

President's Letter



Eva English

President, Montana Library Association
Library Director, Fort Belknap College

Greetings fellow Montana Librarians!

As I sit here making plans for the upcoming MLA Board Retreat at Salish Kootenai College, I am wondering what the heck happened to summer? Wasn't it just last week that we were shoveling snow from the sidewalks? At any rate, the MLA year is off to a rousing start!

First of all I have to say two big thank you's. First to Della Dubbe for serving as the MLA President for 2008-2009. Under her leadership, MLA made great strides including what I believe is her proudest achievement, hiring T&T Conference and Event Management as our conference planners. Thank you, Della! My second Thank You goes out to John Finn who has served as the

Focus Editor since August 2004. John has done a great job creating an attractive, useful representation of what is going on in the Montana library world. John Finn has turned Focus over to Suzanne Schwichtenberg, who will continue in his footsteps and allow Focus to continue to grow along with MLA. Thank you, John!

What's coming up in the next few weeks? The long-awaited MLA specialty license plates should be available any day (if they aren't already at your County Treasurer). Please help support the Montana Library Association and its activities by purchasing one. You may purchase a plate even though your vehicle registration is not due. You will simply have to pay the fee for the specialty plate.

Montana Librarians have some important conferences coming up soon, including the 100 Year Celebration of the PNLA Conference which will be held in Missoula, August 5-7, 2009. Also coming up is the ASLD/PLD Retreat which will be held October 25-26, 2009 at Chico Hot Springs.

And it's already time to mark your calendar for the 2010 MLA Annual Conference! The "Opening Minds, Expanding Horizons" conference

will be held April 7-10, 2010 in Bozeman, Montana. The conference website is already available on the MLA home page so take a look to see what is planned. We already have some pretty cool speakers (and entertainment) lined up but you can help us make this YOUR conference by submitting a program idea. Program proposals are being accepted via the conference website through September 28. Connie Strittmatter, Alice Meister and Gale Bacon are this year's co-chairs of the conference planning committee and I am sure they will be asking for your assistance as conference draws nearer.

Remember, the deadline for MLA dues was July 1. I invite and encourage everyone to get involved in MLA in some way - volunteer for a committee, serve in a leadership position, or write an article for

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President's Letter, continued

Focus or another newsletter, any number of ways to make MLA "YOUR" organization!

Marje Doyle, Chairman of the Professional Development Committee, has announced that ALA is accepting applications for the Emerging Leaders, Class of 2010. Please see her article in this issue, or visit the MLA website for more information.

Lisa Mecklenberg-Jackson and her Mar-

keting & Public Relations Committee are working on some exciting MLA fundraisers this year. The first project is going to be announced soon, and we'll be asking each of you for your input to help make it a success.

Please keep watching the website (www.mtlib.org) for updates on these and other Montana Library Association efforts. Stacy Bruhn is the webmaster and with the help of MLA governance will be working to make the website even more useful.

Maya Angelou said "I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw something back," so, thanks to Lyn McKinney, this shall be a year for me to throw something back. I anticipate a rewarding year for MLA and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

Until next time,
Eva English

MLA President

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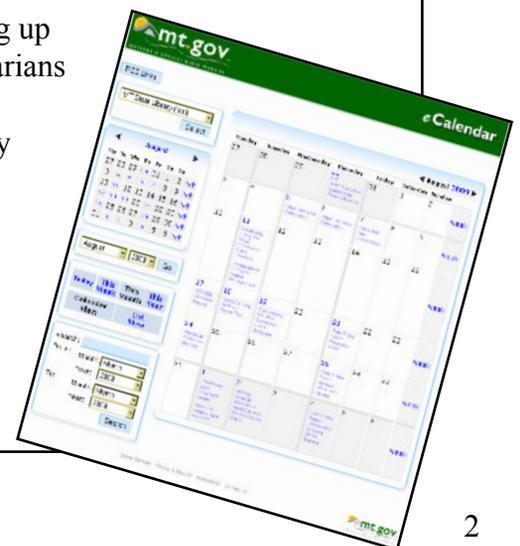
If you are interested in placing an ad, or sponsoring the MLA Focus Newsletter, please send inquires, articles, ads, and reviews to the editor:

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Montana Library Event Calendar

To see what's coming up for libraries and librarians or to post an upcoming event your library is hosting, check out the Montana Library Event Calendar at <http://msl.mt.gov/calendar>.



Montana State Library Happenings

Certification Program Update

As part of the certification update process, Montana librarians and trustees were asked to respond between March 24 and May 31 to a short survey on certification/continuing education.

The results of the survey have been compiled and are available in two different versions: one presents all responses to each survey question (24 page document) and one is a summary of the responses received (11 page document). These documents are available at:

Survey responses: http://msl.mt.gov/For_Librarians/Training/certification/Survey-Master.pdf

Survey summary: http://msl.mt.gov/For_Librarians/Training/certification/Survey-Summary.doc

The Certification Update Focus Group met by phone on June 24th. They discussed the input from the survey (and other sources) and, based on that input, unanimously decided to make changes in the initial certification requirements they proposed in February. Changes include:

- establishing one credit requirement for all certifications (no distinction between initial and subsequent certificates),
- extending the time available to earn certification,
- and adjusting the number of credits required in specific continuing education (ce) categories to give librarians more flexibility.

The Focus Group's recommendations will be discussed at the State Library Commission's August 5th meeting. No action will be taken until at least October to give the public an opportunity to comment.

Comments can be made on 1) wired-mt or 2) by email to State Library staff or Commission mem-

bers. Contact information is available at http://www.msl.mt.gov/About_MSL/contactmsl.asp The Montana State Library would like to thank the members of the Focus Group for their hard work and dedication to updating the certification program. They volunteered for a tough job that required some very difficult decisions. We are grateful for their assistance with the update process during the past few months.



2009 Fall Workshop! September 11-12 in beautiful Great Falls!

The 2009 Fall Workshop will be in Great Falls at the Holiday Inn. A block of rooms has been set aside at the Holiday Inn until August 11th at the state rate of \$70 so please make your reservations now (406-727-7200). To help you plan, the Fall Workshop schedule of sessions is now posted on the MSL webpage: msl.mt.gov/For_Librarians/Training/default.asp Registration will begin in August. As always, there is no registration fee and MSL provides lunch both days.

SWIM Regional Scholarship Grant Receives Funding

Montana State Library is happy to announce that the regional library education scholarship proposal submitted last December has been selected for funding by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. SWIM, which stands for the four participating states (South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho and Montana), will provide scholarships to residents in the region to pursue MLIS degrees and School Library Media Endorsement credentials. At least 10 scholarships will be awarded to Montanans. The official press release and additional information are posted at <http://msl.mt.gov/news/062909.asp> More details will be available on the great career site (<http://msl.mt.gov/greatcareer/>) as the project gears up.

Web 2.0 4 U @ Missoula Public Library

Inspired by the Montana Library 2.0 Challenge, Missoula Public Library recently launched “Web 2.0 4 U,” a program designed to teach patrons the latest and greatest in social networking softwares.



Spearheaded by our own Annie Alger, a 2.0 Challenge graduate, the free self-paced online classes are designed to encour-

age the public to explore Web 2.0 technologies. MPL already has our own blog, tweets, Facebook and MySpace pages.

Now, our patrons can explore and learn about the new Web 2.0 technology, and discover how it can be useful in life and in their relationship with the library. Anyone can participate, whether they are familiar with Web 2.0 or totally new to the social networking world. Web 2.0 4 U explores Communications 2.0, Twitter, social networking sites, RSS feeds and other “cool tools.”

Interested participants start by registering at www.mplweb204u.pbworks.com. They then receive a confirmation email, and can begin a fun, rewarding online experience. We’ve only just started the program so no participation statistics are ready yet, but we’re hoping our residents will discover something new, and recognize the library as the vital community link that it is today.

Creativity Abounds at the Wedsworth Memorial Library

The children around Cascade have been acting up the past few weeks as they danced over to the library each Tuesday to participate in “Be Creative at Your Library”. That has been the theme for his year’s Summer Reading Program, a collaborative effort between forty-four states across the nation, and sponsored by Wedsworth Memorial Library and the Montana Library Association. SRP goals include, motivating children to read and maintain their reading skills, encouraging regular use of the library, and offering experiences through which children learn to work cooperatively.

Attendance was high, averaging 23 Creative Kids each session. Many stories, poems, songs and crafts were enjoyed! We made a list of all the creative pursuits

we could think of and are still adding to it. We studied some art and artists and created a collage mirroring Matisse’s famous “The Snail”. We listened to music, learned that there are seven notes in the musical scale, each represented by a letter, and then we put together a simple instrument. We read a story called “The Naked Lady” about the boy who became an artist and illustrator of books for young people, after being influenced by a sculptor who came to live in his neighborhood. We then created our own sculptures from Play-Doh. Next up was a dramatization of the rhyming story, “The Marvelous Mouse Man”, com-

plete with costumes and masks. Last but not least, we creatively decorated cookies to eat at our wrap-up party where the children also received their certificates of participation and a small prize.



Second annual Library Lock-In at the Montana State University Billings Library

Would you be scared being locked in a library with 20 kids (4th – 6th graders) for an overnight stay? I held the 2nd annual Library Lock-In at the Montana State University Billings Library. Yes, I am an academic librarian. It was promoted as a night of fun! We never stopped moving.



Our evening started with a couple of rounds of link tag followed with sharks and lifeguard parachute game, next we tried to see how far our water balloons would fly with our “canon” water balloon launcher. We stopped for a mere half hour to wolf down some pizza. We then moved on to the traditional water balloon toss with our new friends, which quickly followed with the launching of a few balloons down our waterfall to see if they would survive. You could hear the chants all the way across campus.

As we headed inside, we had to hunt for our glow necklaces within the stacks. As we all started to glow, we played a few rounds of beach volleyball with not one ball but let’s just say that I

think we stopped at 10 balls in the air. We also needed to refuel with a quick bite from the giant cupcakes. Once the sugar rush kicked in, we turned the lights out and started the many rounds of capture the flag in the stacks. All we can see is streaks of color running through the night. After a few more games, we head into our own movie theatre (a classroom which I dragged all the couches into for the night). We watched a few movies and some of us passed out right where we laid, while others moved to sleep in front of the fish tanks. I think the last one passed out by 4am!!!

When the parents arrived at 9am, more than half of us were still sleeping. It is a whirlwind and I walk around the next day as an extra for night of the living dead, but hey the kids remember having fun in the library!!

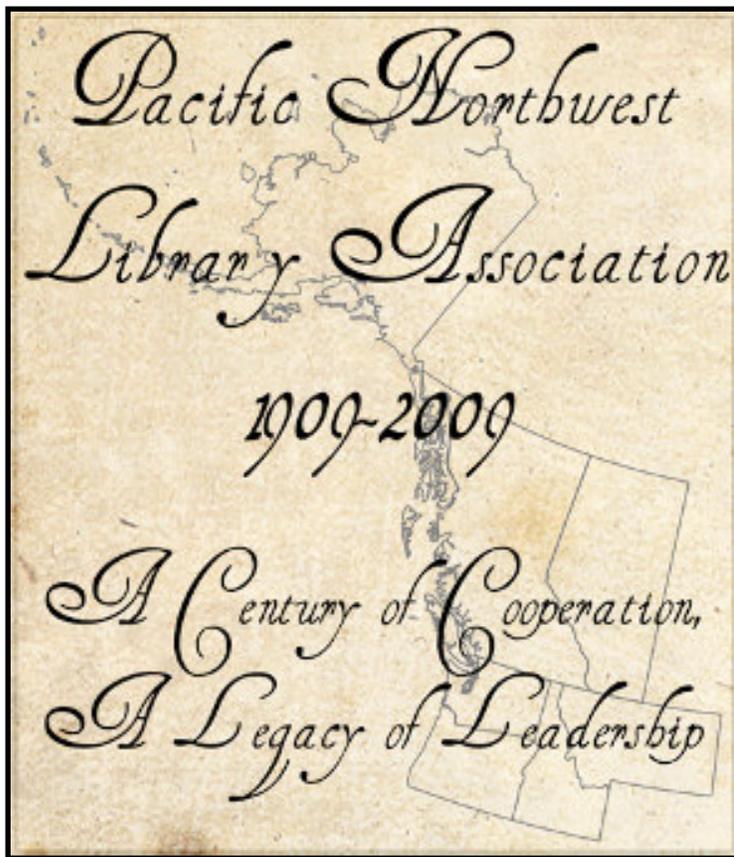


Eileen Wright
MPLA President
Reference Librarian/Archivist
Montana State University Billings Library



Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest.

- Lady Bird Johnson



August 5 - 7, 2009
Holiday Inn- Parkside
Missoula, Montana

- Vendors to meet, visit, and ask questions
 - Corks & Cans
 - Clark Forks River float trip
 - Drum Brothers
 - Dine around Missoula
 - LEADS Raffle for your bidding pleasure
-and the list goes on!

Pacific Northwest Library Association (PNLA) started June, 1909, at a three day conference on the University of Washington – Seattle campus. The first meeting time was devoted to a general discussion of the topic ‘Co-operation of Libraries of the Northwest’. Join us as we celebrate one hundred years of international leadership and co-operation!

- Informative break-out sessions
- Tomas Lipinski – Key Note and Pre-Conference Speaker
- Camila Alire – Incoming ALA President, Friday Luncheon Speaker, Session Presenter
- Sneed B. Collard III – Thursday Author Session
- Jeannette Ingold – Thursday Author Session, Thursday Luncheon Speaker
- Dorothy Hinshaw Patent – Thursday Author Session
- Karma Wilson – Thursday Session

For more PNLA history read Linda Frederiksen's article "A Century of Cooperation: The Pacific Northwest Library Association, 1909 – 2009." PNLA Quarterly Volume 73, no. 4 (Summer2009)
<http://unllib.unl.edu/LPP/PNLA%20Quarterly/PNLAQ73-4.htm>

We hope to see you in Missoula!

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MONTANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION REPORT

PNLA and Regional Events:

- August 5-7, 2009:PNLA's 100th year Celebration
Missoula, MT, Holiday Inn-Parkside
- Sept 30-Oct 3, 2009: Idaho Library Conference
- Nov. 13-15, 2009: PNLA Board Meeting,
Dumas Bay, WA
- February 2010, PNLA Board Meeting,
Dumas Bay, WA
- August 11-13, 2010: PNLA Conference,
Victoria, British Columbia

Committee Reports

1. 2009 PNLA Conference—Missoula, MT. As of July 23rd, 218 attendees have registered. Guest Speakers include Dr. Tomas Lipinski (pre-conference sessions), Jeannette Ingold, Dr. Camila Alire (ALA President), Sneed Collard, Dorothy Hinshaw Patent, and Karma Wilson. Thirty-five sessions and 6 poster participants fill the two-day program. The Drum Brothers will provide entertainment for the 100th year celebration.

The PNLA Basket Raffle will again benefit the PNLA leadership institute. The next LEADS Institute is planned for 2010 at Schweitzer Mountain- Idaho. Social events include whitewater rafting, Corks and Cans, Dine Around Missoula, and the 100th year celebration with the Drum Brothers and cake.

2. 2010 PNLA Conference – Victoria, British Columbia. Joint Conference with Washington Library Association

News Around the Region

Idaho is participating with other states in the following grant programs: Boomer Fellowship

Project - California, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho state libraries will develop and offer a fellowship program to practicing librarians designed to improve library services to Baby Boomers and older adults. NASA Lunar Science Institute - Colorado, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Idaho, and Montana will work with the Southwest Research Institute to develop materials and identify resources for library programs for children ages 8 to 13. SWIM – South Dakota, Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana have formed a collaborative to provide a learning cohort with education scholarships for at least 6 Idaho librarians and 5 school library media specialists beginning the fall of 2010.

Susannah Price, active PNLA officer, recently retired as Youth Services Division Manager at the Boise Public Library.

Submitted by: Mary Lou Mires
PNLA State Representative,
Reference Librarian
D'Arcy McNickle Library,
Salish Kootenai College, Pablo, MT



The Big Read in Billings: *Love Medicine*

The Writer's Voice of the Billings Family YMCA and Parmly Billings Library are pleased

to announce that their partnership has once again been selected as a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant for The Big Read.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services and Arts Midwest. The Big Read brings together partners

across the country to encourage reading for pleasure and enlightenment.

The Big Read will kick off on September 25 at MSU-Billings as a part of the American Indian Heritage Day Celebration. The Big Read will continue programs and workshops at schools, libraries, museums and other public venues in South-Central Montana throughout the month.

The 2009 High Plains BookFest, scheduled for October 2-4, 2009, will also focus on Native and non-native contemporary regional writers, whose works address the culture, history and lives of the Northern Plains Indians.

“Because our Big Read selection is the novel, *Love Medicine*, by Louise Erdrich we are fo-

cusings the 7th annual BookFest on Native American literature, culture, and art—all of which is a vibrant part of our community's heritage and history,” said Corby Skinner, Director of YMCA Writer's Voice.

Billings is one of over 260 communities nationwide participating in this round of Big Read grants. During the fall of 2009 Billings will be invaded by various literary-gearred activities and fun! Among those activities are readings, lectures, book discussion groups, writing workshops and even a film festival! This mini-film festival will show Native American films, such as *Pow-Wow Highway*, *Smoke Signals*, *Skins* and other films by Native American film makers. The films will be shown at the Parmly Billings Library and these and others will also be available to check out.

Bill Cochran, Parmly Billings Library Director, had this to say, “We are happy to be partnering again with The Writer's Voice in The Big Read and are honored to once again be a recipient of this grant. Part of our mission is to ignite a passion for reading, lifelong learning, intellectual pursuits, and community involvement, and The Big Read qualifies on all counts. We encourage as many people in our community as possible to read *Love Medicine* and join in the discussion.”

Libraries and schools in the Billings region interested in participating with us in The Big Read should contact: Corby Skinner, 406-248-1685 ext 231 corbyskinner@yahoo.com



Author Louise Erdrich



Louise Erdrich Wins 2009 High Plains Book EMERITUS Award

Graduate of both Dartmouth and John Hopkins University, Native American author Louise Erdrich has been named the 2009 Emeritus Award Writer, one of the annual High Plains Book Awards sponsored by the Parmlly Billings Library.



The ceremony and banquet is scheduled for Friday, October 2, 2009, in Billings and the public is encouraged to attend. Information is available at www.billings.lib.mt.us.

In her journey as an author, Erdrich has penned twelve novels, multiple volumes of poetry, children's books and even a memoir about her early motherhood experiences. Her novel, *The Plague of Doves*, appeared on The New York Time's Best Seller list and *Love Medicine*, her debut book, won the National Book Critics Award.

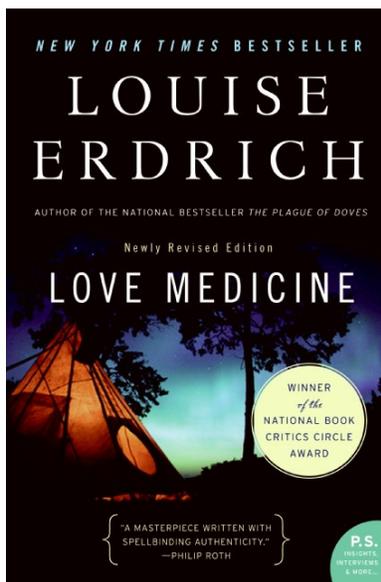
Born in 1954, in Little Falls, Minnesota, Erdrich grew up in Wahpeton, North Dakota where her parents worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Her Chippewa background and Indian reservation experiences have greatly influenced her writing. In her powerful first award-winning novel, Erdrich introduces several generations in the interrelated families living in and around a Chippewa or Ojibwa reservation near the fictional town of Argus, North Dakota.

Spanning the half-century from 1934 through 1984, the novel is told through the voices of a series of vivid characters, mostly Chippewa men

and women who are caught up in the emotional tangle of their families' histories, but who struggle to gain some control over their lives. Sometimes compared to Faulkner's multi-narrated family sagas, *Love Medicine* creates an intense vision of a world that is at once violent and tender, ugly and lyrical, realistic and gothic.

At their best, the separate stories that make up the novel convey the subtle pressures upon the souls of people who are culturally mixed—of those whose lives are shaped by both Native American and non-Indian values, habits, and customs.

Other High Plains Book Awards to be announced at the Awards Banquet include winners in Best Fiction, Best Nonfiction and Best First Book categories and the Zonta Woman Writer Award. The Native American theme of this year's event is derived from *Love Medicine*. Concurrent with the Parmlly Billings Library Book Awards is the 7th annual High Plains BookFest sponsored by the YMCA Writer's Voice. For information on the BookFest, contact Corby Skinner corby@skinnerbenoit.com.



The Parmlly Billings High Plains Books Awards have been established to recognize regional authors and/or literary works which examine and reflect life on the High Plains including the states of Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, and Kansas, and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.

The 2009 High Plains BookFest, scheduled for October 2-4, 2009, will also focus on Native and non-native contemporary regional writers, whose works address the culture, history and lives of the Northern Plains Indians.

The BookFest and The Big Read are designed to engage new audiences, and foster conversations about how literature addresses the challenges, rewards and many unique aspects of Native American life.