- MESSAGE FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT -

by Elizabeth Jonkel, Incoming President of Montana Library Association
Thank you to everyone for granting me this opportunity to serve as the 2018 MLA President. I follow in the footsteps of Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson who headed MLA for two years and, during her tenure, gave Montana librarians fabulous leadership. Continuing on in her fine example, I hope this next year to see a continuation of all our great accomplishments and drive for excellence in librarianship in the state of Montana.

I hope that you all took the opportunity to vote in our new MLA officers. We enter this year with a new MLA Vice President-President Elect (Mary Anne Hansen), a new MLA Secretary-Treasurer (Megan Stark), a new Director at Large West (Kendra Mullison), and a new PLNA Representative (Corey Fifles). We give fond farewell and exuberant thanks to outgoing officers Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Mary Guthmiller, Gavin Woltjer, and Carmen Clark.

This year’s MLA theme entails “Going the Whole Way” – or an examination of the transforming role facing libraries and librarians to balance empathic service delivery with the current social and economic challenges in our communities. A new kind of librarianship is emerging that expands on the significance of libraries as safe and welcoming places for all. The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation points out that more and more organizations now “turn outward” to engage with their communities and provide services that problem solve and improve how communities work. As the landscape of Montana changes the kinds of services that we perform for our communities will need to change as well.

On another note, the 2018 MLA Conference in Bozeman, MT was a huge success. 250 of you registered to attend, there were 7 speakers and 18 vendor tables (if you know of any potential vendor for the 2019 conference please feel free to share that information with us). The keynote speaker was Montana Supreme Court Justice Beth Baker who has recognized for years the vital and important role that librarians play in providing access to legal materials for every day Montanans. Author luncheon speaker Leslie Budewitz talked about her mystery series of legal fiction with a recipe twist. Programs on copyright law, open meetings law, intellectual freedom and many other legal topics were offered. At the Membership Meeting, you voted to accept a Net Neutrality resolution directed at our national and state representatives. In addition, you resolved to officially thank all the people who made the MLA 2018 Conference a rousing success, so thank you again to all the conference planners and our host city.

I’m looking forward to our next conference at the newly remodeled Radisson Colonial Hotel in Helena, MT on April 10-13, 2019. I hope to see you there! But there are other MLA events to consider over the course of the next year. The school library division retreat and the annual PLD/ASLD retreat at Chico are imminent: visit mtlib.org for the latest information on both.

Please remember that if you have any ideas, questions or observations about the association and how it can help us all be more effective and relevant, feel free to email me or call. I look forward to another great year for librarianship in Montana!

[ Elizabeth can be reached at ejonkel@missoula.lib.mt.us ]

- MESSAGE FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT -
Wow, my last President’s letter. Two years of writing these columns for FOCUS and this will be my last one. Better make it good. I think that will be easy enough to do by simply highlighting all the great work your MLA Board, committees, and staff have completed in the last year. It’s been a busy and productive year!

In meeting four times this past year, your MLA Board approved 12 new policies for the operation of the association, including a code of ethics policy and a conflict of interest policy. These policies should provide for a more efficient, smoothly run organization.

Through the hard work of all board members, and Executive Director Debbi Kramer in particular, the MLA Handbook has been updated. This was a project years in the making. It is finally done, at least for the time being. Check out the Handbook on the MLA Webpage.

We’ve added new sections to the MLA Webpage, bringing various items into organized sections. Look in the Handbook for policies, forms, and resolutions.

In October the MLA Executive Board passed a resolution supporting the state library’s strategic framework in face of the state’s declining budget and budget cuts.

We formed an audit committee composed of the three past MLA Presidents to double-check on MLA’s finances and yearly budget. This is an important safety measure for MLA’s finances.

We held three very successful retreats this year: The school library division retreat in Bozeman in August, the fall retreat in Chico, and the Offline retreat in Great Falls in February. Each retreat was excellent AND made money! Woot woot! The board also decided this year to let the MLA Executive
Director handle all administrative functions of retreats, allowing the planners to focus on programs and content.

MLA Directors at Large made the decision to give away several free MLA memberships to encourage people to get involved with the work of the association.

We had a very financially successful MLA Conference in Bozeman. Thank you to all who presented and attended! We made the decision to offer an all-in-one conference registration this year. On the survey conducted after the meeting, we heard far more positive comments for the all-in-one registration than negative, so it seems likely that practice might continue.

Also this year, thanks to the efforts of ALA Representative Matt Beckstrom, we came up with a better process for resolutions, allowing for more exposure and discussion of proposed resolutions prior to conference each year.

And that’s just a few highlights! We hope you, the MLA members, are pleased with the work of the MLA Board in the last year. I know I have been so happy with the great efforts of board members, committee chairs, and interest group chairs, and all the work that Debbi does to keep us organized. It has been an honor, and a pleasure, to serve as your MLA President for the last two years. I will MISS it, President’s letter and all.

[ Lisa can be reached at lisameckjack@gmail.com ]

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JOIN US – MONTANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION-SCHOOL LIBRARY DIVISION SUMMER RETREAT-
ALL LIBRARIANS INVITED

LOCATION: MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY THURSDAY – OPI CREDITS AVAILABLE – MEA-MFT
TRADE AVAILABLE : Check Individual per District

July 25, 2018 Welcome Reception for Retreat Attendees
Time: 6-7:30 P.M.
Location: 419 S. Grand Avenue in the James Martin House – Follow link for house history-
(http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/campeauss-living-in-the-past/article_162fd5fe-
0609-5db2-99ae-fbf27cbff7c4.html)
$3 Reception Fee – Donations for host to give to the charity of her choice.

Schedule of Events (Tentative)
08:00-8:30 Check in and continental breakfast
08:30-09:30 School Library Advocacy: Montana School Librarians Share Their Stories: Learn the results of a statewide survey of school library media specialists from Montana school libraries of all sizes. Learn what other school librarians are doing across the state to advocate for support and recognition in their school as partners and collaborators in students’ education. Hear how others are getting support for their budgetary needs. Join us to discuss the results of 115 survey submissions from small, medium and large school libraries from across the state, while learning about successes and challenges that your colleagues across the state face in their day-to-day work. Join the conversation so that everyone can benefit from knowing the lay of the school library land across the state. **Presenters:** MLA/EveryLibrary School Library Advocacy Project Team (Dr. Ann Ewbank, Chair)
09:30-09:40 Break
09:40-10:40 Native American Oral Traditions & World Beliefs - A Conversation about Cataloging: Diane Van Gorden will lead a discussion about cataloging Native American Oral Tradition/World Belief Literature. Often the suggest Dewey number is “398.2 Folklore (Fairy Tales)” but is that where it really belongs? Would “299.7 Religions of North American native origin” be a better location? **Presenter, Diane Van Gorden, Teacher-Librarian and French Teacher, Baker High School, Baker Montana**
10:40-10:50 Break
10:50-11:50 Design Thinking: Makerspaces are a great idea until someone asks what are you doing there? Are you interested in giving your projects a little structure? Want to infect the school with your Maker mentality? Design Thinking is just the ticket. Learn how engineers and designers conceive and test prototypes for real world solutions. **Presenter Dana Carmichael, Teacher-Librarian Whitesh Middle School Whitefish, Montana**
Montana Battle of the Books: Update on Montana Battle of the Books program to encourage and recognize students who enjoy reading, broaden reading interests, increase reading comprehension and promote academic excellence in an exciting quiz show format. **Presenter- Lisa Brennan Teacher-Librarian Target Range School Missoula, Montana**
12:50-1:50 Makerspace: A Curriculum Based Student Engagement: Using Makerspace, Lauren developed several projects for her students include 5th Grade Recreational Timelines, 2nd Grade Recreating National Monuments and Monument Research, Kinder Animal Research and Habitat , 1st Grade Ozobots and the Retelling of Fairytales, and 4th Grade ABC book creation. Her lessons include projects on Montana, Montana Ghost Towns, Native Americans and Emily Dickinson. **Presenter - Lauren Stephens, Teacher-Librarian Emily Dickinson Bozeman, Montana.**
1:50-2:00 Break
2:00-3:00 1 Book, 1 Community: How the wonder of Wonder brought a community together. Ideas, resources, activities and more to reach out and pull ‘em in! **Presenter Kayleen Randall Teacher-Librarian Troy Public Schools Troy Montana**
3:00-400 Montana Chamber of Commerce/Montana Council on Economic Education Business Challenge: How High School Librarians Can Support Entrepreneurship Education. **Presenter Mr. Tim Alzheimer, Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship, MSU-Bozeman**
4:00-4:15 Wrap-up and distribution of OPI CE Forms
Shining the Light on Un-Cataloged Montana Materials

Do you have un-cataloged Montana materials in your library? The MLA Technical Services Interest Group is providing cataloging and discovery assistance to Montana libraries who need help creating original bibliographic records. Share your Montana treasures with us and take the first step to get them in your catalog and in the hands of your patrons.

If you are unable to find a bibliographic record in your local catalog or OCLC for your Montana item, submit your item to the IG. Required Item information is title and format. Additional item information as known includes author, edition, publisher, date, ISBN, and subject.

All submitted items will be reviewed for cataloging as volunteer time and training opportunities allow. You will be contacted if your item receives cataloging. Please understand submitting items does not guarantee they will receive immediate cataloging.

**SUBMISSION FORM:** [https://goo.gl/bh8GZB](https://goo.gl/bh8GZB)

Recently cataloged Montana materials include:
- Denton, MT 100 years, 1913-2013: centennial celebration, June 28-30, 2013.
- Books from Sanders County: Pioneers & Early Settlers of Camas, Bull River & Noxon, Heron, Paradise, Plains, Thompson Falls, Trout Creek, and Weeksville & Eddy
- Colorado Gulch directory
- A greenhorn gal: life in eastern Montana
- God willing & the river don't rise: stories from James Jordan Simon
- From our kitchen to yours from Eagles Auxiliary No. 374, Lewistown, Montana
- The long road home: 100 years of history, Richey, Montana 1916-2016
- Books, booklets, catalogs, folders, and typescripts illustrated by Charles M. Russell: a "checklist" of publications from 1890 to 2014

In addition to receiving help with your materials, participating in this project will provide valuable data to be used in assessing cataloging needs throughout the state.

Questions? Send an email to the Technical Services Interest Group at: [mlaTechServicesIG@gmail.com](mailto:mlaTechServicesIG@gmail.com)

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**- NEWS FROM OUR AFFILIATES -**

**- PNLA Updates -**

by [Carmen Clark](mailto:Carmen.Clark@pacificnorthwestlibrary.org), outgoing PNLA representative
The 2018 PNLA conference will be held in Kalispell August 1st through August 3rd at the Red Lion Kalispell. Registration for the conference is now open, please check our website for more information: https://pnla.org/conference/

Early bird discounts are available until July 6th, so don't delay signing up for the conference and save some money.

Some of you might remember Shark Rodeo from the PNLA conference in Helena a few years back. We are happy to report that they will be the entertainment for the Corks & Cans event during PNLA.

The conference rotation for future PNLA conferences is as follows:
2019 Washington
2020 Alaska (this will be a joint conference with AKLA)

Is writing your passion? Consider submitting an article to the PNLA Quarterly (see below). For more information, please contact the PNLA Quarterly editor at pqeditors@gmail.com.

Call for Submissions and Author Instructions

Crossing Borders is the focus of the Fall 2018 issue of PNLA Quarterly. We invite library practitioners, students, and educators in the PNLA region (Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, and Washington) to submit articles that deal with any aspect of crossing borders in our profession, including (but not limited to) cross-training within libraries, unique collaborations between or outside libraries, or endeavors spanning geographic boarders. Articles may be theoretical, research-based, or practice-focused.

The deadline for submissions to pqeditors@gmail.com is June 30, 2018. Authors are asked to:

- Submit manuscripts of between 1,000-6,000 words electronically in Microsoft Word file format;
- Use Times New Roman 12 point font and 1.15 spacing;
- Adhere to guidelines in the 6th edition of the Manual of Style of the American Psychological Association (APA). This rule applies in terms of format and references;
- Obtain any necessary written permission to use copyrighted material, and to pay any and all relevant fees. Appropriate credit should be provided in the manuscript;
- Submit original work that has not been previously published and is not under consideration for publication in another journal;
- Contact the PQ editors at pqeditors@gmail.com with any questions regarding these instructions, the publication process, schedule, or the appropriateness of a proposed article topic.

PNLA Quarterly is an open access journal. In that spirit, PQ authors retain the copyright to their works. PQ facilitates the distribution of its authors’ intellectual property in a professional manner to enhance the process of scholarly communication, and to advance the sharing of information in and beyond the library profession and the PNLA region.

As PNLA Quarterly moves toward re-implementing the peer-review process for selected sections of its content, we invite library professionals in the region to serve as peer reviewers. Please contact the PQ editors at pqeditors@gmail.com if you are interested.

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The Pacific Northwest Library Association is proud to launch our newly redesigned website, www.pnla.org. We have redesigned it with you in mind, streamlining menus, simplifying navigation, building a responsive layout for all platforms, and providing a resource for librarians, library workers, and library supporters throughout the vast Pacific Northwest region.

We encourage everyone to visit and explore the site, and if you have any questions or feedback you would like to share with our team, please do so by filling out the form on our Contact us page.

Best,
Brian Hulsey
PNLA Webmaster & Electronic List Manager
South Whatcom Branch Manager
Whatcom County Library
FOCUSing on the 2018 MLA Conference Survey

Twelve participants of the 2018 MLA Conference responded to the survey for this issue. Here is a sampling of answers to some of the survey questions. Thank you to all who provided pictures from the conference.

Briefly describe one valuable thing you learned at conference

Starting a seed library doesn't have to be difficult. I learned this at the Significant Tidings session from ASLD/PLD. -Aaron LaFromboise, Medicine Spring Library

Within the first week after MLA, I was able to help a patron locate an address and landowner by using Montana Cadastral, which we explored during the Essential Services of Montana State Library class. -Kathleen Godfrey, Belgrade Community Library

How weeding a collection will actually increase the visibility of the higher quality of books. Circulation will increase. It is common in most libraries to have minimal nonfiction checkouts each month. -Randy S Robinson, Roundup School Community Library
What do you wish more people knew about going to MLA Conference?

How much fun it is and how much you learn. It is so helpful in doing my job. - Nancy Royan, Wedsworth Memorial Library

Grants available, great variety of topics, good opportunity to present and network. - Marjorie Doyle, Missoula Public Library

That when you attend you realize what other libraries are doing to make the library experience more informative and fun. - Rhonda Bourgoin, Daniels County Library
Describe something at the conference that challenged you

The cost of the food for what was offered up was a bit steep. Would be nice if one could have time to go elsewhere to eat and still hear the keynote speakers etc. -Della Haverland, Stillwater County Library

Sitting on a panel. -Jodi Oberweiser, Drummond School & Community Library

What did you enjoy most about the MLA Conference?

The awards ceremony. -Stephan Licitra, State Law Library of Montana

The sessions on DNA and Oral history projects. -Kathy Robins, Billings Public Library

Networking, sharing/hearing ideas. -Gavin Woltjer, Billings Public Library

What event helped you to meet new colleagues?

Opening lunch I sat with folks I’d never met before. Encouraging people to sit with people they’ve never met at one of the meal times would probably be the best way to meet new colleagues. The programs might be a little more challenging to meet people. Also, volunteering at the conference presents an opportunity to meet new people. -Rachelle McLain, Montana State University Library

- MORE FROM THE 2018 MLA CONFERENCE -

Bookmobile Round-up at MLA Conference

by Carmen Clark, Bookmobile Librarian at Bozeman Public Library
During our annual conference in April, conference attendees were able to tour three different Bookmobiles and one book bike. Conference attendees enjoyed seeing the Bookmobiles and the book bike and chatting with outreach staff about programs, procedures, schedules and lots of other things. Overall the Bookmobile Roundup was well received by conference attendees.
In true Bozeman fashion, conference attendees were greeted by snow! Us bookmobile folk are a hardy bunch, though, and went right ahead with showing off our vehicles!

(all photos by Carmen Clark)

[ Carmen Clark can be reached at cclark@bozeman.net ]

- FEATURES -

Planting Trees Now to Shade Our Children’s, Children’s, Children

by Bruce Newell, Chair, Montana State Library Commission

A few notes:

- This article summarizes and updates several e-mails and planning documents, as well as adds new details such as a rough timeline.
- Assume throughout this article that when the word ‘library’ is used, it aggressively includes academic, public, school, or special libraries.
We plant saplings so that others might someday relax under the shade of full grown trees. This is why the State Library Commission is planning to establish a statewide non-profit corporation today. While it will take ten to twenty years to mature, this non-profit’s sole purpose will be to support statewide, cooperative, library content and infrastructure for all Montana’s communities.

Montana librarians work well together. Over the decades we’ve gotten to know and trust each other as we’ve worked together. Montana libraries have cooperatively provided great library services, and done so at significant cost savings. By providing an additional source of funding, this non-profit will help continue these successes.

Library information resources and services, taken as a whole, are expensive; valuable, certainly, even necessary; but they are expensive. In the past Montana libraries have met these statewide costs using a mixture of state general funds, coal severance tax revenues, federal Library Services and Technology Act funds, and of course, local funds from local library’s budgets. Today’s state budget has reduced library income significantly, both locally and at the state level. Some Montana libraries would like to offer their users shared content and services, but have not been able to do so in the current economic climate. Although cost increases frequently test a library’s ability to pay for their services, fluctuating revenues can be more disruptive.

The State Library Commission believes ALL Montanans deserve a great library, a “…raucous clubhouse for free speech, controversy and community”. Montana users want and need a library that will go forward and thrive, meeting the increasingly complex needs of their community. Every Montana town
needs a library capable of entertaining, educating, and transforming residents and by extension, their community.

To address this need the Commission is planning for a statewide, non-profit organization, most likely an IRS 501(c)(3) foundation. This foundation would help pay for cooperative content and infrastructure such as:

- The Montana Shared Catalog
- Montana's group OCLC contract
- Montana Library2Go
- Courier Alliance
- Montana Memory Project
- Lifelong learning programming such as the Ready2Read project
- Natural Resource Information System
- Digitized state government publications
- Montana interactive maps used by local, state, and federal agencies

The Commission expects the non-profit to eventually raise funds sufficient to help every Montana library (if the library has chosen to participate) to offer these shared statewide cooperative library services to their users, while simultaneously freeing up libraries to double down on local content and services responsive to local needs.

Because shared services cost Montana libraries over a million dollars a year, a large endowment would be needed to meet these needs. For example, an endowment with $30 million of assets, enjoying 4% dividends, would annually yield $1.2 million.

The State Library Commission has used donated funds from the Montana State Library Trust to hire a consultant to help set up this fund. Library Strategies, a consulting firm which is a project of the Friends of the St. Paul Library, has been hired to help plan, develop, make operable, and eventually kick-off this new statewide non-profit. A preliminary eighteen month timeline breaks down tasks into four stages:

Mar 18—Jun 18 Initial Meetings and Pre-planning
Apr 18—Oct 18 Planning and Development with the Steering Committee
Sept 18—Feb 19 Initial State of Operationalizing the Foundation
Mar 19—Sept 19 Finalizing the Creation of the New Foundation

Currently a steering committee is being assembled to serve as volunteer advisors. The initial steering committee meeting is planned for the end of May. The steering committee will work with State Library staff and Commission members during this eighteen-month process. The committee plans to coordinate with statewide efforts of existing library foundations and friends groups. Our intent is not to compete with local libraries' foundations and fundraising. This new non-profit is intended to supplement, not supplant or compete with local funding efforts.

October 2019 is the target date for the non-profit to be organized and legally established, with a board of directors and staffing in place. Most likely this will include a part time director. Our initial fundraising efforts may be focused beyond our state's borders. This, and all other details, will be worked out by the future board of directors and the organization's staff.

We'll stay in touch. If you have questions or suggestions, please direct them to our contact person, Jennie Stapp, Montana’s State Librarian at (406) 444-3116 or via email.

[ Bruce Newell can be contacted at bruce.newell@gmail.com ]
When I talk about transgender topics, I start with two pieces of information: I am transgender and I cannot speak for the entire community – it’s too diverse – but I can speak from my own experiences, including those as a librarian.

Some words about vocabulary. Talking about any issue without providing a basic vocabulary is inadvisable, if not irresponsible.

What is gender identity? A person's internal understanding of their own gender. What is gender expression? That's what a person expresses through how they present themselves – physical appearance, but also name and pronouns. More nuanced definitions exist. A great place to find them is https://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender.

Words are important, especially pronouns – I use he/him/his. It is a positive and validating experience for others to use our preferred pronouns and likewise, a bit demoralizing when they don't. People are allowed to choose which ones they prefer. When in doubt, consider asking!

Sometimes, for people who do not identify as male or female, but have a non-binary identity, the preferred pronouns can be they/them/their. Happily, in the history of the English language, writers such as William Shakespeare have used the singular they, so as librarians we can all heave a sigh of relief about the grammar involved here and carry on.

Understanding the transgender experience isn't entirely about knowing the vocabulary.

In the last few years, the topic of bathrooms has also become part of the conversation. Transgender people have been using the facilities that match their gender identity for a very long time. This is not new! The current heightened concern in this area is likely due to two things: greater visibility/more people who are able to transition and backlash against LGBT marriage rights and other civil rights gains. Montana will possibly have a ballot initiative (I-183) on the issue this year.

Another sensitive topic is transitioning – the process a person who is transgender goes through to align their gender identity and expression.
When someone transitions, they often choose a new name and begin using pronouns that affirm their gender identity. Transition often includes medical aspects, such as going on hormones – testosterone for transitioning from female to male (FTM); estrogen for transitioning from male to female (MTF). Surgery is also a possibility, but there is no single procedure. In fact, the term 'sex change' has become outdated and perhaps mildly offensive.

Transitioning is never easy, and experiences are unique to the individual. Librarians need to understand that this is the most awkward and dangerous time of a transgender person's life, a time when we are most vulnerable to discrimination, harassment, violence, and medical issues. As such, it is also the time in our lives when we are most in need of help from our local libraries, but more on that in a moment.

First a few statistics about the transgender community: Currently, the number of people in the US who identify as transgender is about 1.4 million. That number has doubled in the last decade. In Montana, the estimate is about 2,650 people. Nationally, about 1 in every 137 teenagers identifies as transgender or non-binary.

Now for what I call the grimmer statistics . . . It is important to understand that the transgender community is full of strong, capable, and resilient people; however, challenges remain. These include higher rates of unemployment, poverty, and homelessness in the community. More than half are rejected by their families. People who are transgender are frequently denied access to medical care or experience unequal treatment from government agencies.

The rate of attempted suicide in the community (41%) is incredibly high; the actual suicide rate is unknown, because after death, transgender identities are frequently erased. The homicide rate is likewise problematic, especially for transwomen and most especially for transwomen of color. If you want to understand the scope of the issue, try [https://mic.com/unerased](https://mic.com/unerased).

Now for the library part: How can you put this information to work in your library?

Understand that you will eventually encounter someone who is transgender. You may or may not know it, but even in smaller communities, this should be taken as a given.

If your library collects gender information, such as for issuing a library card, please stop. Why? Because we frequently anticipate having to defend our identities and sometimes it is too much to ask depending on the person, their situation, and that given day. We might opt to go elsewhere instead of getting a library card. And that is not good for anyone! Also, as librarians, how much do we really want to police other people's gender?

Respect the difficulty associated with transitioning, including having identification that may not match in terms of name/gender expression. Nationally, only 44% of people have updated their name on their ID; just 29% have updated gender markers. More than one-third have not done so due to cost. Consider creating a policy/procedure that helps ensure access to information and services for people in this situation.

Please use a person's preferred name and pronouns. Why? Because it is polite and relatively easy. It is the first and best thing you can do for someone who is transitioning and something they will always value and remember. That said, if you use the wrong pronouns or name, just quickly apologize and move on. No need to make a big deal out of it. That can be even more embarrassing for us.

If your library blocks YouTube, consider not doing that. The reason behind this is that YouTube is a cultural and informational repository for the transgender community. Transgender youth go there to learn about transitioning and to see people like them leading full, healthy, normal lives into adulthood.
Gathering in front of the Thompson-Hickman Museum for the cornerstone reveal. Assistant Librarian Christina Koch and Director Jack Albrecht prepare to reveal the contents of the time capsule in the Thompson-Hickman Reading Room. Stone mason Karl Marcus extricates the cornerstone from the wall with the assistance of Chris Harris.

Unfortunately, YouTube age-restricts/censors a lot of our content and this is a problem that is currently getting worse.

Awareness is also important. Consider collecting some materials on transgender lives and experiences, such as books, movies, or documentaries. E-books on the topic are available through MontanaLibrary2Go. Consider doing something for Transgender Day of Remembrance (November 20th), even if you think you don’t have any transgender library users. This can be something creative or something as simple as a book display.

In 2017, nationally, at least eight transgender political candidates won elections. Many of these wins were unexpected. In 2018, more than forty transgender candidates will be on the ballot across the country. An estimated 75% of the transgender community participates in activism, and this is frequently a path to running for office. Someday, your community may have a transgender elected official. This is not just a message for big cities! It might be nice if your library is already understood to be a welcoming place for all members of the community.

Presenting this session at the MLA Conference was a positive and rewarding experience. The questions at the end were great and very illuminating! As a relative newcomer, it was also a great way to learn about the inclusive mindset of the Montana library community and how supportive the community is of its members.

Slides and handouts from James’ presentation at the April 2018 MLA Conference are available at: http://mtlib.org/mla-annual/2018-conference/

[ James can be reached at jparrott@lclibrary.org ]

100th Celebration at Thompson-Hickman Library

by Christina Koch, Assistant Librarian at Thompson-Hickman Library

Gathering in front of the Thompson-Hickman Museum for the cornerstone reveal. Assistant Librarian Christina Koch and Director Jack Albrecht prepare to reveal the contents of the time capsule in the Thompson-Hickman Reading Room. Stone mason Karl Marcus extricates the cornerstone from the wall with the assistance of Chris Harris.

(all photos taken by Stephen Alan Seder)

Construction began on the Thompson-Hickman Memorial Building in Virginia City in May of 1918. In August of 1918, a time capsule was buried behind the cornerstone of the building. To commemorate
At the celebration the 1918 time capsule was unearthed and the contents were displayed. A picnic complete with birthday cake, music by Dave Walker, and photo ops with a Model-T followed the unearthing. Around 200 people attended the event including Virginia City Mayor Justin Gatewood and Montana House Representative Ray Shaw. Library Board President, Lucyanne Ennis, spoke as well as the Library Director, Jack Albrecht, and Assistant Librarian, Christina Koch.

So, what was inside the time capsule? Inside the 3" x 3" Owl Tobacco tin container were written histories of the lives of William Thompson and Richard Hickman, a list of information about the memorial building itself, a 1913 wheat penny, a 1918 buffalo nickel, and a 1918 winged liberty head dime. The contents of the 1918 time capsule will be on display in the library until August 2018, when they will be reburied with a 2018 time capsule. Both celebrations will be featured on Backroads of Montana!

William Boyce Thompson, son of William Thompson, was born in Virginia City in 1869, as was his wife Gertrude, in 1877. William Boyce Thompson became a copper magnate in Butte when he revolutionized the mining industry. He spent a large portion of his wealth on philanthropic endeavors around the world. He and his wife decided to build a permanent structure in Virginia City dedicated to the history of the city. The structure would house the public library with a museum on the lower level. Thompson and his wife decided to name the structure the Thompson-Hickman Memorial Building in remembrance of their fathers, who were both prominent businessmen in Virginia City.

Thompson stated he wanted this building to be “the showplace of the city. No effort will be spared to make the library one of the best in the state.” In 2017, the Thompson-Hickman Madison County Library was named Best Small Library in Montana. One hundred years later, the Thompson-Hickman legacy is going strong!

Special thanks go to Marge Antolik and the McFarland Curatorial Center for loaning the Thompson-Hickman Library the case to display the contents of the 1918 time capsule.
Time Capsule Contents: Sequestered in an Owl tobacco tin soldered by Billy Siprelle in 1918 were Thompson and Hickman family histories, an agenda from the day the time capsule was interred, and three 1918 coins.

(photograph by Stephen Alan Seder)

[Christina Koch can be reached at mclibrary@madisoncountymt.gov]

- KUDOS -

Montana Library Association Award Winners Announced
by Carly Delsigne, Chair, Montana Library Association Award Committee

"Libraries Lead" is the theme for this year’s National Library Week, observed April 8-14. At its annual conference in Bozeman, the Montana Library Association (a statewide organization dedicated to promoting outstanding librarianship and library services) celebrated individuals who create the kind of libraries that do lead their communities and their residents to better lives.

Library of the Year Award was conferred on Montana State University Library Bozeman. Displaying the library’s talent, teamwork, and humor Janelle Zauha, Mary Anne Hansen, Hannah McKelvey, and Pamela Benjamin represented MSU-Bozeman staff at the ceremony. Over the last few years Montana State University Library Bozeman has been an essential player in leading Montana's academic community to new levels of collaboration and achievement through TRAILS (Treasure State Academic Information & Library Service https://www.trailsmt.org). MSU-Bozeman has also developed key partnerships outside academia through their work on preserving and providing access to the Ivan
Doig Archive (http://ivandoig.montana.edu). The final project highlighted by the award has been a long term passion for lifting and connecting librarians through the Tribal College Librarians Professional Development Institute (http://guides.lib.montana.edu/tcli).

The award for Montana Library Association Champion was given to Sara Groves, Marketing and Community Relations Manager at the Helena Community Credit Union. Through cutting edge collaborations, creative problem solving, and extensive fundraising, Sara pioneered early literacy and lifelong learning in Montana.

The award for Outstanding Support Staff of the Year was awarded to Marlys Stark, Administrative Assistant, Montana State Library. Marlys was honored for her hard work, commitment, and excellence in her service to the Montana State Library Commission.

The award for Trustee of the Year was awarded to Rita Henkel, Board Chair, Missoula Public Library. Rita has worked hard coordinating not only the library and library supporters, but also local government, businesses and voters to plan and realize a new state-of-the-art Missoula Public Library community center through both private and public funds. Rita was also appreciated for her extensive involvement in Montana’s library community through support, statewide collaborations, and continuing education.

The award for Pat Williams Intellectual Freedom Award was given to Mark Wetherington, Library Director; Bitterroot Library Board and Staff for their work promoting equal access to library resources and fair treatment of all elements of their community by library policies and staff. They embodied foundational library principles while being transparent, compassionate, and courageous with those involved and the communities they serve.

The award for Montana Library Association Champion was conferred on Dr. Ann Ewbank, Associate Professor, Montana State University Bozeman. Ann was honored for her work attracting classroom teachers into the K-12 Library Media Specialist preparation program at MSU, as well as spearheading the team that successfully advocated for the inclusion of school libraries into Montana’s Every Student Succeeds Act Plan.

Sheila Cates Librarian of the Year Award was awarded to Gale Bacon, Director Belgrade Community Library. Gale's leadership has been essential in not only stabilizing and advancing library services in Belgrade but she has also been a key player in guiding and improving all Montana libraries on the state level. Both Belgrade City-Manager Ted Barkley and Mayor Russ Nelson spoke of their respect for, faith in, and excellent working relationship with Gale and the Belgrade Library while coping with the challenges of a booming population and the changing needs of the community. The partnerships and deep community support that Gale has built over her time in Belgrade have now come to fruition with a plan for an addition to the current library that will double its size.

The Montana Library Association extends its deepest gratitude to all those who make Montana’s libraries ever more relevant in leading the communities they serve to a better future. For more information and pictures please visit the Montana Library Association’s website http://mtlib.org or see our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/groups/34421901898/.
Montana Library Association Sheila Cates 2018 Librarian of the Year Award

by Gale Bacon, Director of Belgrade Community Library
When I learned I was to be the recipient of the prestigious Sheila Cates 2018 Librarian of the Year award I asked myself, “why me”? After contemplating my 27 years of library service, the answer became evident.

When the pioneering women who started the Belgrade Community Library in 1932 came together to create Belgrade’s first public library, they showed great wisdom by including the word “community” in the name. It’s because of the local and Montana library community that I am honored to receive this award.

My library Board has always been a dedicated group of professionals who understand the difference between being a Board member and a manager. They are some of the first people with whom I share my joy of library successes, but they are also the people who come along side me to help me work through the challenges we face. They have laughed with me, shared my frustrations, and listened to my heart. They own a piece of my award.

In 1999, the Belgrade Community Library Foundation was formed to support a financially struggling library. Through book sales, the annual Winefest, and other local events, their focus was to help meet current, unmet needs. However, the picture changed a few years ago. After we received the 2015 Best Small Library in America award, a local ranching family donated $400,000 for future expansion of the library. Overnight our Foundation’s mission went from a single focus of helping the library meet day to day needs, to bravely stepping up and beginning to plan a capital campaign. My thanks go to the Foundation members for their efforts and courage.

My staff: Every day is an adventure with this bright, energetic, team. I take seriously the responsibility of helping them learn and shape their careers. One of the most critical responsibilities of a library Director is to encourage, and guide our young professionals. I consider it a blessing to be a part of their professional lives, and I deeply appreciate all they bring, each in their own individual ways, to our library team. They are by all means part of the reason for this award.

I am fortunate to have a strong working relationship with the City Manager, Ted Barkley. On a number of occasions I have knocked on Ted’s door to seek his guidance or expertise on an issue. Ted is a problem solver and a great advocate for the library. I always have a resource to turn to, and our professional relationship constantly helps me make better management decisions.

I also share this award with our Belgrade Mayor, Russ Nelson and the members of the City Council. With their help we have passed two levies in ten years which has brought stability to the library. Our Mayor and city council continue to be a strong, positive voice for the Belgrade Community Library.
Our success is not only because of local efforts. It is statewide. Despite the daily and legislative challenges they face, our State Librarian, Jennie Stapp, and all of her staff are always a phone call away. I offer my thanks to the State Library for their tireless efforts to support all of us.

The Montana Shared Catalog staff works diligently behind the scenes to ensure our library users have a quality experience. They have earned the respect of library directors and staff all around the state. I am proud to note that Amy and Rebekah, two out of a total Montana Shared Catalog staff of four, started their Montana library careers as employees of the Belgrade Community Library.

Lastly, to the Library Directors from around the state, I am thankful for your leadership. You are dedicated to our profession and always a source of energy and encouragement to me.

While this award is bestowed upon me as a single recipient, it comes as the result of my family, my colleagues, my peers and my staff. I thank you for the privilege of being named the Sheila Cates 2018 Librarian of the Year.

(Gale Bacon [center] with the Belgrade mayor and city council members, family, library board and foundation members, and the Belgrade city and library staff. Photo by Brittany Alberson)

[ Gale can be reached at gbacon@mtlib.org ]

Dr. Ann Ewbank wins the 2018 MLA Champion Award

by Dr. Ann Ewbank, Associate Professor at Montana State University
I am very grateful for the recognition as a 2018 MLA Champion. I am equally grateful for an amazing team of school librarians who have devoted time and energy to advocating for the best interests of our K-12 students. Thank you so much to Karen Mayhall, Elizabeth Waddington, Desiree Caskey, and Liz Barnea for nominating me. Advocacy is vitally important for our students and patrons, and I hope that you will consider joining us in library advocacy for all citizens of Montana!

[ Ann can be reached at ann.ewbank@montana.edu ]

Congratulations to our Newly Elected MLA Officers

by Dawn Kingstad, MLA Past President

The MLA Board appreciates the time and effort all nominees put into running for MLA positions. Thank you so much for being active members in MLA.
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<td>MLA Vice President/President-Elect</td>
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<td>Incoming MLA President</td>
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New MLA School Library Division Co-Chair
by [Angela Archuleta](#), School Library Division Co-Chair
MLA SLD would like to announce a new co-chair for the School Library Division, Erin Regele. Erin is a librarian at West High School in Billings, Montana. Please congratulate her on her new position and welcome her aboard. In addition the division job description up-dates and school library division by-laws passed. There is now a Shared OverDrive Committee for Schools. The description is as follows:

ARTICLE XII COMMITTEES
Section 1. Standing Committees. Standing committees may be instituted should the membership determine and express a need for such. Standing committees shall report to the membership at the annual meeting.
Section 2. Ad Hoc Committees. The Chairperson may appoint ad hoc committees at any time. An ad hoc committee shall finish its mission within two years of its formation and shall report to the Chairperson.
Section 3. The Shared School Libraries Collection Committee oversees and manages the collective OverDrive digital collection for all school libraries involved in the committee, regularly providing input,
New MLA FOCUS Co-Editor*

by Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, MLA Past President

Please join me in welcoming our new MLA FOCUS co-editor* Sarah Creech!

Sarah is the circulation specialist at Belgrade Community Library. One of her duties at Belgrade is putting together their beautiful monthly newsletter. Sarah has great writing experience and we are very fortunate to have her as one of our FOCUS co-editors.

Sarah joins experienced co-editor Alice Kestler from Great Falls Public Library.

A huge shout-out to outgoing FOCUS co-editor Kendra Mullison of the North Lake County Public Library in Polson, who, along with Alice, has done a marvelous job with FOCUS the last two years.

We are so very fortunate to have such talented, giving, librarians in our state who put together such a vibrant, information-packed resource for all of us!

*MLA FOCUS is the online newsletter of the Montana Library Association. Term of appointment for editors is two years, on a rotating position. This is a non-paid position; editors are volunteering their time and expertise. (Thank you!).

http://mtlib.org/handbook/montana-library-focus/

PNLA Announces the 2018 Young Readers' Choice Award Winners

from PNLA website

Junior Division: Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson with 3994 votes
Intermediate Division: Magnus Chase; The Sword of Summer by Rick Riordan with 1087 votes
Senior Division: Red Queen by Victoria Aveyard with 640 votes

Total votes submitted for each division
Junior: 15,750
Intermediate: 4,849
Senior: 2,786
The Montana Memory Project Needs You!

submitted by Jennifer Birnel, Montana Memory Project Director, Montana State Library

The Montana Memory Project is seeking volunteers to serve as ambassadors. MMP Ambassadors will increase visibility and usability of the MMP, introduce the MMP to new audiences, and seek opportunities to fund new collections. An MMP ambassador will be sought from each county in the state.
Volunteers chosen for this project will be extensively trained on how to use the MMP website, how collections are contributed and who can add collections to the MMP. All training sessions will be done online via GoToMeeting sessions.

Ambassador duties will include:
- Organize events to communicate about the MMP to county/region citizens
- Explain and demonstrate how to navigate the MMP website to new users in your county/region
- Explain the basic requirements for submitting a collection
- Explain how individuals can contribute funds to digitization projects
- Disseminate MMP promotional materials to your county/region
- Share ideas for conducting MMP outreach with other Ambassadors
- Learn and share new ideas with other Ambassadors
- Share stories and successes to be printed in the MMP newsletter

Ambassador qualifications include:
- Ability to communicate clearly on the phone and in-person
- Ability to use a computer and basic knowledge of computer skills including slideshow presentations, word processing, and spreadsheets
- Ability to explain how to complete website tasks
- Ability to work independently
- Ability to work accurately with attention to detail
- Ability to follow oral and written instructions
- Knowledge of local MMP collections and their importance to the community
- Willingness to reach out to community organizations to share information about the MMP

Please share this announcement with someone who would make a great volunteer.

Apply Now! Applications are due June 15, 2018.
Jan Elpel of Pony, Montana, has written a novel set in Big Butte, Montana Territory, 1875. 'Healers of Big Butte' is a sequel to and features some of the characters in her 2016 novel, 'Berrigan's Ride.' This book focuses on Carrie Tarynton, a married settler whose husband fights mining companies poisoning their ranch, while rising conflicts in the Territory lead up to the Nez Perce War.  

Submitted by Beth Boyson

Serving Alzheimer Patrons and Families

by Jodi Oberweiser, Drummond School & Community Library
Chris Corneilus refurbished this antique rocking chair for the Memory Corner at the Drummond School & Community Library. The comfort shawls were crocheted by sisters Frankie and Lavina of Billings. The memory corner in the library is part of the library’s effort to support patrons who are affected by Alzheimer’s by displaying material and information.

Drummond’s library is teaming up with the Alzheimer’s Association to help make the community Dementia Capable. Community Conversations encourages anyone who is affected by Alzheimer’s to attend the meetings on the last Monday of every month at 1:30pm. Sheila Corneilus, who also serves on the Committee for Community Conversations about Alzheimer’s, is hopeful that we can create a Dementia Capable Granite County. The committee is currently planning events for The Longest Day. (June 21st) On the Longest Day, people across the world will do what they love, or what those affected by the disease love to do. Together, we will raise funds and awareness for care and support while advancing research toward finding the first survivor of Alzheimer’s. Some ideas include: bowling,
cooking, golfing; really, anything you love to do! You can sign up at www.alz.org/thelongestday. If you are in Drummond stop by the library to show your support.

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

An Informal Interview with Meghan Salsbury, Belgrade Library’s New Youth Services Librarian

by Sarah Creech, Circulation Specialist at Belgrade Community Library

(Meghan Salsbury, new YSL at Belgrade Community Library. Photo by Caitlin Wedding)

Name: Meghan Salsbury
Job Title: Youth Services Librarian
Years in library industry: 5 - Finished my degree in 2015 at Emporia State University, Worked at University of Nebraska-Omaha from 2016-2018 as the Online Learning & Education Librarian

Hometown: Kansas

Where you moved from: Omaha, NE

What gets you out of bed in the morning? My 1 year-old baby boy

Hogwarts House? Ravenclaw

What do you like most about your job so far? The variety of things to do every day

What's your favorite blog? The Engaged Home

What's your favorite book? Not a book, but the Fionavar Tapestry by Guy Gavriel Kay

What is your guilty pleasure? Grey's Anatomy

When was the last time you laughed so hard you cried? Watching my son who is learning to walk manage to trip over the dog, bounce off a wall, and then hit the floor flat on his back (he's fine)!

What is on your wish list for your next five years at Belgrade Library? I want to see the library grow as much as humanly possible in both space and collections. I would love to see a tutoring program/homework club develop, a financial literacy series for teens/parents working through the college admissions process, and to see the summer reading program grow so much that we need two or three of me!

What is on your wish list for your next five years in Montana? I want to start enjoying the outdoors more, see my son grow up with his cousins, visit as many historical places in the state as possible, and maybe work on some volunteering in local history projects.

What's your most memorable facepalm moment? There are too many to count - probably falling off the stage during my senior high school musical...

What would your super power be? Super speed so I could make it to Kansas and back as often as I wanted (I hate flying so that's out!)

Would you be a super hero or super villain? Who? Super villain - Magneto (Ian McKellan's version obviously) because he's just so smug and I love it!

What do you want to be when you grow up? Indiana Jones

Anything else we should know about you? I'm just a Kansas girl who got conned into moving to Montana to be closer to my husband's family. I love KU basketball, reading, history, playing with my kid and watching movies with my husband. I'm a pretty open book, so just ask me whatever you want to know!

[ Sarah can be reached at screech@mtlib.org and Meghan can be reached at msalsbury@mtlib.org ]

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Quilt Binding Class Taught in Drummond

by Jodi Oberweiser, Drummond School & Community Library

(Examples of fidget mats. Photos by Jodi)
Claudette Williams from Patchwork Quilts in Hamilton, taught a class in quilt binding techniques to members of The Triple Creek Quilt Guild on April 21. The class was held at the Drummond School & Community Library. Quilters brought their own sewing machines, a sack lunch, and snacks to share and learned a variety of techniques to finish their quilting projects. Ms. Williams taught techniques in Flange binding, continuous bias binding, and tricks and tips for the best looking mitered corners. She also brought samples of “fidget mats” that her group in Hamilton makes for members of their local retirement homes. These mats are especially useful for patients with dementia and Alzheimer's. Because the fidget mats have various tactile embellishments, patients are less agitated when they are distracted with these colorful, themed mats.

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

- MARGINALIA -

Ocean Display Case created by Austin Castle and Rose Grubb for Glacier County Library. Photo by Austin Castle.

Dive into Reading bulletin board created by Austin Castle and Rose Grubb located above the ocean display case. Photo by Austin Castle.
The Friends of Missoula Public Library are pleased to announce the 2018 Montana Book Award Committee

Filling a vacancy and serving a three year term:
Gloria Behem from Chester

Serving new four year terms:
Kim Siemsen from Billings
Debbie Stewart from Great Falls
Gavin J. Woltjer from Billings

Continuing to serve:
Marje Doyle, Missoula
Stef Johnson, Butte
Alice Meister, Bozeman
Jessie Pate, Helena
Mary Drew Powers, Whitefish

Chair: Elizabeth Jonkel, Missoula

Barbara Theroux
President, Friends of Missoula Public Library
Montana Book Award
PO Box 8732
Missoula, MT 59807

www.montanabookaward.org

Another Great Cates Effort At Conference!
by Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Chair of the Cates Scholarship Committee

It was another exciting, and fun-filled year for Cates activities at the 2018 MLA Conference in Bozeman.

We had 50 amazing items in the Sheila Cates Silent Auction and 100 bidders. Competition was fierce but everyone walked away happy knowing their ticket sale money was going to the amazing cause of scholarships for Montana librarians. For a complete list of items donated for the Cates Silent Auction, see the MLA Webpage at http://mtlib.org/scholarship/.

Thursday night, librarians got a little crazy at the MLA Librarians Got Talent Cates fundraising event. We had magic, art, lip synching, drink making, a play and more--there are many talented librarians in Montana. After much deliberation, these three awards for the talent show were given.
Kendra Mullison 1st Place Individual (for the watercolor painting of the sloth she did at the event and then placed in the Cates auction the next day).

John Finn and Matt Beckstrom 1st Place Team (for Cocktail Music). (Probably didn't hurt that they auctioned off the martinis they made to the highest bidder!)

Jacqueline Frank and Taylor Schultz 1st place Cates Scholarship team (for LIE brarians of ILLusion). Both Jacqueline and Taylor are past Cates scholarship winners and their magic act was really really good, despite having said they'd only been practicing for a week).

**Between the Cates Silent Auction and the Cates MLA Librarians Got Talent fundraising event, we raised $3,600 for scholarships for librarians at conference!**

We also have a beautiful new Cates traveling quilt this year, due to the amazing efforts of Eva English. The previous Cates quilt was completely full of patches and has gone to be displayed at the state library in remembrance of Sheila. This year's winners of the Cates traveling quilt (to be displayed at their library and a library patch added) were Margaret Stell from St. Matthews and Valier Public Library.

Thanks so much to everyone who contributes to our Cates scholarship events at conference, whether it's buying tickets for auction items or attending our wacky fundraising events. Your help is so sincerely appreciated. The money we raise goes to scholarships for librarians. Speaking of which...

**The deadline for applying for a Cates scholarship for 2018 is July 2, 2018!**

Your Cates Scholarship Committee
- Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Chair
- Jo Flick
- Jim Kammerer
- Mary Guthmiller
- Bobbi deMontigny
- Anita Scheetz
- Della Dubbe
- Lyn McKinney
- Mary Anne Hansen
- Cherie Heser

[ Lisa can be reached at lisameckjack@gmail.com ]

**From the Editor's Desk (in Belgrade)**

A big thank you to Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson for appointing me as the Co-Editor for FOCUS! I'm thrilled to be a bigger part of the MLA team and I hope to make Kendra, my predecessor, proud. Thank you to Alice, my co-editor, for being so welcoming and helpful with this first issue.

I'd like to use the opportunity of my first editor's note to tell MLA a little more about myself. I'm currently working on obtaining my MLIS with a public library concentration through the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Go Panthers!). I have about a year left and I'm looking forward to becoming a professional librarian. Before I moved to Montana I lived in Corvallis, Oregon for almost 5 years and worked in the food industry in research and development, sales and trade show management, and quality assurance for OFD Foods, Inc, the makers of Mountain House backpacking meals. I also
volunteered and was a substitute circulation clerk at the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library for a few years. Those opportunities to volunteer and sub offered an insight into the world of library work as a profession and I was/am hooked.

I now live in Bozeman with my husband, Tyler, and our greyhound, Murray. Tyler is an ecologist with the Center for Large Landscape Conservation and Murray is a professional sleeper. I’m never without a physical book in my bag and my goal this year is to read 150 books, and children's books DO count.

I’m looking forward to the next two years of acting as your FOCUS co-editor. Feel free to reach out to me if you want to be a nerd about science or food, greyhounds, keeping lists, or taking notes.

Sincerely,
Sarah Creech
FOCUS Co-Editor
screech@mtlib.org

(Sub) Sarah and Murray at the Missouri Headwaters. Photo by Tyler Creech)

Submissions Open for the August 2018 Issue!

REMINDER: The submission deadline for the April newsletter = July 23. Please email your library news, micro-reviews & photos (with captions & attributions) to mlaFOCUSeditor@gmail.com Thank You!
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:

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