit coordinator to keep track of the sources of donated services and materials. The donation coordinator is responsible for keeping track of the sources of donated services and materials. The Convention Coordinator should check the list frequently, as many gifts may not be reported to donation coordinator. The list should be printed in the program.

The committee may be asked to design a certificate of appreciation. The certificates should be printed before the convention so they are available to all committee chairs. These can be sent by mail, handed to volunteers at the convention, or given out at a special ceremony. The donation coordinator is responsible for sending out the certificate to all businesses, libraries, and organizations who donated money or services.

MEETING ROOMS

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Schedule rooms for meetings, making sure that there is enough space for attendees.
2. Work with A V committee with equipment requests
3. Work with hotel in organizing the rooms
4. Provide signs for rooms and directional signs

TIME LINE

Five - six months prior

- Get map of rooms and seating capacity from hotel
- Do preliminary scheduling of meetings - to see if there are any problem areas or times
- Look at hotel for possible directional signage needs

Two - four months prior

- Do schedule of rooms for pre-registration newsletter
- Begin to check speaker's needs - work with A V
- Design layout for signs; find printer or sign-maker

One month prior

- Confirm final room schedule - check with PROGRAM for latest possible changes
- Get final assignments to PROGRAM
- Have directional signs made toward end of month
- Find volunteers for checking room set-up; if possible, find out placement of microphone jacks, light switches, etc.

Convention month (Two - three weeks prior)

- Have room signs printed
- Final check of size of rooms vs. registration
- Get signs (and easels, if necessary) to hotel

COMMITTEE SIZE

At least two people + volunteers during convention

ROOM SCHEDULES

There are two major parts to the room scheduling. The first is matching the projected size of the audience with the size *of* the rooms available. The second is to provide the set-up desired by the speaker or chairman. The second consideration often controls the needs *of the first*. Information about speakers' and/or chair's requests come from the Presenter Information forms. Some phoning or writing may be necessary to clarify their wishes.

It is useful to have a large sketch pad to plot out the rooms by the hour. It gives the full picture in a glance, reminding of room set-up and size. A computer software package may help achieve the same end

result. Lay out the programs and meetings approximately 6 months in advance, to see if you have room for all the meetings. Changes can be made on this pad as programs need to be moved, added or deleted. This is the time to work with the Coordinator to determine if there are enough rooms and rent more or move a program to a different time slot. As registrations came in, you may need to move some around again because *of* estimated size of audience.

About a month or two before the program goes to print, add room set-up requests. Different set-ups include: theater (rows of chairs), classroom (tables with chairs on one side, facing the speaker), banquet (six- or eight-foot tables, with chairs on both sides), and rounds (round tables with six to eight chairs around it). Rounds are most often used *for* meals, but can be used for small discussion groups. Sometimes the chair or speaker doesn't care, which makes the scheduling easier. It is very helpful to the hotel staff if there are as few changes (tables, different seating arrangement, meals, etc.) as possible in any room. Before the final room assignments were made, look at the requested set-ups and try to get programs with similar set-ups in the same room.

"Final" room assignments are made as close to the printing *of* the program as possible. Know that there will always be last minute changes! Devise a method for handling changes so that attendees are not too confused. Edit the signs with red markers, have an errata sheet, and write notes to all presenters whose rooms have been changed after the program was printed. These notes are then put in their registration envelopes as a courtesy.

The hotel contract is presented by the Convention Coordinator but ROOMS committee prepares the sheets with the requests, including AV equipment to be provided by the hotel. (AV equipment not part *of* the hotel's equipment can be put in brackets on the lists but is handled by the AV committee). The schedule should be done by room so that the volunteers have the whole day's schedule for one room in *one* place. While the hotel's final contract may not be in this form, it is much easier for the committee.

If the hotel has the information easily available, try to get a map which shows the location *of* electrical plugs, microphone jacks, and built in screens. This makes it easier to plan room arrangements if you are using rooms which can be divided or used as one room. Also this information is handy for the person checking the room before each program.

WORK WITH AUDIO –VISUAL COMMITTEE

Equipment requests will probably go to both the AV committee and MEETING ROOMS. (Convention Coordinator can just copy the form for both!) Some *of* the equipment will be provided by the hotel for no charge, such as microphones, podiums, and possibly easels and flip charts. The MEETING ROOMS finds *out* from the hotel what is available and lets the A V committee know what is still needed.

WORK WITH HOTEL IN ROOM ARRANGEMENT

Volunteers can be used to check each room before each session. The sheets made up *for* the hotel contract are kept in each room, so that volunteers can easily find them and check the set-up. If there is time between sessions, the volunteers can also check the microphones and lights, and check for water for both the speaker and the audience. *At* the beginning of the day the volunteers put out the signs for the rooms (kept in each room overnight).

If there are problems with the room arrangement, the volunteer should have the name and phone number of the staff member who could be called. One problem is chronic - the temperature *of* the rooms - and not much can be done about it.

SIGNAGE

Directional

See what the hotel has for general directional signage. Is it clear? Can I find the rooms I'm looking for? Then start making signs to get people around. Particularly useful is one in the main lobby directing people to the Registration area. You can use signs on easels and some that are hung on the walls. Check the second and third day that these signs are still in place. You might need extras of several of them, as hotel staff and other people take signs down when cleaning.

Programs

Sometimes the hotel has no means for displaying signs outside their meeting rooms. In this case signs can be mounted on easels. If the hotel does have sign holders near each room, have your signs printed to fit the holders. Watch out for sign holders that don't show when the doors are open! Signs should list all the sessions scheduled for that room for that day or at least that morning or afternoon.

AV EQUIPMENT

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Work with ROOMS to have all requested equipment available
2. Borrow or rent all equipment not provided by hotel
3. Organize delivery and storage of equipment during convention
4. Move equipment into rooms as needed
5. Move equipment out of rooms as soon as program finished

TIME LINE

Five - six months prior -- OR BEFORE SCHOOL IS OUT FOR THE SUMMER

Contact the school districts, instructional media centers, and colleges about using their equipment

Two - four months prior

Compile list of needed equipment

Work with ROOMS to find out what is available through the hotel

Find volunteers to help move and test equipment

One month prior

Work with ROOMS to come up with final list of equipment needs

Contact sources of equipment to reserve necessary pieces

Contact delivery service (school van, volunteer?) for delivery of equipment

Reserve room at hotel for equipment only

Schedule volunteers

Convention month (two - three weeks before)

Confirm delivery of equipment

Check with ROOMS for any changes in room assignments

COMMITTEE SIZE

This can be done by one person + volunteers.

This person could be part of the Meeting Room committee

EQUIPMENT REQUESTS

Requests for equipment come on Presenter Information forms. Some of the equipment can be provided by the hotel, including (generally) microphones, podiums, screens, and sometimes overhead projectors. This committee must fill all other requests. Most commonly requested equipment included slide projectors, VHS players and monitors, data projectors and flip charts.

Work closely with ROOMS committee, since this is the group that will make the last minute changes and have the most information about the hotel. The two committees should also anticipate last minute requests or hotel shortages (for instance, have an extra portable screen handy). Be sure that all borrowed equipment is clearly marked, so that returning it will not be a problem.

Bring each piece of equipment on a cart with an electrical assembly. The cord on the cart can then double as an extension cord if necessary. Have a couple of extension cords handy, just in case. Tape a spare bulb to each cart. If the projector knows the bulb is there, it will not burn out! Tie a marker to each overhead projector so that it can't walk off. Other pieces of equipment that you might bring include markers, erasers or chalk, and an extra slide projector and flip chart, in case someone comes up with last minute requests.

Those programs that used computers made their own arrangements. If computers are requested, plan to get in touch with the speaker to find out particulars.

DELIVERY AND STORAGE

Find a delivery service, possibly through the school district. Make sure that the date and time for the delivery and pick-up after the conference is on their schedule. Check again approximately a month before delivery date.

Have all equipment brought to one place for delivery to the hotel. This means you can be sure that you've got everything and your delivery people will be much happier.

Reserve a room at the hotel for the storage of A V equipment only, preferably on the same floor with most of the meeting rooms. Keep a key at Registration for last minute requests.

SET-UP OF EQUIPMENT

Schedule volunteers to help move equipment around and check each room before a meeting or program. Don't assume that they (or the speaker) know where to find the cord or how to attach the remote. Have instructions with each piece of equipment OR a short training session with the volunteers. The volunteers should be ready to show the speaker how to use the equipment if necessary.

If you can, set up each room with all equipment needed for the whole morning (or afternoon). Then all the volunteer has to do is check to see that everything is working and that the speaker knows how to operate the equipment. A schedule of what is needed in each room should be provided for the volunteers.

Note: There will always be a speaker who needs different A V equipment than that originally requested. Make sure there is someone available who can try to accommodate the change if possible.

AFTER THE CONVENTION

Within a week contact the owner of the equipment borrowed to make sure that all equipment was returned in good condition. Send certificate of thanks to all owners of the equipment that was borrowed

MEALS COMMITTEE

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Plan menus for all meal functions
2. Work with REGISTRATION to provide enough tickets for each meal
3. Plan seating and decorations for each meal

TIME LINE

Seven - nine months prior

Talk with Convention Coordinator about number of meals needed
Begin planning menus

Five - six months prior

Final menus (and prices) to REGISTRATION and Convention Coordinator
Begin planning food for exhibit hall and Exhibitors' Social

Two - four months prior

Print tickets for meals
Begin taking reservations for speakers, exhibitors
Plan table decorations

One month prior

Final menus to hotel- with estimates of numbers
Confirm any special needs or special menus
Final plans for Exhibitors Social and food in exhibit hall
Work with MPLA President on head table seating
Confirm ticket procedure with hotel

Convention month (two - three weeks before)

Give final number to hotel for each meal
Schedule volunteers for setting up decorations
Schedule volunteers for taking tickets

COMMITTEE SIZE

Three people + volunteers

PLANNING MENUS

Menus need to be planned early enough to be checked with the hotel and still make it into the pre-registration information. The Conference Chair can give you the estimates for numbers, judging on the attendance the previous year. "You can also receive this information on numbers from past conference reports." Judging from the past several years, about half of the attendees come to the banquet and approximately a third to a half will attend the award function. The Conference Chair should also have information on any special meals that might be needed or suggested for this year.

The planning sessions take two to three hours, as the committee discusses different options, menus, and costs. The committee will be working from the menus provided by the hotel. Most of these will have set prices, although some hotels will work with the committee to set the prices. There should be a vegetarian option for each meal, at the same price to avoid confusion at the time of registration. Menus

can be the same for two meals if they are served at the same time or to completely different groups. Otherwise, try to have some variety between the meals, in case you have people (and you will) who plan to attend all the meals. Buffets sound great but generally are not popular.

After the committee has made their initial selections, the chair should meet with the hotel to confirm the details. The hotel catering staff is usually very helpful in advising the committee on the type of food or the service. The caterer will also confirm the prices and work out any problems at that time. This information should go back to the committee before the final menus are set.

It is very helpful to have the menus printed on the registration form or in the pre-registration newsletter. This allows people to decide if they want to attend a meal or make other arrangements. The prices must be set at this time in order to be on the registration form.

Prices for the meals must include tax (if any) and service charges or gratuities. **MOST HOTEL MENUS DO NOT INCLUDE THESE ITEMS -- THEY HAVE TO BE ADDED ON BY THE COMMITTEE.** Be sure to add these charges on before you figure the cost per person; otherwise, the convention would have to pay all of these costs! It is traditional to add a couple of cents to each meal to help pay for decorations. This gives the committee a budget for the decorations at the banquet and/or award meal.

BREAKS

MEALS also plan the food and drink for the breaks in the exhibit hall. Conference attendees appreciate having water, tea, or juice in addition to coffee, since not everyone drinks coffee. Muffins are popular in addition to the large Danish rolls, as many people find the rolls too much. For the afternoon break, have cans of soda, if possible. It is fairly expensive, but well liked.

Numbers are hard to estimate, so try to set it up with the hotel that the coffee and tea will be replenished as needed up to a certain number. This way you only have to pay for the number that you use. You'll just have to pick a number for the rolls, muffins and pop, although you can often get more of each as a last minute thing. Some hotels will let you provide cookies brought by librarians; in this case the person in charge of the break will have to put the cookies out since the hotel will not.

EXHIBIT SOCIAL

The exhibitors pay a little extra to help pay for the social that is held in the exhibit hall. This money can go for a free bar, but in the past couple of years there was only enough to cover the cost of the food plus one glass of wine for those who attended. While all registrants and exhibitors should receive a ticket for the wine, the number attending is usually slightly larger than the number attending the banquet.

TICKETS

Tickets must be printed for each meal. To avoid confusion at the registration desk, they should be a different color for each meal and for the vegetarian meals. Numbering the tickets is a nuisance but is very helpful in keeping track of the actual number of meals needed. Free meals for speakers and for award winners may be reimbursed by the organization or section, but generally they are a convention expense. As such they may not get added into the registration database and can be forgotten in the count.

REGISTRATION or MEALS can do the printing of the tickets. In either case MEALS is responsible for the count of people for each meal. MEALS can help REGISTRATION attach the tickets to the registration form and make sure that there are tickets for the speakers. By helping in this area, MEALS provides a check on making sure that the right tickets are given to each person.

Two people should be available to take tickets for each meal. The tickets for the vegetarian meals should be taken to the table and put out for the waiters to see. One person should stay until the food is served, to make sure that all is in order.

RESERVATIONS

Section chairs or program planners should let the MEALS know if they need tickets for speakers. This information generally goes out to the program planners with the final program sheets. One person should be ready to handle these reservations, as well as any extra ticket requests from the exhibitors.

The other kind of "reservation" that is made is who is to sit at the head table for the meals. The MPLA Vice President should give MEALS the names. Name cards can be made for the head table and a couple of the other tables that have "important" people at them. (For instance, name cards for the awardees and their guests and sponsors.) Have blank name cards available in case there were any last minute changes - such as spelling!

DECORATIONS

Decorations are planned for the banquet and awards meal. If there is extra money, there could be some kind of decoration with the food in the exhibit hall. The decorations can, but do not have to, complement the theme of the convention. The hotel may have table decorations; their staff often has helpful suggestions. One person should do the planning for the decorations, although many will probably have to help in the set-up.

TOURS AND ENTERTAINMENT

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Plan activities hosted by convention
2. Work with host library for library reception, if any
3. Provide list of activities going on in convention city during convention time

Seven - nine months prior

Begin planning of school tours
Contact host library about library reception

Five - six months prior

Final schedule of school tours -- prepare information for pre-registration newsletter
Begin planning of Wednesday evening social - - work with Convention Coordinator and

Two - four months prior

Begin finding volunteers to work events
Work with HOSPITALITY on transportation for tours

One month prior

Confirm tours with schools and other organizations
Confirm details about transportation for tours
Collect information on activities in convention city during convention

Convention month

Confirm volunteers (schedule, duties)
Make final arrangements for tours

COMMITTEE SIZE

This should have enough people to plan or work on each part of the job.
Five + volunteers.

TOURS

Tours can be set up to libraries in schools, colleges, special businesses or general places of interest. Each organization should be contacted and date and general time of day selected. Later confirm the tour and set the specific time for each organization. Sometimes museums want to charge entrance fees; see if the librarian there can help get around that.

The tours should be included in the sign up for meetings on the registration blank. This encourages people to think about the tours and also gives the committee numbers to work with. Information should go out with the registration material. If there is not enough room in the MPLA newsletter, send the information to the state newsletters.

Put up a poster about the tours near Registration Desk and have fliers printed to encourage people to come, if the tours have room on them. The fliers should be available at the Registration Desk or could be in the packets.

Try to set up the tours at a time with the fewest conflicts. Perhaps Wednesday afternoon or a similar time would be better than Thursday morning; avoid the general session.

LIBRARY RECEPTION

The Convention Coordinator can appoint additional people to plan the library reception. The transportation to the library is set up by the HOSPITALITY. Information about the library is put in the registration packets. In addition, invitations to the library reception can be on the tables at the banquet.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Send general press release to state associations and library journals.
2. Work with state conference chair to choose and highlight specific conference activities.
3. Coordinate media coverage of convention
4. Create artwork to highlight theme and appear in all printed material.

TIME LINE

Seven - nine months prior

- Send out general press release to library media
- Send out more detailed release to state organizations in MPLA and neighboring states

Five - six months prior

- Begin design for cover of printed program (if not done by PROGRAM)

Two - four months prior

- Collect information on main speakers for media
- Check with appropriate section or conference chair for possible interviews

If talk show appropriate, contact media for scheduling

One month prior

Information to local media

Convention month (one - two weeks before)

Confirm any personal appearances

Contact media with times & places for special speakers

COMMITTEE SIZE

One person could do this work, if there is an artist who can help

PRESS RELEASES

Two press releases need to be developed -- for two different purposes. The first is for the national library journals and newsletters; it needs to give the dates, theme, and location of the convention. Few of the national journals have space to print much more than that.

The second is designed for the state newsletters or journals. It is written to encourage members to attend the conference and so has considerable detail about the programs and other highlights. It should be sent to all newsletter editors in the MPLA region, as well as any contiguous states not in MPLA. The list of MPLA newsletter editors can be obtained from the current editor of the MPLA Newsletter (the name should be on the MPLA website)

Both should be sent out as early as possible since most journals have a lead time of a month or two and most state newsletters come out quarterly.

HIGHLIGHT OF CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

Two or three months before the convention, look over the program list with a couple of people from a variety of libraries. Pick out those speakers who would create interest because of who they are or what they are coming to talk about. Remember to try to think like the general public; it may be of interest to you, but would John Q. Public be interested?

Take those two or three ideas and write up complete information on those people or topics. Try to find out if the authors are going to be visiting anyplace, particularly schools, which might be a reason for a photographic session. Find out if the speaker can give some time for a taped interview, either audio or video. If the speaker is *of* national importance, find out if he will let the media in while he is speaking.

When you have these details confirmed then contact the local media for coverage. They may jump at the chance or they may need to be convinced. Send them the information and then follow up with personal call. Call again the week before or the week of the convention to confirm attendance, if your first response was good.

Interview shows must be scheduled ahead. Be sure that you know the speaker is willing to take the time. Then call the host of the program to set up the appearance. These are more difficult to schedule because of the time constraints of both parties.

ARTWORK

If it has not already been decided, help design the logo for the convention. This should be used on all printed materials.

The committee should work with an artist (possibly already on the committee), the conference chair, and the PROGRAM chair to develop the cover art for the program. It should reflect the theme as much as possible. The artist (if amateur) should submit a couple of ideas and plan to work with the printer as well. If a professional, the artist probably will give it to the committee camera-ready.

OTHER

If any of the pre- or post-conference programs are open to the public (or specific groups), prepare information and fliers for the appropriate media. For instance, an author post-conference may be open to the public. PUBLICITY could prepare fliers for all bookstores and school systems, as well as press releases to the general media and school newsletters.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provide local transportation for speakers
2. Set up hotel reservations for speakers
3. Collect information on convention city for pre-registration issue of MPLA newsletter
4. Provide transportation to sessions away from hotel (tours, pre-conference)
5. Provide transportation to library reception
6. Schedule Host/Hostess for each session

TIME LINE

Seven - nine months prior

- Select person who will take hotel reservations
- Get name, address, & phone to Conference Chair
- Work with Conference Chair on how to get reservations to hotel

Two months before pre-registration information goes out

- Collect information on convention city for MPLA newsletter

Four - six months prior

Contact committee chairs (if not done by MPLA Vice-President) about hotel and transportation needs of speakers

Two - four months prior

- Contact Bus Company for transportation to reception Work with Tours

One month prior

- Work with Conference Chair to make/confirm hotel reservations
- Confirm transportation from airport for speakers
- Set up schedule of planes to meet

Begin finding volunteers for hosting & airport driving

Convention month

Provide message board (if not provided by hotel)

Final confirmation of speakers' arrangements

Letter or instructions to volunteer hosts

SIZE OF COMMITTEE

One person could do this job + volunteers at convention

TRANSPORTATION FOR SPEAKERS

Some chairs or program planners will need help meeting speakers at airport and/or providing transportation back to airport. This is especially important for MPLA where the person planning the program is frequently from out of town.

Contact person's name should be given to all committee chairs. If this is not done by the MPLA Vice-President, the Hospitality chair should see that the chairs know the name, address, and phone number of the contact person.

As speakers' schedules are set, the chairs (or planners) should let the contact person know names and flight information. This information may come in fairly late (up to the week before the conference), so the contact person should have a couple of people ready for last minute assignments.

Volunteers can be used to meet the flights. They should be given the person's name, airline, and flight number. They should be reminded to call the airport to confirm the time of arrival (or departure).

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Contact person's name, address, and phone number should be given to committee chairs. Again, if this is not handled by MPLA Vice-President, the Hospitality Chair is responsible for letting the section chairs know.

The hotel probably has a form which can be used to make the reservations. Committee chairs should send the dates of arrival and departure to the contact person, who will coordinate the reservations. The reservations can be given to the Conference Chair or whoever is dealing with the hotel once a week or so, until the last two or three weeks before the convention. Changes should be handled in the same manner.

The hotel should assign confirmation numbers for each speaker. The contact person should send a postcard with the speaker's name and confirmation number to the section or committee chair.

If the convention is not paying the speakers' fees, arrangements should be made on how payment is to be made or the section chair should make the reservation. The hotel assumes that if the Conference Chair makes the reservation, then the convention is paying the bill.

Information on Convention City

Pre-registration issue of MPLA newsletter

Information which should be included:

Transportation from airport

Rental car agencies

Other hotels in area

Photographs of the area or city where convention will be held Photographs of the speakers (black & white best)

Information which might be included:

Shopping malls and areas

Restaurants in immediate area or in city Museums, zoos, or other places of interest

Arts groups, music or theater, other entertainment

Registration Packet

Brochures from Chamber of Commerce or Convention Bureau Area Restaurants

General areas of interest in city or area

Some cities have a quarterly events calendar which was included

Local Activities

To help people who want to go places and do things in the convention city, the committee can have a display listing area events during the week of the convention. This includes the schedule of events from the Sunday paper and brochures from various theatres and museums. Information on restaurants can be included in the Registration packets.

Transportation to Sessions or Tours

One person on the committee should contact the schools and bus companies to hire buses. The schools will sometimes let groups use buses for free. The bus company can provide buses for the tours and for the reception at the library. When a pre-conference is small, use a couple of large cars to get people to the site. For some tours a mini-van can be used.

If buses are needed for the reception, they should be scheduled as shuttle buses. This way no one has to wait very long to get to or from the reception.

Hosts/Hostesses for Speakers

Prepare a list of all sessions that will need a host. None need be scheduled for business meetings. Each volunteer should be sent a letter of instructions which includes the name of the speaker and the date and time of the program. A "closed session" sign can be included; the host must find out how the speaker wants to handle latecomers, extra seating, etc.

SUGGESTION: On the first day, hosts (indicated by bright helium balloons tied around their wrists) wandered around the hotel lobby and the area around the Registration Desk. They helped people find their way around the rather confusing hotel and answered general directional questions. A great help!

