

MONTANA LIBRARY FOCUS

MONTANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2011 VOL. 29 ISSUE 1

President's Letter

I have just returned from a couple visits to our fine state capital, Helena. As I'm sure you are all aware the legislature is in full swing, hence my winter travel to Helena. What an interesting process it all is – School House Rock did not do it justice, even if he was a cute little rolled up piece of paper. I want to give a special thanks to all who came to Helena for testimonial purposes and for the Legislative Night at the State Library. And a special thanks to all the representatives and senators who came to the event. I had many interesting conversations, some even library related.

I was going to go on about the law making practices, but instead I am going to mention something that came to my attention today and it has me all riled up. The library director in Enfield, CT was forced to pull the showing of "Sicko" through intimidation and threats from the town council and mayor. Deputy Mayor Nelson has some especially disheartening comments. You can watch the whole thing unfold on the Town of Enfield website on their E-TV section. It is sad that the town council didn't use this as an educational opportunity and generate some healthy debate instead of shutting things down. The suggestion was even made several times that the library should at least show an opposing side. At one point the mayor made the comment that he wants the library to stay away from politics. Seems to me that the library is not where the politics started. I had my blood pressure checked this morning and it was low, so I will stop now before I need it checked again.

Annual conference is coming up soon. I hope many people can attend and take advantage of all the fantastic educational topics that will be presented. Besides the fun of learning, there are many other opportunities to kick up your heels. Billings Buzz will consist of beer samplings at Carter's Brewery. MSU- Billings Library is generously hosting the Montana Book Award Reception on Thursday night. Membership dinner offerings sound scrumptious, so plan to attend on Friday night. Hurry and register so you don't miss this gathering of great minds.



Samantha Pierson, MLA President

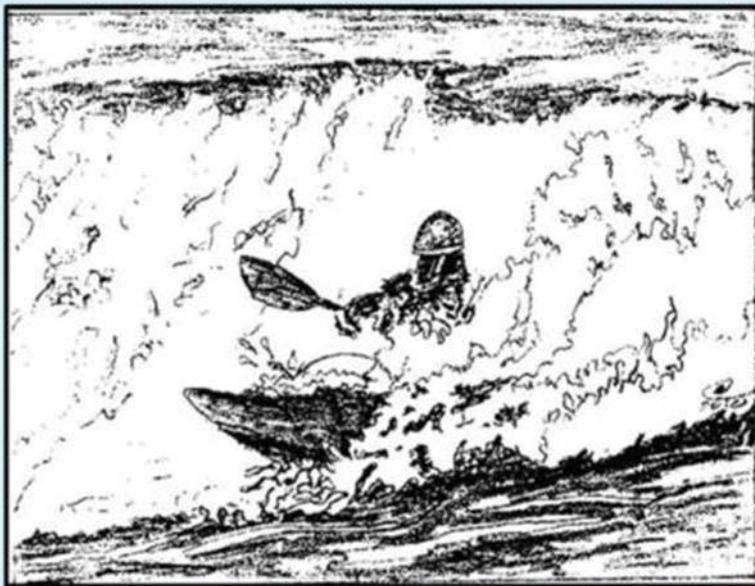


Libraries...
Montana Library Association
Mountain Plains Library Association
Conference

Billings
April 6-9, 2011

The road to everywhere

PACIFIC NORTHWEST LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



“Navigating the River of Change”

2011 Annual Conference

- Web 2.0 and beyond
- Navigating change
- Dealing with budget cuts
- Promoting your library
- Children's/YA Programming in the digital age
- All topics will be reviewed!

2011 Annual Conference

Spokane, WA  August 3-5

Doubletree Hotel – Downtown

<http://www.pnla.org/events/conference2011/index.html>

Montana Library Focus

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

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M.L.A. WANTS YOU!

MLA wants you and you need MLA. Please consider running for one of these available offices:

* Vice President/President-Elect * MPLA Representative and Director at Large-East

Serving in one of these positions is a valuable experience both personally and professionally and I encourage everyone to consider running for an office.

If you or someone you know would like to volunteer please contact Eva English, MLA Past-President, at (406) 353-2607, ext. 262 or email her at evaenglish@yahoo.com. Thank you!

MPLA News

By Pam Henley,
MPLA Representative
Bozeman Public Library

It's time to renew your MPLA membership! Membership runs on the calendar year, so renew now and maximize your investment. Not a member yet? First-time membership is half-price - another reason to join now. MPLA offers grant money for a variety of projects, usually requiring membership for at least a calendar year prior to applying, so if you're interested in attending workshops, conferences, or taking classes in the future, get your membership started now! Information is available on the MPLA website: <http://www.mpla.us/index.html>

Also on the website is a link to the jobline RSS feed so you can check on available jobs around the region. Click the link to a job posting to get more information.

Become the next MPLA representative and have the chance to travel to the next 3 conferences. Upcoming destinations are Nebraska, South Dakota and Arizona, all in the fall so there is no conflict with MLA's spring conference. Interested? Contact Eva English at (406) 353-2607, ext. 262 or email her at evaenglish@yahoo.com

It's the "Giving" time of year for MLA's Professional Development Committee

Two Grant opportunities for MLA members come around this time of year: Professional Development and MLA Conference Travel Grants.

Professional Development:

Is there a Regional or National conference calling you to attend? Do you want to reinvigorate your practice? MLA provides grants for personal Professional Development twice a year, with the deadline for this round on April 1st. It is not a difficult process, and your chances of getting a grant are good.

To assist you in mulling over the possibilities, here's the link to ALA's conferences and events page: <http://tinyurl.com/6dugntj>

MLA Conference Travel Grants:

Have you connected with your peers at MLA's State Conference lately? Or have you been waiting for your first-ever? Attending MLA's Conference in April is rejuvenating, but Montana is a big state and it can be difficult for our far-flung friends to get there. Enter MLA's Conference Travel Grants. If

you haven't had a Travel Grant in the last two years, and if you live at least 50 miles from the conference site (Billings), go to MLA's website (linked below) to make sure you meet requirements and apply. We really want to see you at the conference!

Information on these two grant opportunities and others are online at MLA's website: <http://tinyurl.com/6heghmc>

Applications for Grants are handy, right on the bottom of the page. Questions? Call Mary Drew Powers, Chair, Professional Development Committee at 406-657-8258 (Parmly Billings Reference Desk) or email powersmd@ci.billings.mt.us Hope to be hearing from you!

Learning About Our Users

By Kate Zoellner, Maureen and Mike Mansfield
Library, The University of Montana-Missoula

In September, Teresa Keenan and I attended the Faculty Research Behavior workshop sponsored by CLIR (Council on Library and Information Resources) and led by Nancy Foster, Lead Anthropologist at the University of Rochester-River Campus Libraries. Foster is co-author of the 2007 publication *Studying Students: Undergraduate Research Project at the University of Rochester*. Her study used ethnographic research methods to document students' work practices in an attempt to answer the question "What do students really do when they write their research papers?"



Kate and Teresa enjoying the colorful chairs at Harvard Yard.

During the workshop we were introduced to using ethnographic methods with the purpose of understanding faculty work practices to determine how we as librarians and libraries can best address their needs. We conducted structured observations and learned interviewing methods including how to ask good questions, take notes, and use videotaping in the process. We then put our new knowledge into action through the exercise of conducting interviews with faculty at the host institution, writing up our

findings, and analyzing and interpreting the results.

While the workshop focused on an academic setting, the use of ethnographic methods can be employed by all types of libraries and librarians to strategize outreach, design facilities, and more. Below are some recommended resources to learn more about the exciting work in this area.

Feel free to contact me
you have questions!

Recommended
resources:

ERIAL Project (2011).
*Ethnographic research
in Illinois academic
libraries: A project
funded by the Illinois
state library.*

Retrieved from <http://www.erialproject.org/>

Given, L. M., & Leckie, G. J. (2003). "Sweeping" the library: Mapping the social activity space of the public library. *Library and Information Science Research*, 25(4), 365-385.

McGregor, J., & Williamson, K. (2005). Appropriate use of information at the secondary school level: Understanding and avoiding plagiarism. *Library and Information Science Research*, 27(4), 496-512.

Used Book Sale a Success

The Wedsworth Memorial Library in Cascade held its Used Book Sale on January 8th and 9th. This is the fourth year for the event, which has seen ever increasing success. Because the current library building is too small to accommodate the sale, Wedsworth Hall, one block south was used. There, tables were piled high with hard-bounds, paper backs, audio and video offerings, both fiction and nonfiction in every genre from Fantasy to Finance. In addition, patrons could sit and visit while enjoying a lunch of homemade bread, soups, cookies and beverages provided, for a small donation, by the Library's Board of Trustees. Then they were encouraged to browse and buy some more!

The two day event netted over \$1,400 for the Wedsworth Memorial Library's expansion project, which finally began this Fall.



Photograph courtesy of the Cascade Courier

Montana State Library News

By Sue Jackson,
Montana State Library

Montana Certification Program for Library Directors, Staff & Trustees

In January 2010, the updated certification program was launched by Montana State Library. In the first year of the program, more than 50 certificates were awarded to individuals meeting the new requirements. We're very excited to announce that this includes 5 public library trustees! Congratulations to you all!

If you're interested in the certification program, the details and forms are on the MSL website: <http://tinyurl.com/6bxprt6> With the master CE list and the online tracking form, we think it's easier than ever to participate.

Connecting to Collections Preservation Survey

Thanks to all the libraries that responded to the MT Connecting to Collections (CTC) online survey. The data collected from the survey (from public/academic/special libraries, archives, historical societies, local governments, and museums) will be used to develop statewide preservation strategies for historical materials held by Montana's cultural institutions. The compiled data and the final preservation

report will be available in the spring. The CTC project is funded by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Teleconference Series Available for MT Librarians

Through a statewide subscription purchased by the State Library, all Montana librarians and trustees have free access to the 2011 College of DuPage Teleconference Series. The upcoming programs are:

April 8: Cataloging: New Perspectives

To have access to the programs, just register online at <http://tinyurl.com/6gvny2p> You'll receive an email before each program with details on connecting. Enjoy the programs!

2010 Collection Management Honor Roll

Each year the Montana State Library Commission recognizes libraries that are dedicated to sharing resources through the Collection Management Honor Roll. The 2010 Honor Roll will be announced at the Awards Luncheon at the MLA Conference in April in Billings.

Montana Shared Catalog New Library Application for 2011

The 2010 Montana Shared Catalog New Library Application is now available and can be downloaded by clicking on or entering this link in your web browser: <http://tinyurl.com/5urnbtb>

Why should your library consider joining the MSC? For starters, the MSC now includes more than 130 multi-type libraries from across the state, serving public patrons, school and college students and faculty, medical professionals and state agency staff. MSC members include your colleagues statewide. These people work together in areas of collection development, resource sharing, best cataloging practices and the delivery of electronic and digital materials. The strength of sharing a system allows the consortium to consider group purchases. Joining forces, this group is well prepared to meet and greet the technological challenges and changes ahead for all of us. A “FAQ” (Frequently Asked Questions) containing more in-

formation concerning the advantages of belonging to the MSC, along with other MSC information, is available for download on the MSC web page at <http://tinyurl.com/6j3dt9p>

The 2011 MSC new library application deadline is February 22, 2011. This will be the only application period for 2011. Implementation schedules will depend upon the library type, number of libraries selected to join and the MSC Staff workload. LSTA funds will be made available to cover most, if not all, the vendor startup costs. The amount of LSTA funding available for this purpose will depend upon the number, type and size of the libraries selected to join during this application period.

Contact Ken Adams at 406-444-3004 or email kadams@mt.gov for more information.

In the Wake of the Cyclone: Libraries in Myanmar

By Bill Cochran,
Director
Parmly Billings Library

Although little covered at the time in Western media, Cyclone Nargis left a trail of almost unfathomable devastation across southern Myanmar when it hit in May 2008. To put it in some perspective, Hurricane Katrina and Nargis each destroyed the homes of a million people, but while Katrina resulted in 1,836 deaths, Nargis killed an estimated 140,000. The entire infrastructure of the Irrawaddy Delta region that bore the brunt of the storm was damaged so badly that it still is only beginning the process of rebuilding.

Nargis Library Recovery (NLR) is one of a limited number of non-governmental organizations from outside Myanmar that has received permission to assist in that rebuilding process. NLR was founded by John Badgley, a University of Montana graduate, who first went to what was then known as Burma on a Fulbright Fellowship in 1957. Although a health emergency kept him from participating in the trip, Badgley orga-

nized a 10-day tour of Myanmar in early December 2010, to visit libraries already assisted by NLR and to develop plans for future library relief efforts.

I joined the tour, as one of seven members from the U.S., and we were accompanied during different segments of the trip by three Myanmar citizens. Although we took time to see sights such as the Shwedegon Pagoda in Yangon and the Royal Palace in Mandalay, it was a working trip. My itinerary included visits to 19 libraries and the offices of two non-governmental organizations which are assisting with the rebuilding and support of libraries. Each visit included interviews with staff, taking pictures, and in most cases, checking the materials that NLR and the Myanmar Book and Preservation Foundation had provided. We dedicated a new library building in Thingangone, a community in the Irrawaddy Delta, which had lost its previous library as Nargis passed directly through.

Everywhere we went, we asked people to try to explain the seeming contradiction that, while Myanmar is an extremely underdeveloped nation, ranking near the bottom on most measures of so-

In the Wake of the Cyclone: Libraries in Myanmar

cial welfare, it has a very high literacy rate of 90%, comparable to Brazil. Almost always, we heard that high literacy rates are the result of the long-standing practice of Buddhist monasteries providing food and education to children who can't afford to attend a government-supported school and the near total equality of women since Burma became independent from Britain in 1948. Unlike in many other underdeveloped countries, girls almost always receive an education, usually comparable to that of boys, and, in turn, ensure that their children also are educated.

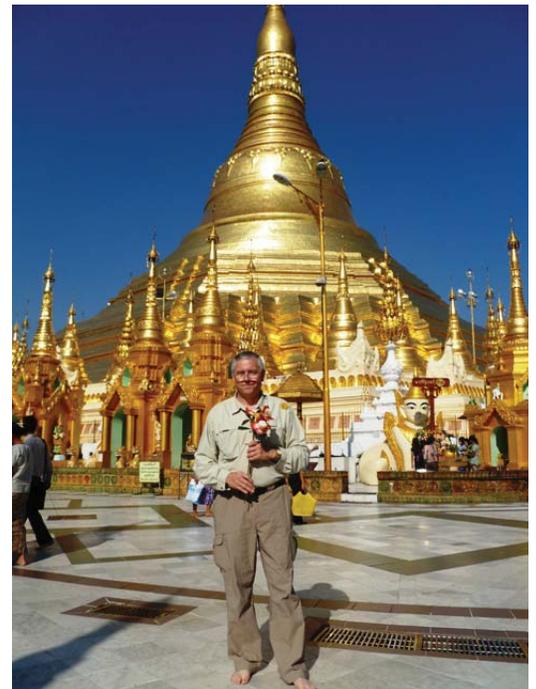
Whether attached to a school or serving as a public library, nearly all libraries are open to the public for in-house use, but charge a membership fee ranging from 1,000 to 5,000 kyats, or about \$1.20 to \$6.00, per year, for the privilege of checking out one or two items at a time for one or two weeks. In the cities of Yangon and Mandalay, there is relatively strong demand for English language materials, but little interest in the Delta, where collections and education focus on literacy in Burmese. Slow-speed internet access is available,

sometimes for a fee, in libraries in the cities, but there is little or no internet access anywhere in the Delta. We were in Myanmar in historic times, about four weeks after the country's first elections in 20 years, a couple of weeks after Aung San Suu Kyi had been released from her most recent house arrest. We arrived in the country the day after Joseph Yun, U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, who was the first high-level official to visit in years. He met both with 'The Lady', as Aung San Suu Kyi is universally called in Myanmar, and the Tatmadaw, the group of generals who rule the country, to encourage dialogue toward a more democratic society.

I am hoping to share more information about my trip at the Montana Library Association Annual Conference in Billings; stay tuned for more details. Also, I would be interested in hearing from anyone who would be interested in working with me to organize an Interest Group to provide financial or other support to Nargis Library Recovery during the three years it expects to be working on library relief, or in any other manner. Contact me at CochranB@ci.billings.mt.us.



In the Bogalay Tint Aung Library in Bogalay in the Irrawaddy Delta. Bill Cochran (right), with Daw Ah Win, a native of Bogalay and now a Librarian with the United Nations in Vienna (second from left), and the staff of the library.



Bill Cochran at the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon.



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