
Montana Library Focus

A Publication of the Montana Library Association

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June 2006

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Milla Cummins

Greetings, Montana Librarians!
When I wrote my first presidential message last August, I reflected on how soon the Montana Library Association's 100th Anniversary would be upon us. Now our Centennial Conference has already come and gone. "How soon it begins to be late," as Thoreau once noted.

During this year that has flown by, your Association has faced some unexpected challenges as we "proceeded on".

Our first challenge arose when new Executive Director Ilene Casey sought to move MLA's bank account from Missoula to her location in Manhattan. Imagine Ilene's and my astonishment and dismay when the bank informed us that they could not create an account for MLA because the Association had been "involuntarily dissolved".

Investigation of this claim revealed that the Montana Secretary of State's office has dissolved the Association because filing of the annual corporate report has ceased in 2000. Apparently, this oversight occurred because the Secretary of State's office had never identified former Executive Director Karen Hatcher as the Association's registered agent and had not been sending the requisite forms to her address.

The benefit hidden within this appalling discovery was that, after much fun with forms, Ilene and I were able to have the Association officially reinstated just two days before the deadline on which it would have been permanently dissolved.

With our 100-year-old association once again officially recognized by the state of Montana, the Board and Council moved on to other issues.

Membership chairmen Magi Malone and Gail Wilkerson set of goal of encouraging 100 new members to join the Association by the Centennial Conference in May. As you will find in Magi's article on page 5, they exceeded this goal, and the Association is now 625 members strong.

In addition, Magi and Gail identified the need for your Association newsletter, the Montana Library Focus, to be delivered directly to members' email addresses rather than relying on a Wired-MT notice for distribution. Since this change will be implemented during the coming year, please be sure to

provide your e-mail address when renewing your membership.

When Association Webmaster Suzanne Reymmer decided it was time to "proceed on" to other opportunities, Steve McCann and Pam Henley stepped in to take charge of the MLA website and keep it updated with current information.

John Finn's Web Task Force, which was formed in 2005 to investigate domain and software issues relating to the Association website, met in November and began considering the primary purposes of the website as well as evaluating available alternatives for serving those purposes.

Marketing and Public Relations chairman Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson organized a contest to create a new logo for MLA's next century and received nine entries. Magi Malone and Stef Johnson's design was the winning entry. This stunning new logo has been digitized so that it will be readily available for a wide variety of publicity applications. Since the retiring logo, which has served MLA for many years, was not available in a digital format, it had become difficult to reproduce efficiently without loss of quality, and digitizing the logo had been one of the Board's goals for the past two years.

Another goal, which Lisa and Magi helped the Board achieve, was the creation of a new brochure for the Montana Library Association. Those who attended conference saw the beautiful result.

In addition to these public relations activities, MLA also supported the Montana State Library's award-winning What's Your Story campaign by budgeting \$4,000 toward the development of that campaign.

During 2005-2006, the Association also sponsored two very successful retreats: the stimulating ASLD-PLD combined retreat at Chico Hot Springs and a fantastic Offline retreat held in Great Falls.

And finally, we celebrated our Centennial Year in fine style with an extraordinary annual conference in Missoula. Very special thanks are due to Conference Co-Chairs Jennie Burroughs and Elaine Higgins and their hardworking committees for donating so much of their time this past year toward planning and implementing the conference.

Which brings me to challenges still ahead for your Montana Library Association. I have officially appointed a Conference Solutions Task Force to investigate possible strategies for reducing the immense

President, Continued on Next Page...

President, Continued

burden the Association places upon those members who organize our conferences. This issue has been researched several times previously by MLA without identifying new solutions, but the time for finding a new path is definitely past due. If you have inventive ideas or simply strong views on our conference dilemma, please contact incoming President Lyn McKinney or task force members John Thomas, Kathy Mora and Beth Boyson with your thoughts.

Better still, consider volunteering as an additional member of the Conference Solutions Task Force. A challenge your Association has not met this past year has been the challenge of increased member involvement. As you will see when you review the ballot on page 5, Past President Rich Wojtowicz and the Nominating Committee were only able to encourage one candidate to apply for each open office.

When incoming President Lyn McKinney or Nominating Committee members approach YOU this coming year about serving MLA, please make a commitment to your Association. Yes, serving on the Board and Council or on an Association committee takes time, but it also offers the chance to work with wonderfully energetic and creative librarians throughout our state. I have been awed by the talent and enthusiasm of those I have worked with this past year and am honored to have enjoyed this very special opportunity. Thank you all!

*Milla L. Cummins, President
Montana Library Association
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Library Golf Tournament

The Montana library community is encouraged to bring their golf clubs to Anaconda for the First Annual Reading the Greens Golf Scramble. Reading the Greens will take place at the Anaconda Country Club on Saturday, September 9. The fundraiser will benefit the Friends of the Hearst Free Library and their mission of supporting "Anaconda's Treasure", the Hearst Free Library. The tournament will be a nine-hole scramble with lots of great prizes, food, and refreshments.

The First Annual Tournament will feature a librarian challenge that the Friends are calling the Reader's Cup. Any team with a librarian is eligible for this prestigious award. The librarian anchored team that has the lowest score will take home the prize. Librarians that have competed on the PGA Tour are ineligible.

If you have questions about the tournament, please contact John at the Hearst Free Library.

Friends of the Hearst Free Library

First Annual

"Reading the Greens"

Golf Scramble

*John Finn
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Discussion List: WIRED-MT Information

Wired-Mt, our listserv, is open to members and non-members. Not all MLA members subscribe to Wired, and not every member of Wired is a member of MLA. MLA members would do well to remember that it is open to anyone with any interest (not necessarily sympathetic to our issues) in libraries. This is a place where people can get quick feedback to ideas and questions. It is a public forum centered on topics of interest to those interested in libraries. Its guidelines are available on our website www.mtlib.org

To subscribe:

1. a. send an e-mail message to **majordomo@bcr.org**
- b. leave the subject line blank
- c. in the body of the message type: **subscribe wired-mt**
- d. include nothing else; do not attach a signature file

For additional information, or if you have problems subscribing, contact Margaret Webster, List Manager (on behalf of MLA) at: mwebster@crowleylaw.com or 406-255-7201

Lewis & Clark Library Named Downtown Helena Business of the Year!

At the Downtown Helena, Inc. annual Townie Awards celebration on May 11th, the Downtown Helena, Inc. Board of Directors announced the selection of the Lewis & Clark Library as the 2005-2006 Downtown Helena Business of the Year.

Tim Lynch, manager of the Base Camp and DHI Vice President, made the presentation stating that, "the Lewis & Clark Library is truly an anchor in our community; providing outstanding service and offering excellent programming and classes; the Lewis & Clark Library is really a place for everyone."

Jim McHugh, executive director of the Downtown Helena Business Improvement District and Downtown Helena, Inc explained the Board's decision as one that "just made sense. The Lewis & Clark Library is not only a great supporter of this community; it is truly a center of the community. This award really is a reflection of the hard work of everyone at the Library to meet the continually changing needs of our community."

Established in 1868, the Lewis & Clark Library is the oldest library in the state. While not only providing continual service to the residents of Helena for over 100 years, the Lewis & Clark Library was reorganized in 1974 to serve all of Lewis & Clark County. At that time the Lewis & Clark Library expanded its system with the addition of branch libraries in Lincoln and Augusta.

In 1974, thanks to the generosity of county voters, a mill levy was passed to construct a new facility for the expanding Library system, which was housed at



the time in what is currently Grand Street Theatre. The new facility, completed in 1976, marked a new era in the history of the oldest library in Montana. It was the first building specifically built to house a library and it was designed with growth and expansion in mind.

Voters again approved a mill levy to expand their Library in 2000. As a result, the facility in Helena was remodeled during 2003-2004 to accommodate changes in technology, an expanding collection, and the ever increasing demands for library service. In addition, a third branch library was added in East Helena at the East Valley Middle School.

The newly remodeled facility on Last Chance Gulch meets the needs of over 26,000 users a month through innovative adult and children's programming; a variety of computer classes aimed at patron needs and requests; a vast collection of books, magazines, journals, audio books, videos, and a new selection of DVDs.

"With nearly 140 years of continual service to the people of Helena and Lewis & Clark County, the Library is very proud to be recognized by the Downtown Helena, Inc. Board of Directors for its commitment to providing the best possible services and materials for the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational use by the community," commented Director, Judy Hart. Hart went on to explain that "there really is always something going on at the Lewis & Clark Library; we are truly a community center and center of our community."

*Patricia C. Spencer
Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator
Lewis and Clark Library
pspencer@mtlib.org*

Trustees Corner Wanted: Trustees! Alive!

Calling all library trustees. We had a great interest group meeting at Conference in Missoula. The group's purpose for the year is "to provide for the exchange of ideas and experience among library board members." Our core group is eager to keep the communication going with you all. Whether you read Montana Library Focus online or on paper, look for the Trustees Corner. We will have news you can use.

Are you and your director registered for the Summer Institute in Bozeman June 19-22? (contact Sue Jackson for registration information.) I hope to see you there.

*Carol Grover, Chair
Trustees Interest Group
cthetrustee@yahoo.com*

Montana Library Events Calendar

If you haven't had a chance to look at the new Montana Library Event Calendar, go to calendar.mtlib.org. This online calendar, which features upcoming library training events and activities, is a joint project of Montana State Library and Lewis and Clark Library in Helena. There are guidelines and an entry template on the website explaining how events can be added to the calendar. Thanks to Judy Hart and Matt Beckstrom at Lewis and Clark Library for their support and technical assistance on the calendar project.

*Sue Jackson
Montana State Library
1-800-338-5087
sujackson@mt.gov*

State Library News



PEEL II Scholarship Winners

The Montana State Library Commission met on May 18th to review the recommendation for scholarship awards from the PEEL II Advisory Committee. The Committee's recommendation was approved and the following ten Montanans have been awarded \$25,000 scholarships to attend the distance graduate library program of the University of Washington's Information School. Congratulations to each scholarship recipient!

Michelle Fenger
Brett Fisher
Melissa Hart
Nancy Hatfield
Stef Johnson
Desiree Olson
Lee Phillips
Kathryn Robins
Megan Stark
Sheree West

2006 Fall workshop

Montana State Library's 8th annual Fall Workshop is scheduled for Friday and Saturday, September 22-23, 2006, at the Yogo Inn in Lewistown. Tentative topics include programming for patrons of all ages, securing public access computers, InfoTrac databases, parliamentary procedure, sharing strategies, mental health resources, marketing the library, and more. Details will be available in late August.

2006 Trustee Workshop

The State Library continues to offer training and networking for public library trustees. This year, the trustee workshop topic is Fundraising Essentials. As in past years, the training will be offered in two locations: Billings on October 28th and Missoula on November 11th. We are very excited that Illene Roggensack of Third Sector Innovations in Colorado will present the workshops. Illene has served as President for the Colorado Nonprofit Association and has been involved with fundraising for nonprofit organizations for more than twenty years. Details for the trustee workshops will be available in late September.

Summer Institute for Public Library Directors and Trustees

The 2006 Summer Institute is scheduled for June 19-22 on the MSU campus in Bozeman. It will start (June 19) with a half-day orientation for all of our new public library directors. The institute (June 20-22) will feature workshops on keeping patrons well-connected, mildly delirious libraries, and black belt librarians. Institute participants will have accommodations in the MSU dorm and meals at the campus dining hall. Reimbursement for mileage to travel to and from Bozeman will be available. The registration deadline is June 7th. Details are at: montanalibraries.org/idd/Training/SummerInstitute/Slapplication2006.pdf

The Summer Institute is funded by grants from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

New Gates Grant for Public Libraries

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has awarded \$295,500 to Montana for public libraries to purchase new computers between 2006-2008. The Public Access Computing Hardware Upgrade Grant (PAC-HUG) will be administered by Montana State Library. All public libraries and branches completed an online technology inventory in December 2005 and grant funds will be awarded to each library based on the data provided in that inventory. PAC-HUG project details and grant agreements will be sent to public libraries by early July.

For further information on any of the preceding articles from the Montana State Library, please talk with Sue Jackson at the contact information found below.

Sue Jackson
Montana State Library
1-800-338-5087
sujackson@mt.gov

Manhattan Community Library Awarded Two Grants

The Manhattan Community Library has been awarded two grants this month. We have received a "We the People: On Becoming American" grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and a Libri Foundation grant. The "We the People" grant consisted of 15 assorted books for grades K through 12. Three of the books were also duplicated in Spanish. The Libri Foundation grant will allow us to choose \$900 worth of children's books.

Julia Herdina
Manhattan Community Library
jherdina@manhattan.k12.mt.us

Membership News

As of May 31, the association has a total of 625 members - 42 more than reported in the last issue of Focus. There are 363 in the public library division, 162 in the school/library media division and 108 in academic/special library division (8 of us are in more than one division). Thank you to everyone who joined or renewed their membership. Our informal membership drive of 100 new members in the year of our 100th annual conference was reached, and was exceeded by 16 (stay tuned for future informal membership campaigns...). The breakfast for new members/first-time attendees at the conference was well attended, even though it was at 7:00am! If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please contact one of your Directors at Large: East-Gail Wilkerson 406-232-3060, gail.wilkerson@va.gov, or West-Magi Malone until June 30, 2006 406-758-5814, mmalone@co.flathead.mt.us. And please help us welcome our newest members:

Robyn Albright, Livingston Park County Library
Trustee, Livingston

Jamie Archev, Belt Public Library, Belt

Laura Bovard, Missoula International School,
Missoula

Janett Eidson, Glasgow City-County Library,
Glasgow

Brett Fisher, Flathead County Library, Kalispell

Karen Havelange, Glasgow City-County Library,
Glasgow

Brianna Huffman, Missoula Public Library, Missoula

Sam Kitzenberg, Glasgow City-County Library

Julie Lennox, Missoula International School,
Missoula

Susan McKamey, Bicentennial Library, Colstrip

Ben Miller, Missoula Public Library, Missoula

Jodi Moore, Red Lodge Carnegie Library, Red Lodge

Erling Oelz, Mansfield Library, UM, Missoula

JoAnn Schutte, Library Board Trustee, Bridger

Edwin Springfield, Little Big Horn College, Crow
Agency

Khrys Suckow, Joliet

Sonja Woods, Miles City Public Library, Miles City

MLA Elections 2006

Although there is no real opposition in this year's election for MLA offices, please take the time to read the biographies and statements of those running for office. The biographies and statements can be found on the following page. Please print this ballot page, mark your votes, and mail it to the following address:

Richard Wojtowicz

Reference Librarian/Asst. Professor

The Libraries

Montana State University—Bozeman

P.O. Box 173320

Bozeman, MT 59717-3320

It is important that we each know about those who will run our organization in the coming years. The ballot must be mailed since the By-Laws do not provide for an email vote. At the same time I encourage all of you to consider running for MLA offices during the next go-around in 2007. If you have any questions please call me at 994-1873 or email me at richw@montana.edu

Official MLA Ballot

*Candidate statements can be read on the following page
Please mail to the address above.*

Vice President/President Elect - **Honore Bray**, Missoula Public Library

Secretary/Treasurer - **Peggy Smith**, Skyview High School Library, Billings

Director At Large/West - **Carlene Engstrom**, D'Arcy McNickle Library of the Salish Kootenai College

MPLA Representative - **Eileen Wright**, MSU Billings Library

Montana Library Association Elections 2006

Your Candidates Are



Vice President-President Elect

Honore Bray

Native Montanan growing up in Anaconda. Bachelors degree from MSU in Home Economics and Extension, Secondary Education and Elementary Education, 5th year in Library Science from U of M and completion of a Masters in Library and Information Science in May from University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.

Career began in Jordan Montana where I taught 7-12th grades for nearly 20 years. In 1995 moved back to Western Montana with my husband and two children and assumed the position as Director of the historic Hearst Free Library in Anaconda. In September of 1995 a new opportunity arose and following in my friend Bette Ammon's footsteps, I changed positions and am now the Director of the Missoula Public Library. I don't play the kazoo but have a great staff and legacy left by Bette.

I have been a member of ALA, PLA and MLA for ten years. In the past I served as the Chair of the Public Library Division, and am currently the Chair of the Professional Development Committee. MLA has served me well and being part of the organizations mission is important to me. I would be honored to serve in the capacity of Vice President/President Elect of such a great organization.



Secretary/Treasurer

Peggy Smith

I began working in the library field in 1977 as an instructional aide at a high school library and because of this experience I decided to go back to school for my library certification.. In 1985 I was hired as a librarian at Skyview High School where I have worked for the past 20 years. During that time I went back to school and completed my Masters in Library Science at the University of Arizona. I have been a member of MLA for 20 years. I have served on the conference planning committee, worked on the beginnings of the school library survey, trotted off to Helena to meet with the OPI Library Specialist (remember those days?), worked on the annual conference as local arrangements co-chair twice and enthusiastically attended MLA conferences.

I would like to get more actively involved in MLA again. Serving as Secretary/treasure would give me an opportunity to give back to the organization that has given me so much over the years.



Director at Large- West

Carlene Engstrom

Library Director of the D'Arcy McNickle Library of the Salish Kootenai College on the Flathead Indian Reservation and current President of the American Indian Library Association. She is outgoing Chair of the Montana Library Association's Academic and Special Libraries Division. Carlene is currently on the American Indian Higher Education Consortium Committee to revitalize the AIHEC web page and MLA's web committee. Carlene received her MLS from the University of Washington's School of Library and Information Science in 1990. Previous to that she was Library Director of the Polson City Library during the design, construction, and moving into of its current building.



MPLA Representative

Eileen Wright

I am the Reference and Special Collections Librarian at Montana State University-Billings, Library. I am in charge of the Children's collection, and I teach library instruction, too. Like many librarians, I wear many hats where I work.

I have been a Montana State Library Association and Mountain Plains Library Association member since 2003. I have also been an ALA member since 2000. I have just completed my three year term on the MPLA nominating committee, and I was elected to the Vice-Chair Preservation, Archives, and Special Collections Section 2005-2006 just before we switched over to the electronic communities. I am a MPLA Ghost Ranch Leadership graduate of 2004. I was co-chair for the Montana State Library Association 2005 conference, and I am a conference planning committee member this past year. I have been active within both organizations at various past conferences. Being a member of both organizations has been rewarding, and the two organizations compliment each other so well. I can be a good representative for MPLA within the MLA organization.

Reading Readiness in Sidney

In January 2006, the Sidney Public Library in Richland County, Montana launched an exciting new program focusing on children birth through four. The Reading Readiness Project increases access to books that are just right for children birth through four, provides information to parents and caregivers on reading readiness, and fosters positive interaction



A Ready Reader

between kids, adults and community groups.

The program includes traveling library tubs to local daycares and preschools, Reading Readiness for Parents and Caregivers, a class presented by local experts; Healthy Readers which distributes books to

children under five through doctor's offices; and the addition of age appropriate material and caregiver resources.

Before launching the program, a survey was distributed to every childcare provider in the county. The survey asked questions about library use and early literacy habits. About 50% of providers returned the survey. In addition, a survey was distributed through county wide preschool assessment screenings to gauge parents' early literacy behavior and their interest level in attending the parent class.

The initial idea that lead to the Reading Readiness Project was Library Director Renee Goss' vision of traveling library tubs. The project addressed the two key reasons childcare providers were not using the library: lack of transportation and lack of staffing. As a result, a pilot tub project was conducted this winter and spring. Four childcare facilities participated in the Reading Readiness Tubs. Over 100 children were able to access books, videos, DVDs, music, and

large story time books. A full launch is planned this fall with four additional facilities.

In April, the first Reading Readiness for Parents and

Caregivers class was held. There were 18 parents and caregivers in attendance. Developed by George Biebl, a Family Support Specialist with Hi-Line Home Program, Inc. and Darci Haraldson, a special needs preschool teacher with Sidney Public Schools, the class examined brain



Happy Little Patrons

development, effective storytelling, picking out books, and the important role fathers play in the learning process.

After an assessment of the library's collection of age appropriate material and early literacy resources, it was determined that more items were needed. A goal was set to purchase 415 new items, each item representing a child under five in Richland County. The library looked to local community groups and a small Montana State Reading Council grant to provide some additional funds. By making presentations to groups such as the Sidney Lions Club and Sagebrush Reading Council, nearly \$3000 was raised and over 200 items have already been purchased.

Local supporters of the program include Sidney Lions Club, Sunrise Childcare Association, Sagebrush Reading Council, Delta Kappa Gamma-Theta Chapter, and Women of the Moose. For additional information on the Reading Readiness Project please contact Sidney Public Library Director Renee Goss at 406-433-1917 or rglibrary@richland.org

*Melissa Elgersma
AmeriCorps VISTA
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Conference Wrap-up

The 2006 MLA Conference has come and gone. Thank you to all who attended and contributed to the networking, continuing education opportunities, and centennial celebration.

Conference program summaries and commentary can be found on the MLA Conference blog: mla-conference.blogspot.com/. Feel free to add your own observations on the conference.

Would you like a commemorative t-shirt or travel mug? Conference merchandise is still available: t-shirts are \$10 (sizes S-XXL available) and stainless

steel travel mugs are \$7. Please contact Elaine Higgins elaine.higgins@umontana.edu if you're interested.

Next up: MLA 2007 in Helena. Lisa Mecklenberg-Jackson and Judy Hart are the 2007 Conference Co-chairs. Let's help them plan a great conference.

*Thank you for your support this year,
Jennie Burroughs and Elaine Higgins,
2006 Conference Co-chairs*

2006 MLA Awards and Honors Banquet

The Montana Library Association (MLA) is pleased to announce the winners of its 2006 awards for important contributions to library services in Montana libraries. All winners and their guests will be honored at the Association's annual award luncheon, scheduled this year for Friday, May 5, 2006 at the Holiday Inn Parkside in Missoula.

Library of the Year honors go to a consortium of libraries, the Partners Libraries, whose members are Missoula Public Library, Flathead County Library,



Representatives of the Partners Libraries

Hearst Free Library, Bitterroot Public Library, Drummond School/Community Library, and Polson City Library. Beginning in 2004, the Partners developed and began

to employ a cooperative system by which patrons at any of their libraries could borrow materials from any and all of the other Partner libraries free of charge and with a speedy delivery via bus service. This innovative program committed both to excellent service and to the best and widest use of library resources, has seen literally tens of thousands of library materials borrowed and lent among Partners libraries.

MLA's choice for Librarian of the Year Award is Gloria Curdy, currently K-12 Library Media Program Coordinator for the Missoula County Public Schools. Ms. Curdy has been with the schools since 1981, serving as a librarian at Hellgate and Big Sky High Schools before moving into district administration in 2000. Known, in her colleagues' words, as "practical but visionary," her contributions to librarianship in Montana have included long experience in the review and setting of public school library standards; enthusi-



Gloria Curdy and Friends

astic and successful advocacy for and administration of library technology and resources; fostering an atmosphere of camaraderie with district librarians as well as mentoring new school librarians; and service at the University of Montana as both an instructor of library-related courses and as president of the Friends of the Mansfield Library.

The Pat Williams Intellectual Freedom Award this year is awarded jointly to Montana state senators Jim Elliot (D-SD 7) and Jim Shockley (R-SD 45) and to Governor Brian Schweitzer, for their stand against the Patriot Act. During the 2005-06 legislative session, Senators Elliott and Shockley drafted and presented a resolution opposing the Act, guiding that resolution to passage by the General Assembly. Gov. Schweitzer added the weight of his office to the resolution by signing it—resolutions do not require the Governor's signature. All three men took Montanans' concerns about civil liberties and the Patriot Act to the Congressional delegation in Washington, and all have remained vocal in Montana about the Act and its renewal.

This year's School Administrator of the Year is Dr. Peggy Anderson, Superintendent of the Frenchtown Public Schools. Dr. Anderson, retiring this year after thirty-years in education, is recognized for her vigorous support of district libraries, evidenced by active promotion of learning and the use of libraries; fulfillment of state standards for the full-time and professional staffing of district libraries; provision of very significant funding for district library materials and computer hardware and software; and support of district library networking on the local, state, and national levels.

For the public library Trustee of the Year Award, Jerry (J. B.) Bancroft, trustee of the Bozeman Public Library, is this year's winner. Mr. Bancroft, a trustee since 1997, has spearheaded the development and realization of the construction of a new library in Bozeman. As Dean of Montana State University's College of Arts and Architecture, Mr. Bancroft has



Jerry Bancroft and Friends from Bozeman Public Library

brought enormous professional expertise to the project, including volunteer service as project manager. In addition, he is highly regarded for his gracious temperament and his skills in mediation and diplomacy, all much in evidence during the debate and consideration of community concerns about the project.

MLA's Special Friend to Libraries Award goes to Beverly Helrich of the North Valley Public Library in Stevensville. Ms. Helrich's contributions to the good of the library have been numerous and widely diverse. She headed the 2004 election campaign for the library to become an independent library district. She

Awards and Honors, Continued on Next Page...

Awards, Continued

conducted the research concerning refinancing the library building, which resulted in a savings of hundreds of dollars. As President of the Friends of North Valley Public Library since 2003, she has revitalized that group and its fund-raising efforts, seen in the success of projects ranging from an upgrade of the library's wireless network to replacing the library's down-for-the-count vacuum cleaner.

MLA's Media Award, conferred to honor a broadcast production or a published work that best underscores the value of libraries to community and society, is this year awarded to the state and national promotional campaign, "What's Your Story? Find It At the Library." Designed as a multi-year project to help libraries better market their collections and services, the campaign makes use of TV and radio PSA's, Websites, and posters and other print promotional materials. For year one, senior citizens were the focus of the campaign, as materials reflected their story various information needs of seniors, and how those needs can be met at the library. The campaign is a product of the cooperation of multiple partners: a statewide marketing committee; the Montana State Library's marketing & Coordinator, Sara Groves; the Q Group; and, as funding sources, the Montana Library Association, Mountain West Bank, AARP, The Institute of Museum and Library Services, a Library Services and Technology Act grant, and the National Library of Medicine.

Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
2006 MLA Conference Publicity Chair
ljackson@mt.gov

A Guide to Dues Reimbursement for Your Employer

If you're not the only one benefiting from your association membership, then why are you the only one paying for it? Your library association membership isn't just valuable to you, it's valuable to your library, too. As a member, you know you receive top-quality professional publications, gain opportunities for essential continuing education, and have access to a unique set of resources to improve your own worklife. But is your employer aware of how these benefits can advance your entire library's mission and work? By demonstrating how your library association membership improves your work, and therefore your workplace, you can encourage your employer to pay your association dues. Here are four simple steps to help you build a compelling case with your boss or board to pay for your professional memberships:

1. Make a list of all member benefits that directly AND indirectly benefit your library. We've included some ideas at the end of this article to help get you started.

2. Review your library's mission and strategic goals. Match up specific organizational or departmental objectives with association resources that help you meet those goals.

3. Talk with your supervisor about why membership has been valuable to you, and go through the list of ways that association benefits 'match' your library's goals.

4. Ask your supervisor to cover all or part of your library association dues as an investment in your own professional development, and as a benefit to the entire library.

Don't be shy. Remember, pennies a day in dues, your library gets a well-connected and informed staff member who is up-to-date on new trends around the library world and understands how the latest technology, legislative issues and new media affect your patrons. Plus, you get the personal bonus of an employer who understands and acknowledges this in a special way. You know how important your membership is. Here are a few facts about membership benefits to share with your employer:

- Your membership will help you stay up to date with the latest news focused on the work you do every day through members-only publications, e-lists, and special interest sections.

- Members-only discounts on professional products and conference attendance. These discounts help the library stretch its budget for purchasing and continuing education.

- Your association offers grants, scholarships, and awards that can directly subsidize the library budget for conferences, continuing education, and special programs.

- You are eligible to serve on committees and work groups that set the course for the future of libraries. Boards and community leadership are proud of, and find added value in, staff members who are recognized by their peers for outstanding service.

- Your own staff development goals can be enhanced through the continuing education, skills training, and mentoring programs offered by the association. Plus, you bring back new ideas to your coworkers from every outside training.

- Members have unique opportunities to contribute articles, propose new publications, become a reviewer and bring your library's best-practices to a new audience. This brings recognition to your library in the wider community of professionals. For more information on association member benefits, or to learn more about the opportunities described above, visit your association's website. We are glad that you are a current member and support your efforts to gain the recognition from your employer that you deserve.

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Jane Howell Wins Salute To Women Award



Jane Howell

On April 20, 2006, MSU-Billings Library Director Jane Howell was honored with the YWCA of Billings Salute to Women Award. Jane was honored along with five other amazing women for her commitment to positive change, service in the community, and her inspirational efforts at making a difference in the lives of many people.

Jane was especially noted because she blows the typical "mouser in dusty books" librarian stereotype to bits. A tireless library advocate, Jane has worked in academic, public, and special libraries, and her visionary leadership led to the establishment of OMNI, a consortium of nine eastern Montana academic libraries, and BAHASIC, a collabora-

tive effort between the MSU-Billings Library and eight local academic and medical libraries. She has served in leadership capacities in the Montana Library Association, the Pacific Northwest Library Association, and the American Library Association.

In addition to her many accomplishments in the library world, Jane has also been active in the MSU-Billings Wine and Food Festival, the High Plains BookFest, the Yellowstone Public Radio board, and ACLU of Montana.

Please send Jane your congratulations at jlhowell@msubillings.edu
Congratulations, Jane!

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Music in the Great Falls Public Library Park

It's that time of year again! Flowers are blooming, birds are singing, and if you're passing by the Library Park on Thursday evenings, you can hear music drifting in the breeze. The Great Falls Public Library is hosting the sixth annual Music in the Library Park series beginning June 29, at 7:00 p.m. The series will feature a wide array of musicians, mostly local, a few out-of-towners, in programs that are free and open to the public. If the weather is inclement, the programs will shift inside to the Cordingley Room of the Library.

This year you might hear strains of classic guitar and flute from favorite Meredith Connie, joined by Amy Eyles, the principle flutist with the Great Falls Symphony, or nationally known, award-winning, Celtic duo, Willson and McKee, playing their rousing renditions on a variety of instruments ranging from Hammer Dulcimer to the Irish Bouzouki.

Johnny Cash fans will want to catch Cold Hard Cash, a tribute band headed by Merle Peterson. Peterson, who sounds and looks like the second coming of Johnny, is joined by John Burrey on acoustic guitar, Jeff Carol on bass and Dan Lewis on drums. A longtime musician, Peterson has played solo and with various musicians in Missoula and Seattle. "I wanted to do more than just stand on a stage and play music," Peterson states. "We developed this act to take the audience on a musical journey."

Fans of acoustic music won't be disappointed. Singer and songwriter Bob Leader, who hails from East Glacier and tours around the state, will stop by with

his acoustic guitar. Local favorite Jeni Dodd, also a singer/songwriter will share her original and cover tunes. Viveca Arnst will play contemporary and classical music. Finally, longtime Great Falls musician Rick Tryon's show will be highlighted by selections from his recently released CD, Hometown Brew. Along with his solo act, Tryon performs with the Sliptones.

If blues is your bag, don't miss Hit-n-Run, with Sara Seekins on trombone, Tom Halvorson on guitar, Matt MacDonald on trumpet, John Johnson on bass and Brian Christiansen on drums. Formed in November of 2005, Hit-n-Run employs an eclectic funk/rock/blues style of both contemporary and classics with horns, hits, and steel riffs.

For a complete change of pace, come hear the Great Falls Trombone Trio with Ted Dollarhide, Sara Seekins, and Bob Bailey.

As you can see, there's something for everyone. If you're traveling through town or want to take a special trip, drop by the Great Falls Public Library for an enjoyable summer of music.

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This House of Sky the 2006 One Book Montana Selection

The Montana Center for the Book and the Montana Committee for the Humanities announce the 2006 One Book Montana selection, *This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind*, Ivan Doig's 1978 memoir tracing his life growing up in rural Montana.

The One Book Montana program offers an invitation to all Montanans to read and discuss *This House of*



Ivan Doig
Photo by Carol Doig

Sky over the summer and fall. MCB will provide reading and discussion guides, suggestions for library, school and book group projects, and opportunities for reader comments and other tools on its website, www.montanabook.org.

A limited number of copies will be available from MCB for short-term loans to book groups. Additional programming on the work will include programs on Montana's public radio stations, events with the author at the Montana Festival of the Book, September 28-30th, and much more.

The "One Book" concept has grown in popularity nationally for the past six years, and this is the fourth year MCH and the Center for the Book have offered the state-wide program. In previous years One Book Montana featured *Letters About Yellowstone* by Diane Smith, *Fools Crow* by James Welch, and the inaugural selection, *Winter Wheat* by Mildred Walker.

In *This House of Sky*, Doig describes growing up in the rugged Montana heartland with his father, Charlie, and his grandmother, Bessie Ringer, among the shepherders and denizens of small town saloons and valley ranches. What he deciphers from his western past is a raw sense not only of the land and how it shapes us but also of our ties to our mothers, fathers, and those who shape our search for intimacy, independence, belonging, and love.

Ivan Doig was born in White Sulphur Springs, Montana, in 1939, and grew up along the Rocky Mountain Front where much of his writing is set. His first book, the highly acclaimed memoir *This House of Sky*, was a finalist for the National Book Award, and was followed by (soon to be) ten other critically acclaimed works, including *Heart Earth* (reissued by Harcourt Brace this summer) and his newest novel, *The Whistling Season*. A former ranch hand, newspaperman, and magazine editor, Doig is a graduate of Northwestern University, where he received bachelor's and master's degrees in journalism. He also holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Washington. He lives in Seattle with his wife Carol, who has taught the literature of the American West.

Doig's works have received many awards. The

Chicago Sun-Times reckons him "...the premier writer of the American West," and the San Francisco Chronicle describes him as "The reigning master of new Western literature...". In the century's-end San Francisco Chronicle poll to name the best Western novels and works of non-fiction, Doig is the only living writer with books in the top dozen on both lists: *English Creek* in fiction and *This House of Sky* in non-fiction. Among many other honors, Doig is the 1995 recipient of the Montana Governor's Humanities Award.

Please join us in reading, or re-reading, *This House of Sky*, in the coming months, and take advantage of some of the programming and suggestions we will be offering. One of the core beliefs underlying the Montana Center for the Book is that literature—stories, words, poetry, history—can bring us closer together, can give us deeper understanding of each other. We believe the One Book Montana program can be a valuable part of that process.

The Montana Center for the Book is indebted to its advisory committee for assistance in selecting this year's One Book Montana. Advisory committee members include William Bickle III, John Clayton, Bill Cochran, Walter Fleming, Penny Hughes-Briant, William Marcus, Rick Newby, Kathy Springmeyer, Barbara Theroux, and Niki Whearty.

The Montana Center for the Book promotes Montana literature, libraries, and literacy, and sponsors the Montana Festival of the Book (September 28th-30th in Missoula), the Letters About Literature writing competition for young people, and OpenBook reading and discussion programs. The Montana Center for the Book is a program of the Montana Committee for the Humanities, Montana's independent non-profit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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Cates Event Wrap-up

From donating silent auction items, to buying raffle tickets, to shelling out cash at the Cates Trivia Mania event Thursday night, over \$3,228 was raised for the Sheila Cates scholarship fund at the Missoula conference. Thanks so much to all who contributed! A special thanks to our superb Trivia emcee Dale Alger. The 2006 Cates Committee: Mary Anne Hansen, Chair, Ve Abrams, Tracy Cook, Roberta Gebhardt, Cherie Hesel, Coby Johnson, Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Lyn McKinney, Anita Scheetz, Diane Van Gorden, and Darlene Staffeldt, ex-officio member.

Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
2006 MLA Conference Publicity Chair
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