

# Getting a Speaker Series at Your Library Right

Cheryl D. Bain, Sheep River Library

[theunrestrictedlibrarian.com](http://theunrestrictedlibrarian.com)

Calgary Libraries in Action. April 30, 2025





# Want These Slides?

*Will be on my website by Saturday evening!  
This link will be provided again at the end!*

[theunrestrictedlibrarian.com](http://theunrestrictedlibrarian.com)

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# What Did My Abstract Imply I'd Be Discussing Today?

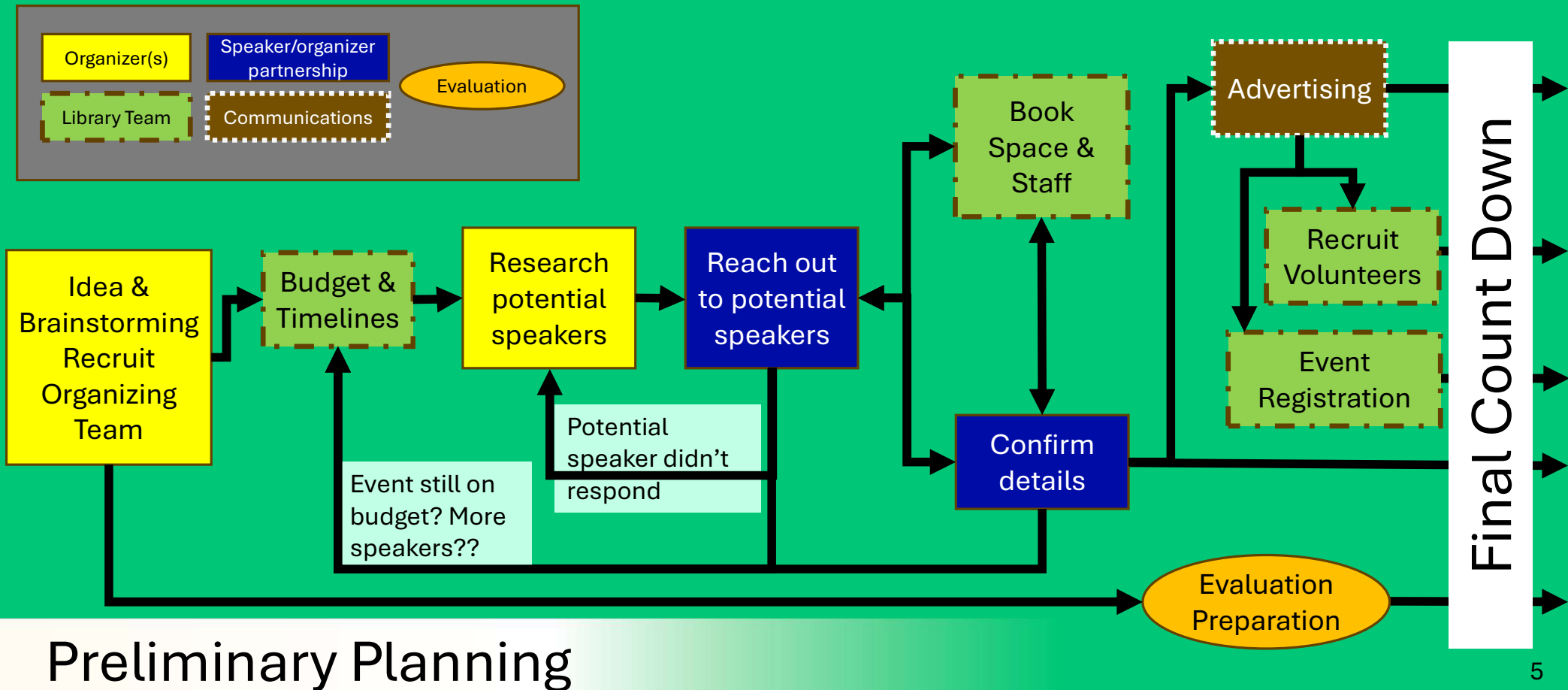
- Timeline (slides 5, 39, 40-41, 48-54)
- Preliminary Speaker Series Planning (slides 6-26)
- Recruiting Organizing Team (slide 9)
- The Budget (slide 10) & speaker compensation (slide 26)
- Researching Potential Speakers (slides 11-20)
- Recruiting Speakers – First Contact & Failed Connections (slides 21-22)
- Advertising (slides 28-32)
- Volunteer Wrangling (slides 33-34)
- Event Registration (slides 35)
- Community Evaluation (slides 36-37, 55-56)
- Final preparations (slides 40-44)
- Event In Progress (slides 48-54)
- Pictures from Hollywood Got It Wrong (slides 49-54)
- Every Event Has Its Own Challenges (slides 57-58)
- What Did We Learn? (slides 59-60)
- Questions (slide 61)

# What Am I Discussing Today?

- Timeline (slides 5, 39, 40-41, 48-54)
- Preliminary Speaker Series Planning (slides 6-26 – many skipped)
- ~~Recruiting Organizing Team (slide 9)~~
- ~~The Budget (slide 10) & speaker compensation (slide 26)~~
- Researching Potential Speakers (slides 11-20)
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- Questions (slide 61)



# The Timeline – Advanced Stages



# Preliminary Planning – Idea & Brainstorming

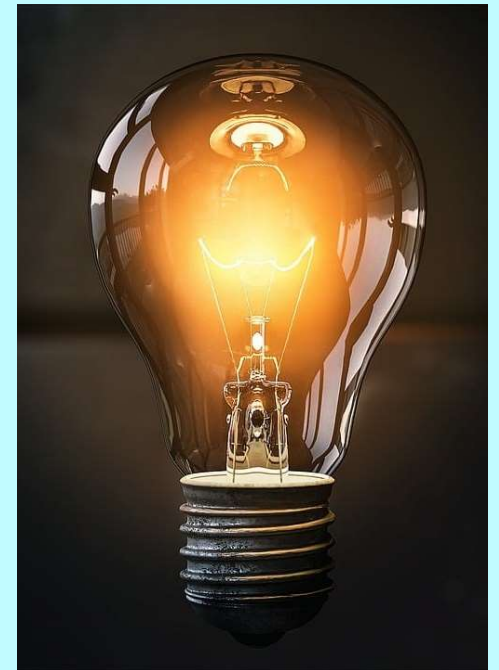
What is the purpose of your event? How will it serve your community?

- Education, entertainment, edutainment, public awareness, etc.

Can you briefly explain the event theme?

This controls what you look for in speakers!

Organizers



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# Preliminary Planning – Idea & Brainstorming Example

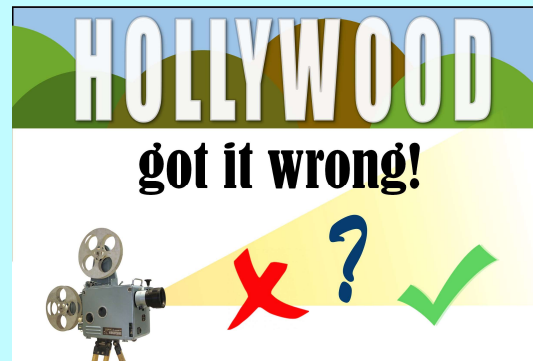
Organizers

What is the purpose of your event?  
How will it serve your community?

- *Hollywood Got It Wrong:*
  - Edutainment
  - An opportunity to support life-long learning, critical thinking skills, and media literacy.

Can you briefly explain the event theme?

Each speaker has been asked to use their professional experience and knowledge to let us know: ***what the film makers got wrong, what they got almost right, and what (if anything) they got right.***



<https://pixabay.com>

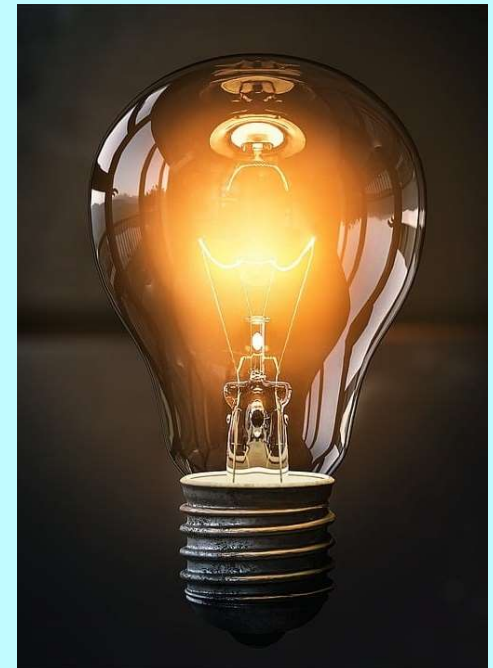
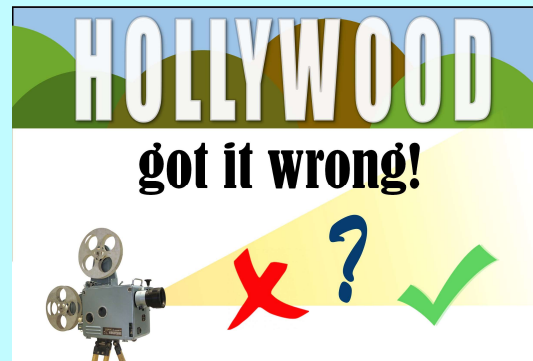
# Preliminary Planning – Idea & Brainstorming Example

Organizers

What type of speakers did we want?

Aimed for at least 5, filling these criteria:

- Someone from physical sciences
- Someone from biological or medical sciences
- At least two arts or humanities
- At least one whose professional life didn't take place in post-secondary education
- At least one with expertise in natural disasters (cross-promote *Emergency Preparedness Week*)



<https://pixabay.com>



# Recruit Organizing Team

Library Team

Organizers

- For Hollywood Got It Wrong, 95% of the event was organized by me.
- For other events I have participated in organizing, team ranged in size from 4-10 organizers

## Key questions

What skills and reputations do interested organizers have?

- What skills are missing from people who stated interest in organizing?

How many of our organizing team will be long-term affiliated with the organization (eg: staff or executives on a volunteer board for a professional organization), how many new volunteers?



<https://pixabay.com/>

# Budget

Library Team

Develop budget in consultation with stakeholders

- at SRL this was: staff, library board, fundraising people)

This will control what you can offer your speakers!

Take note of deadlines for booking things, printer deadlines, etc.



Incomplete list of **possible** line-items:

- Speaker and/or facilitator fees, mileage, care (food & water) and gifts
- Advertising costs, ticket printing costs...
- Staffing costs (do staff need to record hours dedicated to event?)
- Do you need first-aid personnel and/or supplies present?
- Does your schedule conflict with labour laws on how long a person can be working?
- Food and/or catering
- Large organizations and events: do you need to rent space and/or chairs?
- For movies: streaming licenses and/or physical copies
- Larger speaker series: nametag for attendees? Programs?
  - If there are programs, can you sell advertising?
- Volunteer appreciation (t-shirts? Food?)
- Brainstorm with organization team. Do you have enough duct tape?



# Researching Potential Speakers

Organizers

Circle back to **the purpose of your speaker series:**

What is the purpose of your event?

How will it serve your community?

- *Hollywood Got It Wrong:*
  - Edutainment
  - An opportunity to support life-long learning, critical thinking skills, and media literacy.



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# Researching Potential Speakers

## Define Your Search

Organizers

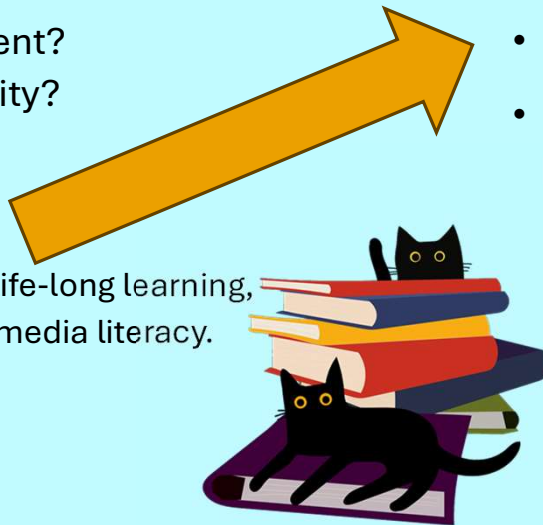
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What is the purpose of your event?  
How will it serve your community?

- *Hollywood Got It Wrong:*

- Edutainment
- An opportunity to support life-long learning, critical thinking skills, and media literacy.

- Educators experienced with communicating with the public
- Engaging speakers
- Take their profession seriously, but not too seriously



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# Researching Potential Speakers

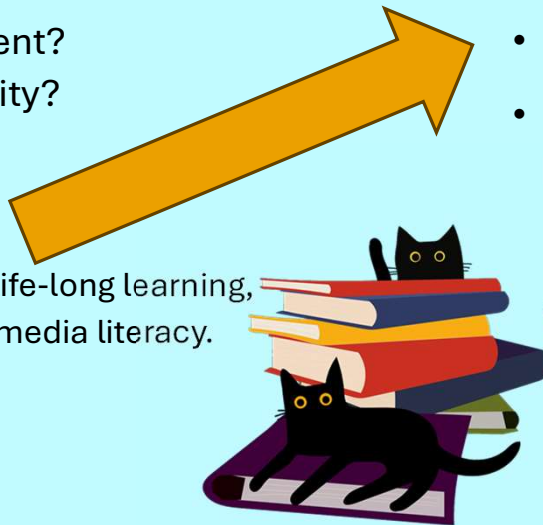
## Define Your Search

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- Educators experienced with communicating with the public
- Engaging speakers
- Take their profession seriously, but not too seriously

What acts as hints in public records that a person will be good public educator and an engaging speaker?

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# Researching Potential Speakers

## Hints I Looked For

Organizers

- Teaching awards
- Publications and conference presentations with amusing titles
- Active engagement with non-specialist audiences
- Mentions and/or proof of life-long learning or teaching as a priority

But first, find potential speakers to evaluate...



# Researching Potential Speakers

## Where to Find Targets?

Organizers

Increasing Search Difficulty

Local sources for speakers:

- Universities, colleges, tech schools, etc.
- Local non-technical conferences
  - Example: When Words Collide (a Calgary writers' conference) lists their speakers and bios for 2024 here: <https://whenwordscollide2024.sched.com/directory/speakers>
- Museums, zoos, science centres
- Professional organization may have a PR department
- Speakers mentioned as experts in documentaries, popular science radio shows (like CBC's *Quirks and Quarks*)



Samantha Adkins



Shannon Allen



Jass Aujla



Brenna Bailey-Davies  
Bookmartin Editorial



Dave Sweet

<https://unconventionalclassroom.ca/>

### About me

With 25 years of policing experience, Detective Dave Sweet (retired) has investigated some of Canada's most heinous crimes.

Over his career, Dave worked as a patrol officer, an undercover police officer and led several task forces targeting gangs and organized crime groups operating in the city of Calgary. In 2009 Dave joined the ranks of the homicide unit where he spent 14.5 years specializing in homicide, missing person, and suspicious death investigations.

[https://whenwordscollide2024.sched.com/speaker/dave\\_sweet.26w6rs2x](https://whenwordscollide2024.sched.com/speaker/dave_sweet.26w6rs2x)



Bator

<https://whenwordscollide2024.sched.com/directory/speakers>

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# Researching Potential Speakers

Organizers

1. Created a list of professions and expertise I'm interested in
2. What University departments match that list?
3. Skimmed through professor profiles on department websites and/or speaker profiles on conference websites



# Researching Potential Speakers

## Evaluating Profiles


Organizers

- Teaching awards

- Publications and conference presentations with amusing titles

- Active engagement with non-specialist audiences

- Mentions and/or proof of life-long learning or teaching as a priority



**Dave Sweet**  
<https://unconventionalclassroom.ca/>

**About me**

With 25 years of policing experience, Detective Dave Sweet (retired) has investigated some of Canada's most heinous crimes.

Over his career, Dave worked as a patrol officer, an undercover police officer and led several task forces targeting gangs and organized crime groups operating in the city of Calgary. In 2009 Dave joined the ranks of the homicide unit where he spent 14.5 years specializing in homicide, missing person, and suspicious death investigations.

I saw him speak at When Words Collide,  
definite sense of dark humour

# Researching Potential Speakers

## Evaluating Profiles

Organizers

- Teaching awards

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### Brandon Karchewski

#### Awards

- Geoscience Teaching Award, Department of Geoscience, University of Calgary. 2019
- Best Poster Award, The University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Teaching and Learning. 2018
- Risk Shining Star, University of Calgary. 2016
- Team Teaching Award of Excellence, Faculty of Science, University of Calgary. 2016
- Graduate Student Presentation Competition, Second Place, Canadian Geotechnical Society (Southern Ontario Section). 2015
- Nomination for Governor General's Gold Medal for Doctoral Thesis, McMaster University. 2015
- Engineering Mechanics Institute Conference (EMI 2014) Computational Mechanics Poster Competition 'Runner Up', Computational Mechanics Committee, Engineering Mechanics Institute, A.S.C.E.. 2014
- Engineering Mechanics Institute Conference (EMI 2014) 'Third Place Poster Award', Engineering Mechanics Institute, A.S.C.E.. 2014
- 'Image of an Engineer' Award, McMaster Engineering Society. 2014
- TA/RA Award, Faculty of Engineering, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 3906. 2014
- Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, McMaster Engineering Society. 2013

# Researching Potential Speakers

## Evaluating Profiles

### Organizers

- Teaching awards

- Publications and conference presentations with amusing titles

- Active engagement with non-specialist audiences

- Mentions and/or proof of life-long learning or teaching as a priority

Kerri Alderson, MN, RN



Academic Title: Associate Professor

Office: Y455  
email: kdalderson@mtroyal.ca  
phone: 403.440.8841

#### Education

MN, University of Calgary  
BScN, University of Alberta

Kerri Alderson, R.N., B.Sc.N., M.N. has been a full-time faculty member at Mount Royal University since August 2006. Prior to her current tenure as Associate Professor, she was employed as a part-time instructor at Mount Royal and as a medical nurse in a wide variety of settings in Canada and the United States. Kerri graduated from the collaborative Bachelor of Science in Nursing program offered by Red Deer College and the University of Alberta. She received her graduate degree from the University of Calgary. Her nursing practice has primarily been in adult medical nursing, focusing on populations with chronic illness. Her current research interests include nursing pedagogy, clinical nursing education, games-based learning and simulation. Kerri has been a recipient of the CNA Award of Nursing Excellence in Education.

#### Areas of Instruction

- N1112 - Health Promotion with Individuals I
- N1214 - Professional Practice I
- N3104 - Adult Health
- Simulation Facilitator, BN and BCN Program

#### Area of Scholarship

- Nursing Pedagogy
- Clinical Nursing Education
- Games-Based Learning

#### Selected Publication

Kennedy, A., Semple, L., Alderson, K., Bouskill, V., Karasevich, J., Riske, B., van Gunst, S. (2017). Don't Push Your Luck! Educational Family Board (Not Bored) Game for School-Age Children Living with Chronic Conditions. Journal of Pediatric Nursing (Vol. 35 pp. 57-64). Elsevier. (In Print / Published). doi: 10.1016/j.pedn.2017.02.032

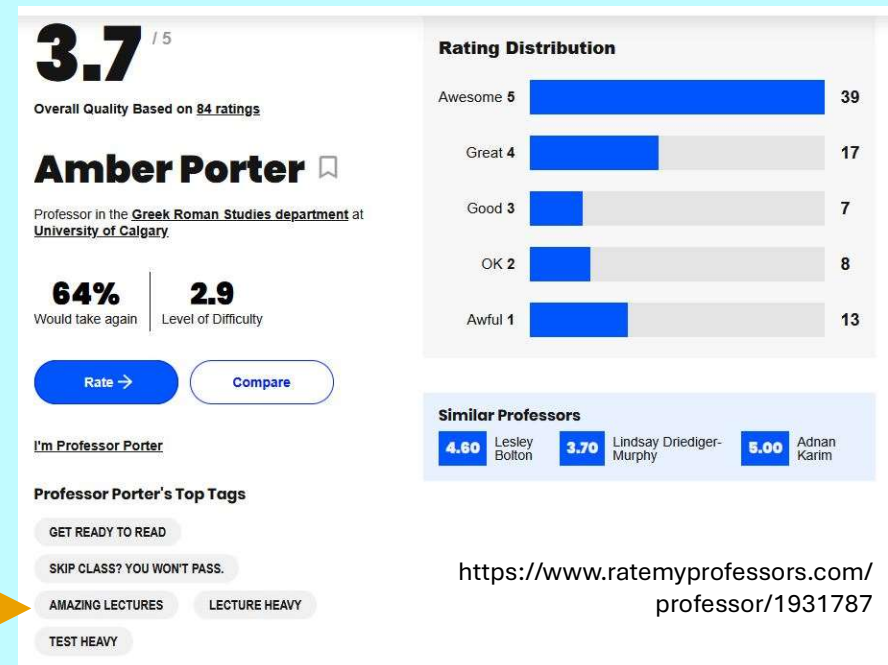
#### Selected Presentations

# Researching Potential Speakers

## Evaluating Profiles: Triage

Organizers

- Picked 5-10 profs from each department that I liked based *solely on staff/faculty website vibes*
- Second opinion: asked a colleague if there were any she felt needed eliminating and/or what her top pick was
- More in-depth research on survivors. LinkedIn, online teaching reviews, basic Google to see if they've been an expert on news programs, etc.



# Communication With Potential Speakers: First Contact

Speaker –  
Organizer  
Collaboration

Reach out to first round selections with partially personalized Email detailing:

- Why I picked them with specifics
  - Make that research pay off!
- Brief summary of speaker series
  - Gave the speakers freedom to select movie (excited speakers make more engaging talk)
- Location of library relative to Calgary
- Invitation to reach out and discuss movie titles, dates, and compensation

Hello **\*\*\*name of person\*\*\*,**

I am reaching out to you because  
**\*\*\*reasons they are awesome, proving I didn't just randomly select them\*\*\*...**



<https://pixabay.com/>



# Communication With Potential Speakers: Failed Connections

Speaker –  
Organizer  
Collaboration

Reached out with a single follow-up, one week later

Pattern noticed: one local institution *never* replied.

Phone follow-up with 3<sup>rd</sup> prof there revealed overly strict spam filter to blame. I wasn't getting through.

Positive response rate (all): 67%.

If excluding ones likely caught by spam filter: 86%

Hello **\*\*\*name of person\*\*\*,**

I am reaching out to you because  
**\*\*\*reasons they are awesome, proving I didn't just randomly select them\*\*\*...**



<https://pixabay.com/>

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# Be Prepared for Surprises!

- Invited speaker talked to a colleague, and...

# Be Prepared for Surprises!

- Invited speaker talked to a colleague, and...
- Can you accommodate a suddenly appearing speaker in your budget, schedule, and do they fit with the series theme?
- Evaluated my surprise physicist the same as my other professionals, and invited him to join

A wild physicist appeared!

He used “I have professional opinions about *Oppenheimer!*”

It's super effective!

<https://profiles.ucalgary.ca/jason-donev>

# Selected Speakers for Hollywood Got It Wrong 2025



Aimed for at least 5 (got 6), filling these criteria:

- Physical sciences:
  - UofC Professor Brandon Karchewski, Geoscience.
    - Also our natural disaster expert
  - UofC Professor Jason Donev, Nuclear Physics.
- Biological or medical sciences:
  - Mt. Royal Professor Kerri Alderson, Nursing.
- At least two arts or humanities
  - Mt Royal and UofC instructor Amber Porter, classical history and mythology
  - Anglican minister Andy Lees
- At least one whose professional life didn't take place in post-secondary education
  - Dave Sweet, Retired Calgary Police Detective
  - Andy Lees (again)

# Communication With Your Speakers: Speaker Compensation

Speaker –  
Organizer  
Collaboration

Offered:

- Honorarium
- Mileage
- Long distance speakers could also get room & board (none this year, too expensive)
- Up to 4 tickets to any Hollywood Got It Wrong event *if* they let me know before general registration opened



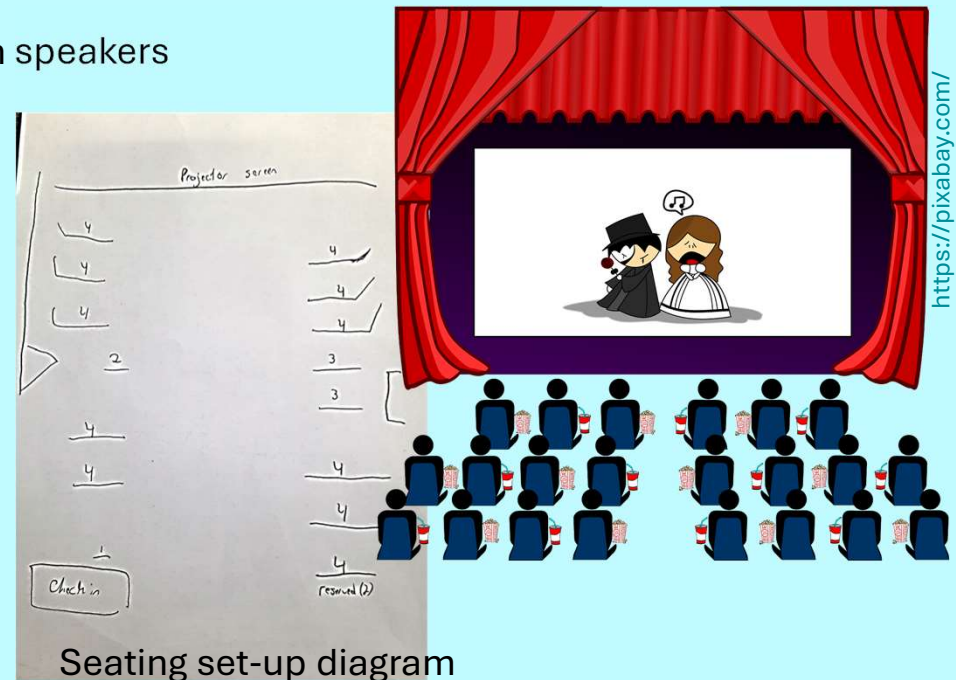
<https://pixabay.com/>



# Book Space

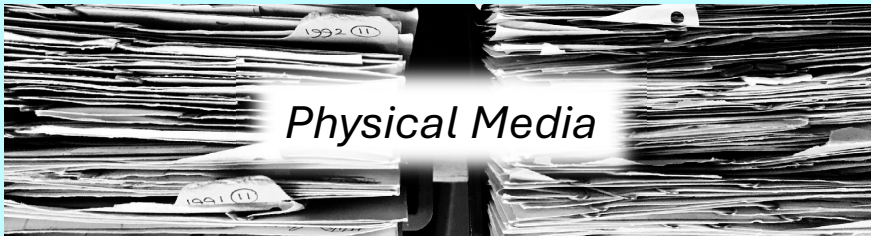
Library Team

- Happening at the same time as communication with speakers
- Be sure to book in set-up and take-down time
- Note potential speaker issues
  - Laptop-projector connection
  - Is there a microphone if they need it?
  - etc.



# Advertising

Public  
Communication



*Physical Media*

- Hard deadline: any newspapers or magazines you wish to advertise in
- Soft deadline: flyers and brochures for in the library



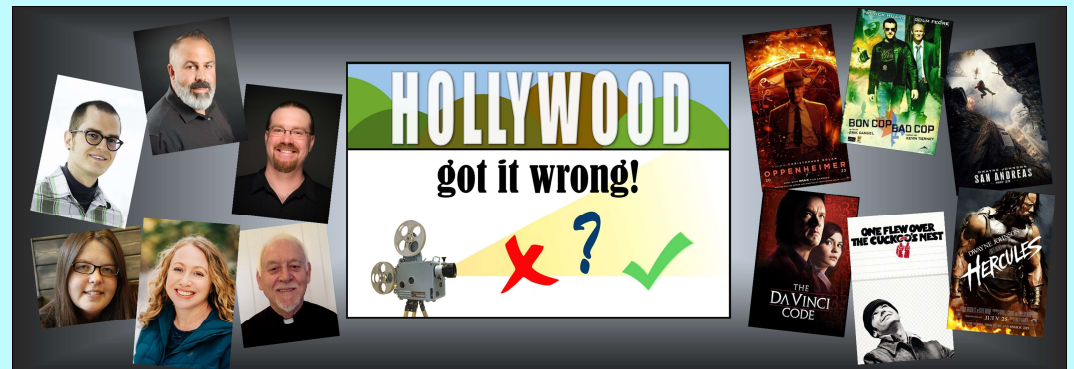
*Digital Media*

- Hard or soft deadline: library website
  - Ours was hard – we had mentioned in local High Country News paper that “full information can be found on the website”
- Soft deadline: social media posts

# Advertising

## Minimize the number of deadlines for speakers

- For Hollywood, I had two:
  - Hard deadline: movie and date confirmation deadline
    - Claimed early December, but newspaper's deadline was ~December 15
  - Soft deadline: biography and photos
    - Early January



Banner posted on Sheep River Library  
website homepage January 31-March 13, 2025


# Advertising

- Give speakers opportunity to proofread advertising
- Speakers not getting back to you fast enough? Politely show them the consequences.
- Draft emailed out to speakers 30 min earlier had four missing photos...
  - “Headshot photos are optional, so I picked some clipart to put in its place. Let me know if you’d prefer different clipart.”

Speaker –  
Organizer  
Collaboration

Public  
Communication

**Hollywood Got it Wrong 2025 Lineup**

 <p><b>VS.</b></p>  <p>Saturday, March 8. Movie 12:30PM, talk 3:00PM</p> <p><b>Andy Lees</b> is an ordained Anglican priest who spent much of his 20 years as a multi-faith chaplain at the Calgary Foothills Hospital. Now mostly retired, he helps run services at the local Anglican church.</p> <p><i>The Da Vinci Code</i> (2006) - Can Langdon and Neveu decipher cryptic codes concealing a secret older than Da Vinci before Langdon is wrongfully arrested or murderers take them both out? Rated PG-13</p>	 <p><b>VS.</b></p>  <p>Saturday, March 22. Movie 12:00PM, talk ~3:00PM</p> <p><b>Jason Donev</b> is a tenured University of Calgary physicist. He has received teaching awards, assists intergovernmental organizations, and leads the popular adult education website, <a href="http://EnergyEducation.ca">EnergyEducation.ca</a>.</p> <p><i>Oppenheimer</i> (2023) - Fearing the Nazis will win the race to build atomic bombs, the Allies select Oppenheimer to lead the Manhattan Project. Should anyone be trusted with weapons of mass destruction? Rated R</p>	 <p><b>VS.</b></p>  <p>Saturday, April 12. Movie 1:00PM, talk ~3:00PM</p> <p><b>Brandon Karchewski</b> is an Associate Professor at the University of Calgary. He has contributed research in geotechnical engineering and geophysics and the current Geology and Geophysics programs' director.</p> <p><i>San Andreas</i> (2015) - When a huge earthquake triggers devastation, Chief Gaines sets out to save his family. With another quake looming, is there time to pull off the most important rescue of his life? Rated PG-13</p>
 <p><b>VS.</b></p>  <p>Saturday, March 15. Movie 1:00PM, talk ~3:00PM</p> <p><b>Detective Dave Sweet</b> spent his award-winning 25 years in Canadian policing undercover, fighting organized crime in Calgary, and with the homicide unit. Since retiring, Sweet has co-written two books.</p> <p><i>Bon Cop, Bad Cop</i> (2006) - A crime on the Quebec-Ontario border forces Bouchard and Ward to overcome different approaches to policing, car trunk contents, and language to catch the murderer. Rated R</p>	 <p><b>VS.</b></p>  <p>Saturday, March 29. Movie 1:15PM, talk ~3:00PM</p> <p><b>Amber Porter</b> is a Mount Royal University and University of Calgary instructor. She has spent 15+ years teaching Greek and Roman mythology, history, etc. She is passionate about teaching and life-long learning.</p> <p><i>Hercules</i> (2014) - When threatened King Cotys and Princess Ergenia turn to Hercules, son of Zeus. To restore peace, Hercules must summon the strength and valour that first made him a myth. Rated PG-13</p>	 <p><b>VS.</b></p>  <p>Saturday, April 26. Movie 12:45PM, talk ~3:00PM</p> <p><b>Kerri Alderson</b> is a Mount Royal University faculty member. As a nurse, she has focused on adults and chronic illness. Her current research interests include nursing education and games-based learning.</p> <p><i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i> (1975) - McMurphy pleads insanity to avoid prison. Sent for psychiatric evaluation, he encourages rebellion against head nurse Ratched. Originally R-Rated. Now 14A rated</p>

For more details and information about free tickets, please visit:  
[sheepriverlibrary.ca/Programs/Events-Exhibits-Displays/Hollywood2025](http://sheepriverlibrary.ca/Programs/Events-Exhibits-Displays/Hollywood2025)

# Advertising

- Give speakers opportunity to proofread advertising
- Speakers not getting back to you fast enough? Politely show them the consequences.
- Draft emailed out to speakers 30 min earlier had four missing photos...
  - “Headshot photos are optional, so I picked some clipart to put in its place. Let me know if you’d prefer different clipart.”
  - Within four hours I had all the photos

Speaker –  
Organizer  
Collaboration

Public  
Communication





# Advertising

For social media, soft deadline:

- Let social media person post on their schedule

For website person (me), semi-hard deadlines:

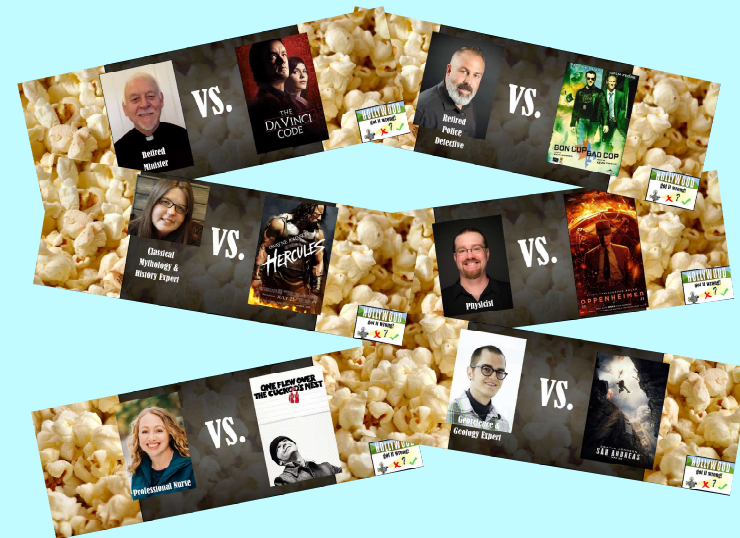
- Hard deadline: date website went live controlled by High Country News publication date
  - Content can be edited
- Hard deadline: date online registration opened

For physical flyers and posters

- Soft deadline (printed in-house)

Library Team

Public Communication



Front page of flyer, banners for event webpages

# Volunteer Wrangling

- *Hollywood Got It Wrong* had minimal use of volunteers this year
- *Wetterberg Fencing Tournament* I ran multiple years was volunteer run.
- For untested volunteers, have redundancy in critical roles.

Library Team

Organizers

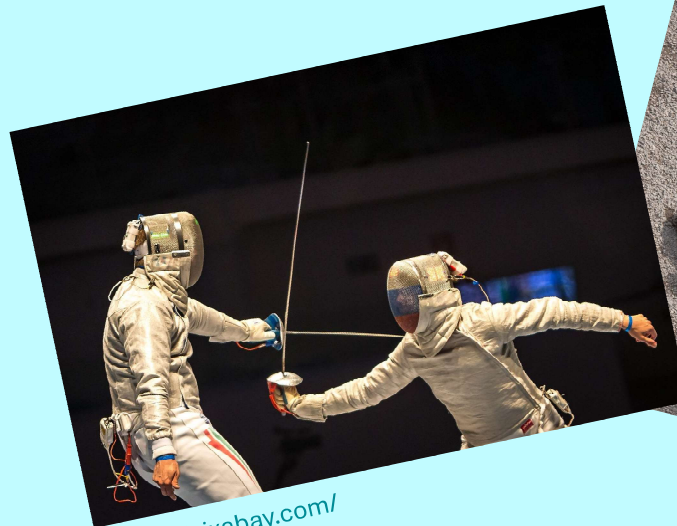


# Volunteer Wrangling

Library Team

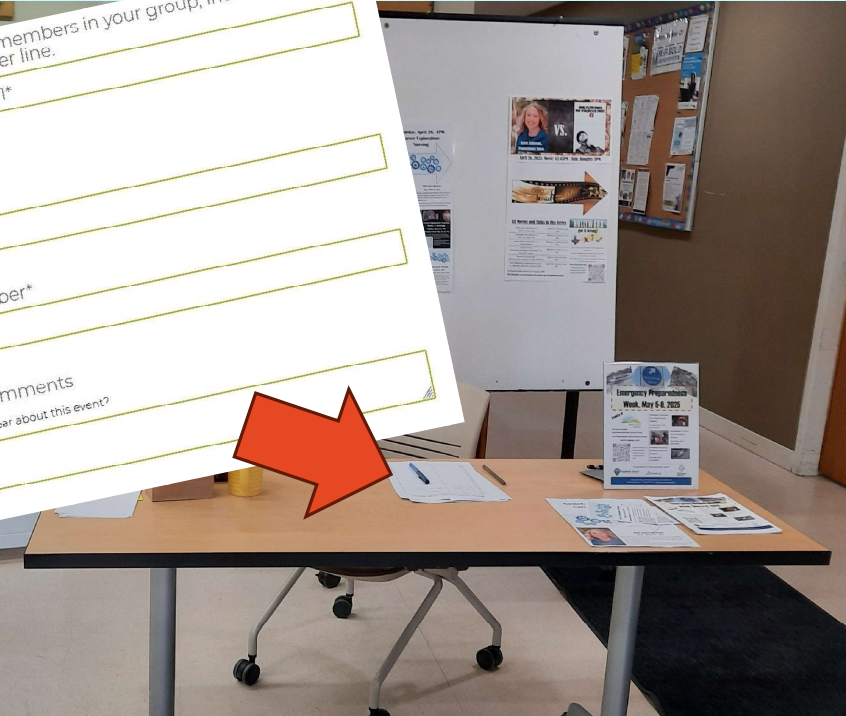
Organizers

- *Hollywood Got It Wrong* had minimal use of volunteers this year
- *Wetterberg Fencing Tournament* I ran multiple years was volunteer run.
- For untested volunteers, have redundancy in critical roles.
  - Be prepared to challenge slackers to duels. (May be fencing specific...)



# Event Registration

Library Team



The photograph shows a registration table in a room with a whiteboard and a bulletin board in the background. On the table are several brochures, including one titled 'Emergency Preparedness Week, May 5 & 6, 2025'. A large red arrow points from the registration form overlay towards the table.

Please register all members in your group, including guardian(s), one per line.

Attendee Name 1\*

+ Add Attendee

Email\*

Phone Number\*

Notes / Comments  
How did you hear about this event?

Is it required?

- Drop-in forbidden, permitted, or encouraged?
- Do you need/want to confirm attendance?

What format?

- Online? In-person? Mixed?
  - How tech-savvy are likely attendees?
- Advanced, and/or on the day?

What deadlines for open and close?

- Will these be advertised?
- Who will handle these tasks?

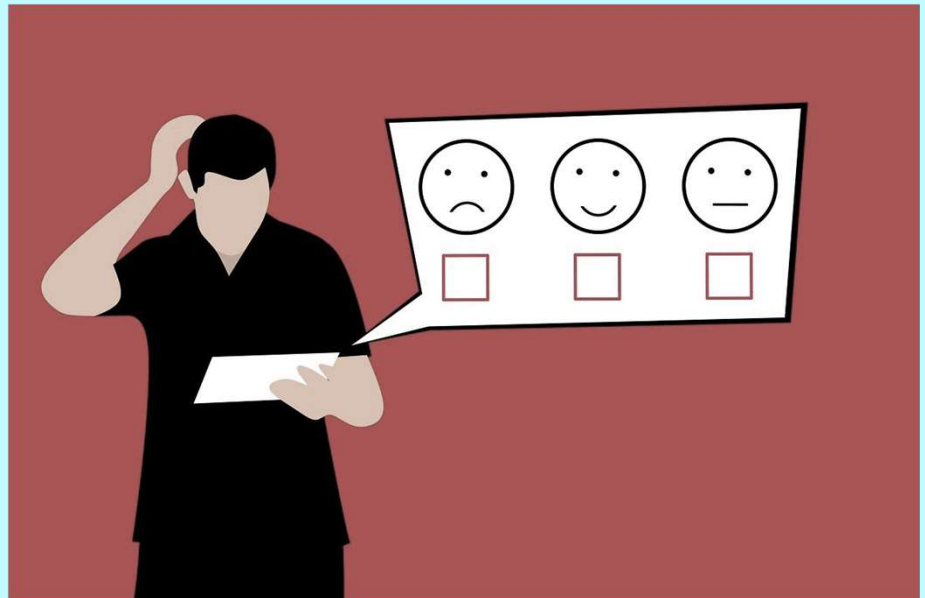
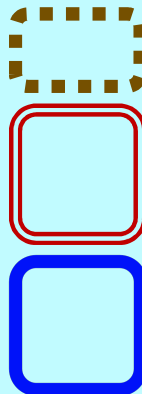
# Evaluation

Evaluation

- Determine what questions you need answered
- Draft simple feedback methods
  - Minimal time to fill out

## Our Key Questions

- How effective is our advertising?
- What did the community think of the event? What would the community like to see in the future?
- Emergency Preparedness Speaker also requested geographic origin of attendees?



<https://pixabay.com>

# Evaluation

The paper  
evaluation fit 2 on  
a legal-size sheet.

Word document  
available on my  
personal website.

Hollywood Got It Wrong 2025 Survey

Which Movies and Talks are you attending/planning to attend?

	Attended	Planning to Attend	Not Attending
Andy Lees vs. <i>The Da Vinci Code</i>			
Dave Sweet vs. <i>Bon Cop, Bad Cop</i>			
Jason Donev vs. <i>Oppenheimer</i>			
Amber Porter vs. <i>Hercules</i>			
Brandon Karchewski vs. <i>San Andreas</i>			
Kerri Alderson vs. <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i>			

Were you signed up for today's movie and talk before attending? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you did not sign-up before, why not?

☐ I didn't know that was an option   ☐ It was too difficult

☐ I chose not to sign-up   ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What profession(s) would you suggest we invite for next year's speaker series?  
(eg: Doctor, historian, mechanic, chef, etc.)

Do you have any additional comments for the speaker(s) or the organizer(s)? (Feel free to use the back of this paper.)

Register for the entire series  
**FireSmart Registration**

Please register all members in your group, including guardian(s), one per line.

Attendee Name 1\*

+ Add Attendee

Email\*

Phone Number\*

Notes / Comments

How did you hear about this event?

Where do you live?

None selected ▼

Evaluation



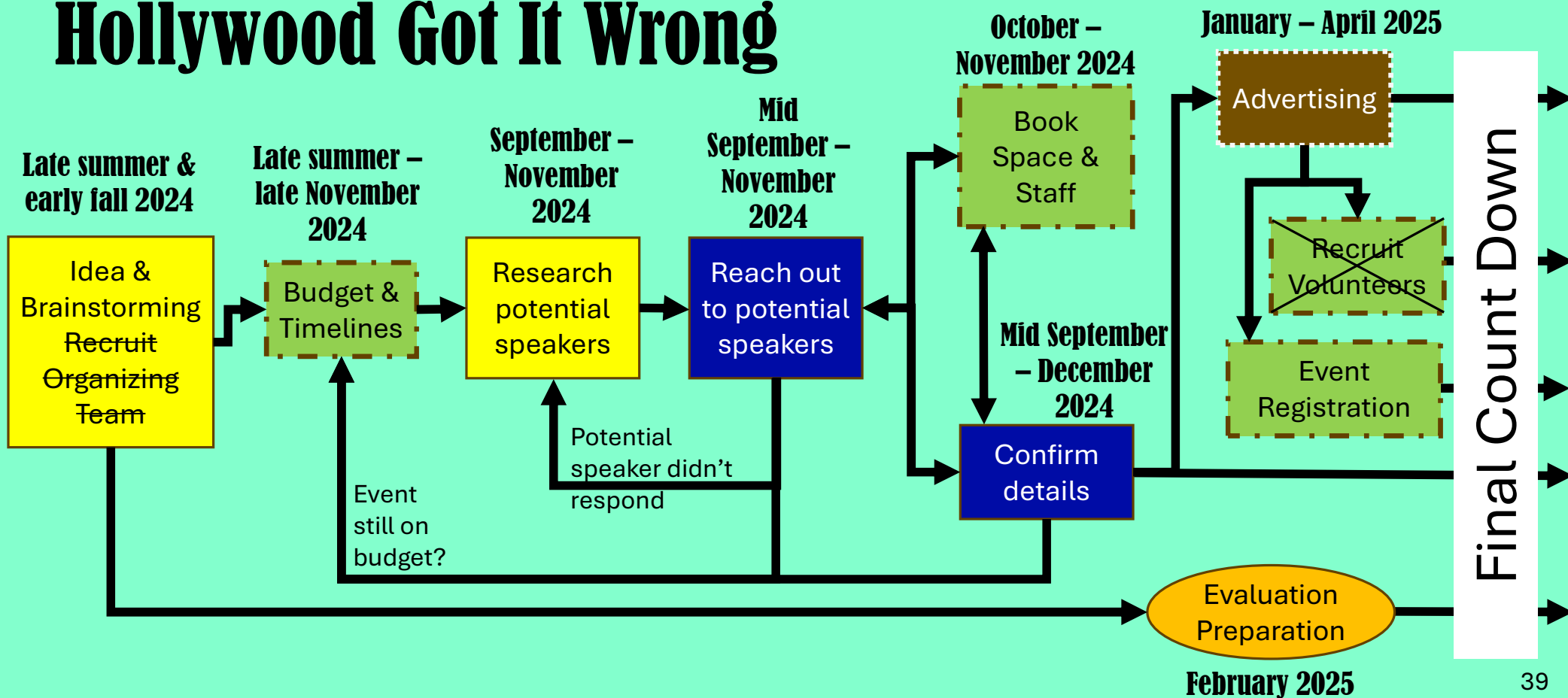
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**Back to The Timeline...**

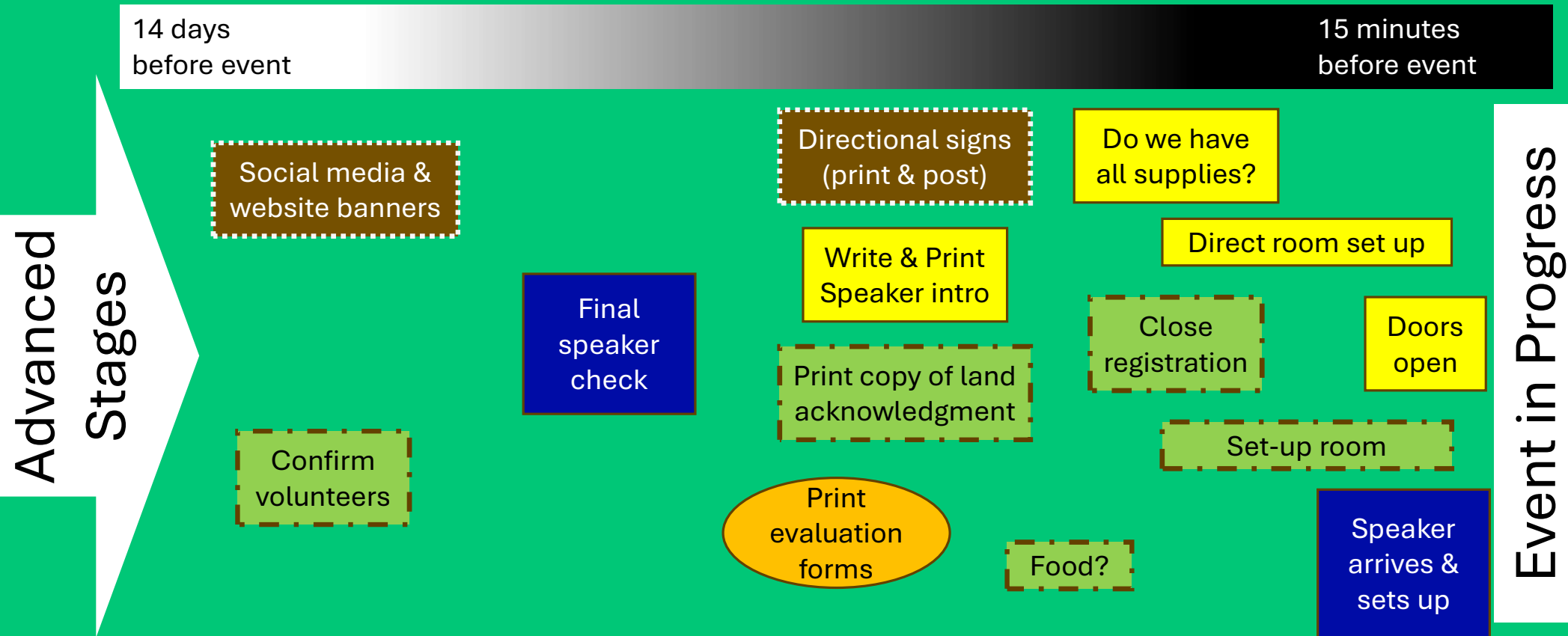
**What do advanced stages look like in  
our example speaker series?**

# The Timeline – Advanced Stages Example

## Hollywood Got It Wrong

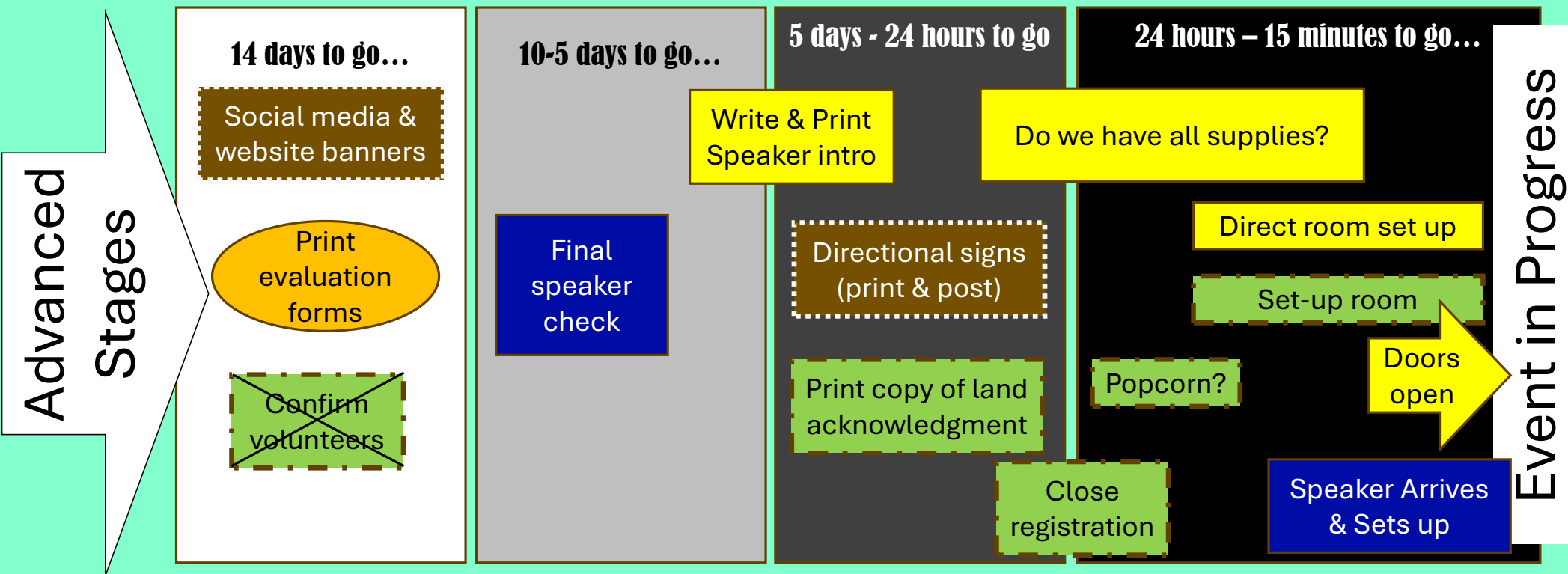


# The Timeline – Final Countdown



# The Timeline – Final Countdown Example

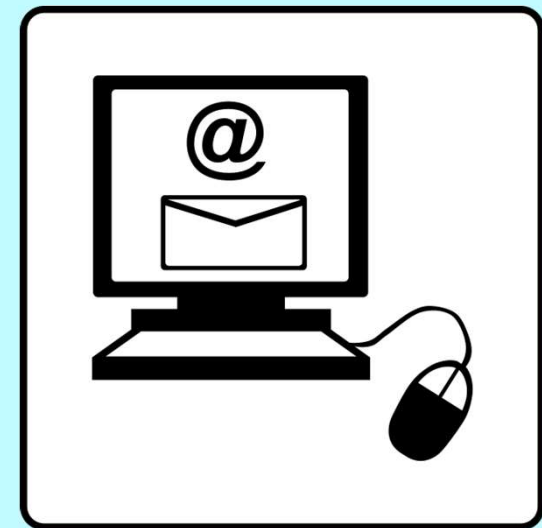
## Hollywood Got It Wrong



# One Week Left... Speaker Check-In

Speaker –  
Organizer  
Collaboration

- Confirm event start time
- Tell them when their primary contact will be in the building
  - Contact info if anything goes wrong
- Confirm number of speaker tickets at their talk
  - this changed for most of my speakers
- Remind them about laptop connections available

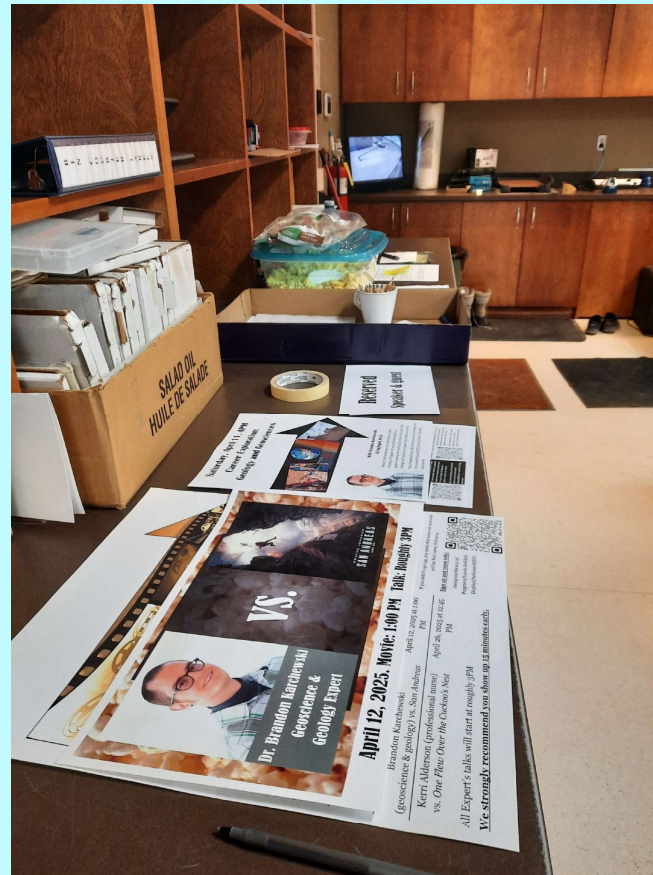


<https://pixabay.com/>

# 24-48 hours before:

## Do We Have All The Supplies?

- I recommend setting up a staging area with checklists as required

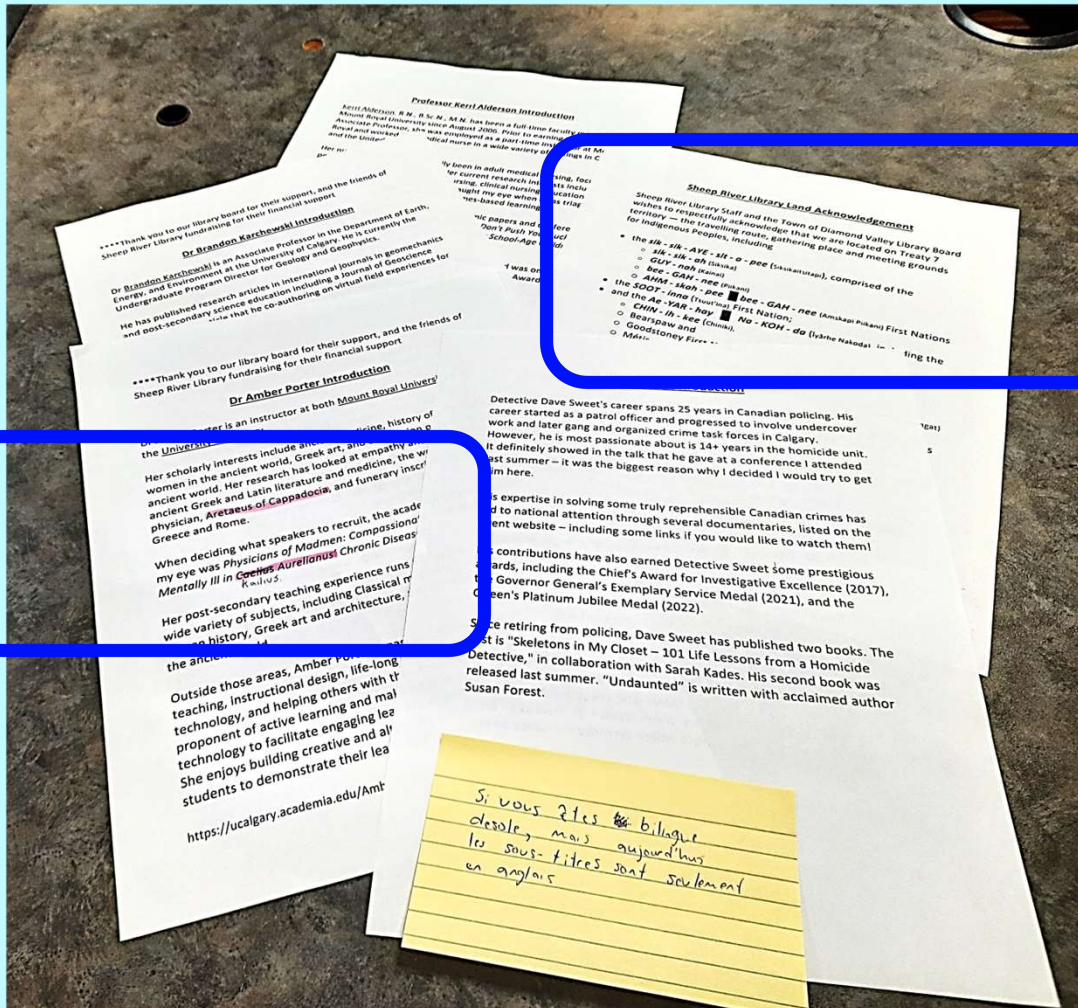


Organizers

## Organizers

# Speaker Bio & Land Acknowledgement

- For some types of speaker series, you won't be the one doing this!
- Print in large font size at least 12 hours before
- Include phonetic pronunciations of unfamiliar words, and highlight anything you need speaker clarification from
- Lesson learned: likely will have a poster with names and/or ask speaker to include this in their slides...





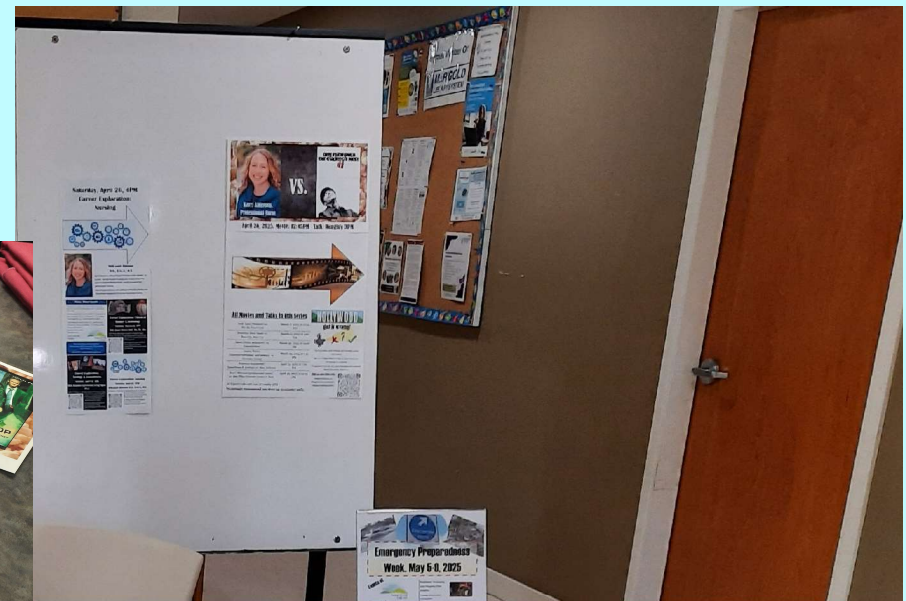
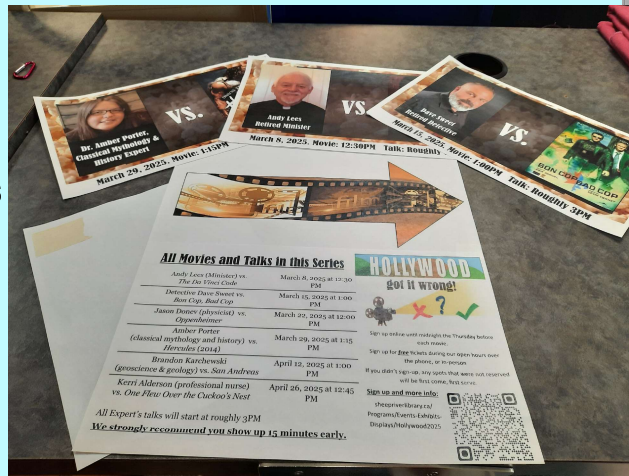
# 18+ Hours Before: Directional Signs

Public  
Communication

Hollywood Got It Wrong – at least 18 hours  
before event. (Added advertising.)

Election Canada & Elections Alberta does signs  
shortly before  
polls open.

Wetterberg Fencing  
Tournament did signs  
inside building night  
before, outside signs  
morning of each day.



# Set Up Room



Library Team  
&  
Volunteers

Organizers

# Doors Open. Event in Progress...



Came?	Name	How did you hear about this?
1	Bonnie	
2	Sharon	
3	A4 Susan	
4	M Howard	
5	Luke D	
6	M Corina	
7	Qonora	
8	T Tracy	
9	M Bev B	
10	M Dave	
11	M Bev M	
12	M Lee M	
13	M Wani	
14	M Wani	
15	M Wani	
16	M Wani	
17	M Wani	
18	M Wani	
19	M Wani	
20	M Wani	
21	M Wani	
22	M Wani	
23	M Wani	
24	M Wani	
25	M Wani	
26	M Wani	
27	M Wani	
28	M Wani	
29	M Wani	
30	M Wani	
31	M Wani	
32	M Wani	
33	M Wani	
34	MILARY	ALICE GROSS
35	CAROL	WHEEL
36	Krista Hendon	
37	Shelby	word of mouth
38	Loretta Lade	staff
39	+ 1 late	
40		
41		
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55		

B. Karchewski vs. San Andreas (not pre-registered)

These drop ins must set up chairs



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# The Timeline – Event in Progress

This will vary *wildly* from event to event.

- Confirm audio-visual working
- Land acknowledgement
- Introduce speaker
- Take photos for posterity
- Manage Q&A session
- Thank & pay speaker
- Distribute & collect evaluations

- Take down

A Summary of my, very event specific schedule is on the next few slides.

# The Timeline – Event in Progress

## Hollywood Got It Wrong

My actual day for each speaker in the series:

~ 1 hour – 15 minutes before movie start:

- Arrive at work
- Confirm chairs are set up ok. Count chairs, (should be 10 more than signed up)
- Confirm location of directional signs
- Set up reception table **except** guest list
- Set up speaker table (thank-you card, water bottle, print copy of intro, etc.)

15 minutes: start projector. If there are previews, play them.

- Find Library Board Member who agreed to man reception. (He found cookies in the library **again**...HOW??) Give him a pen and the guest list.



# The Timeline – Event in Progress

## Hollywood Got It Wrong



### Start movie

- Quietly move wheeled reception table to outside room. Sign in last guests. (I watched the movie before the event!!!)
- Do other **interruptible** work at table outside the event room. Check that volume is ok ~15 minutes into movie

### Movie ends

### No fixed time:

Greet Speaker when they arrive (some watched the movie, some did not).

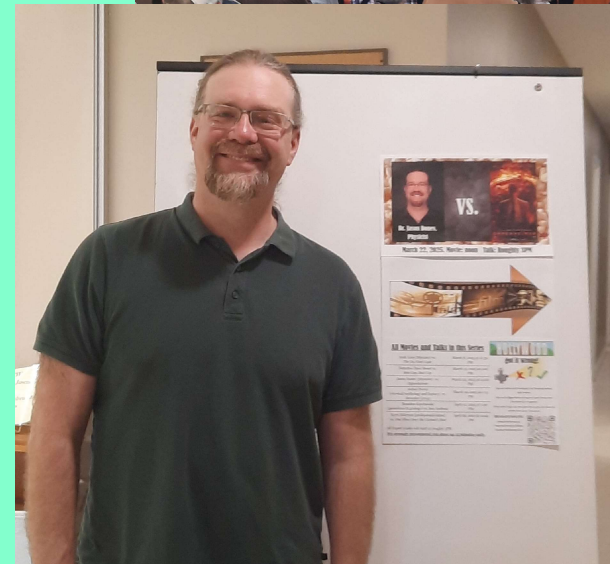
- Pay speaker

# The Timeline – Event in Progress

## Hollywood Got It Wrong

### After Movie

- Tell audience when talk will begin
- Change over from movie → speaker's computer.
- Send a volunteer to check washrooms ~1 minute before talk start.
- Read land acknowledgement, introduce speaker, and acknowledge sponsors.
- Take photos for posterity
- Manage Q&A session





# The Timeline – Event in Progress

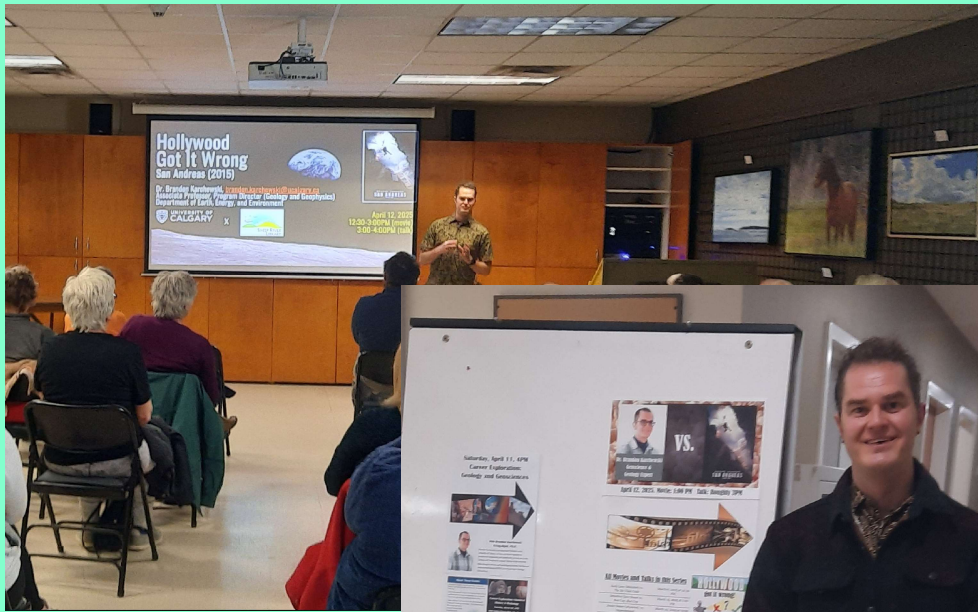
## Hollywood Got It Wrong



- “Thank you” gift to speaker
- Distribute & collect evaluations
- Take down
- After speaker and community member interaction is finished, ask for a photo for posterity.

# The Timeline – Event in Progress

## Hollywood Got It Wrong



# The Timeline – Event in Progress

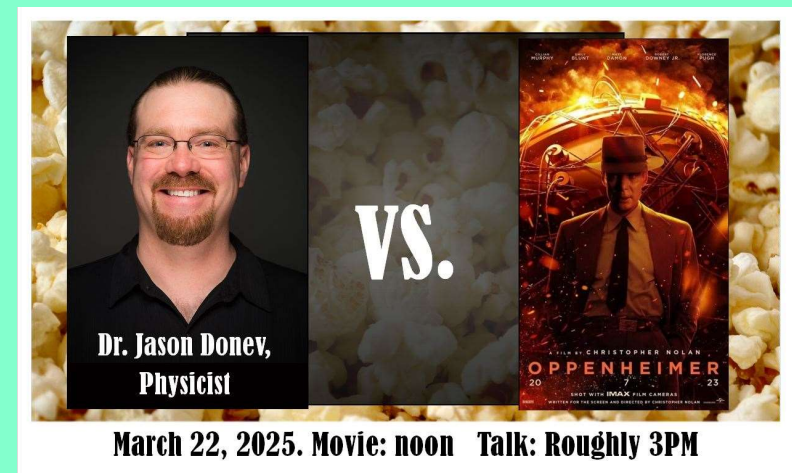
## Hollywood Got It Wrong



**Thank you gift!**

Speakers encouraged to keep the top portion of directional poster to display in their office.

More surprise physicists next year?





# The Timeline – Wrap Up

- Process evaluation forms **send positive remarks from audience to speaker!**
- **Write down ways you can improve**

Do you have any additional comments for the speaker(s) or the organizer(s)? (Feel free to use the back of this paper.)

One gentle comment: in order to facilitate viewers to readily read the sub-titles (closed caption) an aisle down the centre of the room would be highly welcomed.  
During today's viewing heads were bobbing left then right - Also 3 viewers choose to stand.

Jenni - Beautiful afternoon I could be outside.

Speaker –  
Organizer  
Collaboration

Organizers

Evaluation

# The Timeline – Wrap Up

- Thank speaker through email
  - Ask speaker if there are things that could be improved
- Prepare a talk about how to organize a speaker series (optional)

Do you have any additional comments for the speaker(s) or the organizer(s)? (Feel free to use the back of this paper.)

SPEAKER MADE A COMPLEX  
SUBJECT EASILY UNDERSTOOD.  
MANY THANKS!

Do you have any additional comments for the speaker(s) or the organizer(s)? (Feel free to use the back of this paper.)

The speakers have all  
been so good  
Such a great idea!

EXCELLENT CHOICES FOR  
MOVIES/SPEAKERS

Speaker –  
Organizer  
Collaboration

Organizers

Evaluation

**Key Differences**  
**Between:**  
**Hollywood Got It Wrong**  
**&**  
**Emergency**  
**Preparedness Week**  
**&**  
*Fencing Tournaments*

**Speaker Series**

- With Hollywood (March & April), if someone was hard to contact and/or very busy, I would move on. Lots of choices with speakers.
- With Emergency Preparedness (May 6-8), tighter schedule meant more negotiation with local people required. (We also cut half the proposed talks due to scheduling.) However, funded by our tax dollars...

**These speaker series have  
required about the same  
amount of staff hours!**

**Key Differences  
Between:  
Hollywood Got It Wrong  
&  
Emergency  
Preparedness Week  
&  
*Fencing Tournaments***

**Speaker Series vs  
Tournaments**

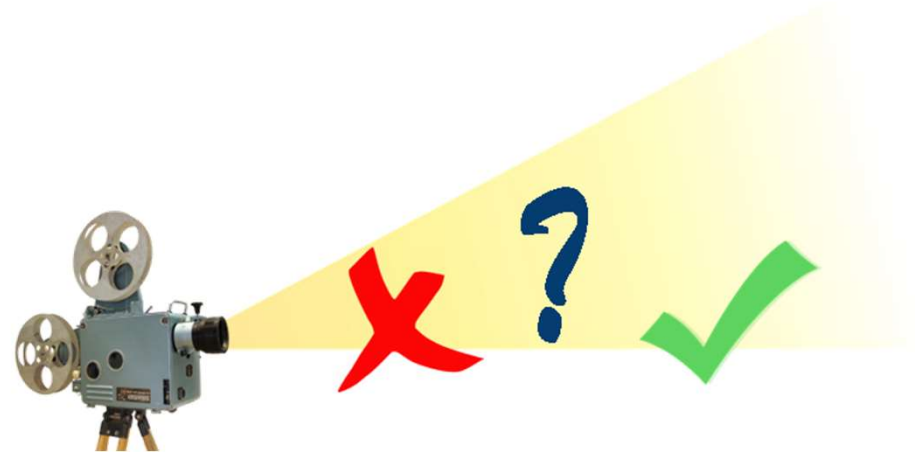
- Much greater flexibility in schedule required for tournaments
- Speaker series had decreased risk of being challenged to a duel
- Tournament's computer printers had more opportunity to choose mischief & evil



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# Lessons Learned: What Did We Do Right? What Did We Do Almost Right?

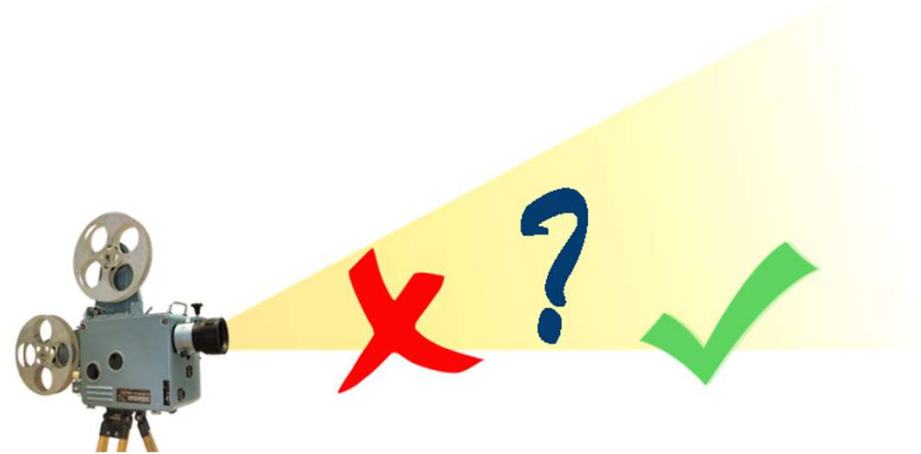
- Largest number of program participants in March since Library started recording that.
- Having a shake-down event with a very local speaker was excellent. If this is your first time in a space, I recommend this if possible.
  - Identified problem with subtitles not being visible
- A few speakers spontaneously recommended books, movies, or TV series. Suggest this to future speakers.



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# Lessons Learned: What Did We Do Wrong?

- Leave longer for community questions – give speakers 60 min for talk, 30 min for questions.
- I need a phone with a better camera. My pictures are terrible.
- We may need to buy a fan to aid cooling in the room if the event grows significantly next year.
- Try not to have a conference talk on your speaker series four days after the series ends



# Questions?

Slides and a sample evaluation form will be up by late Saturday on my blog:

- [theunrestrictedlibrarian.com](http://theunrestrictedlibrarian.com)

*Hollywood Got It Wrong 2025* webpage:

<https://sheepriverlibrary.ca/Programs/Events-Exhibits-Displays/Hollywood2025>

*Emergency Preparedness 2025* webpage:

<https://sheepriverlibrary.ca/Programs/Events-Exhibits-Displays/Emergency-Prep-2025>

## **Contact**

Sheep River Library: [abdsrclibrary@marigold.ab.ca](mailto:abdsrclibrary@marigold.ab.ca)  
or to reach Cheryl directly the contact form at  
[theunrestrictedlibrarian.com](http://theunrestrictedlibrarian.com)





# Cheryl's Post-Presentation Thoughts

Writing the first contact email: my outline for that email *is* in the slides, (slide 21), and does include a brief extract from my first contact email.

Yes, it can be hard to get the tone right.

For tone, I aim for professional respect, roughly the same level I would give if I decided to talk to a person at a professional conference after watching their presentation. If the person I am trying to recruit doesn't feel like there should be peer-to-peer respect, for the speaker series I was coordinating that would not have been a good fit. (And seriously, if the person is going to demand you worship the papers they've published instead of **only** respecting them, do you really **want** to work with them? Will that type of person respect the audience at your speaker series?)

Though this wasn't intentional at the time, re-reading all of those first contact letters shows that I focused the proof-this-isn't-random-contact paragraph mostly on the same hints I'd looked for when I was narrowing down the list of speakers that I wanted to invite.

As far as how much "proof of research" I included in my email, it is usually 1-3 sentences. I treat it as a conversation opener, plus proof that this is not a spammy form letter. For example, my recruitment letter to Prof Karchewski mentioned his multiple teaching awards and the natural disaster course he was teaching.