



## Event Toolkit: Planning for a Special Event

Preservation Week, inspires action to preserve personal, family, community, and library, museum, and archive collections and raises awareness of the role libraries and other cultural organizations can play in providing preservation information. We urge you to do at least one thing, even if it's small, to celebrate Preservation Week. See [www.ala.org/preservationweek](http://www.ala.org/preservationweek) for additional information.

All of us know planning can help assure the success of an event, but we often feel stressed for the time to plan. Here is a list of relatively small and easy steps to help make planning a part of your Preservation Week activity, however small. Some steps may not apply to some activities—if not, skip them. For example, you won't need a planning committee or coordinator if you put a banner on your home page with a link to preservation resources at your institution, or to the Preservation Week site, [www.atyourlibrary.org](http://www.atyourlibrary.org). Here are typical planning steps. You might find it helpful to write out the responses to steps, and to share them with another staff and/or a typical audience member to make sure there are no unexpected complications.

### 1. Develop strategies for success

- Ask yourself, how does the event help you fulfill your mission
- Gather event planning committee and select a coordinator
- Define scope of event
- Identify event objectives
- Identify target audience
- Target collaborative/partnership opportunities
- Garner support from staff
- Talk to others who have had similar events for tips, success and strategies
- Determine how long you need to plan the event
- Determine what success would be and how you will evaluate it

### 2. Make a checklist including a timetable

A checklist with a timetable helps one to keep track of all the activities involved with planning an event.

### 3. Create a budget

- Identify revenue opportunities, if any (donations, concessions, tickets sales, sponsorships)
- Determine expenses (Printing, permits, speakers, food, supplies, security, room rental)
- Seek funding opportunities, including current budget, donors, grants

### 4. Plan logistics

Many event planning activities will be going on at the same time, but it's good to think through whole the process in advance. Some major areas to consider:

- Set date(s)
- Identify size requirements
- Choose location of event

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- Identify set-up needs
- Decide on catering
- Decide on and assign clean-up responsibility
- Make emergency plans in the event of a major unexpected event (power outage, weather, illness)
- Locate parking

#### 5. Plan Publicity

The first purpose of promotion is to publicize event—Brainstorm ways to get the word out (press release, PSA's, newspaper, banners, newsletters, Website, emails to Friend's group). Choose your secondary purposes of promotion. Are you trying to:

- Inform, educate or entertain?
- Increase awareness or attendance?
- Build a base of support?
- Facilitate community relations?
- Build cooperation between organizations with joint program planning?

#### 6. Evaluate

- Choose an evaluation form or other method
- Tabulate evaluation forms or other sources of information
- What worked and what did not?
- What items were missing on your checklist?
- Was the program worth doing?
- Who attended and did you attract a new audience?
- Did the program meet your goals?

#### 7. Wrap up

- Write thank you notes
- Write up event
- Publish follow-up of event with photos on Website, newspaper, newsletter, annual report

*Source:* Adapted from *Planning Special Events: Blueprints for Success* by Debora Meskauskas <http://www.librarysupport.net/librarylovers/eventips.html>; adapted in turn from an excerpt from *Part-Time Public Relations with Full-Time Results: A PR Primer for Libraries*, Rashelle Karp, Chicago: ALA Editions (1995), 65 pages. This covers topics ranging from how to write a news release to desktop publishing.

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