Happy Spring to All!
(even if it does happen to be snowing on the day you download your issue of Focus)

MLA’s Centennial Conference will be here before we can appreciate that another month of lengthening days and warming temperatures has managed to slip on by. Have you registered for conference yet? Gail Hanowell of the Registration Committee reports that 304 Montana librarians, trustees and friends had registered by the early date of March 17.

If you are not one of those already registered, I hope you will still plan to join your library colleagues in Missoula for this special celebration. In addition to providing exceptional opportunities for continuing education, networking and fun, conference is the perfect place for joining the dialogue on the shape of our changing profession as we “proceed on” into the twenty-first century.

Recent posts on Wired-MT have emphasized opposite ends of the spectrum of library service possibilities. Some value the 21st century library as a presence in the community, a welcoming meeting place for bodies as well as minds. Space-related benefits and free resources for lifelong learning are reported to rank as highly important aspects of libraries in recent public surveys. Others see the library existing primarily “out there”, beyond the bounds of a physical space. Blogs, downloadable texts, and 24/7 online reference services are all seen as vehicles for meeting the public where they are, both actually and figuratively. The Millennials we are told, eschew authorities and wish to seek information from within their own communities.

At the risk of being labeled a creeping curmudgeon, I must confess to being wary of the validity of seeking information by asking around among my own community of acquaintances. Back in the days of gophers and news groups, I lurked on an unmonitored group devoted to herbal medicine. Over the six weeks I followed the discussion threads, I never encountered a post that used the scientific names for plants. In this democratic, we-all-have-something-to-contribute environment, common names were the established norm. The disadvantages of this approach were starkly illustrated when participants debated hotly about whether or not one of their group should self-medicate a heart problem with Foxglove. Many opinions were offered about the wisdom of self-medicating a heart problem, but not one of them noted that the scientific name for Foxglove is Digitalis purpurea, the original source of the prescription drug digitalis. Nor did anyone mention that most “authoritative” texts would classify this plant as “extremely poisonous”.

Although it should always be subject to question, authority—the sort of authority well-edited texts and reference works possess—does have its place. I would rather rely on the Physicians Desk Reference or my local pharmacist for information on drug contraindications than on my neighbors, who may, after all, know even less than I do. Although I know authorities may be fallible, I tend to believe that they became recognized as such because they know more about a given subject than the random citizen.

The role of libraries has historically been seen as a gateway to learning, a repository of recorded knowledge that invites all people to share in discovery and learning and seeks to advance literacy. Is this still our role if libraries are viewed as virtual and serve primarily as facilitators of communication?

In his President’s Message for the March 2006 issue of American Libraries, Michael Gorman reflects on the decline of literacy in our society, where literacy is defined as the ability to interact with complex texts and to analyze and compare presented viewpoints. He further emphasizes that improving literacy should be an essential component of the services provided by librarians in all types of libraries.

I believe I agree with this point of view. As we search for the perfect balance in allocating scant library resources, I think we need to truly value the benefits of traditional library roles as well as applauding the possibilities of reaching out to new audiences in new ways.

Do you share this view? Does it make you wince and think of Luddites? Do you believe Montana’s libraries are “proceeding on” the right road into the future? Come to conference, May 3-6, and let’s discuss it!
Virtual Reference is Growing!

We’re coming up on our second year of virtual reference in Montana, and things are happening! For those of you who were at Offline this year, Pam Bailey’s presentation ([montanallibraries.org/Offline/WhoAreYouCallingFlat-PamBailey.pps]) really struck a cord. Virtual reference is all about “flattening the world”, collaborating deeply, and realizing that geography and language don’t matter as much.

In our Montana virtual reference service, Ask a Montana Librarian, we’ve answered almost 1500 email and chat questions in our two years in business. Now the time has come for us to expand our service.

Starting July 1, we’re going to 24-hour, 7-day a week service. No, we’re not drawing straws or doing reference in our sleep! Rather, we’re joining OCLC QuestionPoint’s global cooperative. This means that our service can continue receiving chat requests and emails “after hours”, and librarians around the world will answer them.

How is this possible? Every library that joins the global cooperative fills out a policy form with basic information about the library-hours, services, frequently asked questions, database subscriptions, and the like. Then that policy attaches itself to any patron who sends a question or requests a chat using the library’s form.

Of course we’ll continue monitoring the service during our regular hours (8 AM - 8 PM Monday-Thursday, 8-5 on Fridays) and directly answer our own Montana patrons’ questions during those hours. Want to check us out? Just go to montanallibraries.org and click on Ask a Montana Librarian.

If you’re interested in joining us, we’d love to have you! For information, contact Betsy Harper Garlish (bgarlish@mtech.edu) or come to “Ask A Montana Librarian: Adventures in Reference” with Sheila Bonnard and Betsy Garlish during Significant Tidings on Friday, May 5, 8:30-10:00.

And stay tuned- more changes are in the works...

Betsy Harper Garlish
Montan Tech Library
bgarlish@mtech.edu

MPLA-NMLA Joint Conference

The Mountain Plains Library Association-New Mexico Library Association Joint 2007 conference will be held March 14 - 16 at the Albuquerque Convention Center. The DoubleTree will be the conference hotel, at a rate of $90 per night. For more information contact:

Wayne Hanway
Wayne Hanway, MPLA President-Elect
whanway@sepl.lib.ok.us
Are You Ready?

Montana Library Association Annual Conference News “Proceeding on....”

May 3 – 6, 2006
Holiday Inn Parkside - Missoula, MT

Only one month to go until the 2006 MLA Conference!

The MLA 100th anniversary Centennial Celebration in Missoula (May 3-6) is only a month away. Are you prepared for this big event? Only if you’ve done the following:

• Checked the Website for the latest breaking conference news:
  www.mtlib.org/conf/mla2006/index.htm
• Registered for the conference:
  www.mtlib.org/conf/mla2006/registrationform.pdf
• Booked your hotel room at Holiday Inn Parkside: www.himissoula.com
• Selected your Trivia teammates (and more importantly, the outfits you will be wearing) for Cates Trivia Mania, May 4th, 8:00-10:00 p.m.
• Started reading the conference book The Time Traveler’s Wife, by Audrey Niffenegger to be discussed May 3, 8:30-10:00 p.m.
• Or started reading the book of the author’s luncheon speaker: Janna Nickerson, who wrote Eyes of War.
• Signed up for the MLA Night Dine-Around, May 3rd, 6:00 p.m.: www.mtlib.org/conf/mla2006/MLA_Night.pdf
• Picked out one of these special events to attend: Birding: America’s latest craze, Missoula Style, May 3, 8:30-10:30 am; Wednesday Afternoon Excursions, May 3rd, 1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.: Missoula Smokejumper Center & Missoula Technology & Development Center
  visitmt.com/categories/moreinfo.asp?IDRRecordID=3136&SiteID=1
  Fort Missoula Museum: www.fortmissoulamuseum.org Walking Tour of Historic Missoula, May 4th, 4:45-5:45 p.m.
• Checked out the MLA 2006 Conference Blog at mla-conference.blogspot.com

Ready or not, here we come, Missoula! See you there!

Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
2006 MLA Conference Publicity Chair
ljackson@mt.gov

Items Needed for Sheila Cates Scholarship Raffle

If you are planning to put together a basket, bag or box of goodies for the Sheila Cates Scholarship Raffle to be held at MLA in Missoula, May 4-6, 2006, please send an item description to Ve Abrams at Fallon County Library phone 406-778-7175, email vabrams@mtlib.org or Diane Van Gorden at Baker MS/HS Library, phone 406 778-3329, email dkvg3955@yahoo.com Please remember that the price limit on items in the raffle is $75.00.

Raffle items will be available for viewing in the exhibit area during the conference. Raffle tickets for the items will be $1.00 each or 6 for $5.00, and you need not be present to win. The drawings will be held at the close of the exhibits.

Here’s how the raffle will work:
All items to be raffled will be numbered and a small box with that number will be placed near the item.
If you want to win item #5 (we don’t know what item #5 will be yet!), you write your name on a raffle ticket and place it in Box #5. And even though they say not to put all your eggs in one basket, if you REALLY want item #5, you can place all your tickets in Box #5.

If you don’t want to write your name on raffle tickets a billion times (well, maybe not that many times, but more than once), use some of those unsolicited address labels that appear in your mailbox from time to time.

Not coming to MLA, but still want to participate in the Cates Raffle? Send money with a friend and have them enter you in the Raffle.

Diane Van Gorden
Cates Scholarship Committee
Baker Middle School / High School
dkvg3955@yahoo.com
Membership News

As of March 27, the association has a total of 583 members - 63 more than reported in the last issue of Focus. Thank you to everyone who joined or renewed their membership. There are 334 in the public library division (an increase of 39), 152 in the school/library media division (an increase of 24), and 100 in academic/special library division (a decrease of 9, due to non-renewals for 2005). Three of us are in more than one division. We are 86 people away from reaching one of our highest membership years (669 in 2003). Our informal membership drive of 100 new members since April 2005 by May 2006 is going well though - only 31 new members to go. Membership runs from July 1 through June 30, so if you plan on joining at conference, you will need to renew in two months. The sooner you join or renew, the harder your dues will work for the association. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact one of your Directors at Large: Gail Wilkerson (406-232-3060, Gail.Wilkerson@va.gov), or Magi Malone (406-758-5814, mmalone@co.flathead.mt.us). And please help us welcome our 20 newest members:

- Diane Anderson, Missoula County Public Schools, Missoula
- Jan Burgess, Lone Rock School Librarian, Florence
- Karen Collins, Glacier County Public Library, Cut Bank
- Mary Greil, UM Library Student, Missoula
- Trude Hunsucker, Polson Public Library, Polson
- Skeeter Johnston, Flathead County Public Library, Whitefish
- David Ketchum, Mansfield Library, Missoula
- Linda Lynch, Central Elementary School Library, Helena
- Pamela Marek, Mansfield Library, Missoula
- Maggie Meredith, Montana State Library, Helena
- Renee Meyer, Bozeman Public Library, Bozeman
- Nancy Peterson, Franklin Elementary Library, Missoula
- William Peterson, Trustee, Wedsworth Memorial Library, Cascade
- Heather Prebel, UM Library Student, Missoula
- Leslie Rieger, Mansfield Library, Missoula
- Kimberly Rott, Sentinel High School Library, Missoula
- Megan Stark, Mansfield Library, Missoula
- Jodi Teeple, Student, University of Montana, Missoula
- Glenna Waltee, Trustee, Jefferson County Library, Whitehall
- Sue Warner, Trustee, West Yellowstone Library, West Yellowstone

Thank You!
Your Membership Committee

PNLA News

PNLA has three executive board positions open for the 2006 election; Secretary, 2nd Vice President, and Vice President/President Elect. If you would like to be part of this dynamic international organization of dedicated librarians, contact Jan Zauha at jzauha@montana.edu

Young Readers’ Choice Awards

The Pacific Northwest Library Association is looking for someone to run the YRCA store that Bette Ammon and Carole Monlux have managed for so many years. As technology has changed, the committee is hoping to make many of the products available through a web site which will make the job less time-consuming. Anyone interested in helping young readers as store manager, can contact Norma Glock at nglock@cablemt.net

PNLA Leadership Institute

“Library leaders come in all forms and from all levels within libraries. They may be support staff or professionals, with or without library school degrees.” This quote from the www.pnla.org website expresses the desire of PNLA’s Leadership Institute to “cultivate ... leadership skills and potential” to all people involved in the library field. This year’s institute will be held October 22, 2006 to noon on Friday October 27, 2006 at the Tamarack Resort (Donnelly, Idaho, 90 minutes north of the capital city of Boise). Scholarships are available to help defray the costs of this Institute. Applications are now being accepted and four Montanans are eligible to attend.

Library Leaders Honored

Three distinguished Montana library women have been honored as Women of the Year by their Business and Professional Women local organizations. Alice Meister, Director of the Bozeman Public Library, was named by the Bozeman BPW, and Library Expansion Campaign Co-Chairs Janet Bernthal and Nancy Danaher were named by the Livingston BPW. Their nominations for the Montana Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Woman of Achievement Award will be reviewed by a panel of judges during April, and the award will be announced at the end of the month.

Those of us in Montana libraries already know what talented and dedicated individuals support library services in Montana, but it is wonderful to have an organization such as Business and Professional Women recognize the outstanding contributions these library leaders make to their communities.

Three cheers for Alice and Janet and Nancy!
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E-mail: slis@unt.edu • Visit: [www.unt.edu/slis](http://www.unt.edu/slis)
State Library News

State Library presents Overview of Library Resources for Government Workers

The Montana State Library is offering two separate opportunities for state employees to learn more about the services and support the library provides. Hard-copy resources, maps, government documents, online databases, interlibrary loans, research assistance, and reference services will be discussed. The sessions will be held at the Montana State Library in the Grizzly Conference Room on April 13 and May 12 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. To sign up for a session, please register at msl.mt.gov/contact/overview_registration.html

Julie Klauss
Collections Access and Outreach Librarian
Montana State Library
jklauss@mt.gov.

“What’s Your Story?” Campaign Wins Gold Addy

The Montana State Library has announced that its “What’s Your Story?” campaign was recognized with a gold addy at this year’s Addy Awards. The award specifically recognized a series of posters that were created for the campaign, and have been distributed widely to libraries to use in their facilities and to also market themselves in their communities. Q Communications Group of Helena designed the posters and accepted the award.

“The “What’s Your Story?” campaign is an excellent tool for Montana libraries to use to market themselves,” said Sara Groves, coordinator of the campaign. “The marketing committee worked hard to develop a series of tools that libraries around the state would be proud to display and that would help us do a better job of marketing ourselves to our communities.”

United by a logo, the campaign will focus on a different audience in each year of the campaign. The first year of the “What’s Your Story?” campaign focused on Montana’s senior citizens.

A wide range of tools and materials were developed for the “What’s Your Story?” campaign, including three television and radio public service announcements that are airing statewide on cable and network television; posters; bookmarks; a public Web site; and print ads that appeared in statewide publications. The campaign also provided librarians with key messages; tips on handling various press situations; sample letters-to-the-editor; op-eds; and programming ideas.

“We developed a comprehensive set of marketing tools so that any library could utilize the campaign,” said Groves. “Whether your library is large or small, with a staff of one or a staff of 30, whether you serve the public or a special segment of the population, there is something in the “What’s Your Story?” campaign for your library to use.”

The State Library also received a bronze award for its “Xtreme Research” poster, which was developed to share with school libraries as a way to reach teens. Q Communications Group also designed that poster. Q won a total of seven awards.

The Addy Awards competition is an annual event to recognize and reward creative excellence in advertising, sponsored by the American Advertising Federation and its affiliate, the Great Falls Advertising Federation.

Additional “What’s Your Story?” materials will be available for libraries at the Montana Library Association conference in May. For more information on the “What’s Your Story?” campaign or to access the tools and materials that are available to libraries to use, please visit: msl.mt.gov/whatsyourstory

Sara Groves
Communications and Marketing Coordinator
Montana State Library
sgroves@mt.gov.

Summer Institute for Public Library Directors and Trustees

The 2006 Summer Institute (SI) is scheduled for June 19-22 on the MSU campus in Bozeman. It will start (June 19) with a half-day orientation for all of our new public library directors. The institute (June 20-22) will focus on obstacles to sustaining public access computing and participants will learn how to create technology sustainability action plans, an important tool for library directors and Boards. We’ll also explore how to connected the library with the community, developing library stories and other tools to put the library at the center of local issues and developments. As always, the institute provides a perfect opportunity for librarians and trustees to come together and brainstorm solutions for challenging issues they all face. Institute participants will have accommodations in the MSU dorm and meals at the campus dining hall. Reimbursement for mileage to travel to and from Bozeman will be available. Registration for the Summer Institute will begin in late April.

MSL, Continued on Next Page...
Montana Library Focus  April 2006

**State Library Welcomes New Staff**

The Library Development Department (LDD) welcomes two new staff members. Donna Caban joined the State Library staff in February as LDD’s Administrative and Training Support Associate. The position was reestablished by the 2005 Legislature. Donna will be helping with organizing and implementing a wide variety of library development projects and events. Lauren McMullen joined our staff in March as a Training Specialist, a new position funded with Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant funds administered by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the State Library Commission. Lauren, who was director of the Carnegie Library in Big Timber before joining the State Library staff, will be providing customized formal/informal training on new technologies and services on both a statewide and local level. A hearty welcome to Lauren and Donna!

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**PEEL Library Stipend Program**

Montana State Library is happy to announce that two library stipends for professional library positions have been awarded as part of the PEEL grant project: Helena Public Schools will hire a full-time librarian at Jim Darcy Elementary School and Bitterroot Public Library in Hamilton will add a children’s/youth services librarian to the staff. The stipend recipients will receive $30,000 over two years to fund the new positions. The libraries will match this amount and make every effort to continue the position after the two-year grant period. The stipends are funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Four library stipends will be available in 2008 as part of the PEEL II project.

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**PEEL Scholarship Update**

Twenty-four scholarship applications were received by the March 15th deadline. Montana State Library will first receive from the University of Washington’s Information School notification of the Montanans who have been accepted into the graduate program. Then the PEEL Advisory Committee will meet in Helena on April 25 to review the scholarship applications and prepare a recommendation for the State Library Commission about the scholarships awards.

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**New Gates Grants for Public Libraries**

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has awarded $295,500 to Montana for public libraries to purchase new computers between 2006-2008. The Public Access Computing Hardware Upgrade Grant (PAC-HUG) will be administered by Montana State Library. All public libraries and branches completed an online technology inventory in December 2005 and grant funds will be awarded to each library based on the data provided in that inventory. Details for the PAC-HUG project will be finalized during the next two months and grant awards will be made available to libraries in July.

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**Lewis and Clark Activity Books**

Lewis & Clark Activity Books are still available. The books are $2.00 each and full of lots of information and activities. If you drop me an e-mail jherdina@manhattan.k12.mt.us, I can bring your order along to MLA and save you the postage. Use these books as fund raisers for your library, additions to vertical files, premiums for reading programs, etc...

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**A great career at your library**

New videos are now posted on the great career website about librarianship msl.mt.gov/greatcareer/html/postings.htm Thanks to Suzanne, John, Laura, and Fred for sharing their thoughts about being a Montana librarian.

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**Lewis and Clark Activity Books**

Julia Herdina
Lewis & Clark Task Force
Manhattan Community Library
jherdina@manhattan.k12.mt.us
Fourth Annual Montana Book Award Winner Selected!

The Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild to Yellowstone by Douglas W. Smith and Gary Ferguson (The Lyons Press of Guilford, Connecticut) has been selected as the 2005 Montana Book Award (MBA) winner. This annual award recognizes literary and/or artistic excellence in a book published in the previous year.

This year's award winner is a work of nonfiction that traces the first decade of the controversial wolf reintroduction program in Yellowstone. Interweaving scientific facts, personal accounts, and stories of the wolves themselves, the authors provide an intimate glimpse of this groundbreaking project and of the Yellowstone ecosystem.

The committee was impressed with the even handed treatment of this highly charged topic in a book that, while it clearly celebrates the wolf, takes pains to present both sides. Douglas W. Smith lives in Gardiner, MT, and Gary Ferguson lives in Red Lodge, MT.

Four honor books were also chosen by the Montana Book Award committee:

- X Out of Wonderland: A Saga by David Allan Cates (Steerforth Press);
- Composing Voices: A Cycle of Dramatic Mono-
-logues by Robert Pack (Lost Horse Press);
- Darkest Before Dawn: Sedition and Free Speech in the American West by Clemens P. Work (University of New Mexico Press);
- Mahjong All Day Long by Ginnie Lo, with illustrations by Beth Lo (Walker & Company).

The Montana Book Award was founded by the Friends of the Missoula Public Library in 2002 and winners are selected by a committee of individuals representing geographic distribution throughout Montana. Members of the 2005 committee included Bill Kehler, Billings; Haven Gourneau, Poplar; Jan Zauha, Bozeman; Samantha Pierson, Libby; Susan Duffy, Missoula; Della Dubbe, Cut Bank; Jean Lemire Dahlman, Forsyth; Linda Minich, Butte; and Susan Witte, Helena. The MBA chair is Brigid Wilson, Missoula with corporate sponsorship of the Montana Book Award provided by Fact & Fiction Bookstore (Missoula).

The 2006 Montana Book Award committee is already hard at work considering titles published in 2006 for its next award. Eligible titles must be set in Montana, deal with Montana themes or issues, or be written or illustrated by a Montana author or artist. Books for all ages are considered for the award. Nominations may be submitted by authors, publishers and members of the public. For more information, or to nominate a title for consideration, visit: www.montanabookaward.org.

Jan Zauha
MBA Committee Member, 2005
jzauha@montana.edu

The Courage to Remember

The Big Sky High School library and Title I services teamed to present “The Courage to Remember.” Students, staff and the community had the opportunity to view a special historical and educational exhibit which focused on the Holocaust. As an extension activity for freshman students reading Night by Elie Wiesel, the library opened its doors to the exhibit. In four days, 52 English, Social Studies and Foreign Language classes visited the exhibit and 50 community members attended a special evening showing.

This well received exhibit included 40 posters with nearly 200 photographs and text which gave a historical perspective of the Holocaust. Many teachers had students engaged in writing activities related to their reflections of the exhibit. Due to the positive response from staff and students, the library plans to have the exhibit return in the future.

“The Courage to Remember: The Holocaust 1933-1945” was on loan from the Montana Association of Jewish Communities.

Christine Fogerty
Big Sky High School, Missoula
cfogerty@mcps.k12.mt.us
Books and Movies

Books and Movies is the theme of the sixth annual Great Falls Festival of the Book, held at the Great Falls Public Library April 27 – 29. All events are free and open to the public.

The festival kicks off on Thursday, April 27, at 7:00 p.m., in the Cordingley Room of the library with a presentation by former TV personality Norma Ashby. Ashby will discuss and read from her book Movie Stars and Rattlesnakes, which tells of the many movie stars and personalities she interviewed and worked with during her career. She will also show a short video with clips of some of her more famous interviews.

On Friday, April 28, the festival continues with a reading and reception beginning at 7:00, in the Cordingley Room of the library. Featured authors are Janet Muirhead Hill, Marcus Stevens, and Annick Smith.

Hill is the founder of Raven Publishing and author of the Starlight Series of books for young adults. A film based on the first two books of this series, Miranda and Starlight, is in the works, with endorsement from Governor Schweitzer.

Stevens, the 2004 recipient of the Montana Book Award for his book Useful Girl. He has lived in Montana for the last fifteen years and is the author of two books. He has worked for the last 20 years as an award winning, commercial director and cameraman. His screenplay, Smile Cowboy, based on Buck Brannaman’s life and book, Faraway Horses, is currently in development with Stevens slated as director. His 2002 book, The Curve of the World, is also in development.

Annick Smith has written four books including most recently In This We Are Native, Memoirs and Journeys. She was a co-editor of The Last Best Place, a Montana anthology, and her essays have appeared in many notable magazines. Her story, “It’s come To This”, which won a National Magazine Award in Fiction for Story Magazine, has been widely anthologized. She was the executive producer of the film feature Heartland, and a co-producer of A River Runs Through It. She has lived on a homestead in Montana’s Blackfoot River valley for thirty years.

On Saturday, April 29 events begin at 10:00 a.m., with Sue Hart, a professor at MSU—Billings, and scriptwriter and co-producer of the documentary Gravel in Her Gut & Spit in Her Eye, based on the life and work of Dorothy Johnson who wrote such classics as The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance. A screening of the documentary will be included in Hart’s presentation.

An informal discussion on books and movies begins at 11:30 a.m. Sue Hart will lead a discussion with Annick Smith, Marcus Stevens, Janet Muirhead Hill and Andrew Smith.

The festival continues in the afternoon, beginning at 1:00 p.m., with local author and screenwriter Ted Geoghegan with the presentation “Blood Curdling Fun: Writing for Horror”. As the title implies, Geoghegan works specifically in the genre of horror. He has had a hand in several major horror films in the European market.

At 2:00 p.m. Andrew Smith with present “Slaughter Rule and New Territory”. Smith lives in Brooklyn and Missoula, Montana, where is an Assistant Professor in the Media Arts production program. Together with his twin brother Alex he wrote and directed the film The Slaughter Rule, filmed in the Great Falls area. The brothers are currently working on other film projects. Along with his work in films, Andrew also is a published poet.

The book festival will conclude with a 3:00 p.m. screening of the film The Slaughter Rules.

Walk To Library

Curious about how many steps you take a day or are you trying to get motivated to increase your activity levels? The Great Falls Public Library can help. Residents of Cascade County can borrow pedometer kits from the library for one month as a part of the “Get Fit Great Falls” program. The Cascade County Physical Activity Council sponsors this program and is providing the pedometers. The library is facilitating by checking them out.

You don’t need a library card to borrow a pedometer, but will fill out a form for a month’s use of the step-counting gadget. Included with the pedometer are an instructional book, a few pamphlets and a tape measure to set your stride. The Great Falls Public Library is one of a handful of libraries in the United States and Canada that are involved in a pedometer program. Fresno County Library System, which has been participating since last spring has reported a strong, consistent use of the pedometers. We hope to see the same in our community.

For more information on the program, contact Cascade County Commissioner Peggy Beltrone at 454-6810. To get information on the pedometer checkout contact the Great Falls Public Library at 453-0349.

Jude Smith
Public Relations Coordinator
Great Falls Public Library
jusmith@mtlib.org
News From Bozeman Public Library

Governor Brian Schweitzer toured the new Bozeman Public Library building site on Wednesday, March 8 with his wife, Nancy, an avid fan of libraries, architect Mark Headley, chair of the building committee JB Bancroft, and others. The Governor talked with Headley and Bancroft about many of the Library’s “green” features including solar panels, recycled materials, and night flushing.

The new Library will be the premier green building in our state. When completed in the fall of 2006, it is anticipated that the facility will receive a Silver LEED (Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design) rating from the U.S. Green Building Council. All sustainable systems will be educational in nature and will be featured in an exhibit in the main lobby that will highlight the unique green building components.

Two Requests for Proposals (RFPs)-one for an art project for the children’s library entryway and another for a coffee shop vendor—are posted on the Library web site www.bozemanlibrary.org. Deadlines are Monday, April 17 for the Coffee Shop and Friday, April 28 for the Children’s Entry. For more photos and information about the new Library, check our website.

In other news, Library Director Alice Meister received the 2006 Woman of Achievement Award from the Bozeman Business and Professional Women’s organization on February 22. Alice was recognized for her commitment to literacy and to libraries locally and nationally. We are all so proud of her contributions to our Library and our community.

Cindy Christin  
Bozeman Public Library  
christin@mtlib.org

Beyond the Patriot Act Screening

MLA Intellectual Freedom Committee will sponsor a showing of “Beyond the Patriot Act”, a 30 minute DVD from the ACLU, with a discussion following moderated by Lois Fitzpatrick.

This event will be at the Missoula Public Library at 6p.m. Wednesday May 3rd. It is free and open to all MLA conference attendees. Pizza and soda will be provided.

“Beyond the Patriot Act” is the first episode of the ACLU Freedom Files from the American Civil Liberties Union and Robert Greenwald’s Brave New Films. It is produced and directed by award-winning filmmaker Jeremy Kagan. Through personal stories of ordinary Americans, “Beyond the Patriot Act,” tells how a misguided law and other government overreactions to Sept. 11 have restricted our most basic constitutional freedoms and threaten America’s system of checks and balances.

Beth Boyson  
Intellectual Freedom Committee  
Bozeman Public Library  
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ASLD Dinner

Members of the Academic and Special Libraries Division (ASLD) will again gather on May 4th in Missoula for their traditional conference dinner. Arrangements have been made at The Bridge just a short walk across the Higgins Avenue bridge from the conference site. The cost is $23 and advance reservations must be made. Visit the conference Website for more information www.mtlib.org/conf/mla2006/ASLDDinner.pdf. A special invitation is being extended to all past ASLD chairs to attend.

ASLD also announces its 2006 slate of candidates. Samantha Hines of the University of Montana Mansfield Library is candidate for Vice Chair/Chair-elect (Chair 2007-2008) and Mary Lou Mires of the D’Arcy McNickle Library at Salish Kootenai College is running for Secretary. Balloting will be done via the Web. Please watch Wired-Mt for the particulars. If you do not have access to email and the Web, please contact John Thomas (447-4343 or Carroll College, 1601 N. Benton, Helena 59625) for a paper ballot.

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Northwest Archivists to Meet in Butte

Northwest Archivists, the regional association of professional archivists and those interested in the preservation and use of archival materials, is holding its annual conference in Butte May 17-20, 2006.

FOCUS readers may be particularly interested in the pre-conference workshop “Archives Basics,” taught by Arlene Schmuland of the University of Alaska-Anchorage. This 2 day workshop is intended to give individuals with responsibilities for historic or permanent records an introduction to the basics of archival theory and practice. The workshop is made up of a combination of hands-on practice, group discussion and projects, and some lecture. The goal is to help individuals understand how to best manage the historical records collections in their care. The cost for this 2-day workshop is $40 for NWA members, $45 for non-members. Registration is limited to 15 people.

For additional information, including a full conference program and more details about the “Archives Basics” workshop, check out the NWA 2006 conference website at: weblib.lib.umt.edu/faculty/mccrea/nwa/nwaindex.htm

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SLA NorthWest Regional Conference in Vancouver, BC

Don’t miss the next great SLA Conference. If you can’t make it to SLA 2006 in July, there is still another great opportunity for networking and professional development coming this fall.

The SLA NorthWest Regional Conference will host a meeting on October 6 & 7, 2006 in beautiful Vancouver, British Columbia. It will be an educational gathering for information professionals to discuss the life cycle of information and how it can be facilitated, improved and advanced through people and technology.

Our theme, “Content Management—Converging Information, People and Technology” will allow us to look at knowledge management, knowledge sharing, content management, communities of practice, and water cooler gossip—all describing the time honored practice of sharing information via tools such as metadata, thesauri, ontologies, and XML schemas.

The centrally located Fairmont Hotel is the conference site, and will be offering a special SLA hotel rate of C$189/night for a double room.

Keynote speaker, Bob Boiko, the author of the Content Management Bible, is considered the guru of content management. Mr. Boiko is currently President of Metatorial Services, Inc. www.metatorial.com and an affiliate faculty member of the Information School at the University of Washington www.ischool.washington.edu. He will kick off the event on Friday morning, which will follow with a general exhibit floor opening and several breakout rooms available for discussions through the next day.

The conference will focus on three tracks critical to information management: process, technical and implementation. Plan on participating in this energizing conference to discover how our colleagues are converging information, people, and technology.

This conference offers a program with great content in a scenic location with lots of opportunities to explore the area. Fall is a great time to experience Vancouver, BC!

Early registration starts on April 1, 2006
Regular registration July 1-September 1, 2006
The SLA NorthWest Regional conference web site is located at: www.sla.org/chapter/cwcn/conference/NWRC2006/index.htm

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Overnight Successes Are Years In The Making!

And that’s where MPLA comes in. If you are an emerging library leader, the Mountain Plains Library Association wants you to be primed for a great library career, and we are ready to assist you. The Leadership Institute will once again be held at the Ghost Ranch, just north of Santa Fe, New Mexico on October 29- November 3, 2006. This year’s Institute Leader will be again be Maureen Sullivan of Sullivan Associates. Application deadline is fast approaching. Applications must be received no later than May 14th.

If you have questions, please contact Montana’s own Mary Bushing, who is this year’s Institute coordinator and mentor.

What attendees have said about the Institute...

“The Institute was most meaningful for me on a personal level. I did all of my graduate work completely online I graduated with forty people, many of whom I ‘attended’ class with for three years, and I didn’t know a single one of them. I did not realize how much I missed having peers until the institute. MPLA provided a profound learning experience at Ghost Ranch, definitely, but I came away with something even more profoundly valuable: a cohort. There’s really no way to adequately express my gratitude in words, so I intend to prove it with a brilliantly productive career. I hope I do the Institute justice.”

Dr. Mary C. Bushing
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