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Montana Library Focus

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Lyn McKinney

This issue of **Focus** will be full of articles about our recent conference. My final message to you is going to focus on what has happened over the course of this last year and talk about

some opportunities for you to get more involved.

We started in August looking for a new Executive Director. We were fortunate to have Ilene Casey, who had been with the association in that capacity for a year, but she was ready to "really retire". So we conducted a new search and were fortunate to find Debbi Kramer to fill the position. Debbi has done very well learning the job and the guidelines set forth in the handbook. We are looking forward to many years of working with Debbi.

2007 was a legislative year and the Association was very active

during the session and special session. MLA and the State Library co-hosted a reception for legislators in January and several of our members and legislators attended. We had a great turnout and got to see many legislators. Lois Fitzpatrick, the MLA Government Affairs Committee, and our lobbyists were kept very busy watching bills and testifying on them. We owe them a huge thanks for the wonderful job they did. Our State Librarian, Darlene Staffeldt, will probably be giving us the particulars soon as to how the State Library budget fared, but things look good at this point.

We had some wonderful retreats this year. ASLD-PLD sponsored a great retreat at Chico in October and the SLMD put on a great retreat in January in Helena. The always wonderful Offline was held in February in Bozeman. All were well attended and very worthwhile.

We have had some major changes in how the Association does business. Members may now use credit cards to purchase items at the MLA store at conferences,

we may register and pay for conferences online, and we can even renew or begin memberships and pay online. Please check out the MLA webpage for all those services. We owe Debbi Kramer and Steve McCann a huge thanks for getting the background work done so we can have web-based pay options. The MLA Board has also authorized Debbi to look into getting the Association a credit card so we can use it to pay for items related to Association business.

In early spring we found that BCR, who had generously hosted our list serve, WIRED-MT, had changed platforms and could no longer support our list serve software. We have appreciated BCR's free hosting for many years and I want to thank them for making the transition so smooth. The recently retired Bruce Newell worked with BCR and our WIRED guru, Margaret Webster, to find a new host. OCLC graciously offered to host us, again for no charge, and within a week we were up and running again. We really appreciate OCLC being willing to host and Bruce and Margaret's hard work finding a solution.

Marketing and Public Relations Chair, Lisa Mecklenberg-Jackson has been busy this year. She put together the **Montana Book Babes** calendars, featuring librarians around the state, and secured MLA travel name badge/holders for all conference goers. If you didn't get a calendar, you can still purchase them online with a credit card from the MLA website www.mtlib.org. In addition to these PR activities, MLA also sup-
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ported the second phase of the Montana State Library's award-winning, **What's Your Story?** campaign by budgeting \$4,000 toward the project. Contact the State Library for new posters and book-marks.

Speaking of advocacy, MLA was well-represented at the ALA Legislative Days in Washington D.C. in May. Darlene Staffeldt, State Librarian, Lois Fitzpatrick, Government Affairs Committee Chair, Lyn McKinney, MLA President, Caroline Bitz, Montana Library Commission member, Bonnie Williamson, Havre Hill Public Library and her 8th grade grandson, Ryan attended the advocacy meetings and met with our three Congressmen. We actually had "face time" with all three Congressmen and we felt our information and concerns were heard. Ryan was a wonderful advocate and a big hit with our representatives. We decided we need to send him every year!

Our membership chairs, Gail Wilkerson and Carlene Engstrom have also been busy. They designed and purchased membership pins for all members and gave them out at the conference. Gail and Carlene also organized another New Members Breakfast at this year's conference which was well-attended by new and veteran members. Thank you for your hard work this year, Ladies!

Finally we celebrated our 101st year with our conference in Helena in April. We owe a very special thanks to Co-Chairs Judy Hart, Lisa Mecklenberg-Jackson, and their hard-working committee chairs and members for all their hard work and organization. Their planning and implementation made the conference very enjoyable for all of us. Nancy Pearl and Neil Gaiman were big hits with us and the public. I want to especially thank Nancy Pearl for being such a good sport in allowing herself to be auctioned off for dinner and for answers at the Cates Event at the Conference. She was delightful!

At the Conference we celebrated meeting our goal of raising \$20,000 to build a school through the Central Asia Institute (CAI). I would like to thank all of you who donated money, had events to raise money, and I'd like to thank Norma

Glock for spearheading the effort for our Association. Check out Norma's report in this issue of Focus for more details on the school's location. We are continuing the CAI idea through an Interest Group in the Association - watch for more details.

Our next Conference is April 9-12, 2008 in Great Falls. Sheila Bonnard accepted the Conference Co-Chair crowns on behalf of herself and Kathy Mora in Helena and are already busy planning for 2008 in Great Falls. They will be asking for Conference proposals soon -so be thinking about what you can suggest for programs for next year.

During the week of July 30-August 1 our in-coming President, Honore Bray, will be hosting the MLA Leadership Retreat at Camp on the Boulder. All MLA Board Members, Council Members, and Committee and Interest Group Chairs are invited and encouraged to attend. Please mark those dates on your calendar and contact Honore with any questions you have.

Our Conference Solutions Task Force has had several ideas given us, but we would like more people to join us in deciding what direction MLA should take with future conferences. If you are interested in helping with this, please contact me directly. Next year as Past President, I will also be in charge of Nominations - please think about running for an MLA office. We need your input to keep our organization going.

Finally, I'd like to thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to serve as MLA President. It has been one of the most rewarding positions I have ever served in. I also want to thank Peggy Smith, MLA Secretary, for keeping me straight and driving me across the state to meetings and my family, Craig and Rachel, who were patiently keeping the home fires burning in my many absences. It has been a wonderful year for me, thank you so much for all your help and support! I look forward to seeing all of you at future conferences and MLA-sponsored meetings!

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MLA Discussion List: WIRED-MT

WIRED-MT-L is a listserv sponsored by the Montana Library Association and hosted by **OCLC-Western**. The list is open to everyone interested in Montana libraries and library issues, including MLA members and non-members. Additional information and guidelines for use may be found at www.mtlib.org.

- To subscribe to **WIRED-MT-L**,
1. Send a message to:
listserv@OCLC.ORG;
 2. Leave the subject line blank;
 3. In the body of the message type:
SUBSCRIBE WIRED-MT-L <your name>
 4. Do not attach a signature.

If you have problems subscribing or have additional questions, contact Margaret Webster, List Manager (on behalf of MLA) at:
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or call me at 406-255-7201.

Bruce's Corner

Utility: Not a Bad Measure of Success

By
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Sometimes 'good enough' really is good enough. If things work, they work; why chase perfection? From your patrons' point of view the real measure of your library's success is the degree to which they find their library useful, that it has utility. But what is 'utility'? Here're a couple of good-enough definitions of the word *utility*:

"...The quality of being of practical use." (wordnet.princeton.edu)

"In economics, utility is a measure of the relative happiness or satisfaction (gratification) gained by consuming different bundles of goods and services..." (Wikipedia)

How do you tell if any specific piece of content or library service is of practical use, or if it makes your patrons happy? Or, thinking about the future, how do you know if something you own or do will make your patrons happy or be of some practical use? Here are four straightforward (hopefully useful) suggestions-

1. Talk to your patrons. Have a real conversation over coffee, spend enough time to get past good manners and happy-talk and get down to the nitty-gritty. Find out how they spend time in what you consider your library's sphere of influence, what they like, what they loath, and where there are opportunities to improve current content and services or add new ones.

2. Examine patron outcomes, not just numbers. Counting books circulated, for instance, doesn't tell you if the checked out materials were of practical use or if they made your patrons happy. We should deemphasize relying solely on descriptive numbers (circulation/capita, books owned, program

attendance, etc.), and tell more stories. See suggestion #1.

3. Be sure to talk to a representative cross-section of your current patrons, but in addition seek out those who are not using your library and find out why, and what you could do or acquire that would be useful to them or make them happy.

4. Finally, look to other libraries for best practices. How does your library's mix of materials and services compare to others'? Think big, look to library leaders such as Ann Arbor Public or the University of Washington (for digital content), Columbus Metro (for planning), the Montana Shared Catalog Partners (for resource sharing), and so forth.

Perfection is an unreachable goal, however we are sometimes attracted (like a moth to a flame) by its unreachable glitter, and in its pursuit keep ourselves from getting done what really needs getting done. Keep it simple: The best measure (of what and how you are doing) is your library's utility to all its patrons and potential patrons. Are you keeping your customers satisfied? Are you making them happy?

In the end the degree to which your patrons and your potential patrons (as a group) find your library useful, is THE measure of whether your library is successful. It's not how 'good' you run your library; it's how well you serve your patrons. And if your good-enough library is useful to your community, and it makes your patrons happy, you're running a great library.

Links:

- Picture Ann Arbor www.aadl.org/services/products/pictureAnnArbor
- University of Washington content.lib.washington.edu/
- Columbus Metropolitan Library www.cml.lib.oh.us/ebranch/about_cml/sta_strategic_plan.cfm
- Montana Shared Catalog montanalibraries.org/MS/MLNmsc-home.htm

Trustee's Corner

By Carol Grover, Chair
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Ask a new trustee what he or she is supposed to do as a board member, and the response is likely to involve keeping track of the money. Public officials have a basic responsibility to know where the funds go and to control that expenditure. However, before we deal with spending the funds, it's a good idea to know where the monies come from. Money for libraries comes from several sources. One of these is local, which may be property taxes or special mill levies. Appropriations from general funds is also possible. Partly because of I-105, passed in 1985, support for libraries differs among the cities and counties in Montana.

Monies also come from the state. In order to receive these monies, libraries must meet state standards, a topic for another time. State monies include the Information Access Montana Act(IAMA), which determines state aid with a per capita and per square mile formula. It also deals with Interlibrary Loan reimbursement and gives basic grants to the six federations. Another source of state monies is the coal severance tax which provides basic monies to the federation libraries.

On the federal level, monies are obtained through the Library Services and Technology Act(LSTA). This is a grant program which, like its name says, helps libraries purchase technology and software to provide necessary services. The Telecommunications Discount Program, or Erate serves a range of services from local telephone to Internet access.

Other sources of monies include grants, endowments, local businesses, civic organizations, and library foundations. Now that you know where the money comes from, look forward to future columns on how to spend it—the budget!

State Library News



All of the following articles relating to programs and services of the Montana State Library are by:

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Montana Library Event Calendar

Check online for upcoming library training/activities AND add your upcoming event to the calendar.calendar.mtlib.org

PEEL Scholarship Update

Fourteen applications were received for the \$25,000 scholarship available from Montana State Library to attend the University of Washington's distance library program. The PEEL Advisory Committee will screen the applications and make a recommendation to the Montana State Library Commission for the scholarship award. The scholarship recipient will begin graduate school this fall and then work full-time for two years in a Montana library following graduation.

Professional Development RSS Feed

If you subscribe to RSS feeds you can now receive weekly updates about new library professional development materials available at the State Library. The new Library and Information Services Division Library Professional Development RSS feed lists recent additions to the professional development collection. For more information or to subscribe visit: msl.mt.gov/PubRSS/RSSNewPubs.asp

Gates and ALA

Five Montana public library directors will head to the June ALA annual conference in Washington, DC, courtesy of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. ALA-bound librarians are Renee Goss (Sidney), Bridgett Johnson (Lewistown), Renee McGrath (Stevensville), Jodi Oberweiser (Drummond), and Sami Pierson (Libby). The group will attend a daylong forum on rural libraries (sponsored by the Gates Foundation) where they will make a special presentation introducing other participants to Montana libraries. They will also be guests of WebJunction at a special reception. The ALA trip is the final event in the Foundation's Rural Library Sustainability grant program.

Trustee News from the MSL

The 2007 trustee workshop topic is library laws. Two workshops are scheduled: in Billings on October 27th and in Missoula on November 10. Details will be announced and registration will begin in the fall.

9th Annual Fall Workshop

Lewistown is the site of this year's Fall Workshop. The dates are September 28th and 29th. Tentative topics include book mending, Library 2.0, using the statewide periodical database, technology for teens, volunteers in the library, improving customer service, e-learning, and more. And, we're excited that Montana's own Mary Bushing will be back at the Fall Workshop for a day of workshops and visiting. Registration for the Fall Workshop will be available in late summer. As always, there is no registration fee and lunch is provided.

2007 Summer Institute for Library Leadership

This year's summer institute for public library directors and trustees will be in Bozeman on the MSU campus, June 5-7. Details and registration forms are available at: msl.mt.gov/summerinstitute Topics include **It's a Disaster!** on emergency preparedness and disaster planning and **Community Leadership.... It's Not a Spectator Sport** on establishing the public library as the most important and vital resource in the community. Please register by May 31st.

Chouteau County Librarian on PBS Board

By
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Jill Munson, director of the Chouteau County Library in Fort Benton, has been appointed to the POV/ALA Board (Point of View, American Library Association), which promotes the Community Engagement Film Series - independent films sponsored by PBS and available to libraries to screen. After the library shows a film, audience members can go online and make comments. Libraries in this program must have a local co-sponsor- for Chouteau County Library, that is the Ft. Benton Woman's Club. Jill encourages other libraries to participate in this series. If you'd like information on this free program, contact her at fblibrary@mtintouch.net or 622-5222.

Board members preview the films and help write companion materials such as book lists. Other board members are from Harvard and San Francisco Public Library, as well as other large, urban areas. So far, the committee has met via conference call and Jill says the other librarians on the board are very interested in libraries and life in Montana.

Western Council Certification Program

By
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The Western Council of State Libraries, a professional association of 22 state libraries, announced the start of its Library Practitioner Certification program. The certificate provides recognition for library directors and managers located anywhere in the U.S. without a master's degree in library science.

Developed with support from an Institute of Museum and Library (IMLS) grant in response to calls for improved training opportunities, the Western Council identified a set of competencies that define the skills and knowledge needed for success as a library practitioner. The Certification program is based on these competencies.

Library practitioners completing 240 contact hours of training in competency areas and with 2000 hours of library experiences will be awarded Western Council certification.

"Developing a certification program for this level of library worker represents an important step in Western Council's efforts to advance the improvement of library services in communities not yet able to support a professional librarian," said Jan Walsh, President of Western Council and Washington State Librarian. "By offering standardized certification to library practitioners, Western Council provides employers with a benchmark for selecting highly qualified individuals, while offering individuals a recognized, portable credential that enables them to demonstrate their skills and knowledge. Western Council hopes that applicants look at this certificate as the first step in library science education."

To insure the quality of courses for applicants, Western Council will require that applicants select from courses offered by Western Council Approved Providers. Institutions and individuals can become Approved Providers by completing an application and submitting a fee based on the type of institution. Upon certification, Approved Providers will be entitled to use an official certification logo as an indication of their status and will be listed in the directory maintained by Western Council.

For complete information about the program, including how to be certified and how to become an Approved Provider, go to certificate.westernco.org

PNLA and Central Asia Institute News

By
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Edmonton is ready to go for the 2007 Pacific Northwest Library Conference on August 8-11. The entertaining and hilarious Marty Chan provides the keynote address, plus the annual Corks and Cans, and much, much more. The 2007 PNLA Conference Program is now online at:

www.pnla.org/events/conference07/2007program2.pdf

The Central Asia Institute Interest group was formed at the annual conference in Helena and reports that the location of the "Montana" school will be built in the Neelam Valley, Azid Kashmir, Pakistan. A great big thank-you to all who put us over the "tipping point" in raising funds for this school. Montana Library Association's account, Job #12 is still open for additional funds for this project.

Madison Valley Public Library Awarded Libri Grant

By
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Madison Valley Public Library in Ennis has been awarded a BOOKS FOR CHILDREN grant from The Libri Foundation. The Friends of the Madison Valley Public Library raised \$350.00, which the Foundation matched at a 2-to-1 ratio. This means that the library received \$1069.57 worth of easy, junior and young adult books. The 69 books received were selected from a list provided by the Foundation. The list included award winning books, fiction and non-fiction, for children pre-school through young adult.

The Libri Foundation is based in Eugene, Oregon. Their main purpose is to donate quality children's books to rural public libraries. The Foundation supports the concept that "children who learn to enjoy reading at an early age continue to read throughout their lives." The Foundation enables rural libraries like Madison Valley Public Library to obtain children's books that could not otherwise be acquired due to budgetary constraints.

The books have arrived at the library and are being processed. The book plates inside the books show that the books were donated by The Libri Foundation, The Friends of the Library, and by Sue Campbell and Bruce Campbell, who made a special donation for books going to Montana, Idaho and Wyoming.

The books will be ready to check out, and displayed on a special shelf in the Children's Room on June 8th, which is the first day of the Summer Reading Program.

For more information about the Libri Foundation, please visit their website at www.librifoundation.org.

Bozeman Public Library Welcomes New Foundation Director

By
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The Bozeman Public Library Foundation welcomes Paula Beswick as its new Foundation Director. Paula has been closely involved with the Library and the Friends organization for the past decade and is delighted to be joining the Foundation. Eager to build on the tremendous community support shown for the new building, she looks forward to the next chapter in the Library's future. "This is an exciting time to be joining the Foundation with its move from the capital campaign phase to raising the Library's profile and stature in the region," she said. "I'm looking forward to helping build the Library into a true cultural center."



Paula at the Computer

Paula will guide the Foundation's fundraising efforts, as well as the creation of programs and community events. Prior to accepting this position, she worked for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and spent many volunteer hours in the Bozeman schools. She officially starts in July and encourages visitors to stop by to say hello this summer at the Foundation offices upstairs in the beautiful new Bozeman Public Library.

News From Great Falls Public Library

By
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In an effort to improve Internet service to patrons, we have switched Internet service providers and increased the bandwidth. On the subject of computers, we've also started a blog, which is linked from the library's home page (greatfallspubliclibrary.org). Hopefully, this medium will offer insight into community needs and wants, as well keep the public informed on what's going on at the library.

The Great Falls Public Library is getting new carpet! Starting from the basement up, the job begins June 6th. The existing carpet is much in need of replacement. This project is made possible by donations.

AAUW presented Library Director Jim Heckel a check for \$1500 on May 5. This gift comes from proceeds from the AAUW's annual book sale. Library donations count for a large portion of the sale's inventory.

Jude Smith, Public Relations Coordinator for the Great Falls Public Library, was presented with the AAUW's *Woman of the Year Community Service Award* on May 12. Along with honoring Jude and the work she does at the library, this award also acknowledges the library for its commitment to community. Jude joins the ranks of such notables as Eve Franklin and Sheila Rice, past winners of this award.

Susie McIntyre, Head of Information Services, has been reappointed to the Consumer Health Advisory board of the Pacific Northwest Regional Library (PNRML). PNRML seeks advice from librarians, health care professionals, consumers of healthcare services, and other stakeholders in health information access. The Consumer Health Advisory Board provides input to the PNRML on their services and programs specifically targeting health consumers. PNRML, based at the University of Washington Health Science Library, is the regional headquarters for the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. It collaborates with academic, hospital, and community libraries, and with health agencies and organizations, to ensure that quality health information is accessible to health care providers and consumers throughout Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. The mission of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NM/LM) is to advance the progress of medicine and improve the public health by providing all U.S. health professionals with equal access to biomedical information and to improve the public's access to information to enable them to make informed decisions about their health. The program is coordinated by the National Library of Medicine and carried out through a nationwide network of health science libraries and information centers.

It's official! The Great Falls Public Library has a *Teen Scene*. On May 12, the mayor of Great Falls, Dona Stebbins, cut the ribbon and Library Director Jim Heckel plugged in the light for the *Teen Scene*. The space, which was paid for by generous donations, is designated for young adults, ages 12 – 18. About 80 folks, adults and kids, celebrated the grand opening with a DJ, dancing, an OPAC treasure hunt, prizes, food and lots of fun. (See photo).



Great Falls New Teen Scene

MLA 2007 Conference Awards and Honors Recipients

By
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At the Montana Library Association annual conference in Helena, seven individuals who have made significant contributions to Montana libraries in 2006-2007 were honored. Each individual was nominated by a librarian. Each nomination was supported by two letters of recommendation. A committee of seven librarians reviewed the nominations and made awards to the people named below. While all librarians, their employees and friends of the libraries contribute significantly to the education of Montana's populace, these individuals have made contributions well above the norm.

Sheila Cates Award for Librarian of the Year is conferred upon a librarian in recognition of



Honorary Lifetime Membership Award winner, Deanna King and the Sheila Cates Librarian of the Year, Norma Glock. Pictured here with Lt. Gov. John Bohlinger.

outstanding leadership and accomplishment in library service. Norma Glock of Columbus Schools is recognized for her outstanding work with students, administrators, teachers and other librarians. She is dedicated to bringing resources to people, to stimulating interest in reading, to encouraging students to pursue their own interests and to maintaining up-to-date libraries. Norma Glock does this with limited resources. She is always more than willing to volunteer her time and energy to the achievement of outstanding goals.

June 2007

Pat Williams Intellectual Freedom Award recognizes significant contributions during the past year



Pat Williams Intellectual Freedom Award was presented to Johanna Freivalds. Pictured with MLA President Lyn McKinney

to the enhancement of First Amendment rights. Johanna Freivalds of Lockwood Middle School helped her community learn and grow in their understanding of the complex issues associated with intellectual freedom.

Intellectual Freedom Award of Appreciation is a special award conferred this year only to recognize the outstanding work done by Bozeman attorney Brian Close. After attending a national training from the American Library Association, Brian helps Montana libraries and librarians navigate the difficult legal waters of intellectual freedom, rights of privacy, Internet filtering, and the Patriot Act.

The Media Award recognizes work for publication which best underscores the value of libraries to community. Jim Dullenty of the Lewistown *News-Argus* receives this award for his fine



Media Award was presented to Jim Dullenty of the Lewistown News-Argus.

coverage of the events and concerns of the Lewistown Public Library.

Honorary Life Membership Award is given to a librarian who has made an outstanding contribution to librarianship or who has rendered outstanding service to library interests. Deanna King has served in several Montana libraries in several capacities. She served as Director of Stillwater County Public Library, and was instrumental in purchasing a new building for the library. She has extended good relations in the name of libraries in every sector of her community.

Trustee of the Year Award is conferred upon a Montana public library trustee in recognition of outstanding achievement and leadership. Tom Heyes, Chair of the West Yellowstone Public Library Board of Trustees is a strong voice in the library community which is heard all over town, especially at town council meetings.

Special Friend to Libraries Award recognizes volunteers who have rendered outstanding service in support of library interests within Montana. Julie Enman of Drummond is honored for her tireless contributions in creating the Drummond School Community Library.

Special Friends of Libraries Award was presented to Julie Enman by Jodi Oberweiser and Lt. Gov. John Bohlinger.



Trustee of the Year Award was presented to Tom Heyes, Chair of the West Yellowstone Public Library Board of Trustees

Special Friends of Libraries Award was presented to Julie Enman by Jodi Oberweiser and Lt. Gov. John Bohlinger.

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SLMD News

By

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The school year is rapidly drawing to a close. We look back, marveling at how quickly the year has passed and how much we have accomplished! In our school libraries, inventories are being wrapped up, new book orders for fall are being put in place, the cataloging oddities we've ignored are calling to us and we're on the hunt for those library books that should have been returned, well, a long time ago! (aka "the bad book roundup")

Those of us who were able to attend the wonderful MLA conference in Helena are still savoring some of the glow and wondering how we can implement what we learned. The Friday morning SLMD breakfast was very well attended! Thank you all for making the effort to get up early and join us! There were door prizes, some lively discussions and the wonderful renewal of our friendships and networks. Indeed, this conference was terrific! There were such incredibly good workshops and outstanding presentations (to say nothing of the spellbinding presence of Neil Gaiman).

SLMD seems to be at a turning point, a juncture, one that holds real promise for the future. At this

conference, a great many school librarians were present, active, engaged, and involved at all levels in the organization. We have special praise, thank yous, and kudos to Lyn McKinney, our MLA President this year. She has done an outstanding job, working tirelessly and selflessly for libraries of all types. We also want to thank Peggy Smith for her unfailing, unerring work as our MLA secretary. And, we wish to honor Norma Glock, the Shelia Cates Librarian of the Year, who has raised the bar for all librarians to reach beyond their own needs to serve the needs of others. Thank you to these great gals, and the all the other gals and guys we have not named, who time and again, take their place among all the outstanding librarians in MLA.

Perhaps one of the ways we can best show our gratitude to these leaders and hard workers is for each of us to step up to the plate and take our place among our fellow librarians. When we roll up our sleeves and participate with our colleagues from public, academic and special libraries, we become the professionals who represent *tomorrow's lifelong learners*: the youth who are our patrons today will tomorrow be the patrons of our colleagues in their unique libraries. We lay the foundation for lifelong learning and insure a strong link into adulthood.

Our new leaders for the SLMD beginning in July are Jodi Teeple of the Frenchtown High School Library, who will serve as our

chairperson, and Teresa Marchant of Lockwood Intermediate Library, serving as vice-chairperson. Their respective email addresses are: teeplej@ftsd.org and mrsMarchant@yahoo.com. We welcome these fresh, enthusiastic library media specialists to their new leadership role, and we can't thank them enough for stepping up to the plate! We also want to thank you for allowing us the privilege of working with all of you this last year and serving as co-chairs for the SLMD! We appreciate the honor, and the fun!

As we thank people, we want to mention all those from our ranks who are retiring at the end of this school year. We don't know all your names, so we will leave out names. We are grateful for your hard work, many years of friendship and dedicated service. Enjoy your new venues, and please, continue to stay in touch! We expect to see you round and about!

The juncture we, as the SLMD of MLA, seem to have passed through is one of choosing to embrace our place within MLA. We have new, and renewed, energies being shared within our organization. We are both discovering and acknowledging our unique identities and commonalities in the Montana library community. As we begin summer, let's celebrate these steps forward and let our energies be nourished and renewed! Have a great summer! We'll see you in the fall!

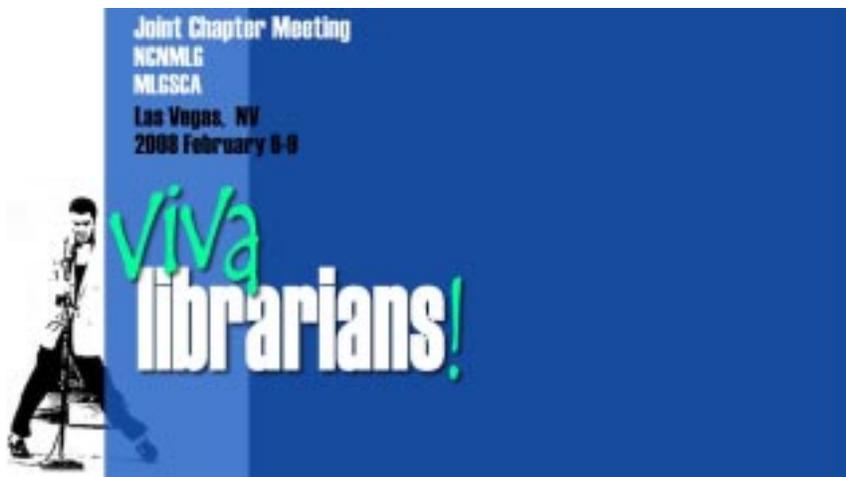
Cates Event Update is Forthcoming

The Cates Fundraising Committee regrets that they were unable to get an update to Focus readers in this issue. They promise to get news of the event out in the next issue, as well as a post-

ing to Wired about money raised, fund account ballance, and plans for the future of the Cates Scholarship Committe. In the meantime, enjoy this photo of a very memorable Cates Fundraising event!



Who's who? Jan Allen and Nancy Pearl at Cates Fundraiser



Executive Director Updates

By *Debbi Kramer*
Executive Director
Montana Library Association
debkmla@hotmail.com

I have just completed my first six months as the Montana Library Association's Executive Director. I truly love my job, and it is time to update MLA members on the new association address and other changes.

The new address is Montana Library Association, 169 W. River Rock Road, Belgrade, MT 59714. Please begin using the address immediately as the Manhattan post office box has expired. My e-mail address is **debkmla@hotmail.com** and I check it several times a day. My phone number is 406-670-8446 and it is a cell phone that is with me at all times. Updating of the MLA website will be done very soon and all the forms and contact information will have the new address.

Membership dues are now payable for a full year from the payment date. This change was implemented last year. By paying dues at anytime during the year,

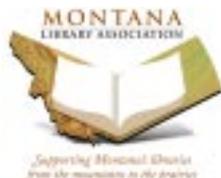
the association has a more steady cash flow. Now members get a full year of membership for their payment. If any member has a question about renewing his or her dues, please send me an e-mail. I will promptly send a reply. Posting an updated membership list to the MLA website is in the works.

Remember dues payment is online with a credit card or by sending a renewal form and check to the new Belgrade address.

With the recent postal rate increase, our bulk mailing rate also increased by a significant amount. If you have an e-mail address that you have not shared with MLA, please send it to me as well as any changes in your present e-mail address. MLA does not share your information with anyone. It is our hope, in the near future, to deliver each issue of FOCUS to your individual e-mail account to reduce mailing costs.

Together we can keep MLA's expenses down. When we keep expenses in check, membership, retreat, and conference fees will remain affordable.

Feel free to contact me at anytime with questions or concerns.



Lots of great pictures were taken at this year's MLA Conference. You can check some of them out at:

www.flickr.com/groups/montanalibraries/

While you're there, add some of your own! Can you top these examples?



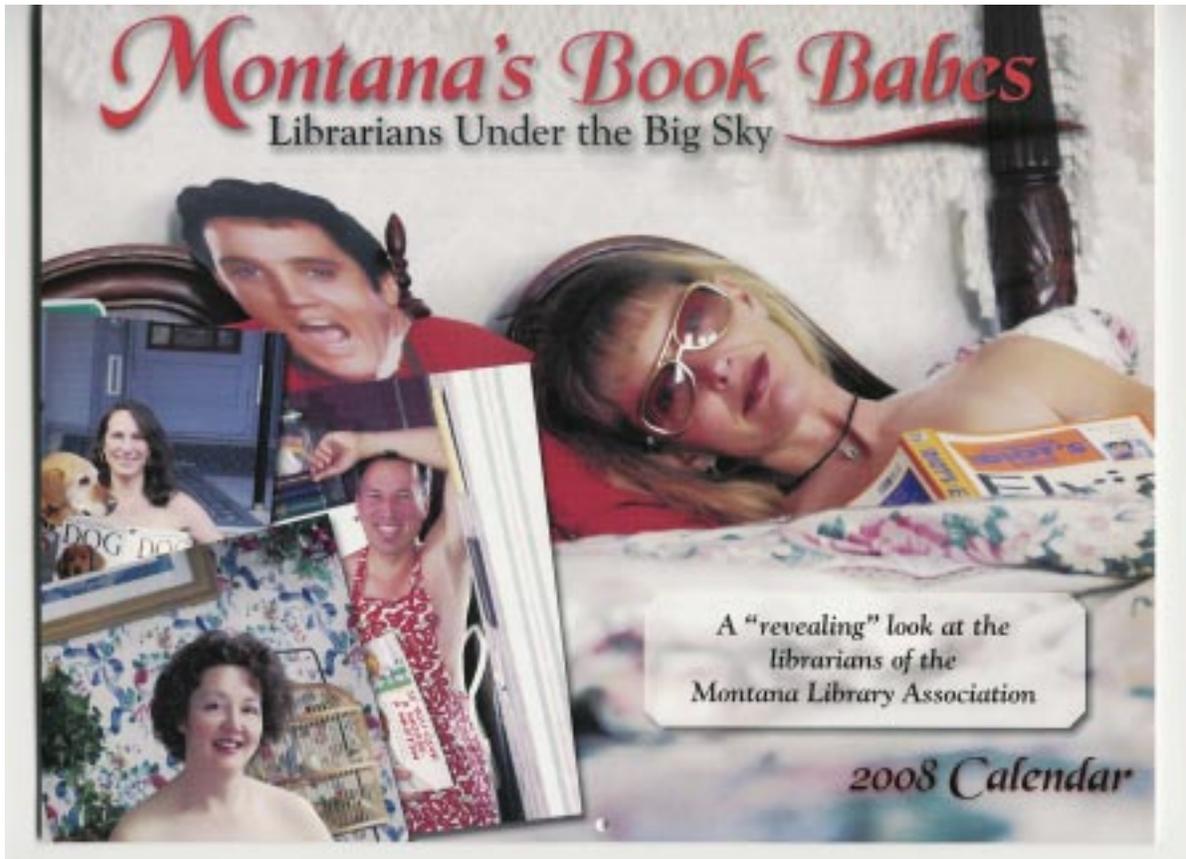
President Seuss and Nancy. MLA President Lyn McKinney and Keynote Speaker Nancy Pearl



MC Dale is in the house! Dale Alger at Cates Event

**Don't be the Only One To Miss Out!
Oh My! Montana Book Babes 2008 Calendars Are Still on Sale**

If you missed the unveiling ceremony, or didn't get a chance to see the calendars in all their splendor, don't fret. You can still buy yours today! They are available online at www.mtlib.org/calendar/index.html. Remember, it's a fundraiser for MLA, so every dollar made goes to support librarians and their libraries across the state. Buy one for you, your sister, your mother, your friends, your dog, your ...



Pictures From Montana Library Advocacy Day in DC



MLA's picture perfect representation: MLA President Lyn McKinney, MLA Government Affairs Committee Chair Lois Fitzpatrick, and our very own State Librarian Darlene Staffeldt.



Lyn McKinney, Caroline Bitz, Ryan Shaneybrook (Bonnie's Grandson), Bonnie Williamson, Lois Fitzpatrick, Darlene Staffeldt, and Unidentified Capitol Hill Staffer.

HEADWATERS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION SUMMER MEETING AT THE YNP HERITAGE & RESEARCH CENTER IN GARDINER, MONTANA



Photo by C. Curry, YNP Photographer

What: Tour of HRC Research Library and building from librarians Jessi Gerdes and Jackie Jerla. Brief summer meeting & election of new officers will follow tour.

When: Tuesday, June 12th at 10 am .

Where: Heritage & Research Center at 200 Old Yellowstone Trail (near the Gardiner School).

RSVP to Catherine McMullen at ccmcmull@u.washington.edu or call (406) 539-6687 by Thursday, May 31st. Carpooling will be available.

Visit <http://www.nps.gov/yell/historyculture/collections.htm> to learn more about the HRC.

The Headwaters Library Association is an informal multi-type (academic, public, school, and special libraries) organization of library staffers and friends from the libraries of Gallatin, Madison, and Park Counties. Meetings include special programs, volunteer projects, and time for socializing and networking.

Dues are only \$5.00 per year and new members are always welcome.

Guy Vanderhaeghe's *The Last Crossing* Chosen as 2007 One Book Montana

By

Mark Sherouse, Executive Director
MT Committee for the Humanities
mark.sherouse@umontana.edu

The Montana Committee for the Humanities and its Montana Center for the Book announce the 2007 One Book Montana selection, *The Last Crossing*, Guy Vanderhaeghe's 2002 epic novel of the 19th century American and Canadian west.

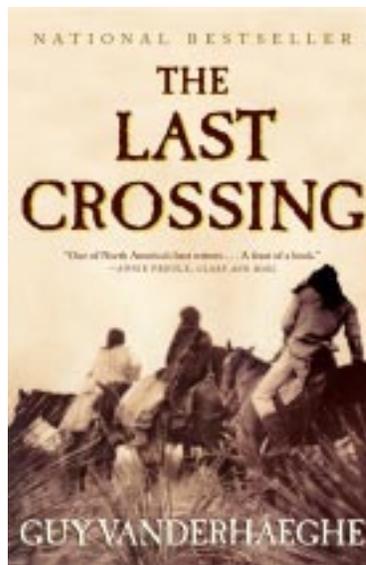
The One Book Montana program offers an invitation to all Montanans to read and discuss *The Last Crossing* over the summer and fall. MCH will provide reading and discussion guides, suggestions for library, school and book group projects, and opportunities for reader comments and other tools on its website, www.montanabook.org/onebook.htm. A limited number of copies will be available from MCH for short-term loans to book groups. Check the web site for additional programming, including events with the author at the Montana Festival of the Book, September 13-15.

In *The Last Crossing*, brothers Charles and Addington Gaunt travel from England to the frontier settlement of Fort Benton in search of their brother Simon. As they struggle to fathom this new and strange civilization, they also gather about them a ragtag posse of outsiders and loners including a half-Blackfoot, half-Scot guide, a Civil War veteran, a single woman bent on revenge, and an American journalist, before beginning their journey even farther North. The novel moves from the colleges of Oxford and mansions of London to the rugged Montana plains, the trading posts of the Canadian wilderness, and the heart of Indian country.

Guy Vanderhaeghe was born in Esterhazy, Saskatchewan, in 1951. He is the author of several plays, three short story collections and four other novels, including *The Englishman's Boy* (1996),

winner of the Governor General's Award for Fiction, the Saskatchewan Book Awards for Fiction and for Best book of the Year, and a finalist for The Giller Prize and the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. *The Last Crossing* (2002), a long-time Canadian bestseller and winner of the Saskatoon Book Award and the Saskatchewan Book Awards for Fiction and for Book of the Year, was a finalist for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Book. *The Last Crossing* was chosen as the 2004 *Canada Reads* selection. Guy Vanderhaeghe lives in Saskatoon, where he is a Visiting Professor of English at S.T.M. College.

In addition to his many awards, Vanderhaeghe has received acclaim in the U.S. Richard Ford has



called Vanderhaeghe "simply a wonderful writer," and Annie Proulx says "*The Last Crossing* deserves honors and the widest readership. Guy Vanderhaeghe, one of North America's best writers, is at the top of his form."

Of the 2007 One Book Montana selection, Vanderhaeghe commented "I am astonished, enormously pleased, and a little abashed at the choice of *The Last Crossing* as the 2007 One Book Montana selection. My historical

fiction is a tribute to the intimate connections and shared history that existed between Montana and Western Canada in the 1870s. This great honour suggests that they continue."

Please join us in reading *The Last Crossing* 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.

This is the fifth year MCH and the Montana Center for the Book have offered the state-wide One Book program. In previous years One Book Montana featured *This House of Sky* by Ivan Doig, *Letters From Yellowstone* by Diane Smith, *Fools Crow* by James Welch, and the inaugural selection, *Winter Wheat* by Mildred Walker.

The Montana Center for the Book is indebted to its advisory committee for assistance in choosing this year's One Book Montana selection. 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 Committee for the Humanities* and its *Montana Center for the Book* promote Montana literature, libraries, and literacy, and sponsor the *Montana Festival of the Book* (September 13th-15th 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.

Bozeman, Kinsey, Missoula Students Top State Letters About Literature Competition

By
Mark Sherouse, Executive Director
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Students from **Bozeman, Kinsey** and **Missoula** captured top honors in this year's Montana Letters About Literature writing contest. Judges selected the winning entries from more than 750 submissions in three separate age categories. Copies of the three winning letters are below.

Letters About Literature is a reading and writing promotion program of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, presented in partnership with Target Stores. The program is sponsored at the state level by the Montana Committee for the Humanities and the Montana Center for the Book.

"We offer our congratulations to all our state winners," said MCH Executive Director Mark Sherouse, "and indeed to all the more than 750 Montana students who entered this year's Letters About Literature competition. And we offer our thanks as well to the many teachers, librarians and parents who encouraged them. Many Montana students are reading and writing well, and Letters About Literature is a wonderful opportunity for them to show what they can do."

To enter, young readers wrote a personal letter to an author explaining how his or her work changed their view of the world or

themselves. Readers selected authors from any genre — from fiction or nonfiction to contemporary or classic. The program has three competition levels: upper elementary, middle school and secondary. The contest theme encourages young readers to explore their responses to a book and then express those responses in a creative, original way.

Cara Robertus, who won first in the state's elementary division, wrote a letter to author Eleanor Estes that said in part: "Although 'The Hundred Dresses' is a short story, its messages are powerful. I can choose to be a true friend to someone who is unpopular. I can choose to focus on the inner character of a person rather than the outward appearance. I can choose to stand up for what is right, even in the face of peer pressure. Thank you for writing a book that has strengthened my determination to make those right choices."

The state winners in the three age categories are:

Level I, grades 4-6

First Place, Cara Robertus, individual entry, **Bozeman**.

Second Place, Kelsey McFeely, Whitefish Middle School, **Whitefish**.

Third Place, Sara Blessing, Learning Circle Montessori, **Bozeman**.

Level II, grades 7-8

First Place, Kelsey Weyerbacher, individual entry, **Kinsey**.

Second Place, Mariah Wearley, Choteau High School, **Choteau**.

Third Place (tie), Suzanne Saroff, Sussex School, **Missoula**.

Third Place (tie), Louis Rassaby, Headwaters Academy, **Bozeman**.
Level III, grades 9-12

First Place, Tessa Berg, Sentinel High School, **Missoula**.

Second Place, Kevin McSpadden, individual entry, **Bozeman**.

Third Place, Roxanne Madler, Whitefish High School, **Whitefish**.

Montana finalists each receive a cash prize, and state first-place winners all receive a \$50 gift card to Target Stores. First-place winners also were entered in the national contest.

This year's LAL state judges were Sharon Beehler, English professor at Montana State University-Bozeman; Penny Hughes-Briant, English professor at The University of Great Falls; Missoula author Dorothy Hinshaw Patent; and Kim Anderson, MCH associate director of programs. Guidelines for the 2008 Letters About Literature program will be posted soon at <http://www.loc.gov/loc/cfbook/letters.html>.

The Montana Center for the Book is a program of MCH, Montana's state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.