President’s Letter

It is difficult for me to believe that my year as MLA President is nearly over. It seems like only a few months ago that I was first asked to run for this office and now the time is drawing to a close.

First of all, a huge thank you to the entire conference committee, especially Connie Strittmatter, Alice Meister and Gale Bacon. Their tireless work and endless energy provided the foundation for a wonderful conference.

Thanks also to T & T Conference and Event Planning for looking out for us and letting us go in oh-so-many directions, while still maintaining a consistent theme. Thank you also to the many volunteers who gave of their time whenever needed. A personal thank you to Connie for taking the lead on so many things and for putting up with my random (and often not so timely) thoughts!

A few announcements of current and upcoming MLA happenings. Watch for the long-awaited MLA Cookbooks, “A Literary Feast: A Collection of Recipes from the Montana Library Association.” Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson has done a great job coordinating this and I know we’re all anxiously awaiting their arrival!

Remember that the MLA specialty license plates are currently available at your county treasurer’s office. By purchasing the plate, you are supporting the Montana Library Association since a portion of the price comes directly back to us.

If anyone is attending the American Library Association Annual Conference in Washington, DC this summer, Library Advocacy day at ALA June 29, 2010. Help show your support of Montana’s and America’s libraries by participating in these activities.

Finally, I invite and encourage each and every one of you to become more involved with your organization, for example, run for an office, volunteer on one of the committees or one of the many other ways that MLA needs you. If you are thinking that you aren’t interested in running for office, let me assure you that is not a requirement. I had never considered it either but I am so glad I agreed to take on this challenge and I urge you to consider doing the same. If you are interested, please contact me or any member of the board to find out where you are needed. Again, I thank you for giving me this opportunity, for meeting so many wonderful people and for the continued faith in the importance of Montana’s libraries and those of us who work in them.

Thanks for this year filled with so many memories,

Eva English
MLA President
Fort Belknap College Library Director

P.S. Please remember that the annual dues deadline is July 1!
2009-2010 LAL - Letters About Literature Montana Winners

LAL contest results for Montana are in and the winners are:
Level I, grades 4-6, Kiley Layman of Seeley Lake, Delaney Galloup of Cameron, and Cade Habel of Great Falls.
Level II, grades 7-9, represented by Dahn Ebert of Pendroy, who advanced and was a finalist at the National Level for her excellent letter to Jack London!
Other winners for Level II are: Tatia Elizabeth Hollowell of Hysham, and Taylre Sitz of Ennis.
Level III, grades 9-12, winners were Miranda Atwood of Billings, Nate Roberson and Hannah Barrett—both from Bigfork. A number of Montana students also received honorable mentions from LAL judges. Congratulations all!
Just under 70,000 adolescent and young adult readers nationwide in grades 4 through 12 participated in this year’s Letters About Literature program, which encourages young people to read, be inspired, and write back to the author who has somehow changed their view of the world or themselves. LAL is an annual program. For more information, including free teaching resources to guide students through the reader response and writing process, visit the program website at www.lettersaboutliterature.org.

Target sponsors Letters About Literature as part of its national reading initiative, “Ready. Sit. Read!” which is aimed at fostering a love of reading among children at an early age. Since opening its first store in 1962, Target has partnered with nonprofit organizations, guests and team members to help meet community needs. The Center for the Book, Target, and Humanities Montana, partner to bring Letters About Literature to your Montana community.

The Center for the Book was established in 1977 as a public-private partnership to use the resources of the Library of Congress to stimulate public interest in books and reading. Go Letters About Literature! Go Montana! And again for further information go to www.lettersaboutliterature.org
MSC News

Libraries Joining The Montana Shared Catalog
Ken Adams, MSC Director

Congratulations to the following libraries, library systems, schools, and school districts on their recent acceptance into the MSC:

- Absarokee Schools (K-6 and HS) Libraries
- Darby School District #9 Libraries
- Glacier County Library and Browning Branch

Hi-Line Shared Online Catalog (this includes Blaine County, Havre-Hill County, Liberty County, Harlem Public, Big Sandy Branch and six school libraries in Havre and Galata)

- Libby School District
- Noxon Public School
- Petroleum County School Community Library
- Sheridan County Library
- Sidney/Richland County Library
- Summit Preparatory School
- Sun River Valley Schools (Ft. Shaw Elementary and Simms HS)

This will bring the total number to 130 Montana libraries collaborating to provide state-of-the-art library service to patrons and students across the state. Once their collections have been added, the system will approach the one million mark on the number of titles in the catalog.

Montana Shared Catalog’s Newest Staff Member

Hi, Bridgett Johnson here. I am the new Montana Shared Catalog (MSC) trainer. My job involves developing and delivering training modules and workshops that relate to MSC issues involving cataloging, circulation, inventory, special reports, and coordinating training sharing with others. It is a new position for MSC.

I’m living in Helena for a short while learning the job and then, maybe in July, will work online with the rest of the MSC while living in Lewistown.

I invite you to check out the MSC page on the State Library’s website; the newest addition is the Training page. If you have suggestions on how we can improve our services to you, please call any of the MSC staff or email us at msc@mt.gov.

Glacial Institute Hosts Natural Resources Information Council

Pam Arroues is please to announce that the 2010 meeting of the Natural Resources Information Council will be held at the Glacial Institute August 4-8. This will be the first time the meeting will be in Montana and it promises to have a lot of great information regarding the management of Natural Resource Information. For more information go to their website at http://www.nric.info/. Anyone with an interest in the accumulation and dissemination of Natural Resources Information is encouraged to attend this fun, laid back learning opportunity (fly-fishing included!).

Pam Arroues, Library Director
Water Quality Planning Bureau
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
406) 444-6763  Fax (406) 444-6836
The Headwaters Library Association met in May at the brand spanking new Hyalite Elementary School Library in Bozeman for their spring 2010 meeting. School Librarian Nancy Hatfield (PEEL scholar) also gave the group a tour of the facilities, and hosted the 25 attendees in their Tech Fair. While munching on fresh fruit salad, granola, and yogurt the group tried several new technologies:

- Amazon Kindle
- Zen Creative MP3 Player
- Text ChaCha Reference Service with a cell phone
- Wii games and applications
- Geocache with a GPS
- PDA’s to find book values
- Skype with a Netbook
- Flip Camera video recorder
- Playaways

Headwaters Chair Ilene Casey held a business meeting to announce the success of the recent fundraiser – selling READ aprons at MLA Bozeman conference. In light of the healthy treasury, the Headwaters members decided to donate $100 divided evenly between Central Asia Institute Job #12, the Haiti Library relief fund, and Chile library relief funds administered by the American Library Association.

Incoming Chair Gail MacMillan announced the next meeting of the Headwaters will be in August 2010 at Bozeman High School to help shelve materials in preparation for school opening. The group will also meet in November at Bozeman Public Library for the Lois Lowry author reception.

Headwaters Library Association is an organization of school, public, academic, and special library staff members from the Park, Gallatin, and Madison County area devoted to library projects, continuing education, and networking. For more information, please contact Gail MacMillan at Bozeman Public Library, email: gmacmillan@bozeman.net.

Beth Boyson, Secretary/Treasurer
Headwaters Library Association

Bookstore buckaroos!

The MLA Bookstore earned nearly $1,000 ($925) in profits, thanks to the generous shopping habits of conference attendees. Thanks also to the volunteers who staffed the store: Terri Dood, Sheila Bonnand, Mark Miller, Brian Close, Kathie Callahan, Elaine Peterson, Liz Babbitt, and Kelly Olson.

The MLA bookstore will return to the 2011 joint MPLA conference in Billings. All proceeds are donated to defray Montana Library Association conference costs.

Beth Boyson, MLA bookstore chair
bboyson@bozeman.net
I attended the Mountain Plains Library Association Leadership Institute at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado on April 25-30, 2010. Also attending from Montana was Pam Arroues, the Director of the Water Quality Planning Bureau Library at the Montana Department of Environmental Quality in Helena. There were 30 attendees from 12 different states, as well as four mentors and our Facilitator, Maureen Sullivan. The mentors were there to share their time, experience, and expertise with us.

Participants were from Academic, Public and Special Libraries. There were people from small one person libraries to one of the largest universities in the country in attendance.

It was a nice mix of experiences, educations, and personalities. Maureen is an excellent facilitator and incredibly knowledgeable on the subject. The topics we discussed included:

- leadership
- communication
- managing difference
- risk taking
- influencing
- change
- commitment
- teamwork
- personal planning

During discussion of each topic we were all encouraged to think about things on a personal and/or professional level. We often had group work time and were able to work with a different group of people each time. Again, this was a great way to get to know everyone in the group and to learn from their successes and frustrations.

Some of the more interesting sections of the Institute included the one-on-one time with the mentors, the sections about resonant leadership, communicating effectively in difficult conversations, and how to move forward as a leader while mentoring others.

MPLA has opened up the Institute to those with MLS’s as well as support staff. I would highly encourage everyone in a leadership position or with a desire to move into a leadership position to apply for the next Institute in 2012.

It is worth far more than the cost and one week’s investment of time. It has truly changed how I view management as a whole and how I view myself as a manager. Through the Institute I have gained a new circle of friends and mentors as well as a new understanding of myself. If you have the opportunity you should attend this wonderful and enlightening Institute. For more information, visit www.mpla.us/leadership.
Register Now for the 2010 PNLA/WLA Conference!
2010conference.wla.org/registration/

This is the latest information I have received about passports. Check-out the following two websites. Travelers to and from Canada will be required to have a passport or other secure, accepted documents to enter or re-enter the United States. This is a change from prior travel requirements and will affect all United States citizens entering the United States from countries within the Western Hemisphere who do not currently possess valid passports.

www.consular.canada.usembassy.gov/enter_usa_from_canada.asp

Hope to see you there!
Mary Lou Mires, PNLA Representative
Montana Library Association
Molly Ledermann, Reference Librarian
Missoula Public Library

Six individuals from across the state were honored for hard work and dedication to their communities on April 8 during the Montana Library Association’s annual conference in Bozeman. Each year librarians around Montana nominate co-workers, administrators, trustees, and volunteers who they feel made outstanding contributions and provided leadership to their libraries.

Alice Meister, Director, Bozeman Public Library, will receive the Sheila Cates Award for Librarian of the Year in recognition of her ambition in bringing new and innovative services to the Bozeman Public Library, her patience in the decades-long process of planning a new LEED-certified library facility, and her passion as a library advocate in Bozeman and Montana.

Jane Howell, Director, Montana State University-Billings Library, will receive Honorary Lifetime Membership in the Montana Library Association. In his letter of nomination, Associate Director Brent Roberts observed, “Her energy and drive have inspired scores of people in her workplace at the MSU-Billings Library, across the MSU-B campus, and throughout the Billings community...her tireless efforts in various capacities in local, state, and national organizations, have touched people throughout Montana and the nation.”

Chrysti Smith, Trustee, Belgrade Community Library, will receive the Trustee of the Year award in recognition of her dedicated service as a library advocate and board participant. Always willing to offer her assistance, she has written grants, sought donors, volunteered at events, painted walls, edited newsletters, and served as a voice for the library in the Belgrade community and Montana.

Eileen Johnson, School Administrator, Lockwood Schools, will receive the School Administrator of the Year award for her tireless efforts to provide funding, technology, programs, and support of high standards and intellectual freedom in the three campus libraries.

Both Dorothy (Dot) Gallager and Doug Kramer were recognized for their tireless contributions to Montana Libraries with a Special Friend to Libraries Award. Dot has been an active Friend of the Stillwater County Library and started a local R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dogs) program with her therapy dog Shane that has grown to include five additional dogs with volunteers in the library and area schools. Doug has been a hero of the Three Forks Community Library for over fifteen years, saving the library hours and dollars with his volunteer services. No task is too great or small. He has cleaned carpets, moved furniture, fixed leaky book drops, installed new toilets, transported books, assisted at library events, and generally lent a hand when needed.

The Montana Library Association thanks all of the 2010 award winners for the wonderful services they have provided to Montana libraries.

**Selected Poems** by Richard Hugo chosen as 2010 One Book Montana

Richard Hugo’s *Selected Poems* has been chosen as the 2010 One Book Montana Selection. The book features poems from Hugo’s first six poetry collections, including “The Lady in Kicking Horse Reservoir” and “What Thou Lovest Well Remains American.”

Hugo taught at the University of Montana in Missoula, for almost 18 years; edited the Yale Younger Poets series; and received the Theodore Roethke Memorial Poetry Prize. “The poetry of Richard Hugo is one of the most profound and moving human documents that our period of American literature has produced,” James Dickey said.

The One Book Montana program invites all Montanans to read and discuss Richard Hugo’s poetry throughout the summer and fall. Humanities Montana offers a variety of complementary and discussion-provoking programming on its website including; discussion questions; biographical information; suggested companion readings; loan copies of the book; loan copies of the documentary on Hugo, *Kicking the Loose Gravel Home*; links to other rich websites; and recordings of Hugo reading and discussing his poems.

Humanities Montana also will be hosting a moderated discussion on the Humanities Roundtable later this summer, and a number of events devoted to Hugo’s work at the 2010 Montana Festival of the Book, October 29-30, in Missoula.

Thanks to the support of the book’s publisher, W.W. Norton, a limited number of copies will be available from Humanities Montana for short-term loans to book groups.

Richard Hugo was born on December 21, 1923 in White Center, Washington, a suburb of Seattle. He volunteered for World War II, where he served as a bombardier, flying thirty-five combat missions in the Mediterranean. He received his B.A. and M.A. in Creative Writing from the University of Washington and was employed as a technical writer for Boeing for thirteen years before publishing his first poetry collection, *A Run of Jacks*.

This is the eighth year Humanities Montana has offered the statewide One Book program. Humanities Montana is indebted to its Montana Center for the Book Advisory Committee for assistance in choosing this year’s selection.

Advisory committee members include William Bickle III, Mandy Smoker Broadus, John Clayton, Bill Cochran, Jennifer Harrison, Rick Newby, Barbara Theroux, and Niki Whearty.

Humanities Montana and its Montana Center for the Book promote Montana literature, libraries and literacy and sponsor the Montana Festival of the Book, the Letters About Literature writing competition for young people and OpenBook reading and discussion programs. The Montana Center for the Book is a program of Humanities Montana, Montana’s independent nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Contact us at 406-243-6022, or info@humanitiesmontana for more information.

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Holly Harper, Whitehall High School Librarian, earned her MLIS from the University of Washington iSchool in June, 2010. She currently teaches high school English and high school library, and is Chairman of the Jefferson County Library Board. Congratulations, Holly!
Missoula Public Library held a reception for the winners, contestants, and judges of our second annual Writing Contest on May 16. The standing-room only crowd filled our large meeting room to hear segments of the winning submissions read by their authors.

A couple fun tidbits about this year’s contest: 96 entries were submitted increasing participation by 20 percent over last year. Entries came from as far away as New Jersey and Nebraska, and winners hailed from Missoula, Florence, Huson, Victor, Helena, and Lolo.

The contest allowed submission of fiction and non-fiction writing for a variety of age categories starting at 6 years old. We’ll be compiling the entries into two bound volumes – one for our Montana Collection and the other for checkout. Last year’s entries are already bound in the Montana Collection.

Meet us at the Market

Missoula Public Library’s bookmobile is making its grand return to the Missoula River Market this summer. Last year we had more than 1,100 visitors to the bookmobile, which rolls out to the market on the last Saturday of every month. Over the summer we gave out an extra 50 cards to new patrons who stopped by to say hello.

This year we return to the market once a month so patrons strolling through the market can take the opportunity to check out some books, get a card, and discover the treasures the library has to offer!
Certification Program – New Trustee Track
The new Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff, and Trustees offers a special track for public library trustees. This is the first time a certificate giving official recognition to board members who participate in continuing education activities has been available from Montana State Library. To earn the certificate, trustees are asked to earn at least 15 continuing education credits by attending workshops (such as the Leadership Training announced below), conferences, or online training. Here are links to more details about the certification program located on the MSL website:
Trustee Track: http://www.msl.mt.gov/For_Librarians/Training/certification/default.asp

Leadership Training is Back for Fall 2010
It’s been a few years since Montana State Library has been able to offer leadership training. With the recommendation of the Network Advisory Council and approval of the State Library Commission, two leadership workshops are scheduled for this fall. All library directors and board members are invited to attend. Saturday, October 9th – Billings (Hilton Garden Inn) Saturday, November 6th -- Missoula (Hilton Garden Inn)
We’re very excited that Pat Wagner, Pattern Research (Denver), will be the presenter for these workshops. Pat is a distinguished library consultant and trainer with a special interest in library boards and the important role of library trustees. We’ve asked Pat to help boards understand how to better serve their libraries and communities and to share some specific information about library finances, a topic of great interest to us all.

Please share the dates with your board members and plan to attend. Registration will begin in early fall.

SWIM Scholarship Awards
A total of 51 scholarships were awarded in the SWIM library education grant project. This included 18 Montanans: 10 individuals will receive $14,400 each in scholarship funds to complete the MLIS degree from the University of North Texas Library Information School, and individuals will receive $4,320 each to complete the School Library Media Endorsement program from either the University of Montana or Montana State University. As soon as the scholarship recipients have officially accepted the awards, their names will be announced by Montana State Library. The other SWIM partner states have also made scholarship awards: 14 South Dakota residents received awards (8 MLIS and 6 endorsement); 11 Wyoming residents received awards (7 MLIS and 4 endorsement); and 8 Idaho residents received awards (7 MLIS and 1 endorsement). Congratulations to all those selected!

The SWIM scholarship recipients will begin school this fall and complete their programs by summer 2012. Then, they will put their education to work by serving for two years in a professional library position in the 4-state SWIM region. The SWIM project is funded by a grant from the federal Laura Bush Librarians for the 21st Century Grant Program and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Fall Workshop 2010 – Great Falls Holiday Inn, September 24-25
The sessions for this year’s Fall Workshop are shaping up. Here are some highlights:
□ MT’s own trainer extraordinaire, Mary Bushing, will make a final FW appearance (she’s really going to retire) sharing her expertise on personnel evaluation (staff, directors, trustees, boards) and on the past and future of cataloging;
Peggy Cadigan from New Jersey State Library is coming to remind us why libraries are indispensable now and how they can continue to be so in the future. Peggy was recently named an ALA Mover and Shaker and is one of only two librarian members of the Association of Professional Futurists. Her forecast for libraries is both exciting and uplifting;

Rita Emmett, author/procrastinator guru/clutter buster/customer service expert, will return to MT to share her remedies for burnout/stress and to help understand communication skills including the ever-tricky body language. Rita’s visit is cosponsored by AARP Montana so we’ll be joined by its members.

Sonia Gavin, Library Director of the MT Legislative Reference Center, will get us ready for the upcoming session with tips and resources for tracking bills (new and old), discovering legislative intent, and other challenging questions your patrons or students may ask. Judy Hart, Chair of MLA’s Government Affairs Committee, will also have information about the next session and legislation of special interest to librarians;

Suzanne Schwichtenberg, Adult Services Librarian, will tell us how nifty (and free!) web-based tools and online sites can make life at work and home easier.

Other sessions still in development include behavioral codes for libraries, early literacy, digital archives, GIS for libraries, advocacy for school libraries, and more.

Registration for the 2010 Fall Workshop will begin in late summer. Watch for it on wired-mt!

MT Connecting To Collections Grant
The Montana State Library and Montana Historical Society have received a two-year Institute of Museum and Library Services Connecting To Collections Statewide Planning Grant in the amount of $40,000. The project has three major goals:

1. develop an online survey to collect data about historical materials held by Montana’s cultural institutions. The survey will be available in September;

2. provide preservation workshops for staff/volunteers of MT’s libraries, museums, historical societies, county records offices, and tribal governments. The workshops are scheduled for this fall in five locations: Bozeman, Butte, Havre, Kalispell and Miles City;

3. Use the data collected in the survey to develop statewide preservation strategies and to educate legislators and other funding sources about the state’s preservation needs.

Contracted services for the project will be provided by Tom Clareson and Leigh Grinstead of LYRASIS, one of the oldest US library networks and a participant in other Connecting To Collections projects. They will be advised and assisted by an eight member volunteer Task Force: Faith Bad Bear-Barrett, Archivist at Little Big Horn College representing tribal heritage organizations; Molly Kruckenberg, Research Bureau Chief at Montana Historical Society; Donna McCrea, Archivist at University of Montana Library; Sarah McHugh, Statewide Projects Librarian at Montana State Library; Deb Mitchell, Program Specialist at Montana Historical Society representing the Museum Association of Montana; Jean Nielsen, Archivist at Miles City Public Library representing the Montana Library Association; Bonnie Ramey, Jefferson County Clerk and Recorder/Assessor/Election Administrator representing Montana Clerks and Recorders Association; and Kim Allen Scott, Special Collections Librarian at Montana State University Libraries.

LSTA Site Visit
During the week of June 14th, Montana’s State Program Officer from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) will be making a site visit. Michele Farrell will spend time with Montana State Library staff discussing Library Services and Technology Act projects and reviewing documentation on the administration of LSTA funds and compliance to federal grant regulations. Michele will also spend part of the week visiting MT libraries in the central and northeast parts of the state. Her tentative schedule includes visits to 17 libraries in 2½ days. Thanks to all the librarians who welcomed Michele to their community.
Lewis and Clark County Commission Chair Mike Murray and Commissioners Andy Hunthausen and Derek Brown commemorated the completion of the 1,008 square foot addition to the Lewis & Clark Library Lincoln Branch with the formal dedication and ribbon cutting on Friday, May 7th. Also on hand to celebrate were County Administrative Officer Eric Bryson, Public Works Assistant Director Kyle Thomas, and Lewis & Clark Library Board of Trustees Chair Sandi Conrady.

The first meeting held in the new facility was the Lewis and Clark County Commission May Lincoln Government Day, at which Murray remarked on the value that the Lewis & Clark Library has brought to the community and county in general. Lewis & Clark Library Director Judy Hart thanked the Commission for their support in making the project a reality. Many people from the community were on hand to watch as Lincoln Branch Librarian Sherri Wood cut the ceremonial ribbon as Branch Assistant Eleanor Pierce and Branch Sub Sherrill Leggett looked on. Wood, who has served as the Branch Librarian since November of 1983, expressed her gratitude to the people of Lincoln who make the Library such a wonderful place to work, “I have the best job in the world!”

The expansion was done to address a lack of space for increased usage of the Branch. Community groups can reserve the meeting space at no cost when the space is not being utilized by the Library for Library events. The separate access door allows groups to use the room outside of regular Library hours.

Calling all public and academic librarians:

This year the PLD / ASLD joint conference will be held at Chico Hot Springs on Sunday October 17 and Monday October 18. The annual conference will feature presentations and materials relevant to both public and academic librarians and will offer cross-divisional collaboration and networking opportunities. Watch the Wired Listserv for more information and be sure to save the dates. Plan to take advantage of this fall professional development event!
A group of civic minded students at East Valley Middle School is “Piecing the World Together One Library at a Time.” With the pending move of the Lewis & Clark Library East Valley Branch from the East Valley Middle School into a full-service, stand-alone branch on Main Street, students at EVMS organized a plan to be actively involved in the move of and set-up, of their new community library.

At 11:40 AM on Monday, May 10th a group of 7th and 8th graders from EVMS formed a Wagon Train Book Brigade to move books from EVMS to the new Library at 16 East Main. “The Wagon Train Book Brigade was symbolic on many levels,” explained EVMS librarian Judy Salisbury. “The new Lewis & Clark Library is not yet finished, so the book move is the students’ way of telling the community that this is going to be a community library and is only possible through the support, help, and dedication of the entire community.”

The Wagon Train Book Brigade was the culmination of month long project to support the relocation of the Lewis & Clark Library’s East Valley Branch at the East Valley Middle School. The two libraries have shared space since 2001 in a cooperative relationship between the Lewis & Clark Library and the East Helena School District.

“We designate a goal each year during the Scholastic Book Fair to get students excited about reading,” explained Salisbury. “This year we had three goals; to support the move of the East Valley Branch of Lewis & Clark Library; to raise money for a Bike Rack for the new Lewis & Clark Library East Helena Branch; and to get books in the hands of our students.” The theme for the EVMS Scholastic Book Fair this year was “Piecing the World Together One Library at a Time.”

“The students surpassed their goal of raising money for the new bike rack, a testament to the ownership they feel for their community library,” stated Salisbury. In addition, the students took their puzzle theme to the next level when they embarked on the symbolic Wagon Train Book Brigade to begin “Piecing our Community Library together one book at a time.”

“Libraries truly are Centers of the Community as well as Community Centers,” explained Lewis & Clark Library Director Judy Hart. “We are so thrilled to have the students this excited about helping with the expansion of their Community Library.”

Since 2001, the East Valley Branch of the Lewis & Clark Library has experienced record increases in visitation, circulation, program attendance, and use of public access computers. In response to this increase, the Lewis & Clark Library Board began researching ways in which to better serve the growing population in East Helena and the East Valley.

“Last year, the East Valley Branch had a 6.7% increase in visitation, a 27% increase in circulation, computer use increased 33%, and program attendance by over 11%,” explained Hart “We have enjoyed a wonderful relationship with the East Helena School District and we are immensely appreciative of their help and support in getting our new Branch up and running. It truly takes a community to build a library,” said Hart.
Parmly Billings Library is delighted to welcome two new librarians

By Dee Ann Redman, Assistant Director
Parmly Billings Library

Parmly Billings Library is delighted to welcome two new librarians to our Adult Services staff, and to the Billings and Montana library community.

BARB RIEBE has been promoted to Librarian from our Circulation Services unit. She has been a member of the Library’s staff for three years and has a background in literature. This experience will serve her well as she takes on development duties with the Fiction collections, and is half of the dynamic duo organizing the adult Water Your Mind Summer Reading program.

MARY DREW POWERS has recently joined the staff at Parmly Billings Library as a Librarian. She recently earned her Master’s degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Washington, and had been working at the Flathead County Library’s Whitefish Branch.

Among other responsibilities, Mary Drew is now the friendly voice behind most of Parmly Billings Library’s postings on Facebook and Twitter.

Nomkoo Comes to Bozeman

A 9 foot, 1.3 ton elephant from South Africa will be visiting Bozeman in August as part of a six-city tour. Nomkhubulwane, called Nomkoo, is the creation of Andries Botha, an eminent South African sculptor, human rights activist, and founder of the Human Elephant Foundation (HEF). Botha has created a series of life-size elephants that have been exhibited and or placed around the world.

Nomkoo was made from recycled truck tires, and is traveling to Bozeman to facilitate understanding and discussion of creating a better, respectful, and sustainable world. Nomkoo will be on display on the Library’s front plaza from August 1 – September 15. For more information, visit www.nomkoo.org/bozeman.
MPLA News

By Pam Henley, Technology Assistant
Bozeman Public Library

The joint Oklahoma/Mountain Plains Library Association conference in Oklahoma City last month had over 700 people attending. Highlights included keynote speaker Nancy Miller, creator of the TNT drama Saving Grace, and the “Stacked: Fashion off the Shelves” event at the downtown library, where librarians modeled items created from library materials. There were many creative entries, with the winner modeling a colorful floor-length vampire-style cape fashioned from Mylar book covers (she also carried a scanner to protect her books from evil forces of censorship!). Next year the joint conference will be in Billings so get ready to have a wonderful time!

MPLA, like many associations, is looking for ways to stretch their budget. In addition to publishing the newsletter only online for a year, board meetings will be held online as well. This will save travel and hotel costs for the July board meeting. This will be re-evaluated next year to see if cost savings are justified.

My term as MPLA representative runs through the Billings conference, and a new person needs to be elected. Interested? Here’s what you need to know: the position is for 3 years; you need to attend MLA board meetings (the August board retreat, October board meeting after the ASLD/PLD retreat, and meetings at conference), and MPLA board meetings (usually online, and at joint conferences). MLA pays for expenses to the joint conference. You need to be an MPLA member, and will write the MPLA news for the Focus. Questions? Ask me – it’s a wonderful position!

406-582-2422
phenley@bozeman.net

Big Dummies in Libby!

Samantha Pierson, Director
Lincoln County Public Libraries

Anyone who knows us, knows that Libby Librarians cannot resist a challenge, free stuff, or pizza. When Sarah Daviau and I learned about the For Dummies® Library Display Contest by Wiley Publishing, it was meant to be. Thanks to the energy of three librarians (Melody Condron was the tall one we sent up on the ladder) and one mother of a librarian (thanks Mama Daviau), Libby Library put together a display of Dummies Books featuring black and yellow streamers, balloons, and the message “Don’t Understand Most Meaningful Information Easily? Start here…” The library display garnered a third place runner up position. As a result, the Libby Library received 45 Dummies books, fun Dummies swag, a pizza party, and most importantly a trophy. Personally, I never expected to earn a trophy in the world of librarianship. The judges were very impressed with the message and how it incorporated Dummies. So, look for many more Dummies books available as soon as Melody gets them cataloged. If you’d like to see pictures of all winning entries go to: http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-301896.html.
Upcoming Projects
Thanks to the Great Falls Public Library Foundation for providing the Great Falls Public Library with $10,000 for a variety of ongoing projects.

$1000 will be used for downloadable audio and/or ebook materials through the state MontanaLibrary2Go consortium.

$2000 will sponsor the Budding Babies early literacy project. The Foundation is working on finding a sponsor for the project for matching funds, which could double the funds available. The library initiated the Budding Babies project last fall with great success, distributing 200 early literacy packets to various organizations around town. These organizations included the City/County Health Department, Planned Parenthood, Quality Life Concepts, and the Indian Health Clinic.

The remaining money from the Foundation is being used to reupholster 100 chairs used in the second floor public area. These chairs were originally purchased by the foundation.

The Great Falls Public Library is also the recipient of a $3000 grant from PPL. This money will be used to purchase young adult series bestsellers.

Welcome to New Director
Congratulations to the Great Falls Public Library’s new director, Kathy Mora, who has been serving as Interim Director since August. This comes as the pinnacle to Kathy’s career at the library, which began as a page after school and on weekends, at the age of 15. At the same time, she also worked as a page in her high school library. By the time Kathy reached her mid-twenties, she returned to the Great Falls Public Library as a temporary inventory clerk. It was just a matter of time before she was hired in a permanent position. During her tenure at the Great Falls Public Library she has worked in Tech Services, Interlibrary Loans, on the Reference Desk, as Systems Administrator, Assistant Director, Interim Director, and now, Director.

Kathy exemplifies her outlook on the role of libraries. “The fundamental purpose of libraries is to help people improve their lives and expand their knowledge,” Kathy expressed recently. Her professional life reflects that philosophy, no question. On the personal side, she will be the first to say she has been on the receiving end as well. While working on the reference desk at the Great Falls Public Library, Kathy began to do basic computer troubleshooting. This developed her interest and the roots of her expertise in the technological side of library work, which was initially self-taught. While working fulltime, she returned to school, earning a networking certificate, a Bachelor of Sciences degree in Computer Information Systems, and her Masters Degree in Library Science. To accomplish her goals she utilized both the public and school libraries extensively, and feels she is proof of how libraries can improve lives and expand knowledge.

We welcome her as our new director and wish her much success.

Thanks for a Job Well Done
Jeff Savage, Information Services Librarian at the Great Falls Public Library, announced he will be retiring August 31, after 11 years of service. Jeff was happiest when hip deep in challenging research projects. As for retirement, it would come as no surprise if Jeff hung up the “Gone Fishing” or maybe the “Gone Hiking” sign. We at the Great Falls Public Library thank him for a job well done.