

Beyond Hope 2011 - Library Gaga: I Want Your Everything As Long As It's Free

By Janet "Just Dance" Marren and Neil "Paparazzi" Godbout.

They came for the glitter.
They came for the glam.
They came for Library Gaga.

The Prince George Public Library welcomed more than 115 delegates from across B.C. and Alberta to its Beyond Hope Library Conference from June 5 to 7, 2011 with this year's theme being Library Gaga: I Want Your Everything As Long As It's Free.

Rapper inspires

In the spirit of Library Gaga, the opening act for the main event was unique and unforgettable – a rap star urging libraries and librarians to keep changing, keep adapting and keep making a difference.

"Maestro" Wes Williams, a two-time Juno Award winner and author of *Stick To Your Vision: How To Get Past The Hurdles and Haters To Get Where You Want To Be*, gave an inspiring Sunday night talk about his evolution from hip-hop performer and actor, to author and motivational speaker.

He explained how he's successfully grown in his career and changed the way he delivers his music to meet the expectations of his audience. Libraries have also grown but must keep working to satisfy the changing demands of a diverse, moving audience. By sticking to our vision, he concluded, libraries have the tools and the desire to make it happen.

With that encouraging message, delegates returned to the Prince George Civic Centre the next morning ready to get to work.

But first, our keynote speakers, Gene Ambaum and Bill Barnes, the creators of *Unshelved*, the popular library comic strip, got the entire standing-room only crowd laughing with their hilarious tales of customer and library staff insanity.

OK, **then** the delegates got to work.

Presenters and sessions

Thanks to the BCLA's continuing education committee, Library Gaga received the *250 and Sunshine Coast Incentive Grant* in the amount of \$1000. The funds were used to host Kay Cahill, the assistant manager of website and community development at Vancouver Public Library, who presented a session on both days of the conference. In "Search: the Next Generation", Kay explored the current search environment and how the library can leverage and benefit from the latest search tools and trends.

In "Toolkit 2011: Social Media and Web Tools for your Library", Kay focused on the value and purpose of social media for the library, including policy and best practices and identifying opportunities for the future. It included some great tips and tricks for engaging with the library's online community and enhancing the library's web presence.

Also thanks to BCLA, Dave Obee gave a lunch-time talk on Monday, June 6. Dave is the author of *The Library Book: a History of Service to British Columbia*, a book published by BCLA to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2011.

Some of our other fabulous guest presenters and topics at Library Gaga included:

- Serving Baby Boomers and Renovating Libraries by Ann Curry, University of Alberta professor
- Using Sitka Reports by Shannon Dineen, trainer and help desk specialist with Sitka
- True Colors: Keys to Personal Success, by Christine Gish, employment program coordinator with the Prince George and District Elizabeth Fry Society
- Mobile Computing and Managing Library Websites, by James MacDonald, web services librarian at the University of Northern B.C.

- NetLibrary's Integration into EbscoHost, NovelList Training and New Ebsco Database Features, by David Lubin, EBSCO's regional sales manager
- Fundraising for Non-Profits, by Debie Hamilton, fund development officer with Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation
- Business Reference, by Mark Bodnar, business liaison librarian at Simon Fraser University and Aleha McCauley, community business services librarian at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre
- eReader Lending, by Sarah Felkar, library assistant at West Vancouver Public Library
- Substitute Storyteller, by Jacob Fehr, head of technical services at Tumbler Ridge Public Library
- Reliable Health Information, by Ann Allgaier, the regional librarian with Northern Health
- Serving Mental Health Clients, by Brooke Ballantyne Scott, librarian with Fraser Health
- Family Law for Public Librarians by John-Paul Boyd, lawyer with Aaron Gordon Daykin Nordlinger of Vancouver and Janet Freeman, LawMatters program coordinator at Courthouse Libraries B.C.
- Using Library Statistics in support of Funding, by Susan Laidlaw, Public Library Services Branch consultant
- Emergent Technologies, by Doug Atkinson, CVS Midwest Tape director
- Web Tools for Different Learning Styles, by Kathleen Reed, research and technology consultant and Darby Love, reference librarian at Squamish Public Library
- Public Library Services Branch update and Neighbourhood Learning Centres and Personalized Learning, by Rod Allen, Superintendent of Achievement, Ministry of Education and Ken Campbell, Secretary-Treasurer, School District 50.

PGPL presenters

As in past years, PGPL staff channeled their inner Gaga to develop and present some amazing sessions:

- teen librarian Amy Dawley shared her experience on effective teen programs and setting up and maintaining teen advisory councils
- support service coordinator Paul Burry gave some insight into working with e-resource metadata

- communications coordinator Neil Godbout's sessions offered tips for using the news media to spread the library's message and how libraries can clean up their signage clutter
- children's librarian Becky Stark and children's programmer Ingrid Wenzel provided great ideas on making the most of toddler programs
- public service manager Marc Saunders joined Mimi Lam, the community digitization librarian from the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre, for a talk about community digitization projects
- public service librarian Jeff Kozoris presented a session on assisting patrons in using the Library To Go database
- public service librarian Patricia Gibson and reader's advisors Andrea Palmer and Evelyn Lee joined Amy for a session called Books To Go Ga-Ga Over.

Social and supporters

Game three of the Stanley Cup final between the Vancouver Canucks and the Boston Bruins did not keep delegates from joining us Monday night for a yummy apples and dinner social at Hummus Brothers. The Canucks got creamed 8-1 but all of the Library Gaga delegates had a great time connecting with new and old friends and colleagues.

Besides the BCLA's 250 and the Sunshine Coast Incentive Grant, Library Gaga was generously supported by:

- Friends of the Prince George Public Library as sponsors for the keynote session from the creators of Unshelved
- The board of trustees of the Prince George Public Library as sponsors of the "Maestro" Wes Williams session
- The North Coast Library Federation
- The North Central Library Federation
- Bar Code Applications Inc.
- Books & Company
- CVS Midwest Tape
- United Library Services

If you missed out, no worries – we'll see you in June 2013!

Janet Marren is PGPL's public service coordinator and was the chief organizer for Library Gaga. Neil Godbout is PGPL's communications coordinator and was Janet's wingman for Library Gaga.