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A *Conference Manual*. It certainly isn't bedtime reading. But when planners ask the question "What do we do about...?" or "How was this handled before?" they will find in this *Manual* the rich experience of many years of WLA conference planners.

All conferences are unique as a consequence of their themes, their physical sites, and the ideas and knowledge of the conference committee members. However, there are fundamental policies and guidelines that were adopted by the WLA Board and all conferences must adhere to them. There are also practices and procedures that have evolved over the years that may be used as-is, or they can be adapted to avoid reinventing the proverbial wheel.

The *Manual* is arranged by conference activities rather than responsibilities of each chairperson because every conference committee differs in their experiences, skills, and interests. The *Manual* presents activities and notes the chairs that are usually involved, based on common practice. It is intended for use of the annual WLA conference and the annual WALE conference. The registration policies and procedures are the same for each conference, but each will take a different approach to their planning process.

Please note that this *Manual* incorporates the suggestion of past conferences that the Annual Conference Registrar no longer be a subcommittee of Local Arrangements. Another change is that the WLA Continuing Education Coordinator job description includes participating in the conference committee as the Pre-Conference Chair.

Clearly the conference committee member responsibilities intertwine—and it will be no surprise that communication between and among the conference committee, the WLA officers, the Association Coordinator, and Interest Groups is essential to success. The more people who are involved in planning, reviewing, discussing, and proofing, the fewer glitches are likely to occur. Developing the registration form is a prime example of that coordination. Nearly every committee chair will contribute content to the registration form.

The report forms are required for all conferences in order to build the history that will aid future conference planners. Please look at report content early in the planning process so you are sure to collect the data. All forms appear in Chapter 7 for but they are also duplicated in the *Manual* sections often with examples of the report. Please note that the reports may need additional information or modification to clearly represent the happenings of a particular conference. Please add explanatory notes!

If the unexpected or the unusual happens—that is a typical conference. Be prepared to tap the wealth of resources available, starting with the Association Coordinator, WLA officers, and previous former conference planners. All can help solve your particular puzzle.

My thanks to all who contributed to this *Manual*, especially Mike Wirt and Joy Neal who prepared earlier conference procedures manuals. Special thanks to Gail Willis and the many others who reviewed and contributed to multiple drafts. Most of all, thanks to the many conference chairs and committees whose detailed reports created the foundation for this *Conference Manual*.

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