Greetings All!

I hope you have been enjoying the warm temperatures and return of the birds and bits of green in the landscape. I’m enjoying the changes outside while I reflect on what has been going on inside the last few months. Our association has had a busy winter.

We had a small crisis arise with Wired-MT, our association listserv. BCR, who hosted us very graciously for years, had a software update that did not mix with our listserv software and was no longer able to support hosting Wired-MT. Bruce Newell volunteered to help our List Manager, Margaret Webster, and with the help of Barb Conger and others at OCLC, came up with a new hosting situation at OCLC within a week! I want to thank Bruce, Margaret, and Barb for making the transition as painless as possible for us end-users. I am grateful to BCR for hosting Wired for so many years and for their help with the transition to our new hosting site. I also really appreciate OCLC for jumping in and helping us continue the great communication vehicle that Wired provides.

February brought OCLC Western staff to Montana to conduct the annual members meeting. We had great discussions around the theme of user-centric environments. The very next day was the start of our Offline conference. I’m sorry to say I could not attend Offline, but I know many of you did and I heard it was wonderful! Kudos to Liz Babbitt, Kathy Mora, and all who helped organize and host the event. Many people had not seen the new Bozeman Public Library and were thrilled to get the chance to enjoy that new space.

Lois Fitzpatrick has been keeping all of us up to date on the happenings during our unpredictable legislative session. Many items are still pending as I write this, but I again urge you to keep an eye on Wired-MT and read and respond to Lois’ postings. Your response and input to the process has been invaluable so far - please stay tuned!

We have had several changes to our Montana Library Association web presence. John Finn has updated the Focus with our new logo and the effect is dazzling. Steve McCann has been working with Debbi Kramer to implement the credit card online pay option. You can buy tickets to Neil Gaiman’s public event on Saturday, April 28 or pay your MLA membership online from our website now. Next year you will also be able to register and pay for the conference in Great Falls all online! We need to thank Lee Phillips for pushing the online pay idea forward. You can also plan to use your credit card to purchase books, posters, Nancy Pearl action figures, etc. at the MLA store in Helena this month.

And speaking of Helena, there are just a few short weeks to the 101st conference, which will be held in Helena, April 25-28. Conference Co-chairs, Lisa Mecklenberg-Jackson and Judy Hart have been hard at work with their committees doing all the background work that makes this happen. We have had over 325 people register for the conference and I look forward to all of you helping me welcome Keynote speaker, Nancy Pearl and our fea-

Continued on page 2…
Continued from page 1...

Lyn McKinney, President, Montana Library Association
Billings Senior High School Library
lynmckinney@bresnan.net

I just sent a check to the Central Asia Institute from the Billings Senior High School Honor Society for $260.00. Our students raised that money to build schools. The Montana Library Association is Job #12 and we are close to meeting our $20,000 goal. I want to thank Norma Glock for spearheading this and look forward to celebrating reaching our goal in Helena!

I’m closing with a reminder that this organization runs mostly on volunteer labor. Please think about what your commitment to MLA can be next year. Do you want to run for office? Let Milla Cummins know today. Do you want to work on a committee? Let Honore Bray or me know. Want to help with the next conference which will be held in Great Falls, April 9-12, 2008? Let Kathy Mora know. We need each of us to be invested to keep our association going; what is your investment going to be this year?

Thank you for allowing me to be the President of the Montana Library Association this year. I had a wonderful year meeting all of you and learning all about libraries in our great state. I hope you are able to come to Helena and enjoy the conference. I look forward to seeing you there!

Lyn McKinney, President, Montana Library Association
Billings Senior High School Library
lynmckinney@bresnan.net

Trustee’s Corner

Veni, Vidi, Blabbi

By
Carol Grover, Chair
Trustees Interest Group
cthettrustee@yahoo.com

Hey! I only had one year of high school Latin, give me a break.

In spring the geese fly north and library trustees head (Veni) for Helena to renew old friendships, make new acquaintances, and learn about our libraries and what makes them tick.

As trustees we have great responsibilities to represent our areas, and as those in charge of the library we are en-TRUSTed to. This is why we go to Helena this April to see (Vidi) what’s new this year.

After our trip to Helena, we will return home and tell (Blabbi) about our adventure. Are you in the news? Put an article in your local paper about your trip. Be sure to tell what you did and saw and how great the workshops, fellowship, and meetings were. Talk to your friends, other trustees unable to attend, and let them know what a wonderful experience attending MLA was.

Did you learn something that troubled you? Something your library should be doing (or should not)? Arrange to speak privately to your director and voice your concerns. Perhaps it was a misunderstanding, or something the board and the director need to work out for the benefit of the people you serve. Veni, Vidi, Blabbi!

Hope to see you in Helena! Trustees special day, Friday April 27, begins with our breakfast meeting at 7 AM. I’ll be looking for YOU!

MLA Discussion List: WIRED-MT

WIRED-MT-L is a listserv sponsored by the Montana Library Association and hosted by OCLC-Western. The list is open to everyone interested in Montana libraries and library issues, including MLA members and non-members. Additional information and guidelines for use may be found at www.mtlib.org.

To subscribe to WIRED-MT-L,
1. Send a message to: listserv@OCLC.ORG
2. Leave the subject line blank;
3. In the body of the message type: SUBSCRIBE WIRED-MT-L <your name>
4. Do not attach a signature.

If you have problems subscribing or have additional questions, contact Margaret Webster, List Manager (on behalf of MLA) at: mwebster@crowleylaw.com or call me at 406-255-7201.
John has graciously invited me to contribute an article to Focus, and I am quite pleased to do so. I write this month about why ‘friendly’ is good and ‘unfriendly’ is bad; we will better serve our communities with a loud “yes, come on down”, then with a furtive “no”. Duh.

I would rather shop in a friendly, welcoming store, than one in which I am always concerned that I might not be measuring up or following all the rules. Libraries, as friendly as we think we are, sometimes can be a little off-putting to the informationally-unwashed. Unfortunately, we librarians sometimes are a pretty prescriptive, rule-based bunch.

And you know how this works outside the world of libraries. How does it feel to walk into an automotive parts store if you can’t talk shop and spit with the good old boys at the counter? How does it feel to walk into the ladies’ intimate apparel department if you can’t remember your wife’s dress size? In either case, you, the customer, feel a little intimidated and behind the eight ball right off the bat. This is a lousy way to start a conversation, which is the basis of all good service. It’s never a good idea to start things by making the customer feel stupid.

Libraries too often have a myriad of ‘secret’ rules (we call them policies and procedures) and a legion of ‘instructive’ signs that brace our customers before they can even get in the joint:

No Cell Phones, No Food or Drinks, and my favorite Fines, 10 cents/day/book

How welcoming is this? For that matter, how smart is this? Cell phones are threatening to become the most prevalent Web interface in the (known) galaxy, and every-one has them. Hydrated students study better. Caffeinated customers are happier. Fines cost more to administer then they bring in, and, worst of all, make us customers feel stupid. These signs carry potent subliminal messages as well:

You are welcome here, but only at our sufferance. This is not YOUR living room, forget the snacks. This is a rules-based place, tread lightly.

How much more welcoming it would be to say (not on the door please, instead on table tents or someplace less affronting): Cell phones welcome, please turn the ringer off. Please cap your drinks to prevent spillage. Great coffee is available at the information desk, come and have a cup. No fines (but no checkouts if you have overdue books).

Libraries’ signage (in our buildings and online) often leaves a lot to be desired as well. We smother our users in library-lingo, instead of friendly, welcoming direction. Mark Hurst, in the blog goodexperience.com, writes, “…You can tell a lot about an organization by looking at its customer experience…” He illustrates his point by two airlines’ online ticketing interfaces. The first, American Airlines, presents customers with: “Self-Service Check-In”, “Check-in now available for domestic and INTERNATIONAL flights.”, “Check-In Without Bags (carry-on only)”, “Lost Boarding Pass? Reprint Boarding Pass(es)”. And then Hurst contrasts this with Jet Blue’s: “Touch screen to begin.”, “hi there”, “start”. Yay for Jet Blue! We should all be so welcoming. When customers walk into your library’s front door, is it an American Airlines or Jet Blue experience for them? Do your library’s policies say “yes” or “no”? I hate to take issue with Nancy Reagan, but I think libraries should just say “yes”.

goodexperience.com/blog/archives/001293.php

April 2007

Montana Library Focus
2007 Summer Institute for Library Leadership

This year’s summer institute will be in Bozeman on the MSU campus, June 5-7. Registration will begin in mid-April. Public library directors and trustees are invited to attend.

Day 1 — It’s a Disaster! — will focus on emergency preparedness and the creation of a disaster plan for public libraries. The training will include how to prepare an effective plan using dPlan, a free online template www.dplan.org. All public libraries are now required to create a disaster plan using the dPlan model to meet the new public library standards. Day 2 - Community Leadership….It’s Not a Spectator Sport — will feature Jim Connor from Trustee College, a private Colorado consulting service specializing in organization management, community advocacy, and public library board development. Participants will learn how to establish the public library as the most important and vital resource in the community. Day 3 - Into Action - will have the group sharing ideas, practicing effective community leadership skills, and exploring ways to establish the library as the community’s anchor. It promises to be a fun day - complete with prizes!

9th Annual Fall Workshop

Plan to travel to Lewistown to attend this year’s Fall Workshop. The dates are September 28th and 29th. Workshop details and registration materials will be available in late summer.

Evaluation Report Now Available

Thanks to all of the librarians and trustees who completed the online survey on Montana State Library’s use of Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant funds. The survey data was collected and analyzed by Johnson & Johnson Consulting of Wisconsin and included in a formal evaluation report that was submitted to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the federal agency administering the LSTA grant program. The report is now available on the MSL web site: msl.mt.gov/lsta2002-2006.pdf

Receiving input from nearly 400 of you was not only vital to the evaluation, but is also critical as MSL plans for the best use of future LSTA funds to provide high quality information services for all Montanans.

Library Board Education Program

Does your library board have new trustees who might need an orientation on their duties and responsibilities? Could current board members benefit from free, high-quality training on special issues the library is facing? The Library Board Education Program (LBEP) is available to bring this training to your community, presented by volunteer trainers who are themselves experienced Montana trustees. To learn more about LBEP or to schedule a trustee training, contact Maggie Meredith (mmmeredith@mt.gov or call 1-800-338-5087).

PEEL Scholarship Reminder

If you have applied to the distance MLIS degree program at the University of Washington, don’t forget to also apply for the $25,000 scholarship available from Montana State Library. Scholarship applications are available at msl.mt.gov/greatcareer/files/schapp07.pdf and are due to MSL by April 15, 2007. Applicants must be Montana residents and must begin the three-year UW program in the fall of 2007. The scholarship recipient will work full-time for two years in a professional librarian position in a Montana public, public school (K-12), or tribal library following graduation. For information about PEEL, go to msl.mt.gov/greatcareer
Book Kits Available For Your Library

By
Beth Boyson
Bozeman Public Library
bboyson@mtlib.org

Everything you need for a successful Book Club meeting. Just add people!
Now available to Montana Libraries through Interlibrary Loan from Bozeman Public Library. Please use an ALA manual request form for ILL. Bozeman Public Library will deliver free to MLA Conference!
Book club kits are available to local Book Clubs to borrow for six weeks. Titles include:

1776 by David McCullough
Crossing to Safety by Wallace Stegner
Disgrace by J.M. Coetzee
Gallatin Canyon: Stories by Thomas McGuane
March by Geraldine Brooks
Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides
Rules for Old Men Waiting by Peter R. Pouncey
The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom
The Golden Compass by Philip Pullman
The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini
The Man in My Basement by Walter Mosley
The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For? By Richard Warren
Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson
Under the Banner of Heaven by Jon Krakauer
Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague by Geraldine Brooks

The kits check out for six weeks and include: 6-8 copies of the book, discussion questions, and biographical information about the author. Just add people! For more information about Book Club kits, discussion guides, used book sales, storytelling, One Book Montana, or internet classes, please visit our web page at: www.bozemanlibrary.org or call us at 582-2410. Book Club kits are sponsored by The Friends of Bozeman Public Library.

Lincoln County Libraries Has a New Librarian: Welcome to Sarah Daviau

By
Sami Pierson, Director
Lincoln County Libraries
samantha@libby.org

Lincoln County Libraries is pleased to announce that Sarah Daviau has joined the staff. She is the new Adult Public Services Librarian. Sarah graduated with her MLIS in December 2006 from Simmons College in Boston. She is originally from Batavia, NY. Sarah will start in Libby on April 2, 2007. We are very excited to have her join us. She is looking forward to all the new adventures Montana has in store for her.

Soup Fundraiser at the Library, Yum

By
Jill Munson, Director
Chouteau County Library
fblibrary@mtintouch.net

To celebrate National Soup Tasting Month in January, the Chouteau County Library and its Foundation held a Soup @ The Library event on January 25. Eight local restaurants and caterers each provided a pot of soup for free, two businesses provided crackers and cookies, and the library charged $4 a bowl (with $1 refills). Tables were set up in the upper level of the library, so patrons could see what we were raising money for (new carpeting). Soup was served from 11AM-2PM, and there was no soup left at 2!

Assistant Librarian Debbie Wellman looks after the soup

Over 140 people were served, and various individuals wrote generous checks to the “cause”. With members of the Friends of the Library acting as cashiers, the event went very smoothly. We have decided to make this an annual event!
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CAROLINE PATTERSON

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MAY 3, 4, 5
Conference News

MLA Is Coming To Town

At the end of April, legislators will be leaving town, But that's certainly not a reason to feel down. In their place, eager librarians will come, To MLA in Helena—it’s going to be plum!

A Word From The Co-Chairs

By
Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
2007 Conference Co-Chair
Ljackson@mt.gov

Judy Hart
2007 Conference Co-Chair
jhart@mtlib.org

We are all looking forward to seeing you in Helena April 25-28, 2007. If you have any questions on anything conference-related, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Conference Bookstore

Christian Frazza, Chair
Conference Bookstore Committee
cfrazza@carroll.edu

The MLA bookstore will have some great items for your shopping enjoyment: books, posters, action figures, buttons, and something very special: the MLA Librarians calendar! If you're looking for Nancy Pearl or Neil Gaiman items, be sure to check the bookstore first. There will also be selected titles on important library development topics available. Everything at the bookstore will be discounted (some items as much as 20%)! and this year you can make purchases with a credit card. Proceeds from the bookstore go to pay conference costs. Bookstore hours are 10-6 Thursday, 8-6 Friday, and 10-4 on Saturday.

Conference Registration

By
Cheri Bergeron, Co-Chair
Conference Registration Committee
cbergeron@mt.gov

Raeleen Williard, Co-Chair
Conference Registration Committee
rwilliard@mt.gov

As of the third week in March: 335 have registered for the conference. The genealogy workshop is filled and a second class has been added. The committee needs volunteers to staff the registration desk. Registration hours are:

- Wednesday 7-11am 12-6pm
- Thursday 7am- 5pm
- Friday 8am – 5pm
- Saturday 8am – noon

Please let us know if you are willing to lend a hand. Sign up by e-mail: cbergeron@mt.gov or by phone: 888-231-9393 ext. 2082

Keep them coming!

Conference Entertainment

The air will be filled with exciting sounds and motions on Friday night, April 27, 2007 during the MLA conference at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel in Helena.

Guitar and mandolin music by two members of The Growlers band will set the stage for the State Library Commission Reception at 6:30 p.m. During the MLA membership dinner, a traditional Irish acoustical group, Special Session, will share their talents at 7:30 p.m., and the Tiernan Irish Dancers www.mtlib.org/conf/mla2007/index.htm (Photos of Dancers) will lift your spirits at 8:30 p.m. Be sure to mark your calendars!

Innovative Ways To Participate at Conference

Edible Book Art Contest


Books will be showcased at MLA 2007 with the winner receiving a fabulous prize. With good participation, this could become an annual event—how hilarious! So come up with your best edible book art. We’ll eat it in your honor! Contact Lisa Mecklenburg Jackson ljackson@mt.gov with any questions.

Pictures Of Conferences Past

Do you have any photos from previous MLA Conferences? If so, please send them to Lisa (e-mail is best, ljackson@mt.gov, but mail will work if you only have a hard copy). I will be working on a slideshow for MLA 2007 and could use any and all photos of past MLA Conferences. Please send them in. The more the merrier.

PR Swap and Shop Montana-Style

They do it at ALA, let’s do it in Montana. PR materials sought for Montana’s first annual Swap & Shop (modeled after ALA’s most successful event). Montana librar-

More Innovative Ideas on page 8...
Innovative Ideas continued...

ies of all types and sizes - share your creative, great PR efforts with your colleagues! Gain statewide exposure for your library’s best marketing and promotional items by bringing them to the 2007 MLA Conference in Helena. Library professionals from all around the state will have the opportunity to fill their Swap & Shop tote bag full of the very best ideas in library public relations. Share your great ideas with your colleagues—we’ll display them proudly at this event at a table in the exhibits hall. The event will showcase the library promotional materials (reading promotions for children, teens, adults and families, plus annual reports, calendars of events, newsletters, bookmarks, bibliographies, fundraising materials and more) submitted by libraries of all types around Montana. Come stop by and create your own library PR “idea kit.”

Please bring 50-100 copies of your library’s best marketing and promotional items to MLA 2007. Swap & Shop is sponsored by the MLA PR & Marketing Committee. Contact Lisa at ljackson@mt.gov with questions.

If You Haven’t Booked Your Conference Hotel Room Yet...

The MLA Conference hotel, the Red Lion Colonial, is full. However, there are a number of hotels within EASY walking distance of the Red Lion, that offer very reasonable rates:
- Days Inn 442-3280
- Fairfield Inn (Marriott) - 449-9944
- Guesthouse Inn (formerly Mountainview Inn) - 443-2300
- Super 8 - 443-2450

MLA 2007 Cates Conference Events

By
Lauren McMullen
Sheila Cates Committee Member
Montana State Library
lmcmullen@mtlib.org

The MLA 2007 Conference is coming right up and the Sheila Cates Scholarship Committee would like to remind you about several ways that you can have fun, win prizes, and donate to the Cates Scholarship Fund.

Get ready for round two of Cates Trivia Mania! on Thursday, April 26th from 8-10pm. This year’s theme is Literary Trivia, as we celebrate and show off our librarians’ outstanding knowledge about all kinds of books. Four fun-filled rounds of general trivia will be followed by a Calcutta round for betting on top teams and, if it goes that far, a shotgun round to sort out the real champs. You can form a team of 8 people and reserve a table at the event, or just join a team when you get there. As always, costumes are appreciated but not required, and you are invited to come dressed as your favorite literary figure OR as your favorite Librarian Action Figure. Prizes will be awarded for these two categories of costumes, as well as the winning Trivia team. Pre-registration is encouraged for this event, but walk-ins are welcome too: donation is $10 in advance or $12 at the door.

Another great way to earn money for the Scholarship Fund is to participate in the Sheila Cates Scholarship Raffle. You can get together as a federation, library staff, group of friends or even individually, to donate a basket, box or bag of goodies which will be on display at the Cates tables during exhibit hours. Raffle tickets for the items will cost $1.00 each or 6 for $5.00 and may be purchased at the Cates table, MLA bookstore, or at the Trivia event. For the duration of the display, tickets can be deposited in the boxes representing each raffle choice and drawings will be held at the close of the exhibits. (you need not be present to win) As a buyer, you may spend an unlimited number of tickets for any single item, or you can try to win them all. Among this year’s collection of fabulous raffle items is an unusual new item: you can win a consultation item, or you can try to win them all. Among this year’s collection of costumes are appreciated but not required, and you are invited to come dressed as your favorite literary figure OR as your favorite Librarian Action Figure. Prizes will be awarded for these two categories of costumes. Pre-registration is encouraged for this event, but walk-ins are welcome too: donation is $10 in advance or $12 at the door.

During the conference, you will also have several opportunities to rub elbows with world famous Librarian Action Figure Model, Readers Advisor and Keynote Speaker Nancy Pearl – while contributing to the Cates Scholarship Fund: You can buy her for dinner on Thursday evening, April 26, prior to the Cates Book Trivia event. To place a bid, go to the conference weblog at mla-conference.blogspot.com/ To Make Your Bid. Good Luck!

You'll see an entry titled “Bid on Dinner with Nancy Pearl”. Leave a comment on the post with your bid and contact information. Bids will also be accepted at the conference until NOON THURSDAY, next to the Conference Registration table – look for the Cates sign.

If you don’t win Nancy for dinner, you can still have your picture taken with her at the Cates Book Trivia event for $5.

Your team can purchase Nancy’s expertise for the Cates Book Trivia Event. All teams will have a chance to “buy” Nancy and have her join

More Cates on page 9...
them for a round of book trivia.

Another way to join in the Nancy Pearl Fun is to introduce her to the wonders of our state via the Nancy Pearl Librarian Action Figure photo pool on Flickr. Started by 2007 Offline Bibliotechie Award Winner Suzanne Reymer, the MLA Cates Nancy Pearl group is available at www.flickr.com/groups/522790582N00

For instructions on how to add your photo to the pool, contact Suzanne at sreymer@mtlib.org. There will be a slideshow of the photos during the Sheila Cates Fundraiser, and prizes will be awarded for the NP Action Figure photos that best capture the spirit of the event!

What's it all about? The Montana Library Association established the Sheila Cates Scholarship in 1994 to honor the memory of Sheila Cates, who served as Library Development Coordinator at the Montana State Library from 1985 until her death from cancer in 1993. Sheila was an inspirational librarian who cared about the development of every librarian and every library in Montana. The Scholarship provides financial support to MLA members who are seeking graduate degrees in library and/or information science and who show potential for emulating Sheila's contributions to Montana libraries. For more information about the Sheila Cates Scholarship, visit the link on the MLA website www.mtlib.org/handbook/catescriteria.html

Conference Technology Updates

By Chris Stockwell, Chair
Conference Technology Committee
Montana State Library
CStockwell@mt.gov

Presenters Get the Word Out

MLA Conference 2007 encourages presenters to make their presentations available on the conference wiki, mtlib.wiki.zoho.com/. To have your presentation posted to the conference wiki, send the outline of the presentation and/or handouts or a link to where your presentation lives on the web to cstockwell@mt.gov. Note, this is a voluntary program, and we respect a decision not to participate for whatever reason. If you opt out, drop a note to cstockwell@mt.gov, so he can take you off the mailing list for further notifications on this.

We are just getting started. There are four presentations uploaded out of more than 100 presentations. Thanks to early adopters.

Wide participation by presenters in the conference wiki will help move Montana libraries from good to great. It will aid learning by attendees who can overview the presentations before going to sessions. It will enable MLA members and media to refer back to presentations for accuracy. It will create a record of what we did in 2007. And subtly, it reduces the need for taking a laptop along to meeting rooms to take notes. With your help, the notes will be posted online.

Want a Laptop at MLA Conference 2007?
Be Prepared or Not!

Conferences are not laptop friendly places. Free wireless access can be slow and spotty. Also, if everyone brings a laptop, there are not enough plugs-ins in the typical presentation room or auditorium to keep hungry batteries charged up. So, forget taking live notes of presentations unless you are prepared. Prepared attendees bring extra batteries and/or power strips and plan to sit next to the outlets. This can be a great way to meet people in the know, speakers who may be polishing off their upcoming presentation right next to you. Even if you secure your power supply, and can take notes, the signal strength or bandwidth may not be adequate to allow you to connect to the web for other purposes.

The good news is that the conference is doing what it can to make the MLA Conference 2007 more laptop friendly at the same time it is trying to reduce the need to bring a laptop. The Red Lion is upgrading to T1 bandwidth as you read this. We will be providing blog spots with power strips. Add your thoughts to the conference blog at mla-conference.blogspot.com/. But the best strategy may be to leave your personal laptop at home unless you absolutely need it, or use it in your room when the conference is not gobbling up bandwidth.

To support those who go without laptops, there will be an Internet Café. Additionally, we are inviting presenters to post their presentations to the conference wiki. If we can get a critical number of presenters to allow us to do this, outlines and handouts will be available on line so that there is less need to take live notes during presentations. We hope these arrangements will provide the best way possible, given the state of the art, to meet your technology needs. We look forward to seeing you at the conference.
You are invited to attend a jewelry-design workshop, which will be held on Wednesday, April 25, from 7:30-9:00 p.m. at the Lewis & Clark Public Library. Beginners and pros alike join and share your expertise!

Learn the steps of starting, stringing, and finishing your design to create a necklace. Donations are accepted for the teaching time. You may bring your own supplies as well as purchase materials and/or kits at Something Catchy studio and bead shop, 119 Reeder’s Alley from 5:00-7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 25. Here is a list of items to bring: Bead board; Jewelry stringing-wire; Beads; Crimp beads; Clasp; Three jewelry tools: 1) round nose pliers, 2) flat nose pliers, 3) wire cutter.

After we complete our designs there will be a walking tour to the Something Catchy studio and bead shop at 9:00 p.m.

Please contact Julie Klauss at beadzter@gmail.com or call 461-7388 to R.S.V.P. for the workshop by April 18.

When you arrive at the conference, be sure to visit the hospitality table for information about special events, tours, receptions and local attractions. Friendly folks are there to help you get the most out of the conference and your visit to Helena. Let us know if this is your first MLA conference and we'll be happy to introduce you to fellow librarians and show you the ropes. Don't forget, there will be drawings for door prizes throughout the conference and you could be a winner! Hours for the hospitality table are Wednesday 7-11am and Noon-6pm; Thursday 7am-5pm; Friday 8am-5pm and Saturday 8am-12.

Here are some hospitality highlights:

**Wednesday afternoon**
Two tour options:
1. **Architecture** — Cathedral & Capitol: Construction of the Gothic-styled Cathedral of St. Helena began in 1908 and the building was first used by the Helena community in 1914. A special feature is the 59 stained glass windows which were made in Bavaria. The Montana State Capitol Building was opened on July 4, 1902, and underwent a four-year multi-million dollar renovation beginning in 1997. The tour will include the House and Senate chambers, special artwork, and a for librarians only, behind-locked-doors tour of the capitol dome.

2. **Art** — Holter & Bray: The Holter Museum of Art opened in 1987 and provides a variety of visual arts exhibitions. Special exhibits during the Conference include drawing as an international language and the art of Montanaan Bill Stockwell. The Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts was founded in 1951 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The tour will feature artwork on the grounds, artist studios, and remnants of the historic brick business.

**Wednesday evening**
Walking tour of downtown Helena’s historic district; Reception at Lewis & Clark Library; Strolling, shopping and dining in downtown Helena; Trolley rides to and from the hotel.

**Thursday evening**
Reception at the Montana Historical Society — food, drinks, research center tours, museum; Exhibits, bookstore shopping, and Pages of History book discussion (**We Pointed Them North**); Dining around town with fellow librarians; Sheila Cates Fundraising event.

**Friday**
Reception hosted by the Montana State Library Commission at the Red Lion.

**Montana Historical Society Freebies**

A selected back copy of **Montana The Magazine of Western History** will be available in the lobby of the Montana Historical Society during the library conference. If you have a chance to stop in, be sure to help yourself to a free copy. A limited number of old **Montana Post** newsletters are also available. Please ask for Tammy Ryan in the Historical Society’s Publications Office and she’ll give you a bundle.
New York Times and international best-selling author Neil Gaiman comes to Montana for the 2007 MLA Conference—but you may not have heard of him! But that anonymity may not last long: with numerous best-selling novels under his belt, and three Hollywood movies based on his work coming to theaters in the next year.

Gaiman attained his status of comic book legend when he penned the *Sandman* series of comic books, which ran from 1987-1996. The *Sandman* was published by Vertigo comics, DC’s edgier publishing group, and sold more than one million individual issues a year during its 75 issue run. The *Sandman* series is one of the highest acclaimed comic book series in the history of the medium, garnering every major award in the industry and some from outside the industry. The appeal of *Sandman* was cross-generational and unisex, attracting a wide demographic not usually associated with comics.

The importance of the graphic novel medium to libraries is apparent in both collection diversity and patron demand. The American Library Association refers to graphic novels as, “one of the fastest growing categories in publishing and bookselling. Today’s graphic novels are far more sophisticated and varied in their content than the comics that preceded them, and enjoy a level of respect previously denied to this form of popular entertainment... graphic novels contain some of the most creative work in publishing today. They prompt visual and verbal literacy, as well as love of reading.”

The graphic novel medium has offerings in all areas of library service: from the youngest patrons (*The Snowman* by Raymond Briggs is a fantastic example of graphic novels for the youngest set), to grade school students, junior high, high school, and finally adult patrons.

Norman Mailer described *Sandman* as a “comic strip for intellectuals—and I say it’s about time!” From offerings in your adult fiction and graphic novel collections, to children’s chapter and picture books, Neil Gaiman offers a diversity rarely seen in a popular author. Montana patrons know who Neil Gaiman is; promote his Montana public lecture in your library: Free high-interest bookmarks and posters available at the MLA website www.mtlib.org. Let your patrons know about his public appearance TODAY! Saturday, April 28th, 2:30pm-?: Public lecture and book signing.

Now that you’ve heard of him, come experience Neil Gaiman at this year’s MLA Conference.

Gaiman programs for Library Conference Attendees: 10:30am-Noon: Intellectual Freedom and Comics, 12:30-2:00pm: Author Luncheon.
They’re hot ...
They’re sassy ...
They’re Montana Librarians!

Montana’s Book Babes: Librarians Under the Big Sky

2008 Calendar

Twelve brave librarians from around the state “reveal” what it takes to be a librarian in Montana!

Calendars will be for sale at the MLA Bookstore at conference in Helena April 25-28, 2007

Calendars - $20
A fundraiser for the Montana Library Association

To order your calendar, or for more information, contact
Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
MLA Publicity Committee Chair
(406) 444-4024
Ljackson@mt.gov

CALENDAR UNVEILING!
Come meet the models—April 26 at conference!
Get your own signed copy!

9:30 a.m., April 26 at conference!
Membership News

By
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Carlene Engstrom, Director-at-Large West
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Wow! Look at all the new members who have joined since January. We hope to see you at the conference in Helena. Be sure to sign up for the free New Members’ breakfast.

- Stacey Hyatt Bainville Public School
- Janet Sublett Belgrade Intermediate School
- Sheree West Big Sky Community Lib/Ophir
- Audrey Wagner Canyon Creek School
- Laurie Hickethier Laurel Public Library
- Jamie Lynn Fontaine MSU—Billings
- Carol Thompson Rapelje Public School
- Daniel E Thompson St Ignatius School-Community Library
- Bill Burger Trustee - Butte Public Library
- Bruce McCullough Trustee-Laurel Public Library
- Debbie Hronek Joliet Public Library
- Fran Combs Lincoln Elementary School/Great Falls
- Krystal Zentner Bridger Public Library
- Katrina Stout Seeley-Swan High School
- Connie Strittmatter MSU
- Sonya Neisess Lincoln County Public Library
- Lowell Baltz Trustee - Darby Community Public Library
- Carly Delsigne Clancy Community Library
- Kim Graff Pioneer School/Billings
- Audrey Guesanburi Garfield County Library
- L. Janette Davie Garfield County Library
- Minie Smith Friend of Missoula Public Library
- Andrea Merrill-Maker Friend of Missoula Public Library
- Nora Morris Friend of Missoula Public Library
- Susan Duffy Friend of Missoula Public Library
- Steve Pagliarulo Friend of Missoula Public Library
- Barbara Theroux Friend of Missoula Public Library
- Rebeka Iwen Glendive Public Library
- Bruce Patera Rocky Boy Junior High and High School
- Deborah Benedict Meagher County City Library
- Susan McKamey Bicentennial Library of Colstrip
- Scarlett Sherman Bigfork Elementary School
- Sue Warner Trustee - West Yellowstone Public Library
- Carol Hoffman Trustee - West Yellowstone Public Library
- Joan Bryan Bitterroot Public Library
- MaryAnn George UM-Helena College of Technology
- Lawrence Quigley Park High School / Livingston
- Bonnie Roos Library Graduate Student
- Helga Stimson 4 G’s Library / Helena
- Marcia Herman Florence-Carlton School
- Bonnie Allen UM - Missoula

Please take the time now to renew your membership. You can check out your status by going to the MLA web site and checking the Membership List.

If you know of librarians who aren’t members, send their names to one of the Directors-at-Large, and they will mail out a membership brochure. New members get to attend the New Members’ Breakfast free at MLA.

MPLA Plans

Literary Trip To Ireland

Eileen Wright
MPLA Representative
MSU - Billings
ewright@msubillings.edu

MPLA is planning a Literary Ireland Trip. The trip will take you to some wonderful locations which are the backdrop and the inspiration to so many modern Irish writers. In addition, they will be touring several tourists’ favorite highlights of Ireland - Guinness, the Bushmills distillery, and Belleek Pottery. The trip will take place two weeks in July of 2008. If anyone is interested in attending this fabulous trip, please email Sharon Osenga at osenga@frontiernet.net. She is just collecting names of interested persons in order to send out full information on the trip plus cost in early June of 2007.

Columbus Middle School students travel to Billings each year to compete in the Billings Battle of the Books for the coveted Literary trophy and the right to host the meet the next year.
Is a Foundation in Your Library’s Future?

By
William B. Pratt,
Pratt & Associates
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As Montana’s libraries – no matter what their size — wrestle with the challenges of how to fund essential library services in their communities and the question of how to significantly “augment but not replace” tax-based support often arises. This discussion inevitably turns to the possibility of establishing a library foundation, a charitable organization whose sole purpose is to support the library. Your library may already have a Friends group, which conducts annual fundraising and promotional activities sponsored by volunteer champions for the library including book sales, author teas and coffees, as well as other special events for bibliophiles and the general public. In addition to bringing in dollars to augment annual programs, Friends groups keep the name of the library before public, create opportunities to bring people into the library and encourage further use and involvement. How do Friends groups differ from library foundations?

**Foundation Purpose.** Unlike a Friends group, a library foundation usually focuses on obtaining major gifts for use in capital projects, collections, programs and services that are not funded with public dollars. In addition, the foundation solicits current and future gifts, such as bequests and other planned gifts, e.g., charitable gift annuities, slated to create and build permanent endowments. The foundation is pivotal as a resource to help the library address the increasing challenges of reaching and serving all members of the community and improving facilities, collections, services and programs. While the foundation, like the Friends, may also sponsor events this is done, not as an end in itself or to raise immediate donations, but rather as part of an overall development strategy to involve prospective and current donors. In fact, Friends groups may co-sponsor events with a library foundation and help them to identify prospective donors. Recognizing the need to invest in building capacity, Friends groups may also provide the initial financial resources to establish a library foundation.

**Foundation Advantages.** A library foundation is a charitable entity, separate from the public library, and thus can attract contributions from donors who might not be willing to give directly to the library as it is a public agency. The foundation also enables donors to show their support for the library as a vital, and in some cases, memorable community resource. The most important support for a library is the undesignated gift for it provides the most flexibility to address changing needs. However, a donor can also direct a gift towards a certain purpose if it is consistent with foundation policies, i.e. aligned with the foundation mission or, for example, equals or exceeds the minimum contribution needed to establish an endowment.

Contributions to the foundation are tax-deductible and, for certain types of gifts, may even earn a Montana Charitable Endowment Tax Credit, which is a dollar-for-dollar reduction in a donor’s Montana tax obligation. The legislature is currently considering extending the Tax Credit to 2013. See: www.endowmontana.org. A foundation may also be a vehicle though which a library can receive grant funds from community, private, family and corporate foundations, for which the public library might not otherwise qualify.

**Foundation Organization.** Library foundations vary in the way that they are organized. Common to all, is the need to attract and involve individuals to the foundation board who will raise funds and visibility for the foundation, as well as participate in its governance. Establishing a foundation also provides the opportunity to attract individuals with special skills, who might not have been available otherwise. Another commonality is that the leadership and participation of the library director will be critical to the success of a foundation’s development efforts. It is the director who embodies the presence of the library to the community and is often the “person in charge,” with whom the donor wants to work. While there may also be dedicated foundation development staff, they usually play a supportive role to the library director in his or her efforts to attract gifts for the foundation.

Library foundations may be designed to serve one community or several libraries in a county. Their boards may be entirely separate from the library’s board of trustees, or there might be a designated liaison on their board from the trustees. In other cases all library trustees serve on the foundation board. Depending upon resources and need, staffing also varies. A library might provide office space, staffing and support; there may be a mix of library and private resources, or the foundation may totally support its own staff.

**Foundation Establishment.** To establish a library foundation, the initial founding board needs to:

- File Articles of Incorporation with Montana’s Secretary of State, See: sos.mt.gov/BSB/Business_Forms.asp#npsdomestic
- File a certificate with the Department of Revenue
- Obtain an employer identification number (Form SS-4) See: www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0,,id=97872,00.html

More Foundations on page 13...
Foundations continued...

Create By-Laws to govern the operations of the foundation and hold an initial organizational meeting to adopt them.

Apply to the Internal Revenue Service (Form 1023) to obtain its tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] status.

Sample documents to help guide your effort might be available from libraries, which have already created foundations, or professional associations that provide technical assistance to libraries. You will need to raise private funds for legal services and filing fees, set up an accounting system, and create policies, such as those regarding gift acceptance, investments and spending policies from permanent endowments.

Foundation Development.

Once a foundation’s organizational house is in order, much of the board’s attention can then be directed to creating a development team, which takes a structured approach to attracting gifts. The elements of this process include:

- Identifying prospective donors who can make large or lifetime gifts
- Involving these people in library activities
- Cultivating the prospect
- Soliciting the gift
- Stewarding your donors
- Resoliciting foundation donors

The effectiveness of your fundraising will be determined by how well you do your homework about prospective donors and how well you connect a donor’s wishes to the library’s needs. Parenthetically, you need to continue to make your community aware of the foundation, with special attention paid to professional advisors such as lawyers, accountants, bankers and financial planners.

The foundation’s success will also depend upon the commitment of the foundation board and its ability to persist over time.

Library foundations are built one gift at a time. As that gift may only come to fruition in the future, truly, library foundations are therefore need to be created by forward thinking communities, which want to gather resources both for current purposes and to benefit their children and grandchildren, and all those in the future.

Upcoming Training Opportunity

To learn about building endowments for library foundations, be sure to attend MLA’s pre-conference training session, The Basics of Endowment Development on April 25th in Helena presented by William B. Pratt of Pratt & Associates. This workshop will provide the organizational, legal, management and development fundamentals of creating and building an endowment for your foundation. To review the presentation and the handouts go to mtlib.wiki.zoho.com

William Pratt, the founder and principal of Pratt & Associates, helps nonprofit organizations and communities in the Northern Rockies, the Inland Northwest and the High Plains build their capacity and enhance community philanthropy. He has given workshops for the Montana State Library, the Lewis and Clark County Library Foundation and the Parmly-Billings Library Foundation, the Wyoming Library Association and the Natrona County (WY) Public Library Foundation.

Bill is currently the Project Coordinator of the Philanthropic Divide Initiative of the Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits. Formerly he served in philanthropic and organizational development capacities for the Montana Community Foundation and Inland Northwest Community Foundation, formerly Foundation Northwest, in Spokane, and as the Director of Organizational Services and Community Arts Coordinator for the Montana Arts Council, a state agency.

Resources


Building An Endowment Right from the Start, Moerschbaecher, Lynda S., Precept Press, Chicago, 2001 - Contains information on the MT Endowment Tax Credit by Jim Soft of the Yellowstone Boys & Girls Ranch Foundation


Montana Governor’s Task Force on Endowments and Philanthropy – The citizen’s group responsible for the Montana Charitable Endowment Tax Credit – For more information: Amy Kelley, 321 East Main, Suite 400, Bozeman, MT 59715


Smart & Caring, A Donor’s guide to Major Gifting Livingston, Ron & Linda, RLD Publishing, Louisville, CO, 1999