- MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT -

by Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, President of the Montana Library Association
As I write this, I am sitting on the edge of the bathtub in the bathroom at a Best Western in Bryce Canyon City in southern Utah. Why the bathroom, you ask? Because it is early and my family is sleeping in the room outside and I am trying very hard not to wake them up. The bathroom was the only place I could go and turn on a light without disturbing them too much. (Plus, makes it pretty quick when I am ready to take a shower!). My husband and my twin girls and I are here in Utah doing some exploring and hiking for spring break. But just because it’s spring break, doesn’t mean the working world grinds to a halt.

Since the MLA Conference is next week in Billings, I’ve been doing some work for that, preparing for what I hope will be a terrific conference for all of you. And I believe it will be! In thinking about MLA, my mind always goes to the wonderful people involved with our library organization. We have some great members, and librarians, who are so hard-working and dedicated. They never stop working on behalf of our organization and I am so grateful for them no matter where I am, whether I’m staring at the amazing red rocks in southern Utah or gazing upon the beautiful mountains surrounding Missoula. I’m in a thankful mode. Everyone in MLA is terrific but I particularly want to single out these individuals who have gone above and beyond to make my year as President-elect/surprise President so positive.

**Sheila Bonnand.** Sheila took over the MLA Professional Development Committee which had faltered in the last year and made everything right. She awarded some grants that had been missed and re-wrote the governing documents to ensure smoother grant facilitation in the future. She got us back on track. Thanks Sheila!

**John Finn.** I am so happy Johnny Finn is back with us in Montana and so grateful for his work with the MLA Government Affairs Committee. John understands how policies and processes
work at the state level and he is an amazing advocate for librarians. He was also an integral part of the legislative night last January. He just rocks all the way around. (Plus, he's an Elvis fan like me!).

Conor Cote. New to the board, but willing to take on the creation of a Twitter account for MLA. We've been wanting that for awhile now and Conor just made it happen.

Cara Orban and Mitch Grady. Cara (ASLD Chair) and Mitch (PLD Chair) put together an amazing academic and public librarians retreat at Chico last fall. Not only did they make it look easy, but they made money doing it. They cleared over $1,000 on a retreat that typically breaks even. Thank you for your excellent event planning, you two. Plus, it was a really fabulous retreat.

Dawn Kingstad, for organizing an amazing OFFLINE event in February in Glendive. Great content, great companionship, great chocolate—everything OFFLINE is meant to be. And she also turned a profit.

Caroline Campbell and Kendra Mullison who do such a wonderful job with our association newsletter, FOCUS. It is so much fun to read FOCUS with all the new content and photos they are putting in each issue. This newsletter now exemplifies our dynamic, vibrant, and busy profession. Thank you Caroline and Kendra for your vision—and making it happen.

Debbi Kramer. Executive Director of MLA. She is organized, capable, and answers all my questions promptly. We all need a Debbi in our lives. And I am so glad she is in mine.

I want to say a very special thank you to the MLA Sheila Cates Scholarship Committee. You all have worked with me for years raising money for Cates scholarships for librarians and you are just the most creative, fun people I know. I just love you! Specifically, we are talking about Jim Kammerer, Jo Flick, Anita Scheetz, Della Dubbe, Bobbi deMontigny, Mary Guthmiller, and Mary Anne Hansen. You guys are the best!

And last, but not least, I am so grateful for ALL of Montana's terrific academic librarians. You all do amazing work with students and faculty and make all librarians look good. You are on the cutting edge of technology and are the go-to people for new resources and the best access to them. Thank you.

See you back on Montana soil soon! Now, time to step backwards into the tub for that shower I was talking about earlier...

- IN THIS ISSUE -

News From MLA:
- Sheila Cates Scholarship News
- John Finn: Legislative News & Notes
- Sheila Bonnand: Professional Development Committee News
- Debbi Kramer: Shop AmazonSmile & Why You Should Join MLA!
News From Our Affiliates:
- **Carmen Clark**: Updates from PNLA
- **Eileen Wright**: Updates from MPLA
- **Jo Flick**: Montana State Library News

**OFFLINE Highlights**

Adventures in Academia: We turn our **FOCUS** on Academic Librarians

Programs, Promotions & Projects:
- **Darlene Hert**: The Bill of Rights comes to Billings!
- **Rachel Schillreff**: Billings Loves to Read!
- **Jodi Oberweiser**: Drummond Celebrates Pi Day!
- **Kendra Hartman**: Broadus Elementary Library participates in 'I Love to Read!’ Month!
- **Mary O'Brien**: Music Fills the air in Polson
- **Dana Carmichael**: Whitefish Librarians are Grand Marshals

Marginalia:
- Attention Librarians! (call for submissions)
- Wanted: Your MLA Conference Highlights!
- Who will be the next **FOCUS** editor???
- From the Editors

To view past issues or download PDF versions of the newsletter, please visit: [http://mtlib.org/Focus/default.asp](http://mtlib.org/Focus/default.asp)

- **MLA UPDATES** -

**SHEILA CATES SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS OPEN!**

- **DUE 7.3.2017** -

**ACCESS THE APPLICATION HERE!**
Greetings fellow Montana librarians. It has been an interesting Legislative session so far in 2017. We’re past the half way mark and winding down toward the finish line. MLA Lobbyist Nanette Gilbertson and I continue to monitor bills that might have potential interest or impact for MLA.

HB 261 has passed the full House and is awaiting executive action in the Senate Finance and Claims Committee. Because the budget is tight, many finance bills are being held up. It may come down to the wire before we know the outcome of our State Aid Per Capita/Per Square Mile bill. As you recall HB 261 will reset the sunset date from June of 2017 to June of 2023. I will alert all of you when it is time to contact your legislators and let them know they need to vote in favor of the bill. That time may come at a moment’s notice.

In mid-March the MLA Board decided to be a proponent of HB 563, a bill to create funds for a pre-school and early education program at OPI. The bill would offer grants to communities to create early literacy/preschool programs. We believed there might be some opportunities for those communities to partner with their local libraries. Nanette Gilbertson testified on behalf of MLA during the hearing on Monday March 20. Governor Bullock is keenly interested in passing this bill. It will have a rough go to pass.

HB 609 was brought to our attention by a librarian concerned with the affect the bill would have on library staff. The bill is similar to other bills in other states, commonly known as “bathroom bills.” HB 609 was specifically written with locker rooms as the subject, but it could be easily interpreted to include all bathroom facilities in public buildings. The bill would require individuals to use the locker room designated for the sex that the user has on their birth certificate. The concern of the librarian was that library staff would not want to have the responsibility of questioning patrons using a public bathroom about their birth sex. The MLA Board did not have a consensus, and received the request a bit too late to come to a decision and the Board did not choose to oppose the bill. There will be a resolution proposed for the MLA business meeting at conference. Membership can decide whether they want to oppose this bill in this manner.

READ posters are being printed! The posters that MLA created based on photos from Legislative Night are almost complete. We hope to have them ready for delivery at conference in Billings. If they are not ready we will mail them to individual libraries and legislators. We utilized a professional photographer this year which made the work easier for us on the ground here in Helena. And the poster proofs look great!
This has been an interesting session. We have high hopes for HB 261 and wish the State Library all the best in their budget considerations. Please stay tuned and be ready to act when you are called upon.

[ If you have any questions about this session, please contact John at jfinn@lclibrary.org.]

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE NEWS**

by Sheila Bonnand, Montana State University Library

Are you planning on attending a national or regional conference or professional development event soon? The Professional Development Committee has grant $$$$$ available! Our next grant application deadline is May 1 so send in your application today! Details about these Professional Development Grants and application forms can be found at [http://mtlib.org/Handbook/grant_guidelines.asp](http://mtlib.org/Handbook/grant_guidelines.asp).

The committee awarded a number of grants in March. Congratulations go to:

- **Angela Archuleta**, Lewis & Clark Elementary and Lewistown Middle School Libraries, New Member MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Christina Cowhick**, Great Falls Public Library, MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Desiree Funston**, Missoula Public Library, MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Katherine McFadden**, Great Falls Public Library, New Member MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Kathleen Godfrey**, Belgrade Public Library, MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Kathleen Schreiber**, Harlowton Public Library, MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Kat Wilson**, Great Falls Public Library, New Member MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Libby Wolfe**, PLUK Parent Center Library, MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Sarah Creech**, Belgrade Public Library, New Member MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Wendy Campbell**, Darby Public Library, MLA Conference Grant, $150
- **Hannah McKelvey**, MSU Bozeman, Professional Development Grant, $600. Hannah will be attending the Electronic Resources and Libraries 2017 conference in Austin, Texas.
SUPPORT MLA WITH AMAZONSMILE DONATIONS!

by Debbi Kramer, MLA Executive Director

As we approach the summer, please remember that you have a chance to put your shopping monies to good use! If you shop on Amazon through MLA’s AmazonSmile starting page (here at smile.amazon.com/ch/81-0366433), Amazon will automatically donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice (us, we hope!) and at no additional expense to you.

AmazonSmile works year-round! If you have any questions, please sign in to org.amazon.com and click on the Help tab. Thank you!
WHY SHOULD I JOIN THE MONTANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION?

by Debbi Kramer, MLA Executive Director

I know this question has crossed your mind more than once. If you are new to the MLA community and wonder whether a membership is worth your time or money, the simple answer is YES.

Why? Here are just a few reasons to join or renew your MLA membership.

- Membership discounts for all MLA retreats and conferences.
- Educational opportunities: ASLD/PLD Retreat, Offline and the annual conference. (What a wonderful way to network with other librarians!)
- Travel grants to help members attend conference.
- Professional Development Grants to provide members with the opportunity to further their education.
- Last year MLA distributed more than $6850 in ALA Emerging Leader, Conference Travel Grants, Professional Development Grants and PNLA Professional Development grants. If you haven't taken advantage of all the professional develop funds that are available, learn more about it on the MLA website under “Quick Links” MLA Grant information.
- Membership costs for the Collaborative Summer Library Program in conjunction with the Montana State Library.
- Pay extensive lobbying costs to promote and secure funding for the Montana State Library.
- MLA are champions for the Montana State Library fighting to secure new and maintain available funding for programs through legislative lobbying. As the Montana State Library is not allowed to lobby the legislature on their behalf, the Montana Library Association takes on this task. During legislative years, MLA spends more than $18,000 to lobby for increases in State Aid to Libraries and keep funding to support databases and other services essential to all Montana libraries.
- Sponsor representatives to regional and national library associations.
- Covers the travel costs of representatives to represent Montana in the American Library Association, Mountain Plains Library Association and the Pacific Northwest Library.
Joining and renewing is quick and easy. Go to www.mtlib.org Click on the "JOIN" link and either pay your dues with a credit card or scroll to the bottom of the webpage and download a membership form and send it in with a check or PO. It's just that easy. Your 2016-17 membership card will be emailed to you as evidence of your paid dues.

[ Debbi can be reached at debkmla@hotmail.com ]

BILL OF RIGHTS TRAVELING EXHIBIT
by Darlene Hert, MSU Billings Library

On January 23, 2017, the MSU Billings Library celebrated the 225th anniversary of the Bill of Rights by hosting a birthday celebration. The library received the pop-up exhibit, "The Bill of Rights and You!" from the National Archives Traveling Exhibits Service (NATES).

Library staff served red, white, and blue cupcakes and handed out patriotic pens. One of our library student employees, Daniel Lurie, made an appearance dressed as James Madison. Multiple interactive games related to the Bill of Rights trivia were played with willing library patrons. Staff developed a Bill of Rights crossword puzzle and a word search game on a portable white board. Patrons had fun completing the crossword puzzle and searching for words. Library staff played a Bill of Rights amendments matching game as well as an interactive fortune telling game with library patrons.
Fun was had by all and prizes were awarded to library patrons for participating in the games.

[For more information, email Darlene at DHert@msubillings.edu]

- PNLA UPDATES -

by Carmen Clark, Bozeman Public Library

The PNLA Conference 2017 will be held **August 2-4, 2017** at the **Templin's Resort** in Post Falls, ID.

This should be a great conference in a spectacular setting! Tucked away in the majestic mountains of Post Falls, Idaho, Red Lion Templin's Hotel on the River is nestled on the Spokane River in Northern Idaho, just 35 minutes from Spokane International Airport. Please consider joining us this year.

**Important Dates:**

- Registration opens: April 18
- Early Registration deadline: June 27
- Regular registration deadline: Aug 2
The conference rotation for future PNLA conferences is as follows:

- 2018 Kalispell, Montana
- 2019 Washington
- 2020 Alaska (this will possibly be a joint conference with AKLA)

PNLA LEADS 2017

Please watch WIRED for more information and application forms for this year's leadership institute.

- MPLA UPDATES -

by Eileen Wright, Montana State University Billings Library

The joint conference of the Nevada Library Association and the Mountain Plains Library Association will be held October 16 - 18 at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Stateline, Nevada at Lake Tahoe.
From the sounds of sensory story time to the whir of a 3D printer, libraries are much more than quiet spaces; they are hubs of experience and knowledge creation that set the stage for vibrant communities. As librarians, it’s time to turn up the volume on innovation as we seek inspiration to deliver new models of information literacy and lifelong education; on engagement with listeners, learners, and makers of all ages and from all backgrounds; on advocacy as we share impactful stories of how libraries empower.

**Call For Proposals** is now open at [https://goo.gl/forms/4FMghlVKwaKOYbYF3](https://goo.gl/forms/4FMghlVKwaKOYbYF3) and closes on May 31.

Seeking proposals to support the theme of Turn Up the Volume! in the areas of innovation, advocacy, and engagement.

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**- MSL UPDATES -**

by **Jo Flick**, Montana State Library

Coming soon to **Havre** and **Red Lodge**, MT: daylong training events from your Montana State Library!

**Havre**: Best Western Plus Havre Inn & Suites and the Havre-Hill County Library:

- **April 26th** — Book mending and evening Trustee Training
- **April 27th** — Community engagement, MSC Enterprise, summer programming, and evaluating your web presence
Red Lodge: Pollard Hotel and the Joliet Community Center (evening)

- **May 8th** — Mind in the Making and community engagement – each as all-day seminars followed by an evening training in Joliet targeted to library boards

For more information: learning.msl.mt.gov.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN in the MT Library Directory, no charge to attend.

- OFFLINE HIGHLIGHTS -

by Jo Flick, Montana State Library

I took the opportunity at OffLine to conduct a real-life brief survey using the bean-counter method: simply that you put out some clear-sided containers, hand a bean to your participants and ask them to "vote" for the response of their choice by placing their bean in the appropriate container. In this case, we were pondering a change in how applicants receive their certificates from the State Library.
I explained that printing and mailing the "suitable for framing" certificates that we issue now could be replaced by an option to print your own certificate in our online service hub which will be launched later this year. We are at a pivotal point in designing our new online service hub and we had to decide if the print-your-own option was a "go" or a "no." Since OffLine attendees are a perfect sample of our target audience: namely librarians who attend continuing education events to seek library certification, and I was conducting a training on simple ways to get data for making decisions, I set up the bean-counter survey on this topic. The results indicated that the print-your-own option was preferred or that librarians did not have a strong opinion. So, print-your-own it will be!

[ Jo can be reached at jflick@mt.gov ]

by Sheila Bonnand, Montana State University Library

Dawn and her crew at the Glendive Public Library organized a wonderful evening out for Offliners at the Beaver Creek Brewery in Wibaux. They even arranged a bus to take us all there.
[ Sheila can be reached at sbonnand@montana.edu ]
One of the beauties of our association is that it is made up of librarians of all types and backgrounds. In this segment we focus on a handful of intrepid souls serving in Montana’s academic libraries. We asked these librarians to reveal how they feel about their work and what they do when they are away from the library. We hope you’ll enjoy getting to know them better.

AARON LAFROMBOISE (MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY-BLACKFEET COMMUNITY COLLEGE)
Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. Getting to work with and help people every day.

Q. What do you enjoy when you're not at the library?
A. Crafts, sewing, quilting, beading, and card making.

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. I was the only female lineman on the Browning High School football team (in the history of
BHS football). I've never been afraid to try something new, even if it's hard.

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. I am in the process of re-envisioning the library space and function for the community. Just
to be in the position to see this happen makes me very proud.

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BETHANY SCHATZKE (PAUL M. ADAMS MEMORIAL LIBRARY AT ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE)
Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. I work in a small academic library where I get to have a very satisfying and direct impact on our users. I love helping people find good information or discover new interests. I love creating book displays and find it so fascinating to see which topics/books are popular with our users. I really enjoy tracking down needed interlibrary loan materials (it is like an online treasure hunt!) for people which expands the reach of our library in such an awesome way. It is all about sharing and information and both of those things matter a whole lot to me.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. I wish more people knew about all the things we have to offer. I think a lot of our students just expect scholarly (and dry) academic books and magazines. We DO have research materials like that, but we also have fun books and magazines, too. Plus all sorts of equipment from a GoPro to a record player (with lots of stops in between)! We also have CDs, DVDs, color printing, a scanner, quiet study rooms, art supplies, audiobooks, newspapers, origami kits, and so much more. There really is something for EVERYONE at our library. Oh--and that we don't always whisper or wear glasses.

Q. What do you enjoy when you're not at the library?
A. Hobbies, sports, family activities etc. I am a national park junkie. A couple years ago my husband and I started a quest to visit them. It naturally follows that I love hiking, camping, birding, snowshoeing, bicycling, and travel. I am a passionate about nature, ecology, and the environment. I have two cats and a big garden. I love dancing and live music.
Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. My husband and I share a car so I commute to the library on foot or bicycle year-round. OR I used to be a gymnast and am still quite flexible—enough so that I can put my feet behind my head. OR I'm a born-and-raised Montanan with many members of my extended family involved in livestock production—and I've been vegan for more than a decade.

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. I am proud of my work in interlibrary loan. It is the single most praised services we provide. I think it is a fun challenge, as I said, it is like an online treasure hunt, and users find it tremendously valuable for their research and personal enjoyment. Each year I get such a thrill reading the positive comments roll in during our annual library survey. ILL is so cool and I'm glad our users think so, too.

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http://www.rocky.edu/academics/library/

DELLA DUBBE (UM HELENA COLLEGE LIBRARY)

Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. Being paid to think, create and learn.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. All that is involved.

Q. What do you enjoy when you're not at the library?
A. Teaching Children's Literature and raising chickens.

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. I've lived all over the United States, in 20+ places.

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. Creating the park and enabling the accessibility lift at Glacier County Library.

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http://www.umhelena.edu/library/default.aspx
Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. I get to talk about and explore ideas big and small with people for a significant part of every day.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. The academic library of today is an incredibly dynamic place where learning happens constantly.

Q. What do you enjoy when you're not at the library?
A. Travel, cooking, reading and thinking

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. I'm married to an alien.

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. Presenting at international conferences in Oslo, Johannesburg, and Melbourne

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JESSIE PATE (UM HELENA COLLEGE LIBRARY)
Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?

A. I love that I get to learn something new almost every day, and I love sharing books and other resources with others. It’s very rewarding to give a student the confidence to do research and seek out information.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?

A. I wish more community members knew that they can check out our books and use our online resources on campus. I wish more students, faculty, and staff realized the full extent of our collections and services. We have some really great resources for small businesses and marketing, for example. And it’s so easy to get any book or article a person could want, but folks are quick to say, "Oh, I don't want to inconvenience you," while we’re saying, "It's no inconvenience! We love to help!"

Q. What do you enjoy when you’re not at the library?

A. I love to read, like many in this field. I also enjoy hiking, canoeing, and cross-country skiing. I have a small plot at the community garden in the summer. It’s not enough to survive on, but nothing beats a fresh-picked tomato!

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?

A. People are most surprised to find out that I studied microbiology and Spanish in college. Other than that, I don't think I'm very unusual or surprising.

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.

A. I still feel like somewhat of a rookie in this profession!
Hiking Crypt Lake in Waterton Lakes International Peace Park.

Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. I get great satisfaction from supporting students' success and our faculty.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. I wish that there was more opportunities for support staff to get training and network. Non-professionals make up a large group of library personnel and sometimes I think we are in an in between place in libraries.

Q. What do you enjoy when you're not at the library?
A. I love to hike, cross country ski, read and bake.

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. I am a 10 year breast cancer survivor this year!

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. I have been involved in several outreach projects from our library - a book group, a book exchange, free newspapers for students, and a library on our airport campus.

maryann.george@umhelena.edu
Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. Finding obscure information for customers.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. We offer a plethora of resources and services - just Ask!

Q. What do you enjoy when you're not at the library?
A. Embroidery, hiking, baking

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. I’ve bowled (and placed) in city, state and national tournaments.

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. Being a resource to others.

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http://www.lib.montana.edu/
Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. In my present position for the TRAILS consortium, I don't get to work with patrons, but I do get to do research - which I love. However, in the past, when I have been at the reference desk, I got joy from 2 things: one is common and the other is not, really "pc." I love being able to help folks who really couldn't find the needed information any other way. Also, and maybe I shouldn't admit it, I love the sense of power that is uniquely granted to librarians when we are able to locate information that others don't or can't usually see.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. It depends on who the "people" are as to what I would want them to know. If it is other Montanan, non-academic librarians, we would want them to see the act of creating an academic consortium as a step toward building a more unified, state-wide system of all libraries verses as a possible exclusionary act. The idea being to form respective hubs for public, school, academic, and special libraries in order to better facilitate them all joining in an eventual, but robust network. If the "people" are students, faculty, or researchers, we want them to know that: 1. TRAILS exists and 2. We are here to make their studies, teaching, or research the best it can be through technology and access to cutting-edge, top quality, resources. We want their academic experience to be competitive with that which is offered by any other state. If the "people" are administrators or gov't. officials, then we want them to know not only is this an opportunity to strengthen the higher educational offerings of their institution or those of the state, but it is a way to do so with greater efficiency and a better return on their investment.

Q. What do you enjoy when you're not at the library? Hobbies, sports, family activities etc.
A. I have a beagle, cat, and boyfriend - all which annoy and delight me. Then there is the true love of my life - a little red, Mazda Miata MX-5 with which I terrorize the road. I adore American punk blues, e.g., Hillstomp and would like to listen to more of it.

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. Well, this is fairly unusual in other places I've lived, but I don't expect it has the same impact factor in Montana. When I was 10 and visiting Glacier National Park, I - along with a nature photographer - was chased by a moose and just missed being gored. Ah, good times!

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. I think I am most proud of what we are accomplishing with TRAILS. It is affecting so many, i.e., and higher education students, faculty, staff, researchers, libraries, and institutions, and on so many levels. The potential benefits are truly significant! In addition to the more immediate aid to the academic community, the long term welfare of the state's socio-economic environment will be improved. Through a better prepared work force, a larger platform to support innovation and research, and a stronger, cross-institutional library system, Montana’s people can - and will - thrive.

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http://guides.lib.montana.edu/TRAILS

SUSAN MATTER (FLATHEAD VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIBRARY)

Susan will begin working at FVCC Library on May 1st!

Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. Being a librarian is a job that is never boring, each day is something different, and it is a job that holds so many interesting challenges. The thing I like the best though is helping people. Whether it is helping to find a book that makes a person think long after having read it, helping someone find reliable information sources, or guiding students through the hurdle of in-text citations, I am always grateful that I have chosen this profession.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. I would hope that people know that I will do everything I can to provide them with the resources they need. Excellent service to faculty, students and members of the community is a number one priority.

Q. What do you enjoy when you’re not at the library?
A. I am a passionate distance runner, and I love going on bike trips.

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. I have been an international librarian for most of my career.

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. The thing that makes me feel the best is when students come to me and say that I got them really excited about books, and through this they became dedicated readers. Being a reader changes a person's life, and that is something to feel proud to have been a part of.

smatteraswarsaw@gmail.com  
https://www.fvcc.edu/campus-guide/library/

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**MICRO-REVIEW**

As a librarian, Evicted works on dual levels. I want every student to be inspired by Desmond’s devotion to data collection and how his gripping narrative is made possible, and necessitated by, qualitative and quantitative methodologies that tell new, crucial stories of poverty. These methods are strongly rooted in his discipline, sociology, yet transcend academic boundaries. On a larger scale, the stories told in Evicted strengthen my belief that libraries exist to serve and provide for those left behind by other institutions in this country.

- Jaci Wilkinson, UM Mansfield Library

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**- BONUS PROFILES -**
Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. I love the kids! Also, working in a library is never the same from day to day :) There is so much variety and it's such a social hub of our building! FUN!!!

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. Haha, I wish people knew that being in the library is about more than scanning books! :) Really, I wish teachers knew that we are here to help them with many different facets of their classroom. It's not just research, but we can help with technology, creating new lessons involving PBL, connecting with other teachers and school and so much more! I wish students knew that we not the ladies who just SHHH them all day...we are here to help them in a variety of ways...and we are teachers, too! :)

Q. What do you enjoy when you're not at the library? Hobbies, sports, family activities etc.
A. I have two Golden Retrievers that I adore...I love travel, photography, reading (haha, cliche, right?!), I love being with friends and family, and creating things, too! I also coach cheerleading at Senior, and I'm the Technology Integration Specialist.

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. I am addicted to Etsy...& one day I hope to open my own Etsy store!

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. I am really proud of our I Love to Read Day this year! My colleagues and I worked hard to take an already great event started by the previous librarians at Senior and add to the greatness! We had a Survivor-style theme, with trivia and even challenges for our staff members to participate in! We received amazing feedback and I can't wait to plan another staff event! It brought together teachers who might not see each other on a "normal" daily basis (we are a very large school!) and it was fun! :)

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JENNIE STAPP (MONTANA STATE LIBRARY)

Q. What do you enjoy most about being a librarian?
A. This position supports two loves, learning and helping people.

Q. What do you wish more people knew about your library or the work you do?
A. As the State Librarian, I am so fortunate to be able to see the incredible impact of the good work done by libraries all across Montana.

Q. What do you enjoy when you’re not at the library? Hobbies, sports, family activities etc.
A. I am always busy. I love traveling, cooking, reading, watching movies, hiking, camping, and home remodeling.

Q. What is something people may find surprising or unusual about you?
A. I have four tattoos.

Q. Describe something in your library career that you are proud of accomplishing.
A. During my first legislative session in 2013 I worked with the Montana Library Association to create a statutory appropriation to provide state aid funding for public libraries that resulted in a 400% increase in state funding. That appropriation is scheduled to sunset at the end of June, 2017 and we are currently carrying legislation to extend the appropriation until 2023. That legislative is receiving very positive support from Legislators at this point in the legislative session.

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“Busy public librarians, here’s something for your professional development listening pleasure: The Public Libraries Podcast from the Public Library Association. The ‘FYI’ series of 15-minute information-packed segments will inform and inspire you on a variety of trends and topics in library programs and services. For example, how to build a digital media lab (any size), the library as a community resource during disaster, library programs that foster social inclusion, and much, much more – there’s even a segment on new techniques for weeding collections.”

MICRO-REVIEW

Subscribe via iTunes or listen at Public Libraries Online:
publiclibrariesonline.org/category/media/podcast/

- Lauren McMullen,
  Montana State Library
Billings West High School partnered with neighboring elementary school, Central Heights, to celebrate I Love To Read month during the month of February. A class of juniors who are in Dr. Bruce Wendt’s block English and American History class were learning about protest music and how it correlated to historical events in anticipation of doing a museum display at the Western Heritage Center (see news article here). Two classes of fourth graders were also learning about Black History Month and the music from African American musicians.

The librarians from each school facilitated the collaboration between the two groups. The fourth graders walked over for the afternoon and learned about the juniors’ research topics. Then the juniors worked with the fourth graders on developing their own research skills to inform reports on African American musicians.

They ate cookies, won prizes, and formed positive connections with each other. Juniors became teachers for a day and the fourth graders got their first awesome taste of high school.

Both groups had a great time! The librarians, Brittany Alberson, Rachel Schillreiff and Erin Regele, from West and librarian Kourtni McHugh of Central Heights look forward to continuing this collaborative effort between the two schools.

[ Rachel can be reached at schillreffr@billingsschools.org ]

DRUMMOND CELEBRATES PI DAY!
Mrs. Graybeal’s 3rd graders enjoy LAB (Learning Activity Backpacks) for weekend enrichment. Thanks, Blackfoot Communications!

C. Cartmill and E. Pfendler create paper folded Pikachu characters—even a teeny tiny one!

A cart of DVDs thanks to Missoula Public Library & Hastings.

Friends of the Drummond School & Community Library held a Pi Day Celebration. Children in grades K-4 were challenged to a hula-hoop contest! Brooke H. won with 5 minutes!

Students in Grades 5-12 competed to see who could recite Pi to the furthest digit. 7th grader from Hall Elementary School, Jaise S. recited 79 digits of Pi and Lizzy P, a 6th grader from Drummond recited Pi to the 100th digit! Judges were gob-smacked! Everyone received mini cupcakes and the winners were awarded homemade tarts from Sydney’s Sugar Emporium!

Starting at 3:14pm, Friends sold Pies! Some people purchased a slice of pie and coffee and enjoyed conversations, while others purchased entire pies and took them home to their families.

During Teen Tech Week, teens from Drummond High School were invited to Lunch in the Library. Students brought sack lunches or a tray from the cafeteria and enjoyed lunch in the
Teens Tech Week: Teens in Drummond’s Lunch in the Library use a Makey Makey to play a Fruit Piano.

More from the fruit piano!

3 giant teddy bears were donated to the library!

Sans Howe donated 3 giant Teddy Bears to the library. Now children can sit on a Koala bear chair or read to a 5 foot tall angel bear or even snuggle with a brown bear.

Blackfoot telecommunications donated funds last spring to purchase an art easel and story hour bench as well as monies to create Learning Activity Backpacks for weekend enrichment. Students in Mrs. Graybeal’s Third Grade Class take home the backpacks on Thursdays and bring them back on Monday. Each backpack has fiction and nonfiction books, games, puzzles and a checklist. This year, Blackfoot is supporting the purchase of an AWE Early Literacy Station. Thanks Blackfoot!

[ Jodi can be reached at librarydhs@blackfoot.net ]

PUPPY EARS & MORE AT BROADUS ELEMENTARY!

by Kendra Hartman, Broadus Elementary School Library
I Love to Read Month is celebrated at Broadus Elementary every year but for the last couple years we have had a great opportunity to partner with the Henry Malley Memorial Library to make this celebration even more special. June Ray, children’s librarian, has taken the time to visit the school many times to help Kendra Hartman, school librarian, and all the teachers and staff plan the events. Then she visits all of the classes weekly during the month of February to help promote reading.

Along with generous sponsors of the program, the Henry Malley Memorial Library provides materials, prizes, donated books, and other surprises (this year June sewed “puppy” ears for all the younger kids to wear). Some of the fun events this year included; dog shows, dress up days, a puppy race to see what class read the most, a book exchange, daily “Paws” to read time, and a general push to celebrate the advantages of reading. We were also able to time the rollout of the School Library Shared Digital collection during February to increase digital reading in our schools. What a great way to TEAM up!

[ Kendra Hartman can be reached at kendra@broadus.net ]
North Lake County Public Library in Polson recently hosted two exciting cultural events focusing on music. Both were free, open to the public, and enthusiastically received by the community.

Musician Wilbur Rehmann presented the Humanities Montana program “American Art and American Democracy: It All Comes Together in Jazz” on March 8th. He followed the art form from its long-ago roots through the modern era, illustrating points with examples from his own saxophone playing, recordings, and video footage.
On March 24th, the well-known Navy Band Northwest’s Brass Quintet also performed at the library, presenting a diverse show of classical music, jazz, patriotic tunes, and more. Comprised of two trumpets, two trombones, and a tuba, the traveling quintet entertained for about an hour to a gathering of all ages.

[ Mary can be reached at mobrien@polson.lib.mt.us ]

WINTER CARNIVAL TAKES OVER WHITEFISH, WITH THANKS TO ITS LIBRARIANS!

by Dana Carmichael, Whitefish Middle School Library
The Whitesh Winter Carnival honored local librarians, Gary and Dana Carmichael, Joey Kositzky, Dan Kohnstamm, and not pictured: Stacy Kelch.

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The wonderful librarians of Whitefish and their Winter Carnival exploits are fully documented in a lovely article put out by the Whitefish Pilot, which you can read here:

http://www.whitefishpilot.com/article/20170131/ARTICLE/170139983

[ Dana can be reached at carmichaeld@whitefishschools.org ]
MIT Libraries and their Future of Libraries document, accessible at https://future-of-libraries.mit.edu, is a great resource!

Print this out and when your work feels disconnected from users or too small to make any difference, read it. Find inspiration to think big thoughts and dream big dreams for your library.

- Jaci Wilkinson, UM Mansfield Library

- MARGINALIA -

SUBMISSIONS OPEN FOR THE JUNE ISSUE!

REMINDER: The submission deadline for the June newsletter = May 20th. Please email your library news, micro-reviews & photos (with captions) to mlaFOCUSeditor@gmail.com Thank You!

Attention MLA Conference Attendees: What was your favorite thing about this year’s conference? Please follow this link to share your conference highlights with FOCUS readers! https://drive.google.com/open?id=1gUQFKLi6TbDDfyiixHuShJGpj159BWbW0vOcYok5ZE
THIS SHIP WON'T SAIL ITSELF!

by Kendra Mullison, North Lake County Public Library (and soon-to-be-bereft co-editor)

In June of 2015, Dawn Kingstad sent out a call for a new FOCUS editor over the WIRED listserv, and Caroline and I together on a path which has seen us through two years of intensive teamwork. These same two years have seen the FOCUS change—a lot! We moved away from finicky Publisher templates into the Cloud, experimented with multimedia, and seen our content double, and sometimes triple in length. It’s a good time to be a FOCUS editor, is what I mean to say, and to push the edge of the envelope a little.

So here’s the bad news: Caroline, organizer and coordinator extraordinaire, will be moving on from the FOCUS now that we have reached the end of our original two-year commitment. We will all miss having her at the helm. A lot. I have been asked to stay on for additional year to provide continuity, in the hope that from here on out, FOCUS will always have two co-editors, each serving a two-year term and staggered so that there will be both veteran experience with the platform and new blood keeping us evolving.

So I’ll be hanging around. But ... I can’t do this alone! I need a friend, and the FOCUS needs a captain for this ship. Editing this newsletter is a fantastic way to learn about MLA, make connections with librarians and other cool nerdy people, and develop some special skills. Whether you’ve been with the association for a few months or a few decades, we’d love it if you’d consider becoming our next FOCUS editor!

If you’re interested, please reach out to our lovely President, Lisa Mecklenberg-Jackson, at lisameckjack@gmail.com or to us here at the FOCUS at mlaFOCUSeditor@gmail.com. Additionally, if you have any questions about what it’s like to be an editor, you can find me at kendram@polson.lib.mt.us.

FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK

Dear Readers,

Librarianship slowly began to look like a viable career option when I discovered I was learning more as an assistant behind the reference desk at the university library than I was in most of my classes. I always thought working in a library would be a fun gig until I got my real job.
Little did I know I'd started down a path I'm still trekking because some kindly librarians found a way to work around my class schedule.

**Amazing Mentors:** The librarians I met in college were not mere mortals; they seemed to be wizards disguised as librarians who taught me the mysteries of the reference interview and database navigation. When asked for information I dutifully consulted the catalog, but the librarians who'd spent years mastering the collection simply walked into the stacks to pull the tome necessary for a student to further their research. Sometimes it felt as though I was witnessing an act of magic. These wizard librarians truly became my mentors. They taught me to ask questions and to keep digging. They helped me understand that each interaction with a student or faculty member was important and could influence that person's willingness to utilize the services of a librarian in the future.

**Amazing Students:** I attended an international campus where English was a second or even third language for several of the students I encountered at the reference desk. It could be challenging to break through cultural and language barriers to determine what these students wanted. We learned to be patient with each other and their gratitude toward me was always very humbling.

**Amazing Memories:** Weird stuff happens in campus libraries – ask any academic librarian and I'm sure they'll have some stories! For me this included hearing a very creepy rendition of the *Roly-Poly Fish Heads* song blast over the intercom right before the stroke of midnight (aka closing time) to roust stragglers out of the building, as well as breaking up many a make-out session in the study rooms. On more than a few occasions when I was working by myself or struggling to help a student (and I'm absolutely not kidding about this) the exact item needed would fall off the shelf or a rather specific journal article would suddenly pop up on screen without prompting. When this happened I could only smile, thank whatever library spirit had intervened and move on to the next question.

Because of my experiences as a student library assistant I've always held a soft spot for those who labor in academic libraries. Please get to know the academic librarians highlighted in this issue – seek them out online and at conferences. They are a delightful lot and we are lucky to have them as associates!

- Caroline Campbell

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The FOCUS welcomes your input! To submit feedback, articles, reviews, inquiries, and ideas—or to place an ad or provide sponsorship—please contact the editorial staff directly:

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