- MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT -

by Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, President of the Montana Library Association
This fall Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson was the featured book for incoming freshmen at MSU. MSU brought Bryan Stevenson to Missoula to talk to the freshmen. The Bozeman Public Library staff was astute enough to snag Bryan for a presentation at the library during his time in Bozeman. A week after Bryan's visit the Bozeman Public Library sponsored a panel discussion on human rights. I was not able to attend the panel event, but a staff member at my office at the Montana Innocence Project was able to participate in the panel discussion. The panel contained representatives from a number of human service and justice-related organizations. The topic of the discussion was human rights, tied to Stevenson's book Just Mercy. Beth Boyson at Bozeman Public reported it was a great panel, well attended and well received. A video of the event will be available soon. Each of the panelists were outstanding advocates in their own right which probably had much to do with the positive reception of the panel by the Bozeman community. I wonder if the warm reception could also be aptly attributed to feelings of appreciation for Bryan Stevenson's book as well.

Just Mercy, published in 2014, was on the New York Times bestseller list as well as one of their 100 notable books of 2014. It has also received a number of other awards. Just Mercy is an amazing story. Stevenson was a gifted young attorney when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending the poor, the wrongfully convicted, and those trapped in our criminal justice system. Just Mercy details one of Stevenson's first cases involving Walter McMillian, a young man sentenced to die for a notorious murder he didn't
The case drew Stevenson into a crazy world of conspiracy, and legal wrangling that would transform his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

I read this book last year; it is one of those books that will change your life. Even if I wasn't a lawyer, a librarian and the director of an innocence project, this book would have made a profound impact on me and my beliefs. That is why I am proposing a One Book event for the 2018 MLA Conference. I want everyone to read *Just Mercy* by April 2018 so we can talk about it at the 2018 MLA Conference (aptly located in Bozeman). Some of you may remember that Lyn McKinney coordinated a similar One Book event in 2007 with *The Tipping Point*. Please borrow a copy of *Just Mercy* from your local library and read it. Then let’s talk about it at MLA.

More details of the Just Mercy One Read will be forthcoming.

Speaking of the 2018 MLA Conference—get your program proposals in! We need lots! And we know you all have something to teach the rest of us. Proposals are due October 6.

I am looking forward to fall which brings the MLA Fall Retreat at Chico, program selection for the 2018 MLA Conference in Bozeman, and the fall MLA Board meeting in Livingston on Oct. 16. If you have any items you wish brought before the MLA Board, please do not hesitate to let me know. Lisameckjack@gmail.com. I would love to hear from you!

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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)
"Although this book opens with a tragedy (a girl with skin of blue falls from the sky and dies, impaled on an iron gate), it is not a typical young adult dystopian tale. Though it is a fantasy, there are no vampires, werewolves, or witches in it. The story and characters are unexpected and unique. The protagonist Strange is an orphan raised by monks, who delivers a package to the Great Library of Zosma, and stays, finding a mentor in Master Hyrrrokin. Here the boy reads books which confirm that the fables he heard as a child, and the dreams which haunt his sleep (about a fabulous city guarded by soldiers called Tizenkane) are true, not myths. When an unexpected delegation arrives from Weep, and chooses people with special talents to solve an unspecified, dangerous problem, Strange is puzzled but ecstatic to join them. What the young man finds there will change his life, and perhaps his world itself, forever. This is the first volume in a trilogy, and anyone who reads it may be compelled to return to the library for the sequels. And in the words of Master Hyrrrokin, "the library knows its own mind. When it steals a boy, we let it keep him". You don't have to be a boy to fall under the spell of the library and such a book as this!"

- Carole Ann Clark, Great Falls Public Library

- MLA UPDATES -

Legislative Session News and Notes
by John Finn, Lewis and Clark Library

As I told you in August, it was a rough summer for Montana libraries, particularly our State Library.

With falling revenue projections, an unplanned-for and historic fire season, and reductions in tax revenues due to decreased natural resources extraction, the Governor has been forced to look at state agency budgets to balance the State's operating budget. Sadly, that means the Montana State Library's (MSL) budget is being hit very hard. First, part of SB261 reduced MSL's budget by nearly 25%. Now, the Governor is calling on General Fund funded agencies for an additional 10% cut to operating budgets.

By statute, State Librarian Jennie Stapp was required to submit 10% budget reductions to the Governor's office for its consideration. It is up to the Governor to make the final decision on those cuts. MLA feels this request of the MSL is untenable, and the Board has written a letter...
to Governor Bullock asking him to reconsider a further 10% cut to MSL's budget. The Government Affairs Committee is also writing letters to interim committee Chairs asking them to consider other options to keep the State Library from taking an additional 10% cut in funding.

Governor Bullock warned legislators that he may have to call a special session to find a way to pay for this season's forest fires. It is not out of the question for the Governor to also explore a special session to reconsider ideas to raise taxes to cover the loss of revenue to help cover the proposed budget cuts.

These are all issues that the MLA Board may have to discuss at the next Board meeting in October. If a special session is called, will MLA choose to back any proposed revenue enhancements, including new or increased taxes to cover shortfalls?

If you wish to share your thoughts on that weighty issue, please do not hesitate to tell me what you think.

[ You can reach John at jfinn@lclibrary.org . He is Chair of the MLA Government Affairs Committee ]

National Friends of Libraries Week October 15-21, 2017

by Alice Kestler, Great Falls Public Library

United for Libraries is coordinating the 12th annual National Friends of Libraries Week Oct. 15-21, 2017. United for Libraries: The Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations is a division of ALA. According to their website (www.ala.org/united/events_conferences/folweek) National Friends of Libraries Week "offers a two-fold opportunity to celebrate Friends. Use the time to creatively promote your group in the community, to raise awareness, and to promote membership. This is also an excellent opportunity for your library and Board of Trustees to recognize the Friends for their help and support of the library."

Friends groups, library trustees and library staff can access a variety of online resources to help them celebrate National Friends of Libraries Week. Promotional materials are available at National Friends of Libraries Week. There is a free webinar, Celebrating National Friends of Libraries Week: Promoting Your Group and Library, as well as an editable press release, letter to the editor and proclamations for public libraries or school and academic libraries. The site has a link to YouTube for embedding a 15-second or 30-second PSA in your website. Options to share the video via e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, and Google+ are also available on YouTube. Other promotional materials are available for purchase through the ALA store.

In conjunction with National Friends of Libraries Week, two awards of $250 will be given to Friends of the Library groups for activities held during the celebration. Application materials
are available at National Friends of Libraries Week Awards. Entries are due by Dec. 4.

Contact ALA’s United for Libraries with questions.

(Please Credit: www.ala.org/united/altaff/friends/friend-your-library)

[ You can reach Alice for more resources and tips at mlafocuseditor@gmail.com. ]

Make US Smile With AmazonSmile!

by Debbi Kramer, Montana Library Association
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), 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 and click on the Help tab. Thank you!

[ Debbi can be reached at debkmla@hotmail.com! ]
Today Is a Good Day to Join Your State Library Association

by Don Wood, the American Library Association's Chapter Relations Office

The Montana Library Association, also known as an ALA Chapter, offers a wide range of benefits and services. MLA needs your help—and you need its help, as well!—to support libraries in your state. Its members are employed in all types of libraries: academic, public, school, and special. If you’re not already a member, today is a good time to join!

Indeed, it’s not only a good day to join, with budget cuts and worse directed at libraries in many states, it’s also imperative—now more than ever—to support your state library association’s efforts to advocate for and support libraries, librarians, and library workers within your state.

Your Chapter membership will also benefit you personally and professionally:

- You’ll receive discounts for attending your state association’s annual conference;
- You’ll enjoy networking with other students, librarians, and library workers;
- You’ll be able to participate in opportunities to mentor students; and
- You’ll learn about other opportunities and services available to you from your state library association!

Moreover, not only does your state library association promote general library service and librarianship within your state, it also provides representation to the Council of the American Library Association and cooperates in the promotion of general and joint enterprises with ALA and other library groups.

I’m sure you can think of other reasons to join. If you have questions, however, you can certainly contact the Montana Library Association. Here you will find your state library association's contact information on the State and Regional Chapters page. You will also find contact information for your state library association’s elected officials and advocacy information. Have more questions? See Chapter Answers.

If you’re a student, find out whether your state library association participates in the ALA joint membership program. Forty-three Chapters (up 15 Chapters since 2014!) allow students to join one participating Chapter and ALA for one low price of $40, from now through August 31, 2018. Go green and join online today!

The joint student membership program is just one way the Chapters and ALA cooperate with each other. See The ALA and Chapters Partnership to learn more about how the ALA and ALA Chapters partnership works.

P.S. After joining the Montana Library Association, which will help you in your chosen field, if you’re a student, also join your Student Chapter! Here are many, many reasons why! Here is
The PNLA Conference 2017 was held August 2-4, 2017 at the Templin's Resort in Post Falls, ID. There were approximately 200 attendees from the region as well as 16 vendors. The keynote speaker was Lisa Napoli.

Please be sure to watch updates on the 2018 PNLA conference in Kalispell on our website: www.pnla.org

The conference rotation for future PNLA conferences is as follows:

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

And if you haven't already taken a moment to fill out the PNLA survey (sent out via email), please take a moment to do so now!

www.surveymonkey.com/r/2017PNLA-Interest

[ Carmen can be reached at cclark@bozeman.net. ]
We couldn't be more proud of our fellow MLA members, and this month we have the pleasure of introducing you to several new ones. So, pull up a chair, pull out the popcorn, and get ready for some introductions!

Roger W. Young (Trustee, Billings Public Library)
(Roger relaxing on his favorite summer reading location—his deck—reading Wallace Stegner's Angle of Repose for his Turning Page Book Club, one of three book clubs in which he participates. Photo by Carol Young.)
"I WAS A CHAMBER OF COMMERCE EXECUTIVE FOR TWENTY-FOUR YEARS."

- Roger W. Young // Trustee, Billings Public Library

Katy Rende (Lewis & Clark Library)
"I AM PRETTY EXPERIENCED IN WILDERNESS SURVIVAL AND I LOVE BACKPACKING, FORAGING, HIKING, AND CAMPING."

- Katy Rende // Lewis and Clark Library

James Howland (Big Sandy Schools)
(James Howland, self-portrait)
“I REALLY LIKE PUNS BUT I AM BAD AT COMING UP WITH THEM ON MY OWN.”

- James Howland // Big Sandy Schools

Janet Eidson (Glasgow City-County Library)
"I WAS IN EVERY STATE IN THE CONTINENTAL US BY THE TIME I WAS 10."

- Janet Eidson // Glasgow City-County Library

Scott Prinzing (Lame Deer K-12)

(Scott practicing, photo by Kristen Rickels Prinzing.)

(Self-portrait with one of Scott's favorite books.)
“I LOVE MUSIC (CREATING AND LISTENING), AS WELL AS BACKPACKING AND READING, OF COURSE! I AM PART OF THE DUO EARTHSHINE WITH KRISTEN RICKELS PRINZING, MY WIFE.”

- Scott Prinzing // Lame Deer K-12

Leslie Modrow (Billings Public Library Foundation)
In January 2017, ImagineIF Libraries’ Leadership Team began working on a strategy to reposition the library as a vital part of the educational ecosystem in Flathead County. We planned to reevaluate the language used within the organization and make changes intended to reinforce the library’s role as a learning organization, resulting in more community support.

Our Youth Services team began reassessing children’s programs after realizing the name “storytime” does not fully represent what we do as educators at ImagineIF. Youth Services staff decided it was time for a storytime rebrand. After several sessions of brainstorming and discussion, we came up with a new concept for our storytimes, calling them “free weekly early literacy classes,” complete with new names and descriptions. The classes also helped us conceptualize a wide variety of new activities designed to stimulate young children’s
In September 2017, we announced this expanded and improved selection of classes for young children. In *Footloose Friends*, a class designed especially for toddlers, participants enjoy songs, dance, and stories along with hands-on learning designed to build brain development and prepare children for future learning success. *Super Scholars* elevates the beloved preschool storytime and extends opportunities for children to build necessary skills for entering kindergarten. *Early Explorers*, created for infants and toddlers and their caregivers, focuses on rhythm and repetition, forming a foundation for learning by strengthening language connections in the brain.

Since launching the new early literacy classes, we have seen a 15% increase in attendance in comparison to September 2016. Our social media engagement skyrocketed after we announced that changes, showing a renewed sense of excitement about our classes and events for children. These successes prove that language changes help solidify the library's role as a learning institution. We look forward to continued engagement with community members and other stakeholders as we cement our as a key educational institution in our area.

[ You can reach Lune at laxelsen@imagineiflibraries.org or by calling ImagineIF Libraries in Kalispell at 406-758-5821. ]

Outside the Lines @ the Bozeman Public Library

by Kit Stephenson, Bozeman Public Library
Bozeman Public Library has participated in Outside the Lines for the last three years and each year has been a downright wonderful experience. Outside the Lines is a weeklong celebration demonstrating the creativity and innovation happening in libraries. The celebration incubated out of the Anythink Library District in Colorado, and libraries throughout the world have embraced the concept and have introduced crazy fun programs around their communities.

This year, we decided to go to one of our favorite breweries in Bozeman, MAP Brewing, and pair books with beer. Books and Brews was a huge success and folks loved finding out what books matched the beer they were drinking. A few examples: Monkey Wrench Gang by Ed Abbey and Bad Monkey by Carl Hiaasen blend well with Thunder Monkey, MAP Brewing’s Hefewiezen; and the Steep Terrain Double IPA takes on more flavor while reading Into Thin Air by Jon Krakauer or Seven Years in Tibet by Heinrich Harrer. This program is a keeper, based off Multnomah County’s #Book4Tat Twitter outreach, and we will be visiting more local breweries with Books and Brews throughout this winter. We also invite the public to email us what they are currently sipping on and we will email them back a list of books that match up. Give us a try – booksandbrewsmbpl@gmail.com.

We ended the weeklong celebration with our final concert in our Music on the Green summer concert series. We invited the Hooligans, the band that started our Music on the Green concert series 7 years ago. The crowd was large and dancing happened! We also had our first beautiful, sunny, blue sky day in a long time. A great celebration with great tunes to top off a great week.

Reaching out and spreading the word of what the Bozeman Public Library has to offer is becoming one of our priorities as we wade the changing seas of what a Public Library means
Montana universities, institutions partner to make state’s digitized library and museum collections more accessible

by Jennie Stapp, Montana State Library
& Jennifer Birnbel, Montana Memory Project Director

Collections of some of Montana’s most unique historical books, photographs, letters and more will now be widely available online, thanks to a new partnership between the state’s universities and cultural heritage institutions.
In June, Montana State University, the University of Montana, the Montana State Library and the Montana Historical Society partnered to form the Big Sky Country Digital Network, an online hub of digitized library and museum collections.

Forming the Big Sky Country Digital Network, is the next evolutionary step in a partnership that formed nearly fifteen years ago when these and other Montana libraries and museums formed the Montana Memory Project ([montanamemory.org](http://montanamemory.org)).

“At the time we founded the Montana Memory Project, we described it as Montana’s acting of remembering,” said Jennie Stapp, Montana State Librarian. “The deep pride we feel about our history and culture is well represented in the collections of digital content we make available.”

In addition to providing a way to search multiple collections of historical items from across the state ([bscdn.org](http://bscdn.org)), the network indexes information about those collections and submits it to the Digital Public Library of America ([dp.la](http://dp.la)), a nonprofit group that aggregates digital collections from America’s libraries, archives, museums and cultural heritage institutions.

“This is an exciting development,” said Kenning Arlitsch, dean of the MSU Library. “The BSCDN network brings together what once may have been hard-to-find resources from across the state and creates more points of access. The collections will also be harvested by search engines like Google.”

“People around the country and the world care about Montana and they love to explore connections to our great state,” Stapp said. “By forming the BSCDN, and by joining the Digital Public Library of America, we are ensuring that they have the information they need to connect to us at their fingertips.”

The DPLA works with hubs such as the Big Sky Country Digital Network to organize metadata for the items in the hubs’ collections — information about information, so to speak.

Collections from Montana, which include newspapers, photographs, books, maps, diaries and letters, will now be exhibited online alongside nationwide resources on the DPLA website.

“This statewide partnership supports a common mission: engaging Montanans with the information curated by our state’s universities, libraries and cultural institutions,” Arlitsch said. “It makes Montana’s history more accessible to all Montanans.”

Among the thousands of new resources the Big Sky Country Digital Network makes available are:

- **The Ivan Doig Archive at MSU**: A digital collection of the famed author’s notes, manuscripts, letters, photographs and more. The documents were entrusted to MSU by Doig’s widow, Carol, in Sept. 2015, following Doig’s death earlier that year. Doig, a Montana native, was known for his writing, primarily set in Montana, which celebrates the landscape and people of the post-war West.

- **Glacier National Park Historical Photographs** — These images from the Montana Historical Society’s Research Center capture the landscape and people who worked and played in the park in its early years. Work by notable photographers such as George Grant, Fred Kiser and T.J. Jileman appear in this collection.
Civil War Era Diaries and Correspondence Collection — Also available is the historical society’s collection of diaries and letters sharing the experience of new arrivals to Montana Territory during the waning years of the Civil War.

Mansfield’s Speeches and Interviews at UM – Mike Mansfield represented Montana in the U.S. House (1942-1952) and Senate (1952-1977), and was Ambassador to Japan (1977-1988). This digital collection from the University of Montana (UM) spans Mansfield’s career as a candidate, legislator, and ambassador, and highlights his legacy of leadership in public service through his speeches and interviews drawn from the extensive Mansfield Papers housed in the UM Mansfield Library.

Visit the Big Sky Country Digital Network online at bscdn.org and the Digital Public Library of America at dp.la.

[ You can find out more about the MMP at www.montanamemory.org or by emailing Jennifer at jbimel@mt.gov and Jennie at jstapp2@mt.gov. ]

Montana State Library now has OverDrive!
by Jessica Edwards, Montana State Library

Montana State Library now has OverDrive! Our collection is primarily focused on professional development, both library-specific and general. MSL cardholders can click here to access eBooks and eAudiobooks in a variety of formats. If you don’t yet have an MSL card and would like to apply for one, please click here!

[ Jessica can be reached at jedwards@mt.gov or by phone at 406-444-5352. ]
Safe Eclipse Viewing at the Library

by Mary Drew Powers, Whitefish Community Library

Whitefish Community Library invited Big Sky Astronomy Club to give a presentation on Safe Solar Eclipse viewing on the day of the total solar eclipse, August 21. During the event, families learned about how and why an eclipse happens, and used recycled cereal boxes to make eclipse viewers. Then everyone trooped outside to test the viewers. Solar eclipse glasses were handed out during the event as well.
The mission of Whitefish Community Library is to bring people, information and ideas together to inspire lifelong learning, advance knowledge and strengthen our community.

[For more information, call Mary Drew at 406-862-9914, or visit the Whitefish Community Library at whiteshlibrary.org]

Solar Eclipse Block Party @ North Lake County Public Library District

by Abbi Dooley, North Lake County Public Library District
The Great American Eclipse occurred on Monday, August 21, 2017. Our Library provided a community block party from 10am to 1pm to celebrate the eclipse. The event included children's crafts, informational displays provided through a NASA grant, a photo booth, hot dog lunch, book sale and prize drawing.

At the children's craft table kids made cereal box viewers, colored coloring sheets, filled out information sheets, and made paper demonstrations of the eclipse. They were also given sidewalk chalk and asked to draw pictures of what they thought the eclipse would look like.

There were two informational displays with items from a NASA @ My Library grant (see [http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2017/05/75-public-libraries-selected-nasa-my-library-partners](http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2017/05/75-public-libraries-selected-nasa-my-library-partners) for more information). Public Services Librarian Ser Anderson ran the NASA booth. She demonstrated an infrared thermometer, UV beads, and SUNoculars for the participants.

There was also a booth for taking photos using a green screen and the grant tablet. These fun photos depicted individuals standing on the moon. Photos were emailed to participants to commemorate the day.

Solar eclipse safety glasses were a hot topic at the Library in the weeks preceding the event. The Ronan Eye Clinic partnered with the library to purchase 250 glasses. The State Library provided 35 pair. Then we received a surprise shipment of 1,000 glasses from the NASA grant. 400 glasses were handed out ahead of the event. They were gone within a week! The day of the event remaining 850 glasses were distributed within 20 minutes, with folks asking for more.

Participants at the event were able to sign up for a free prize drawing. We gave away a portable outdoor chair and two different robotic kits to three very happy people. We had such an amazing turnout for this event!

Our Library Foundation hosted a hot dog lunch to conclude the event. Tickets sold out very quickly. The book sale that ran concurrently with the event was very successful. This was an incredibly successful program for the Library. We heard many wonderful comments from attendees. Most felt that it was wonderful for the community to experience
Nearly 50 people gathered at the viewing event in Drummond. Patrons young and old shared viewing glasses and enjoyed the eclipse. Viewing the eclipse was made easier by free eclipse glasses.

You can reach Abbi at abbid@polson.lib.mt.us or by calling the North Lake County Public Library District at 406-883-8225.

Suns, Moons, and Cats--oh my!
by Jodi Oberweiser, Drummond School & Community Library

With Glasses provided by Montana State Library and Drummond School’s 21st Century Grant, patrons of the Drummond School & Community Library watched the Solar Eclipse on August 21, 2017, in the school playground across from the library.

( Nearly 50 people gathered at the viewing event in Drummond. )
( Patrons young and old shared viewing glasses and enjoyed the eclipse. )
( Viewing the eclipse was made easier by free eclipse glasses. )
( Several of our younger patrons shared viewing glasses in order to better enjoy the eclipse. )
Librarians Jodi Oberweiser and Beth Langton view the solar eclipse.

The library's 15-year-old cat, made of paper-mache by students from the UM Art Department, advertised the event. Adorned in NCIL Space Science Institute's ISO solar viewing glasses, this is the first time the cat ventured out of the library to showcase an event.

Bridgette Oberweiser and her dad, Jim, donned eclipse viewing glasses to watch the event.

( All photos by Jodi Oberweiser. )

[ You can reach Jodi at librarydhs@blackfoot.net or reach out to the Drummond School and Community Library at 406-288-3700. ]
Submissions Open for the December Issue!

REMINDER: The submission deadline for the October newsletter = September 22nd (??). Please email your library news, micro-reviews & photos (with captions & attributions) to mlaFOCUSeditor@gmail.com Thank You!

Some kudos are in order!

The Executive Board of the Montana Library Association is pleased to announce a new Montana library patron. Stephen Haddad our accomplished MLA webmaster and his wife Sarabeth are excited to welcome Eponine Francis Haddad to their family. Congratulation Stephen and Sarabeth on the birth of your beautiful daughter!

"This book came out not long before the total solar eclipse on August 21, 2017. It tells the life-long journey of Frank Close to see his first total solar eclipse. He witnessed a partial solar eclipse in Peterborough, England in 1954 when he was eight. His first attempt to see a total solar eclipse was on August 11, 1999, in Cornwall, England. It rained all morning with only a second's-long clearing near totality. He describes the attempts of others to see the total solar eclipse that year and sprinkles in some scientific information about how eclipses work, how they are predicted and how we can look back in time to date things by when a total solar eclipse happened.

"After the disappointment in 1999 Close became an eclipse chaser. The next total solar eclipse would be in the Zambian bush on June 21, 2001. As soon as he saw an eclipse tour to Zambia advertised he signed up. His journey to "the dark side" as he puts it, turns into quite an eye opener. While waiting for his flight out of England he heard eclipse chasers chattering excitedly: "What's the zenith?" "It's saros 127." "What f-stop is best when photographing the diamond ring?" and "I've brought a filter for the hydrogen alpha line." Amateurs and professionals flock see totality. Even with all our current equipment astronomers study the sun during totality because it affords the best view of the sun's corona.

"As one who saw the eclipse this year I found the book fascinating; I am planning for the next North American eclipse 7 years away. Those who have not yet experienced a total solar eclipse will find the inspiration here to join others on the journey to the dark side of the moon."

- ALICE KESTLER, GREAT FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY
Sheila Cates Scholarship Winners for 2017

by Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Chair of the Sheila Cates Committee

On behalf of the MLA Sheila Cates Scholarship Committee, it is my pleasure to report that we recently awarded two Cates Scholarships for this fall. This year, each scholarship is $2,000 and will be put towards education for a Montana librarian working to receive a Master's degree in Library Science.

We had many highly qualified individuals apply for the Cates Scholarship this go-around. The decision was tough; ultimately, the committee selected Kendra Mullison and Taylor Schultz to receive Cates Scholarships this year.

Kendra is the youth services librarian at North Lake County Public Library District in Polson and she will be starting the University of North Texas Masters in Library Science program this fall. You may recognize Kendra's name as one of the editors of MLA's FOCUS publication. In one of her recommendation letters, Kendra was cited as "knowledgeable, highly creative,
Taylor Schultz, photo by Kelly Gorham

Kendra Mullison, photo by Angela Claver

direct, energetic, and humorous." Kendra believes that libraries exist to serve marginalized people and readying her community to face the rapidly-changing present, as well as the unknown future, is her personal mandate.

Taylor is a commons assistant at Montana State University's Renne Library and is pursuing her Master's degree in Librarianship from Valdosta State University in Valdosta, GA. Taylor wants to use her library degree to serve a rural community. Having grown up in Glasgow, she says she knows the challenges of providing library service to rural communities first-hand! Called a "rising star in librarianship" in one of her recommendation letters, Taylor has implemented several new initiatives at Renne including Bobcat Browse posters, a workshop series entitled "Software Studio" on technology topics, and a "Love Letter, Breakup Letter" project to solicit feedback from library users.

Please join me in congratulating these wonderful Montana librarians–our 2017 Cates Scholarship winners!

About the Cates Scholarship:

The Montana Library Association instituted the Sheila Cates Scholarship in 1994 to provide financial support to Montana Library Association members seeking a graduate degree in library and/or information science, a graduate school library media program, or seeking a school library endorsement. The scholarship fund was established in memory of Sheila Cates, who served as Library Development Coordinator at the Montana State Library from 1985 until her death from cancer in 1993. Sheila was named Montana Library Association's Librarian of the Year in 1993. Individuals selected to receive an award from the scholarship fund must show potential for emulating Sheila Cate's contribution to Montana libraries.

MLA Sheila Cates Scholarship Committee

Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Chair
Bobbi deMontigny
Della Dubbe
Jo Flick
Securing Yourself from Identity Theft!

by Alex Clark, Montana Legal Services Association

Do you know how to protect yourself if your personal information has been breached? Companies often have personal information about you, like your social security number and birth date. When the security of those companies has been breached, you could be at risk of identity theft. To protect yourself from identity theft after a security breach, it's a good idea to request a security freeze with all three credit reporting bureaus. A security freeze allows consumers to "lock up" their credit information so no one can access it without your permission. This prevents a thief from using your information to take out new credit.

For more information, please visit the Crime Victims section of www.MontanaLawHelp.org. If you can’t find the information you want, click on the LiveHelp button. Or call the Montana Legal Services Association HelpLine at 1 (800) 666-6899.

[ You can reach Alex at aclark@mtlsa.org or by phone at (406) 543-8343 ext. 220 ]

From the Editorial Desk

by Kendra Mullison, North Lake County Public Library District

On the night of August 20th, every room in every Sheridan hotel was booked, and the women behind the counter had dark smudges under their eyes as they sorted through the constant stream of foot traffic and phone calls. "Is this all because of the eclipse?" I asked the lady giving me my key cards, and she shook her head in wonderment. "It's like this all over Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon," she told me. "Every hotel in our chain has been booked for months. And there's a cattle auction going on this week, so it's going to be an interesting couple of days."

She looked exhausted, despite all attempts to stay cheerful and upbeat. "Will you have a chance to see it?" I asked her, and she asked me what time it would be at its peak, then shook her head. "I have to take off of work to pick up my daughter around that time," she said. "She's only three and none of us have those special glasses." With a line forming behind me, I took the key cards and headed off—but I couldn't help thinking three years old is the perfect age to..."
fall in love with science. After all, I cut my teeth on atlases and the solar system around the same age.

Upstairs, opening my suitcase, I came across the glasses that I’d hoarded for my own family. It wasn’t a hard decision; there weren’t many, but even so there were enough to share. I waited for the evening rush to abate and then went back down to the lobby and gave the lady at the desk a pair. “A gift from my library and from the Space Science Institute for your daughter,” I told her. “She might be the generation to set foot on Mars.”

You should have seen her mother smile.

Sheridan wasn’t in the path of totality, of course. Some Casper hotels, like those in Idaho Falls and Salem, Oregon, had started fielding bookings years in advance. I didn’t even live in Montana then … but Sheridan was close enough that my parents and I could make an early morning drive in time to catch the edge of totality. I drove down ahead to secure parking, beating the sunrise by minutes. The hills were blank and brown, the air hazy with smoke from Montana and British Columbia. (It would follow me through my tour of Utah’s National Parks and through my graduate classes over the Labor Day weekend. But that’s another story.)

Highway traffic blazed by. Fellow eclipse chasers pulled out lawn chairs, benches, and blankets. The couple behind us had come from England, where they’d missed a near-total eclipse in 2015. A woman came walking up the line of parked cars with a cooler full of snacks. “I’m a mom,” she explained. “Everybody needs to eat and I brought plenty.” My parents arrived, reported on the hotel’s breakfast buffet, and started socializing. I pulled out a nice fat memoir on meteorite hunters and sat propped against my rear wheel.

Eclipses aren’t like firework shows; they don’t start with a bang and end with smoke and a noisy crescendo. Or at least, this one didn’t: it just became apparent, from one minute to the next, that the moon was nibbling away at the rising sun. I’ve read the famous Annie Dillard essay; I know it’s quite a thing to see the sun disappear at midday. And it wasn’t entirely without drama. Every piece of the puzzle slid into place: Bailey’s beads, the diamond ring, great white ares of the Sun’s corona, purple twilight and a 360-degree sunset. Shouts went up from the mother with her cooler full of snacks, from the hot-rod car which slipped off the highway at the last minute, from my parents, and yes—from me.

Back at my library, I heard later, it was total and happy chaos. More than a thousand people showed up for our block party, kindly put on by my fellow staff while I lounged on the side of my highway, snapping up the glasses provided by our NASA@MyLibrary grant within minutes of opening the doors. It had been happy chaos all summer as I ran our Family Summer Reading Program and the N@ML grant simultaneously, and it would be happy chaos as I started my MLIS degree concurrent with Fall programming a couple of weeks later. But in that moment, as the temperature plunged and the humidity rose and I participated in one of the largest mass movements of citizen scientists in North America’s history, it was peaceful. I had room to dream a few new dreams.

I dreamed a few for a little girl I would never meet in Sheridan, and all the kids I meet weekly in rural Montana. If I can feed their dreams with a couple of books and a bit of STEM programming, I will.
If you’re wondering what this NASA@MyLibrary grant is all about, check out the ALA website at [https://apply.al.org/nasalibraries/resources](https://apply.al.org/nasalibraries/resources) and the STARnet webpage at [http://www.starnetlibraries.org/portfolio-items/nasa-my-library](http://www.starnetlibraries.org/portfolio-items/nasa-my-library).

The summary version is that this is a four-year grant (if all goes well) that combines training, resources (the facilitation kits), and $500 toward programming costs and collection development. The whole grant is designed with a specific emphasis on reaching underserved groups, as the grant partners remind us frequently. Recipient libraries are required to host a certain number of STEM programs utilizing these resources each year of the program. Our job was made easy this year by the availability of Mark Paulson from the Big Sky Astronomy Club (who hosted an adult program on the eclipse in early August) and of course by the day of the eclipse itself (see Abbi Dooley’s great article for more on that!). We also crafted a program for the kids attending our Family Summer Reading Program which maxed out our event space, so a love and passion for science is alive and well in northwestern Montana!

I checked in with the project facilitators from the Space Science Institute this week about future application cycles, and they were thrilled to hear that other Montana libraries might be interested. Out of 500 “fantastic” applications, the SSI only had the resources to offer the grant to 75 libraries in the first round (ours is the only one in Montana, which is both humbling and awesome). As this is only the first year that this particular grant has been offered, we are
by Alice Kestler, Great Falls Public Library

I was very late in deciding to view the total solar eclipse—I didn't make up my mind until two weeks before. I knew hotel rooms anywhere near totality were long gone so I asked a friend in Dillon, a little over three hours from Great Falls, to stay there August 20. That meant I only had 2 hours to drive to a viewing spot in Idaho the next morning. I went online and searched out where I could see the totality west of Rexburg, Idaho. I figured it would be too crowded all around Rexburg. Terreton, a small farming community on Route 33, is 12 miles east from the I-15 cut off for Rexburg. That sounded far enough away to be workable.
On August 21 I left my friend's house at 7:30 AM. The farther I drove south the clearer the sky became until somewhere over the Idaho border the smoke we had been suffering through for weeks was gone. It was a beautiful clear day with just a few wispy clouds in the sky.

My first hint there were going to be serious crowds that day was at Dubois. When I pulled off for gas I was greeted at the off ramp by people directing traffic. The rest area next to the truck stop was packed with people in cars, RVs and all manner of vehicles. Several people had telescopes already trained at the sun. The gas station was busy but I managed to pull into a pump and get filled up. That part didn't take long but the wait for the women's restroom was 15 minutes. I was glad I had allowed a little extra time to get to my viewing area.

When I reached the turn off for Rexburg people were everywhere—even parked along the overpass. I turned east and wondered briefly if I was going to find a place that wasn't overly crowded. About 7 miles from I-15 the crowds thinned out. I ended up parking at a field on the very edge of the farm area surrounding Terreton. I reached my destination with ten minutes to spare.

There were 7 or 8 cars at the viewing spot, a cozy group. One group was an extended family from town. They had a 7" telescope. I looked through it early on during the eclipse when there was just a bite out of the sun. The sunspots were very easy to see. There were several children with this group. It was fun to hear their exclamations before and during totality.

I set up my folding chaise lounge next to a family from Arlee, MT. I had a cooler with my sandwich, water, a brownie (must have chocolate!) and a couple of PepsiColas. I was very glad I brought a jacket—it cooled down a lot during totality.

It is hard to describe the experience of solemnity, excitement and awe during totality. I'm still savoring the experience. When the sun winked out there were cheers, especially from the kids. Then there was silence as we all took off our glasses and looked directly at the sun's corona blazing out around the moon. The temperature dropped and everything grew still. We talked quietly to each other for the 2 minutes and 16 seconds of totality or sat entranced in silence. I missed the diamond ring display at the beginning of totality but I saw it at the end. I took four
pictures of the sun during totality. One came out (printed here). With my naked eye I could not see the chromosphere peeking out through the craters that are visible in the photo. I just got lucky with that shot.

The 360 degree sunset was clearly visible around the edge of the wild sagebrush land around us. There weren't many animals or birds in the area. However, when the totality was over and it began to brighten the birds in nearby trees started their birdsong as they do at dawn.

One of the things that enriched my eclipse experience was listening to NPR on the way down and on my way back afterwards (while I was in range of one of the NPR stations). Both leading up to the eclipse and afterwards NPR played a selection of sun, moon and eclipse songs. As I approached Rexburg NPR was talking about the eclipse as it moved from Oregon through Idaho. After the eclipse as I was driving toward I-15 (very slowly due to heavy traffic) NPR was discussing what it was like in South Carolina. I felt part of the whole expanse of the eclipse across the country.

The next total solar eclipse over our country will be in seven years. Plan ahead and be sure to see it!

Alice Kestler
FOCUS Co-Editor
Kendra Mullison (Co-Editor)

Kendra with her favorite eclipse book, a signed copy of Andrew Fraknoi and Dennis Schatz's *When the Sun Goes Dark*. Her library received its copy in an NSTA giveaway.

*(Photo by Angela Claver)*

North Lake County Public Library

4068838225

Northlakecountylibrary.com

Please send address changes to:

Debbi Kramer (Executive Director)

Montana Library Association

33 Beartooth View Drive, Laurel

4065793121

mtlib.com