"If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need." - Cicero

I've always loved this quote. So simple, but so encompassing. I love green plants and growing things and recently had the opportunity to spend some quality time in nature, which always makes me think of gardens, plants, flowers, and all things green.

Several weeks ago I spent five lovely days floating the Smith River in central Montana. For those of you who have done this float yourselves, you know how absolutely beautiful the Smith is. Towering cliffs, green pines, rolling hills, clear water. I felt so lucky to be able to spend my time in this amazing public space, available to all of us. I feel the same way about our Montana public libraries. Although the scenery is a little different on the Smith than it is in our libraries, it is no less lovely. Instead of cliffs, there are books. In the place of green pines
are computer terminals. The rolling hills are replaced by all the tremendous programming going on in our public libraries. And the water must be the amazing library staff members who just let everything “roll over them.” I love how everyone who visits our public libraries is entitled to the same services, rights, and treatments as everyone else. In our world today, there is not enough of this type of equality. It seems those “in charge” always have some reason to treat individuals differently. And I often can’t tell myself what that reason is. In our public spaces such as lands and libraries, everyone is equal. And everyone has the same access to our resources and spaces. My time on the Smith makes me able to say this even more adamantly...“You go, public libraries—be someone’s garden today!”

The MLA Board met for a very productive two-day meeting June 19 and 20 at Boulder Hot Springs. Items of note from that meeting:

- Conor Cote, Director at Large West, resigned his position due to moving out of state. I appointed Anne Kish to serve the one-year remainder of Conor’s term.
- We have an updated MLA calendar and committee list on the MLA Webpage.
- The board adopted a number of new policies. A sampling include gifts, in-kind donations, accountability and transparency, and the establishment of an audit committee. All policies will be on the MLA Webpage soon!
- Agreed to have Debbie, as MLA Executive Director, handle the administrative functions of all MLA retreats.
- Renamed the Trustee of the Year Award to the Jane Lopp Memorial Award and funded a trustee scholarship for the next five years to attend MLA, thanks to a donation in Jane’s memory from ImagineIF in Kalispell.

Complete minutes of the meeting are available at [http://mtlib.org/governance/minutes/#board](http://mtlib.org/governance/minutes/#board).

And finally, I am excited to report that we are beginning working in earnest on the next MLA Conference, which will be held April 11-14, 2018 in beautiful Bozeman! Under the capable direction of conference planners Debbi and Doug Kramer and local conference planners Lois Dissly, Pam Henley, and Rachelle McLain, I know we are going to have a terrific conference! I am personally pleased to report that I have chosen the conference theme: Big skies, library highs, and legal ties. Our first legal tie will be featured at the author luncheon as I have secured Whitefish mystery author (and attorney!) Leslie Budewitz to speak there. I’ve enjoyed Leslie’s books for years (love the recipes) so I am thrilled she will be joining us in Bozeman!

I would love to hear from any MLA members if you have any suggestions, needs, or questions relating to our organization! Thanks so much!
Lisa enjoying Montana's public rivers like she enjoys Montana’s public libraries!
(Photographer: Scott Jackson)

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

- MLA UPDATES -

Donate Your Car, Truck, Motorcycle, Jet Ski, Recreational Vehicle, Boat, or Trailer to MLA!

by Jim Kammerer, Montana State Library

(Photo Credit: deq.mt.gov)

Who likes the hassle of trying to sell a car, motorcycle, Jet Ski, boat, or RV? Don't you have better things to do than clean up your stuff so that it is somewhat attractive to potential buyers?
buyers? Then you have take pictures of it and advertise it in the newspaper and on Craigslist. Park it in a visible spot. Email back and forth, return phone calls from interested buyers, haggle on a price, make sure their check clears the bank, etc., etc. Consider this alternative: Donate your motorized vehicle to MLA. It’s easy and may qualify you for a tax deduction. Heck, if it is a car or truck, it does not even have to run. (Note: boats must run and come with a trailer; RVs must also run and be good enough for sale.) Best of all, your donated vehicle or whatever will make a big difference in supporting MLA financially. Here’s the process:

1. Fill out online donation form (3 minutes)
2. Receive email reply from vehicle donation program. Call their phone number. Answer basic questions about VIN number, title number, vehicle location (5-10 minutes)
3. Tow truck company calls you to arrange pickup date and time. (5 minutes)
4. Receive your tax deduction paperwork in the mail.
5. MLA coffers get some easy moolah.
6. Feel good again about life.

[You can reach Jim at jkammerer@mt.gov or by calling the Montana State Library at (406) 444-5432]

School Librarians: The MLA/EveryLibrary Advocacy Project Needs Committee Members!

by Ann Dutton Ewbank, Montana State University, Bozeman

Dear librarians,

With the MLA Board’s approval, I am putting together a committee to conduct an advocacy campaign that will highlight the importance of effective school libraries in Montana. The campaign, supported by EveryLibrary with a generous donation from Follett, will use social media and petitions to reach stakeholders. Please see the letter (**click here**) for a detailed description. Librarians of all types are welcome to join the committee.

Committee members as of mid-July:

- Ann Ewbank - Director, Library Media Program, MSU-Bozeman
- Mary Anne Hansen - Renne Library and Instructor, Library Media Program, MSU-Bozeman
- Tona Iwen, Clancy School
- Marla Unruh, Broadwater School, Helena
- Jodi Oberweiser, Drummond School-Community Library
- Dianne Matilla, Rosewater Elementary, Billings
- Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, MLA Past President, Montana Innocence Project

If you are interested in participating on this committee, please email me off list.
Call for Proposals: OFFLINE 2018

by Sarah Kegel, Great Falls Public Library

Conference dates & location: **February 2-3, 2018**, Great Falls, MT.

Offline is a two-day conference focusing on topics that intersect libraries, technology and culture. The 2018 conference will be held in Great Falls.

The conference explores how technology is applied within library settings and its impact on access and services for patrons. Academic, public, school, and special librarians are strongly encouraged to submit proposals.

Offline seeks ideas and presenters for panels, workshops, and presentations, on all topics relating to technology and libraries.

All topics related to technology in libraries are welcome!

Please submit proposals to skegel@greatfallslibrary.org; or kmora@greatfallslibrary.org

Cheers,
Sara Kegel
MLA Intellectual Freedom Committee Welcomes New Members

by Lauren McMullen, Montana State Library

Dear Montana Librarians,

Your MLA Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) is pleased to welcome three new members:

- Jaci Wilkinson from the U of M Mansfield Library
- Angela Jordan of Butte-Silverbow Public Library
- Gavin Woltjer, Billings Public Library Director

Jaci, Angela, and Gavin join current members Matt Beckstrom, Dana Carmichael, Soozi Crosby, Jim Kammerer, Anne Kish, Bobbi Otte, and Lauren McMullen. Thanks go to retiring member Martha Thayer and many other dedicated librarians who have served on this committee.

The Intellectual Freedom Committee is always at your service, tracking and informing you about First Amendment and related issues in Montana and nationwide - including censorship, access, net neutrality, privacy, academic freedom, and more. We provide training on-site and at conferences to educate library, faculty, and trustees about how to uphold First Amendment principles through policies and services. Our committee members also assist libraries that are facing censorship or policy challenges – providing training, resources, referral, and moral support.

Every year, the committee recognizes contributions made by intellectual freedom fighters in Montana through the Pat Williams Intellectual Freedom Award.

Want to learn more about the MLA IFC? Find collected resources and information about members and activities on our wiki: [http://mlaif.pbworks.com](http://mlaif.pbworks.com)

[You can reach Lauren at lmcmullen2@mt.gov]

Government Affairs Committee and Legislative Session News and Notes

by John Finn, Lewis & Clark Library

Greetings fellow Montana librarians.
It has been a rough summer for Montana libraries. As we approach an end to summer, we received word this week from the Governor's Budget Director Dan Villa that we will not meet the revenue triggers proposed in SB 261, which affected both the State Library's budget and the Per Capita/Per Square Mile state aid funds to public libraries.

The State Library’s plans to reduce their budget has already begun. Cuts to personnel began on July 1, others will take place in August.

With these triggers unmet, Senate Bill 261 now renders State Aid void for both fiscal years 2018 and 2019. Public libraries will not receive State Aid for the next two years. As the legislation is currently written, state aid will be restored in FY 2020. The cuts to the State Library's budget will not be passed on to Montana public libraries.

Of course, our biggest impact will be felt with the loss of some of the support system at the State Library. We lost real folks who provided us assistance every single day. It is important to let your patrons and other members of the community know what these cuts mean to the library. Also, please let me know how you are dealing with the loss of budgetary funds at your own library. I have already from many of you telling me of the impacts that you anticipate.

House Appropriations Committee Chair Nancy Ballance was quoted in a *Helena Independent Record* article on July 25 as saying, “The library, Historical Society, promotions for tourism, agricultural marketing. Those to me are much different than funding schools or funding Medicaid.” The *IR* suggested that Representative Balance implied that “She described the third tier of cuts, in particular, as non-essential services.”

MLA believes that libraries, all libraries in Montana are indeed very essential services. Essential to our patron's lives. The MLA Government Affairs Committee will soon unveil a new #EssentialMTLibraries campaign to raise awareness of the essential nature of libraries in Montana.

I am pleased to continue to serve MLA as the Chair of the Government Affairs Committee, and I am very pleased that the following folks agreed to join the Committee and provide us with assistance: Honore Bray – Missoula Public Library; Gavin Woltjer – Billings Public Library; Susan Gregory – Bozeman Public Library; Anita Scheetz – James E. Shanley Tribal Library; Ann Ewbank – Montana State University; Matt Beckstrom – Lewis & Clark Library; and Connie Behe – ImagineIF Libraries. If you have an interest in helping us plan for the next legislative session in 2019, please let me know.

If you have any questions or concerns, or would like to join the committee in its work, please contact John at jfinn@lclibrary.org

Conference Dates for MLA, SLD, ASLD/PLD, & OFFLINE!

by Debbi Kramer, MLA Executive Director

UPCOMING MLA CONFERENCE DATES:
April 11-14, 2018, GranTree Inn, Bozeman
April 10-13, 2019, Radisson Colonial Hotel, Helena
April 1-4, 2020, Holiday Inn, Missoula

**UPCOMING SLD RETREAT DATE:**
August 3-4, 2017, MSU Bozeman

**UPCOMING ASLD/PLD RETREAT DATE:**
October 15-16, 2017 Chico Hot Springs Resort

**UPCOMING OFFLINE DATE:**
February 2-3, 2018, Great Falls

And Also ... AmazonSmile!

Please remember, as you begin to plot out your budgets and your purchase orders for Fall, that you have a chance to support MLA as you shop! If you shop on Amazon through MLA's AmazonSmile starting page (here at [smile.amazon.com/ch/81-0366433](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. It's easy to do, and depending on your operating system, you can set Amazon to notify you with a pop-up reminder box when you log in.

AmazonSmile works year-round! if you have any questions, please sign in to [org.amazon.com](org.amazon.com) and click on the Help tab. Thank you!

[Debbi can be reached at debkmla@hotmail.com!](mailto:debkmla@hotmail.com)
- NEWS FROM OUR AFFILIATES -

YALSA News!
Hello,

I am writing to you to tell you about some of the Young Adult Library Services Association's (YALSA) latest resources and publications that you may be interested in including in your newsletter and/or journal to your members. Below are ready-to-use messages detailing our latest resources and other offerings.

**Self-Paced eLearning Bundles:**

Work at your own pace with YALSA's new eLearning to better serve your library and community! Self-paced eLearning bundles are a collection of YALSA's most popular webinars and selected YALS articles organized into a mini-curriculum on topics that you and your library staff can learn about in manageable pieces of time. Included are questions to think about while working with the material and context for each topic to help you frame your learning.

The bundles are available in the ALA Store for $75 each or $130 for both and also as a group rate for $199 per bundle.

See what’s available now and purchase your eLearning bundles!

**“Putting Teens First in Library Services: A Road Map”:**

YALSA is excited to unveil our brand-new publication, Putting Teens First in Library Services: A Road Map. Edited by Linda W. Braun and Shannon Peterson, with contributions from front-line library staff, managers, and researchers, this book helps library staff take the recommendations in YALSA's The Future of Library Services for and With Teens: A Call to Action report and turn them into practical actions you can take in your library to enhance your teen services. Get your copy today!

**YALS:**

Want to stay at the forefront of young adult literature, technology, teens, and libraries? Subscribe to YALS, YALSA's award-winning quarterly journal! YALS largely serves as a vehicle for continuing education for young adult librarians. It includes articles of current interest to the profession, acts as a showcase for best practices, provides news from related fields, spotlights noteworthy events of the organization, and offers in-depth reviews of professional literature. YALS is available both in print and digitally to subscribers and members. Subscribe
today! Also, as a limited time offer, subscribe by August 31st and receive one of our newest "top reads" digital publications as a thank you gift! After subscribing, simply email Amna Haque at ahaque@ala.org to receive your free gift!

“Partnering to Increase your Impact” Toolkit:

One of the best ways to enhance services, specifically teen services in libraries, is through partnerships. Partnerships on behalf of teens lead to the development of effective programs, services, and materials that help teens thrive. Throughout this toolkit, created by a task force of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), are resources that will help you at each stage of the partnership or funding experience. Included is an appendix of turnkey materials that libraries can adapt to their own needs and use immediately, as well as a list of relevant YALSA resources.

Learn more at the YALSA website and download this toolkit today!

Curriculum Kits:

Are you in charge of curriculum or training library staff? Purchase our guided training kits for teen librarians! Our kits are complete with PowerPoints, scripts, and group activities, helping library staff connect to and work with teens. Available are kits on understanding teen behavior and technology services, now on final clearance for only $25!

Sale ends August 31. See what’s available: http://www.ala.org/yalsa/young-adults-deserve-best

Thank you!

[ Please reach out to Amna at the Young Adult Library Services Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611, or by email at ahaque@ala.org ]

YALSA & ALA's "Libraries Ready to Code" Initiative

by Marijke Visser, ALA Office for Information Technology Policy

Colleagues,

We’d like to make sure you are aware of an exciting new grant opportunity for public, K12 school and native and tribal libraries. Through our Libraries Ready to Code initiative, ALA is offering grants to 25-50 libraries of up to $25,000 to design and implement coding programs for children and youth. This is made possible through Google’s ongoing sponsorship of the initiative. The Young Adult Services Association (YALSA) is administering the grant.

Applications are being accepted now through August 31, 2017. A selection committee consisting of members from ALA’s three youth divisions- the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), the Association of Library Service to Children (ALSC) and YALSA-will review
applications and select grant recipients. Announcements will be made in October and the grant period will be through September 2018.

For more information, here is an ALA press release and a short blog post. The Libraries Ready to Code website has additional information, including the link to the application, the RFP, a resources guide, and an FAQ.

Please let me know if you have questions.

[ You can reach Marijke at the ALA Office for Information Technology Policy, 202-628-8410 ]

Fall training events for all librarians from the Montana State Library

by Jo Flick, Montana State Library

Your Montana State Library is planning 2 full days of FREE training in Bozeman on September 7th and 8th.

REGISTRATION WILL OPEN July 31st. (Due to the cuts in MSL state funding, we are losing some tech staff and that has forced us to move up the date to implement ASPeN - the new online data center that will replace the MT Library Directory; with the transition schedule upon us, we have to delay the start of registration so we don't end up with data split across two systems - please bear with us.)

September 7th - Homewood Suites, Bozeman

9 am - 4:30 pm - The final of four MSL Workshops for the past LSTA grant year, this all-day training will feature some repeat sessions from previous MSL Workshops, and some brand new content and new presenters. Community engagement, customer service,

Find all the details here:

http://libraries.msl.mt.gov/learning/MSLWorkshops

September 8th - Bozeman Public Library
9 am - 4:00 pm - targeted to library administrators and board members - The Local Government Center of MSU will present a full day of training:

**Working Together: building & nurturing positive relationships with governing agencies and the community**

Find all the details here:


TRAVEL GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE for new library directors and all library trustees. Please contact me to request your grant.

OPI credit available for all sessions.

Hotel rates in Bozeman are pricey - it’s that time of year. To get the state rate ($152) at the Homewood Suites, reserve your room by August 7th. (406) 587-8180

[You can reach Jo at JFlick@mt.gov]

- FOCUS ON OUR PUBLIC LIBRARIANS -

Do you know which one of our public librarians:

- Has worked at four Montana libraries: Flathead County Library System (now ImagineIf), the former Parmly Billings Library, Missoula Public Library, and Whitefish Community Library?
- Can ride a unicycle?
- Met the love of their life thanks to Conan the Barbarian?
Dorothy M. Johnson Book Festival

by Alison Pomerantz, Whitefish Community Library

Mid-May the Whitefish Library Association celebrated local Montana authors at the second annual Dorothy M. Johnson Book Festival in downtown Whitefish. The event was an evolution of what was formerly known as Montana Author’s Celebration held at the Whitefish Community Library for nearly 16 years.

“It is such a pleasure for the library to honor our Montana authors,” said Joey Kositzky, Director of the Whitefish Community Library. “This is an event that has progressed yearly, with the first “Honor Montana Authors” celebration held in the Whitefish Library to the Dorothy M. Johnson Book Festival at venues outside the library. This is our way of saying ‘thank you’ to our talented authors.”

Rain did not deter authors and booklovers alike from mingling at the O’Shaughnessy Center to enjoy food, wine and literary discussions. Local businesses generously donated an array auction prizes and nearly 30 authors set up tables to showcase books with an array of subjects ranging from fantasy and outdoor adventure, to suspense and memoir. Mystery writer Marie Martin conducted afternoon writer's seminars in the WCL Heckathorn Community Room on character development and publishing secrets for writers honing their craft.

A distinction originating last year, the Dorothy Johnson Award is given to a writer who has multiple books published, fact or fiction, relating to Montana topics. The award is named after Johnson (1905-1984) who was a prize-winning American author best known for her Western fiction, including more than two dozen fiction and non-fiction novels and short-stories, including Buffalo Woman, Hanging Tree, A Man Called Horse, The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance and When You and I were Young, Whitefish. An honorary member of the Blackfoot tribe, Johnson was inducted to the Montana Cowboy Hall Of Fame and Western Heritage Center for the "Legacy Award" for her "notable contributions to the history and culture of Montana."

This year, the WLA named Roland Cheek, a rugged Montana outdoorsman who is equally gifted with a pen as he is with wilderness survival, as the second recipient of the "Spirit of Dorothy Johnson' Award. Each year, this award honors the author whose roots are in Montana.
and whose books reflect the courage, determination, and history of Montanans. In his own words, Cheek has two things going for him, “a lifetime worth of experiences and a willingness to share them.” Based largely on his experiences and inspiration as a guide in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, Cheek developed a career spanning seven decades as a syndicated columnist, a host of a national radio program, a blog writer and author of more than 20 fiction and non-fiction books, including notable titles such as *Echoes of Vengeance, Bloody Merchants War, Chocolate Legs, Learning to Talk Bear and Montana’s Bob Marshall Wilderness.*

WLA President Donna Maddux said, “Roland’s down home, folksy, tongue in cheek style disguises an abundance of wisdom for both the experienced outdoorsman and the novice. Over 80 years young, Roland knows the backcountry as few do. He and Dorothy M. Johnson could have many fireside chats about the core values of a Westerner.”

Cheek admitted he was completely surprised to discover he had received the Spirit of Dorothy Johnson Award. His humility belies the brazen approach of a man who has sidestepped death more than once after being charged by grizzly bears, stared down by a cow moose, and nearly crushed by a falling tree during a rainstorm on horseback. He has braved blizzards, avalanches, and sub-zero temperatures in Montana’s backcountry as well as witnessed nature’s serene beauty with his wife of 62 years, Jane.

“I began writing with a pencil stub in a pocket notebook while leading packhorses into the Bob Marshall Wilderness — which is the method I used to maintain a weekly newspaper column for 21 years. My tongue-in-cheek quip was that my saddle horn was my writing desk.” Cheek said. “The real truth is that I began the career that eventually caromed into newspaper columns, radio programs, magazine pieces, and books by simply telling stories to guests around campfires. The beauty of such methodology is that unless one is totally ignorant, he begins to note which stories are most popular; the ones folks wanted me tell again and again. Those are the stories that eventually found their way into print.”

Cheek also admitted, not proudly, that while he failed English when he was in high school, reading saved him. His advice to aspiring writers: “Start with comic strips if that’s what you want to read, but read. You’ll graduate to sports pages, then front page news. You’ll advance to more serious stuff — my first serious book was *Man-Eaters of the Kumaon* by Jim Corbett. I read that book at age eleven while sick with the measles. So READ! READ! READ! Always read for enjoyment. You’ll learn by osmosis.”

Roland and Jane currently live in Columbia Falls. They maintain their love affair with adventure and all things wild.

Visit [www.whitesfishlibrary.org](http://www.whitesfishlibrary.org) for more information on hours, programs and other news about the Whitefish Community Library or Like WCL on Facebook. Stop by to browse WCL’s Montana collection, where works by Johnson, Cheek and other local authors can be found.
Interns & Public Libraries

by Lune Axelsen, ImagineIF Libraries in Kalispell

This summer at ImagineIF we had the pleasure of taking on two interns at our Kalispell location. To make the experience beneficial for the interns, as well as the library, we made sure to first consider where a need existed, design an internship around it, and carefully select the right intern. Knowing that the summer months are so busy we determined that having interns at this time would be of most benefit.

In Youth Services the extra help was welcomed as we prepared to launch our Play Expo, a kick-off celebration for our Summer Experience program that involved hands-on interactives, STEAM-based play and creative quests, all of which required a great deal of preparation. Youth Services was thrilled to bring on the enthusiastic and energetic Cathleen Kuchera, currently
Youth Services intern, Cathleen Kuchera, helps get ready for ImagineIF’s Summer Experience kick-off celebration. (Photographer: Lune Axelsen)

Graphic Design intern, Ellie Dey, photographs Summer Experience events at ImagineIF, Columbia Falls. (Photographer: Tony Edmundson)

Even a graphic design student can gain insight into their field of study at a public library. Our second intern, Ellie Dey, from Flathead Valley Community College’s Graphic Design program, was brought on to photograph events and activities during the summer. Having an in-house photographer available for these happenings proved invaluable, as we were able to capture hundreds of candid moments that will help us tell the library’s story for years to come. Although the primary focus of her internship was about capturing and editing photos, her positive attitude and fresh ideas were also a welcome addition to ImagineIF’s communications team. She contributed her ideas in team meetings that focused on social media and brand strategy, while learning to craft press releases.

When speaking of her internship, Ellie told us, “Even though the environment isn’t a business, it still has a business atmosphere. Instead of selling you a thing or product, the library sells you...
on an idea of something while giving to the community and helping it grow and prosper. As for my education in Graphic Design, I learned the importance of social media. By attending most of the Summer Experience events, I saw how much goes on at the libraries that I didn't know about, and also met many different kinds of people. ImagineIF’s branding is very sure of its message and intent; though it’s a library, it has the presence of an important business or graphic design firm."

With a carefully designed internship and the right person for the job, internships at public libraries can be a win-win for both parties. By determining where your library needs assistance, an intern from outside the library world might be a fantastic fit, breathing fresh ideas into the organization. Setting aside time to mentor and coach the intern is critical to the success of the relationship. And feedback works both ways; be open to the fresh ideas an intern can bring.

[Lune can be reached at laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org or by calling (406) 758-2445]

Happy Birthday, Montana Book Club Central!

by Lauren McMullen, Montana State Library

Can you believe that Montana Book Club Central is celebrating its 10th birthday this year?!! Since March 2007 the wiki has been the go-to place for Montana libraries to find and share book club discussion kits with readers in their communities: www.montanabookclubcentral.pbworks.com

The wiki has 67 registered users who update their library book kit holdings, contribute resources to the site, and connect with fellow library staff on questions about books. All Montana librarians are welcome to join as contributors – if your library has books kit to share, just request access on the site and add them to the list when you get the go-ahead!

Choose Civility to Launch in Montana
We hear a lot about divisions these days; the news is full of stories about disagreements, bullies, and divided government. The messages in the media make it seem that everyone just argues all the time. But we know that’s ‘fake news’. We know that in our communities there’s a lot more that we agree upon than divides us, and that we respect both neighbors and strangers. Libraries are the perfect place to come together and discover what unites us. The world really needs us right now!

With this in mind your State Library staff is developing Choose Civility Montana, an initiative that provides programming opportunities to bring community members together for respectful and productive conversation and contemplation of issues that matter. The program will launch in September 2017.

The State Library opted to become a Choose Civility chapter of the Choose Civility Howard County, MD initiative. Becoming a chapter provides access to a national network of other libraries and partners that are participating in this important work; a communications network of representatives from other chapters and affiliates; expertise and an established structure; and a toolkit, including a logo and style guide.

Plans include rolling out a multi-faceted program from which libraries can select how they can best participate. Three types of programs will be offered:

- **Forums** – presentations and panels or ‘learning together’ programs;
- **Conversations** – Facilitated discussions for groups; and
- **Passive Programming** – pop-up interactive spaces inside or outside the library, displays, and booklists.

We’d love to hear your ideas and suggestions, and if you have programs that you’ve offered in your library that fit under this Choose Civility banner. If you are interested in helping with this effort, we are recruiting steering committee members. We anticipate that members would meet online 2 – 3 times per year and help guide and direct this work.

[Please contact Lauren McMullen with any ideas, suggestions, or questions at lmcmullen2@mt.gov. Permission to use logo from Howard County Library via Sara Groves.]

Capitol Christmas Tree 2017

by **Alyssa Ramirez**, Lincoln County Public Libraries - Libby Branch
Kootenai National Forrest will supply the 2017 Capitol Christmas Tree as well 75 smaller trees for the capitol buildings in Washington D.C. Lincoln County is also responsible for providing 8,000 ornaments reflecting the “beauty of the Big Sky.” This is a huge honor for Lincoln County and Lincoln County Public Libraries wanted to show its support. Starting in March, a special ornament has been featured each month at our three branches—Libby, Eureka and Troy—as a “drop in” program for patrons while supplies last. Patrons put on the finishing touches to the ornaments, and we ensure they are safely delivered to Washington, D.C. Ornaments featured include leaves, popsicle snowmen, ribbon “Ponderosa Pines,” pinecones, and twine fish. With help from the Libby Friends of the Library, we’ve been able to send nearly 400 ornaments to Washington, D.C.

(Susan Horelick (left), President of the Libby Friends of the Library, and Alyssa Ramirez (right), Libby Branch Librarian. Photograph by Ashley Neely.)

[Alyssa can be reached at aramirez@lincolncountylibraries.com]
"A racy read for the summer! Montana author Maile Meloy has written an enthralling mystery/thriller but don’t take it with you on a cruise. The setting is a cruise ship heading down the coast of Mexico and Central America. One day on a shore excursion 6 kids from three wealthy families go missing. All the elements combined—including a foreign country, crocodiles, drugs, murder, and secret trysts—make for a page turner. Chapters alternate between the children’s and parents’ voices. Money, race, and privilege are addressed along with the parental concern of not preparing your children enough for the world. The ugly American rears its head in this novel. Caution! This story is every parent’s nightmare."

- Debbie Stewart, Great Falls Public Library

**Micro-Review**

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**Submissions Open for the October Issue!**

**REMINDER:** The submission deadline for the October newsletter = **September 20th**. Please email your library news, micro-reviews & photos (with captions & attributions) to [mlaFOCUSeditor@gmail.com](mailto:mlaFOCUSeditor@gmail.com) Thank You!

**Some kudos are in order!**

- Kudos to the three (3!) Jodis who got together at the 2016 MLA Conference.
(Jodi Smiley (left), Jodi Oberweiser (middle), & Jodi Moore (right) at a serendipitous meeting. May they have many happy meetings more in the future! Photo submitted by Jodi Oberweiser.)

- Kudos also to **Robert Engle, Hiram Lodge #52, and the Rosebud County Library's top Summer Reading Program and Bedtime Math participants**! Hiram Lodge #52 donated 7 Kindle Fires and 2 bicycles to the program, while the Order of the Eastern Star provided the bicycle helmets.
Kudos to the Bitterroot Public Library, which played host to an outdoor contest featuring violinist Tim Fain and special guest Tasha Fain. Over 200 people came to the concert, which was designed to be family friendly. Children sat up front and listened to Goodnight Moon as sung by Tasha Fain on Thursday, June 22 at 5:30 PM. Tim Fain’s performance included 3 violin solos. It was, as Public Services Librarian Nansu Roddy puts it, “a magical evening.”

(Tim Fain photo by Michael Weintrob)

Kudos to Belgrade Community Library’s Sarah Creech, who has put a dollop of hard labor into making an Etsy List of Librarian Treasures. Says Creech, “Etsy will always be one of my go-to sites for unique gifts purchased online from independent makers and retailers. It feels like I’m browsing through a farmer’s market or (in some cases) a second hand store. Inspired by the summer and the need for a new coffee mug, because there are never enough coffee mugs, I put together this list of Etsy items related to books and libraries. Below is a snapshot of the list and the link to access. Hope you enjoy browsing! Maybe you’ll find something for yourself!” Her fabulous list can be found at: www.etsy.me/2tehSid
August has always been a strange month for me. Here in Montana, it's not quite summer, not quite fall, and change lurks just around the corner. In this, my first newsletter produced in tandem with our new co-editor Alice Kestler, change has been both a pleasant and a purposeful thing. Alice has picked up this project with grace, patience, and skill.

There are other changes afoot, as well—some good, and some ... which will require adjustment. In a few weeks I begin my quest for an MLIS degree. I'm partnering with a local scientist and water quality specialist to put together a children's picture book on the subject of aquatic invasive species (AIS). And working with my amazing coworkers here in Polson to make the most of our NASA@MyLibrary grant has begun opening new horizons, both for us and our library users.

These are all glorious and good things.

But what will our new budget restrictions, as John Finn has so graciously agreed to write about in this issue of our newsletter, change for us? What's next for my fellow Montana librarians? We all grieve for the work that could-have-been, and struggle to reconcile our hopes
for what we can accomplish with the material reality of limited resources. It's easy for anxiety to bloom out of control, like algae in tepid water.

In the midst of a mixed bag of a summer rapidly turning to fall, I am more grateful than ever for the Montana librarians—past, present, and future—who pack each issue of the FOCUS with reminders that change is not, in fact, the end of anything. It's the beginning, rather, and there's plenty more good work ahead despite the setbacks.

We adapt.*
We take out one chimera head at a time.
And we move forward.
Together.

Kendra Mullison
FOCUS Co-Editor

*see Alice's comments, below, for one excellent example.

by Alice Kestler, Great Falls Public Library

As I write this editorial, the responses to our FOCUSing on Public Librarians are coming in. So far the vast majority of people say that connecting to patrons in some way is what they love best about being a public librarian. One of the things I most enjoy about serving in a public library is the wide variety of people you get to interact with. I work at the Great Falls Public Library reference desk which is located next to the public computers. We see people of all ages, ethnicities, and abilities. There is never a dull moment! Indeed, sometimes it can be downright scary when a patron who is high or drunk decides to act out and refuses to leave.

Speaking of drug impaired patrons, public libraries (and to some extent other libraries) around the nation are in the forefront of the opioid epidemic. Users take advantage of public restrooms to shoot up and sometimes overdose right in our libraries. There have been recent articles and news interviews with librarians about this issue. According to Anne Ford in the June 21, 2017, American Libraries article Saving Lives in the Stacks (https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2017/06/21/saving-lives-in-the-stacks/) in 2015 more Americans died from a drug overdose than from car accidents and gun homicides combined. More than 6 out of 10 of those deaths were from an opioid overdose. So far Montana is behind the nation in these statistics but we will probably begin to see more of this kind of problem even in our smaller libraries.

Some libraries have begun stocking naloxone and training staff on how to use it. “Naloxone is an easy-to-use, lifesaving antidote to overdose from heroin or other opioids. Used in hospitals for decades, the medication has no abuse potential, costs as little as one dollar for a lifesaving dose and can be administered with basic training” (http://naloxoneinfo.org/).
The American Libraries Magazine article mentioned above shares these facts about naloxone:

- Narcan is the brand name of a drug called naloxone, a medication that reverses the effects of opioid overdose by preventing the opioid from reaching the brain.
- If Narcan is given to someone who is *not* experiencing overdose, nothing will happen; there is no potential for harm. In addition, it is not possible to overdose on Narcan.
- Narcan is available both as an injection and as a nasal spray. It works within two to eight minutes.
- Libraries that stock Narcan typically administer it in conjunction with a call to professional emergency services (911).
- For more information on Narcan, visit naloxoneinfo.org or getnaloxonenow.org

Our libraries might want to take part in International Overdose Awareness Da (IOAD). It is held every August 31st and aims to raise awareness about overdose and reduce the stigma of a drug-related death. The IOAD website, https://www.overdoseday.com/, has kits, posters and other materials to mark the day. IOAD also acknowledges the grief felt by family and friends as they remember those who have died from an overdose or who have been permanently injured as a result of an overdose. Most importantly, Overdose Day spreads the message that the tragedy of overdose death is preventable. It is suggested that you wear silver to show your support on August 31st.

Thanks to Kat Wilson, the Public Services Librarian at Great Falls Public Library, for bringing the American Libraries article to my attention.

On a lighter note see our micro-reviews for some good summer reads and marginalia for some surprising facts about our public librarians.

Alice Kestler
FOCUS Co-Editor

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The *FOCUS* is an official publication of the Montana Library Association (MLA), and is published in collaboration with the members which it serves. You can look for new issues six times a year: in February, April, June, August, October, and December. With an online readership of over 500, the newsletter works to reflect, inspire, and give voice to the vibrant communities that exist in and around Montana’s libraries.

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:
Alice Kestler (Co-Editor)
Alice with one of her favorite books, Nalini Nadkarni's *Between Earth and Sky*.

(Photo taken by Kat Wilson)

Kendra Mullison (Co-Editor)
Kendra with one of her new favorite amateur astronomy go-tos: Terence Dickinson and Adolf Schaller's *NightWatch: A Practical Guide to Viewing the Universe*.

(Photo taken by Angela Claver)

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