Greeting Montana Librarians!

I’ve been reading and watching with interest the articles about Fab Labs and 3D printers. Our Montana Libraries are so forward thinking and innovative; who will be the first to have a 3D printer? My competitive nature wants to know. (If I didn't have to think so hard about “where would we put it?” it could be us.) These musings are just to remind myself, and you, that we can’t be complacent in this post-digital age. Should libraries become the center for innovation in our communities and put a hacker space/Fab Lab in the meeting room or teen area? I like that idea. More and more libraries must create an EXPERIENCE for our users, or at least allow our users to create their own EXPERIENCE in the library.

Soon we’ll send out the interest survey for the MLA conference. Our keynote speaker, Joan Frye Williams, is a library futurist and I’m sure she’ll get us thinking about what new roles the library will play in our communities. One of the pre-conferences will feature the Anythink Libraries from Adams County, Colorado—they are all about EXPERIENCE and have built some beautiful, future-focused buildings. Another will feature up-to-the-moment research and best practices for instilling early literacy skills in our young children. We’ll have lots to choose from and lots to learn concerning both the current library landscape and what we can dream for the future.

If you haven't done so yet, please renew or initiate your MLA membership. And encourage your Boards and other supporting organizations to do so as well. The networking you’ll experience in Big Sky, and the wealth of workshops offered are only a part of what your membership represents. The Montana Library Association strives to keep libraries in the forefront of community dialogue throughout the state and even at the national level. The more of you we have on our team, the more successes we will have in our libraries.

Until next time….

Kim Crowley, President
Montana Library Association
New Montana State Librarian Named
By Sara Groves
Montana State Library

Jennie Stapp, the current Digital Library Director and Chief Information Officer at the Montana State Library, was named the new Montana State Librarian after an extensive national search. Stapp was one of three finalists for the position.

“Jennie is the consummate librarian professional, but her skills go beyond that,” said Don Allen, Chairman of the Montana State Library Commission, which conducted interviews for the State Librarian position. “She’s also exceedingly intelligent and visionary - a true leader who will take library services across Montana to a new level in this age of information and digitization.”

Prior to serving as the Montana State Library’s Digital Library Director and Chief Information Officer, Stapp held various positions at the Montana State Library, including state publications content specialist, cataloging and metadata specialist, and the Montana Shared Catalog technical assistant. She has also worked in other libraries and served in the Peace Corps. She holds a Master’s of Library Science from the University of Arizona.

“I am honored and humbled to be named the new Montana State Librarian,” said Stapp. “Because of our amazing and dedicated staff, the Montana State Library is recognized nationally as a leader in finding innovative solutions to library services. I look forward to expanding my work at the State Library and continuing our longstanding tradition of excellence and innovation.”

Stapp replaces Darlene Staffeldt who retired as Montana State Librarian in September. The Montana State Library has a budget of $9.7 million with 46 employees.

The Montana State Library meets the information needs of Montana government agency management and staff; ensures all Montana citizens have access to information created by their government; supports the role of all Montana libraries in delivering quality library content and services to their patrons, works to strengthen local community public libraries; ensures that Montanans who are visually or physically handicapped are provided access to library resources; and measures its successes by its patrons’ and partners’ successes.

MLA Membership – Your New Year Resolution
By Marjorie Doyle, Director-at-Large, West and Dawn Kingstad, Director-at-Large, East

The New Year is coming and with it comes resolutions. Now may be the time to resolve to be an active member in your professional association. The benefits that you receive from the association include both educational and personal enhancement through conferences and retreats, divisions and interest groups. Eligibility for grants and financial support as well as discounts on conference and retreat registration are based on membership.

The Montana Library Association is your professional association and your way to connect to your community of peers. Montana librarians are change agents in their communities. Do more for your library and your career through membership in MLA.

If you have questions about your membership status feel free to contact your local Director at-Large or the Executive Assistant, Debra Kramer (see http://www.mtlib.org/contacts.html).
Native American Cultural Heritage Month
By Jude Smith, Public Relations
Great Falls Public Library

The Great Falls Public Library celebrated Native American Cultural Heritage Month (November) in a big way this year. Art by renowned Native American artist Monty Yellow Bird (Black Pinto Horse) and a variety of regional Native Artists was exhibited in the library throughout the month. Rife with symbolism, Yellow Bird’s work honors his spiritual roots, Indigenous heritage and both traditional and contemporary art conventions through a bold use of color and design combined with a pictorial narrative that activates the viewer's imagination. He is motivated by a passionate desire to build connections between the past and the present with a hopeful eye toward a brighter future built around empathy and understanding between diverse communities.

The library also hosted a variety of programs throughout the month that revolved around the Native American culture and community. Yellow Bird kicked the events off with a program detailing the history and process of his work.

A second program involved several members of the local Native American community. These folks told stories of their everyday lives that reflected how their heritage helped to lift them up to success and on the flipside, how they were subjected to racism and stereotyping due to their heritage. The success of this program lay in the involvement of community members taking ownership of their own stories and sharing them with the community at large.

A third program featured Native American music, with dancers led by Don Fish and the Helena-based drumming group All Nations. Along with the authentic dancing, Fish gave brief explanations of the various dances performed and how they fit into the Natives’ cultural landscape. The final program featured three middle school dancing-drumming groups who also performed.

Along with these programs celebrating the culture of the Native Americans, they also brought diverse segments of the population together as a community, deepening our understanding of and connections to each other.

Stuffed Animal Sleepover
By Jude Smith, Public Relations
Great Falls Public Library

The Great Falls Public Library hosted its second annual Stuffed Animal Sleep Over in October with a huge turn out of both children and their stuffed animals. Youth Services Librarian Nola Huey led the group of almost 200 children and parents in singing songs, telling stories, and contests before the group followed a footprint path up to the Kids’ Place where they put their animals to bed for the night. A few of the children found it impossible to part with their friends, but 112 stuffed animals stayed the night at the library. After enjoying a treat, the families left and then the fun began.

Nola, along with other library staff and volunteers, spent the evening photographing the animals getting into mischief. Anything went, from playing with the photocopiers, elevators and art exhibits, to cavorting in the outdoor book drops. Burning the midnight oil, Nola compiled photos of the animals for the children to take home when they came to retrieve their animals the next day. It was great fun for both adults and children.
Emerging technology has transformed our lives, including how and where we learn. No longer do we have to leave jobs and relocate our families to pursue our educational dreams. Now, from the comfort of our homes, we can participate in online courses and even earn a degree without ever setting foot on campus.

Graduate students at the San José State University School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) live across North America, and most never visit the campus located in the heart of Silicon Valley. SLIS offers a fully-online Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) degree, with a convenient approach to learning and an ALA-accredited program rich in choices.

Early on, SLIS recognized the benefits of delivering its courses online, including introducing students to the emerging technology they’ll encounter when working in the rapidly changing LIS field. As they interact with peers and faculty from a distance, SLIS students are immersed in sophisticated technology, preparing them to serve clients and collaborate with colleagues who live across town or around the globe.

“We know that tomorrow’s information professionals will need to interact with virtual teams and use emerging technology to serve clients,” said Debbie Faires, SLIS assistant director for distance learning.

“We’re excited about providing students with skills that will make them more employable in today’s challenging economic climate.”

Technology has opened up a world of opportunities for SLIS students. They present at virtual conferences and participate in research projects, all without leaving their homes. They gain hands-on experience as virtual interns, interacting with host institutions that may be located anywhere on the continent. For example, a student who lives in Montana may intern at a high-tech Silicon Valley company without traveling to California.

The San José State University School of Library and Information Science offers two fully-online master degrees, a fully-online certificate program, and a doctoral program: Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS), Master of Archives and Records Administration (MARA), Post-Master’s Certificate in Library and Information Science, and the San José Gateway PhD Program.

Let the learning begin: slisweb.sjsu.edu/mla
Bond Issue for New Library Passes in Billings
By Bill Cochran, Director
Parmly Billings Library

After a 2002 bond issue referendum for a new library building was defeated, Parmly Billings Library supporters regrouped. The Library Board worked with the City Council and County Commission to renegotiate a new interlocal agreement that clarified the roles of each. The Library contracted with City/County Planning Director Candi Beaudry to facilitate both a strategic planning process and a site evaluation study for a downtown library location. The community strongly identified the block on which the current library building is located as the preferred site for a new building. In the meantime, the Parmly Billings Library Foundation hired its first employee, Development Director Leslie Modrow, sent her and Foundation Board members to training on capital campaigns, and hired fundraising consultants Capital Quest to conduct a feasibility study on how much private funding could be raised for a library building project. The Foundation also solicited advice from the Bozeman Public Library and its Foundation, which was critical to funding its new building.

In the course of the feasibility study, a lead donor, who remains anonymous, committed $2 million to the project in October 2010, stipulating only that it be for a new building of architectural significance; the study projected that another $3 million could be raised. Through a competitive process, the donor and the Foundation selected Will Bruder + Partners of Phoenix as the design architects for the project. Throughout 2011, Bruder facilitated public input meetings and worked with Library staff and a Library Building Design Committee through conceptual, schematic and design development plans, keeping the project within an $18 million budget. The unexpected move of a neighboring car dealership led to land exchanges between the City and Billings Clinic and Stockman Bank that resulted in City ownership of the entire block the Library is located on, providing the community’s preferred site at no cost to taxpayers.

A unanimous City Council placed the bond issue on a November 8 City ballot that it shared only with City Council races and an uncontested municipal judgeship. The Billings Gazette, Yellowstone County Commission, Billings Area Chamber of Commerce, Big Sky Economic Development Authority, Teamsters Local 190, and the Billings Cultural Partners were among the many community institutions which endorsed the project.

The Foundation’s Capital Campaign Committee completed raising the remaining $3 million the day before the election, while the Billings Library Initiative Committee worked with Hilltop Public Solutions on a grassroots election campaign that focused on door to door canvassing and calling to identify supporters and get them to vote in the mail ballot election. A crowd of more than 100 supporters gathered at a downtown sports bar to await returns on election night and erupted at news of the 57% to 43% margin of victory. The issue won all five City wards, with a record-setting 63% turnout.

(Continued on Next Page)
The project could be bid as early as March, with groundbreaking in April or May. Occupancy is expected in December 2013, after which the current building will be demolished and its materials utilized on site as part of a planned effort to attain LEED Gold certification. Dedication of the site, including a parking garden, will be in early summer 2014.

**Big Sky Branch of the Missoula Public Library is Turning One**  
By Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, PR and Marketing Committee Chair  
Missoula Public Library

We’re wishing the Big Sky Branch of Missoula Public Library, in Big Sky High School, 3100 South Ave. West., a Happy First Birthday! The branch, serving Missoula’s south side, has been open for one year and we’re celebrating with an open house on Wednesday, Dec. 14 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. There will be food, door prizes, cookie decorating for the kids and, of course, access to great library services both in-house and on the Internet provided by branch librarian Carolyn Kamrud. Swing by and check out the branch. Big Sky Branch hours are Tuesdays through Thursdays 4:00-8:30 p.m. and 9:00-2:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

**New Missoula Public Library Branch Opening in Lolo**  
By Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, PR and Marketing Committee Chair  
Missoula Public Library

Lolo School District and the Missoula Public Library are very pleased to announce the opening of a new branch of the Missoula Public Library. The Lolo School Community Library Branch, located at the Lolo Elementary School in Lolo, at 11395 Highway 93 South, opens for business January 3rd, with an open house/grand opening event planned for January 17th, 2012. Lolo School was chosen as the location for a branch to allow better access to library materials and services south of Missoula. This has been a much anticipated opening for Missoula Public Library, one of the busiest public libraries in the state. The Missoula Public Library sees an average of 70,000 visitors each month and check in 300 items an hour, every day!

The Lolo School Community Library Branch is Missoula Public Library’s sixth branch library, joining branches at Big Sky High School, Frenchtown High School, Seeley Lake High School, the Community Center in Condon, and the library’s mobile branch, the W.O.W. Bus. “The previous school sites have been a big success because it gives the public more for their money,” Missoula Public Library Director Honore Bray says. “They’re already paying public dollars for their schools and they’re paying public dollars for the library. So by combining them together and using the school for longer hours, it makes more sense than paying rent in a building or trying to build a new building,” she added.

With computer access, books to read for fun or study, audio books, DVDs and more, the Lolo School Community Library Branch offers all the same great services as the main Missoula library. The Lolo Branch will serve as a pick-up and drop-off location for Missoula Public Library materials. Patrons can request materials via the online catalog and select the Lolo School Community Library Branch as the pick-up location. The branch librarian, Jodi Christophe, will be making regular trips to the main library to regularly switch out the collection so there will always be something new on the shelves. Plus, she provides great reference service to Lolo Branch users.

The Lolo Branch is open to the public, as well as to students starting January 3, 2012. Hours are 4:00 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday in Lolo School’s upper level building library facility. Further information is available at www.missoulapubliclibrary.org.

Please join us for the gala open house/grand opening of the Lolo Branch of the Missoula Public Library on January 17th. There will be food, drinks, music, demonstrations, giveaways, the READ dogs are invited, and general merriment will ensue as we celebrate greater access to library materials and services in Montana.
Rosebud County Library Celebrates Veterans Day
By Cherie Heuser
Rosebud County Library

Veterans’ Day fell on 11/11/11 this year (and for you history buffs, you probably know that that date comes from the Armistice ending hostilities on the Western Front in World War I and the document was signed at 11:00, adding another 11 to the list). Rosebud County Library decided that with the significance of that date, it was time to collaborate with other local groups and celebrate the day right.

The result was more than 150 people at the County Courthouse for an American Legion flag ceremony, including the playing of the National Anthem by the Forsyth High School band, followed by a very special parade. Veterans from World War II, the Korean War, the Viet Nam War, Desert Storm, and the Iraq Conflict either walked or rode in convertibles or the American Legion bus. Among those walking was Harvey Walter, a World War II veteran clad in his original uniform.

The parade terminated at Rosebud County Library, where the people crowded into every available space for a program which included the Commander of the local Veterans of Foreign Wars giving a history of the VFW and its services; the Chaplain of the local American Legion giving a strong speech on the needs of veterans and the importance of people’s recognition, respect, and support of veterans; the Montana State Regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution speaking on DAR recognition and support of veterans; and E-5 Sargeant Ray Bell, recently returned from Iraq, speaking on the modern soldiers and veterans, the influence of his father, and his gratitude to people for showing such esteem and support for veterans.

The speeches ended at 11:00, and the crowd observed two minutes of silence in respect of all soldiers. Following the speeches, members of Boy Scout Troop 252 performed a play entitled “Soldiers” by Cheryl Heser. The play depicted five soldiers from the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World Wars I and II, and the Viet Nam War with “memories” from the Korean War. They not only gave a picture of their lives as soldiers in each of the wars but talked among themselves about differences and similarities, such as losing buddies and the longing for family and a happier future.

The “icing on the cake” came from an anonymous donor who provided certificates for free lunches that day at local restaurants for veterans and currently serving soldiers.
Whitefish Community Library Named “Great Fish” in Montana’s Sea of Deserving Non-profits
By Allison Pomerantz, Secretary
Whitefish Community Library Board

Four months after breaking away from the Flathead County Library System, the Whitefish Community Library is more than alive and kicking—it is thriving and receiving accolades based on its own merits.

On November 3 at its annual awards ceremony, the Whitefish Community Foundation, an organization that has supported local nonprofit organizations in the Whitefish community with over $3.5 million in funding since its inception in 2000, bestowed its highest honor on the WCL. Whitefish Community Foundation’s Board president Carol Atkinson presented the “Great Fish Award” to the WCL, Whitefish Library Association President Connie Heckathorn and WCL Director Joey Kositzky. The Great Fish Award recognizes the value and service that a local nonprofit, its director and staff provide to the community. New this year, the award came with a $1,000 grant. “I can only say that we are honored and humbled by this recognition from our community leaders,” said Kositzky. “It is perhaps our biggest honor to date.”

The Community Foundation also donated another $6,000 to the library and the John Kramer Family Fund donated $1,000 as part of its generous grants program to assist area nonprofits complete their charitable missions. Kositzky said the entire $8,000 will be spent on new books.

Kositzky added praise to Connie Heckathorn, the Great Fish Award’s other named recipient and an ardent supporter of the WCL, giving her time, talents and financial resources to ensure the library continues to successfully serve the community.

“Connie is and always has been the driving force behind the progress this library has made. She has been involved with the library for over 40 years and continues to be an inspiration and example for all of us,” Kositzky said. “We owe her a huge debt of gratitude.”

Kositzky explained that “it takes a village” for the WCL to accomplish all that it does and added, “Our volunteer base is incredible and helps us offer so many programs and events.” Additionally she said that the amount of community support for the library has been amazing.

In the four months the community library has been open, traffic has steadily increased. In July, 6,000 people visited the library. The following month the number increased to 6,500, jumped to 6,900 in September and to 7,400 in October. Also in those four months, 6,758 new books were added to the library’s shelves and 1,800 new library cards were issued to users. Since the library joined the interlibrary loan system the third week of September, the WCL patrons have borrowed about 1,000 items from other libraries in the group and the WCL has loaned 800 items to patrons of other libraries.

(Continued on Next Page)
In the spirit of demonstrating service and responsiveness to its patrons, the WCL altered its hours to offer more morning times based on feedback to a survey that was distributed this summer. Families with young children can begin to enjoy earlier 10:30 am story times on Thursdays beginning December 1.

Michael Collins, Chair of the WCL Board of Trustees said, “We appreciate all of those people who took time to give us this valuable feedback. The Board hopes to use the information gathered through the survey to sustain the library as a center of community activity.”

“We will continue reviewing the results of the survey and responding to your suggestions as time goes on,” Kositzky added.

Continue to check out www.whitefishlibrary.org for details on news, events and volunteer opportunities at the Whitefish Community Library.

**Letters About Literature Contest Deadline Approaching**

By Samantha Dwyer, Office Manager and Program Assistant

Humanities Montana

Students in fourth through twelfth grade are invited to submit a letter to an author of a book they engaged with on a personal level to Letters About Literature, a national reading promotion program of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, presented in partnership with Target and the Montana Center for the Book. Young readers can enter as individuals, or as a class. For more information, teacher resources, examples from previous winners, and submission instructions, go to Letters About Literature. The deadline for submission is Friday, January 6, 2012.

“Dear Ms. Jhumpa Lahiri, …This is how your book saved my life. Reading your book – looking at my situation, my circumstances, and my family from an outside point of view, allowed me to really think about what was important to me.”—Akash Kar

State and national winners are chosen from each of the three competition levels: Level 1 (grades 4–6), Level 2 (grades 7–8) and Level 3 (grades 9–12). National winners each designate a favorite library that they wish to receive a $10,000 grant.

Humanities Montana is the state’s independent nonprofit state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Since 1972, Humanities Montana has provided services and grants to hundreds of Montana organizations in support of public programs in history, literature, values, and public issues. Among its many programs are its grants, Montana Conversations: Speakers Bureau and Speakers in the Schools, the Humanities Montana Festival of the Book, Letters About Literature, and the Governor’s Humanities Awards.

Contact: Samantha Dwyer
samantha.dwyer@humanitiesmontana.org
(406) 243-6022

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Looking for that perfect holiday gift?! Buy the gift that keeps on giving—*the Montana Library Association cookbook!* A Literary Feast is available at [http://www.mtlib.org/Store/cookbooks.html](http://www.mtlib.org/Store/cookbooks.html) for only $10 plus shipping.
Awards and Honors Committee Seeking Nominations
It’s time to think about the outstanding achievements of our colleagues and give them the recognition they deserve with MLA Awards and Honors. You can also find detailed information and descriptions of the awards in the MLA handbook section of the MLA website and on the MLA Conference website. http://www.mtlib.org/Handbook/Standing_Committees/awahon.html

1.) Three letters are required for every nomination: 1 (one) letter from the nominator and 2 (two) letters in support of the nomination. Hard copies and/or email attachments are fine. No more than three letters will be considered. For the Media Award, a copy of the nominated project must also be submitted.

2.) All nomination materials should be sent to:

Anita Scheetz
Fort Peck Tribal Library
Box 398
Poplar, MT 59255
ascheetz@fpcc.edu (preferred)
406-768-6303 (fax)

The deadline for nominations is Monday, January 23, 2012.

Honorary MLA Life-Time Membership
This award may be conferred upon an individual who has either made an outstanding contribution to librarianship or has rendered outstanding service to library interests. To be eligible, an individual shall have made a contribution of lasting importance to the field of librarianship. The contribution must be outstanding enough that there can be no question of his/her suitability. Only living persons may be considered.

Library of the Year
This award may be conferred upon any type of Montana library, library system or network for distinguished achievement in service. The staff, library board or administering body, and the community or people served shall be involved in the work for which recognition is sought. Award shall be based upon but not limited to activities or accomplishments such as the following:
• User services
• Development of innovative partnerships through networks, systems, cooperative planning and programming
• Sound collection development policies
• Offering opportunities for professional growth and job satisfaction of all employees

Sheila Cates Award for Librarian of the Year
This award is conferred on a librarian in recognition of outstanding leadership and accomplishment in library service. The librarian must be currently employed in any field of librarianship in Montana and must be a current member of the Montana Library Association. Award shall be based upon, but not limited to, activities or accomplishments such as the following:
• Provision of high-quality, community-centered library services
• Contribution to any area of service benefiting users
• Distinguished service to the profession, including outstanding participation in activities of professional library associations and/or notable publications
• Leadership in education and in-service training for librarians
• Leadership in cooperative activities
• Outstanding development of library techniques, management, and/or facilities
School Library Program of the Year Award
This award is conferred on a distinguished Montana Teacher-Librarian and the school library program in which they serve. This award recognizes the outstanding achievement of the teacher-librarian in fully integrating the school library program with curricular goals. A cash award of $500.00 will be provided by Follett Library Resources to be used for library development. An additional application must be filled out for this award. It is available on the Montana Library Association website. The award shall be based on, but not limited to, activities or accomplishments such as the following:
• Emphasis of the school library program's role in the instructional process through professionalism, collaboration, and design of library resources that are in support of curricular goals
• Leadership in information literacy instruction through a variety of models for students, staff, and other community members
• Administration of information management systems that support student learning and school and district programs
• Establishment of a powerful, relevant, and ubiquitous culture of reading in the school community

Support Staff of the Year Award
This award is conferred on a Montana library support staff employee in recognition of outstanding service to the library profession and excellence in job performance. The support staff worker must be currently employed in a Montana library. The award shall be based upon, but not limited to, activities or accomplishments such as the following:
• Provision of high quality library services
• Contribution to any area of service benefitting library users
• Commitment to promoting library service and free access to information for all
• Leadership in strengthening the image of library staff
• Leadership in fostering communication between library workers
• Active service in library activities at the local, state, regional, or national level

Trustee of the Year
This award is conferred on a Montana public library trustee in recognition of outstanding achievement and leadership. Nominations may be made by any library board, individual library, librarian, trustee, MLA member or Montana State Library Commission. Equal consideration shall be given to trustees of small and large libraries. The award shall be based upon, but not limited to, activities and accomplishments such as the following:
• Service to the local library and participation in state and national activities
• Constructive accomplishments in promoting library service shall be considered rather than the length of service as a trustee
• Interest in and contribution to the development of library services beyond those of the local community
• Achievements of nominees are judged according to criteria found in the Montana Public Library Trustee Manual

School Administrator of the Year Award
This award is conferred upon a Montana school administrator in recognition of outstanding achievement and leadership in the development and promotion of school libraries. Nominations for this award should come from the librarian currently employed by the school district of the nominee. The awards shall be based upon, but not limited to, activities or accomplishments such as the following:
• Constructive accomplishment towards the advancement of library service to the students and teachers of the school
• Development of sound school library practices
• Creative and effective work in interpreting the library to the school board, school administration, teaching staff, students, and community
• Fostering cooperative relations with other libraries in the area
• Implementation of programs to address special needs or problems
• Defense of intellectual freedom
• Promoting and supporting the employment of professional librarians in school
Special Friend to Libraries Award
Purpose of the award is to recognize individuals or groups who have rendered outstanding service in support of library interests within Montana. The award is conferred simply as a reward for a job well done. Nominations are accepted from members of the Montana library Association only. Award need not be based solely on service rendered during the previous year, but may be based on cumulative years of service.

Pat Williams Intellectual Freedom Award
This award is conferred upon an individual or group who has made significant contributions during the past year to the enhancement of First Amendment rights. The recipient should have demonstrated a clear understanding of the principles, nature, responsibilities and implications of the First Amendment; the recipient should be a Montanan or a non-Montanan whose contribution has a demonstrable effect on Montana. The recipient should have applied that understanding of the principles in one or more the following ways:
- In defense of the principles in the face of a serious challenge to it which defense is not necessarily limited to libraries,
- In support of the principles through an active role in Formulating programs which develop people's ability to deal with a full range of opinion/controversy and with the issues associated with such controversy, or
- Developing or materially assisting in the development, of a legal base for the continued enjoyment of freedom of mind, its strengthening, and its defense, or
- Expanding the philosophical foundation of the principle or contributing to better understanding of it.

Interest Group Excellence Award
This award is conferred upon an individual member of an MLA interest group or upon an interest group as a whole, for meritorious service on behalf of Montana libraries and/or librarians. Award shall be based upon, but not limited to, activities or accomplishments such as the following:
- Comprehensive projects which benefit the larger library community
- Exemplary programs or outstanding services which are not available through other channels
- Extraordinary assistance to other libraries and/or librarians in Montana

Media Award
This award is conferred to honor a production for broadcast or work for publication which best underscores the value of libraries to community and society. This includes works prepared for television, radio, cable, film, and/or print media. News articles/programs and documentaries also qualify. The broadcast or publication of the nominated work should be within the two years preceding the annual conference at which the award is to be made. A copy of the nominated work must be submitted to the Awards and Honors Committee for review.

GIS Conference Opportunity
by Mindy Cochran, GIS Program Coordinator
Flathead County

The Mountain Association of Geographic Information Professionals (MAGIP) would like to invite you to attend and/or participate in the 2012 Intermountain GIS Conference. Scheduled to be held in Kalispell, MT April 16th – 20th, 2012, this year’s conference “Local Solutions to Global Issues” will be the largest GIS community event in Montana. The conference will include workshops, presentation and poster tracks, featured speakers, and a public night - all designed to increase your GIS knowledge. Co-chairs Mindy Cochran (Flathead County GIS Program Manager) and Wendy Thingelstad (Lake County GIS Coordinator) can be reached at (406) 758-2401 or (406) 883-7212, respectively, or please see the conference website for more information: http://www.magip.org/intermountain. We hope to see you there!
MPLA News
The Mountain Plains Library Association had 50 applicants interested in the Leadership Institute to be held next May in Estes Park, Colorado. One Montanan was among the 50 applicants of which 30 will be chosen for the Institute. This is a great educational experience for librarians to work with organizational development consultant, Maureen Sullivan, who has over 25 years experience in leadership development. Maureen has been elected to the 2012-13 presidency of the American Library Association (ALA) and will be facilitating the 2012 MPLA Leadership Institute during her presidential year.

With the help of an online submission form, award nominations for librarians who have made an impact in the library field are easier than ever. Take time to go to the guidelines at http://mpla.us/committees/awards/awardsinfo.html and recommend a Montana librarian for an award to be announced at next fall’s annual conference in LaVista, Nebraska.

It is not too late for Montana to receive some cool prizes from MPLA. The state that increases the percentage of new and renewed memberships by January will get some VIP treatment from MPLA plus one member will receive a free conference registration. New members receive half off their membership so now is the time to join MPLA and reap some rewards.