

# MONTANA LIBRARY FOCUS

MONTANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2015 VOL. 33 ISSUE 2

## *Message from the President*

In the August 2014 Focus, I shared with you MLA's strategic plan for 2014-2015. The plan was created during the Board retreat last June and was developed after a review of the 2011-2014 strategic plan; we identified goals that still needed work and created a guiding document for the year. Strategic plans are always aspirational but are very helpful in keeping an organization on track—that's a nice way of saying that we met some goals but still need to work on or tweak others! Here are a few highlights:

Under the *Vibrant, Growing Membership* goal, the Board instituted a **Permanent Retirement Membership** option. This allows our retired members to stay on board for a one-time payment and provides an incentive for those who wish to remain active post retirement.

SLD co-chairs, Dana Carmichael and Niki Keuch, are actively working on plans to increase **SLD membership**. The Board is currently discussing a proposal to make it easier for school librarians to renew their memberships; that proposal will also be on the agenda for the upcoming Board meeting.

*Maintaining an Effective Legislative Voice* is another major MLA goal. The Board worked with the government affairs committee to develop this year's legislative priorities. This committee, led by the fabulous Judy Hart and with the support of the Montana State Library, also organized a very successful legislative day and continues working with our lobbyist as the session continues.

Another MLA goal is *Efficient Administration*. This can be a struggle in a volunteer organization but we are continuing to refine our processes to make it a reality. We are lucky to have a great Executive Director, Debbi Kramer, who helps us keep on track both organizationally and financially. The Board has just implemented a template for Board member and committee chair reports that promises to make those reports more consistent. A review of the by-laws has also been conducted and suggested revisions will come before the members at the April 10 membership meeting.

The goal of an *Up-to-date Website* is definitely aspirational (as with all websites, continual updating and continual improvement just part of business-as-usual). However, several important and time-consuming projects were completed this year. Our online payment system was moved to PayPal, a project that took much more time than anticipated because of some unexpected technical issues. All of the web support for the annual conference also had to be re-created because the previous years' materials were part of the conference planners' website, not ours. Thanks go to webmaster Stacy Bruhn and Debbi Kramer for implementing these changes.

Finally, I think we've met the goal of holding an *Invigorating & Hot Conference!* You should all be getting excited about coming to Bozeman for the **2015 MLA Annual Conference**. The keynote speaker is Barbara Jones, the director of ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom. Your conference steering committee members—Carmen Clark, Kari Eliason and Mary Guthmiller—have been working tirelessly to make this a conference to remember.

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Sheila Bonnard, MLA President



## Montana Library Association

*Montana's Libraries from the Mountains to Plains*

The conference schedule has been really changed up. MLA awards, one of the more important events at conference, will now be presented at our Friday night dinner, instead of at lunch. Not only does this give it a more prominent position, it also makes it easier for friends and family of award winners to attend. Division meetings will now take place at lunch instead of early morning (hooray!). We hope this change will increase attendance and also make these meetings more productive and less rushed. The **MLA membership meeting** will be part of the reception before the awards dinner on April 10. No excuses for not attending this short but important meeting! You can meet members of the Board as well as the candidates for open Board positions. We will also be voting on revised MLA by-laws. MLA is only as strong as its members—your participation is vital so please plan on attending.

## MPLA Updates

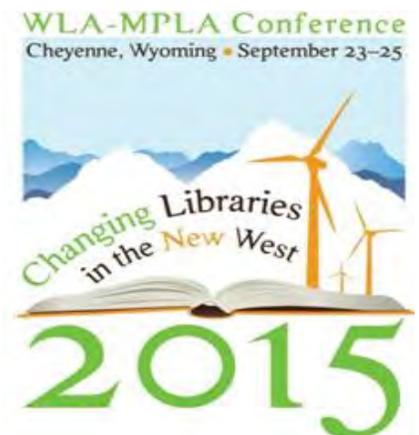
By Eileen Wright,  
MPLA Representative



The Wyoming and Mountain Plains Library Associations are calling for programming/papers for the 2015 joint conference to be held at Little America in Cheyenne, Wyoming; the due date for program proposals is May 1, 2015. We look forward to receiving program proposals that support the conference theme—*Changing Libraries in the New West*. The URL to the conference submission site is <https://survey.uwyo.edu/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=82K1m73H>

Even if you don't want to present, still plan to attend and enjoy fun times with your MPLA friends. You don't want to miss the Hot Tub Roundtable with our famous rubber duckies who always make an appearance. Remember if you need money to attend the MPLA conference or another professional conference, workshop, seminar, or training, Professional Development money is available for MPLA members. For full details, check out this link: <http://www.mpla.us/quick-links/grants.html>

If you haven't joined MPLA yet, remember that your first year is half off. Visit <http://mpla.us/services/membership/> to join. If you have any questions about MPLA, please don't hesitate to contact your MPLA Representative (Eileen) at [ewright@msubillings.edu](mailto:ewright@msubillings.edu).



*Changing Libraries in the New West*, the joint WLA and MPLA Conference will take place in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

## PNLA Updates

By Della Dubbe,  
PNLA Representative



Save the date for the PNLA 2015 Annual Conference—*Pushing the Boundaries*—on August 5-7, 2015 in Vancouver, WA. The 2015 Conference hotel is the Hilton Vancouver. Please visit their site for more information or to place a reservation: <http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/P/PDXVAHH-PNL-20150804/index.jhtml>.

### Important Conference Dates:

Registration opens: March 20

Early Registration deadline: July 3

Regular registration deadline: July 31

Go to the PNLA conference website to find info about keynote speakers. More information will be available as we get closer: <http://pnla.memberclicks.net/conference-2015>

**Join PNLA** to attend the conference at a reduced rate, <http://pnla.memberclicks.net/membership>, but remember that if your library has an institutional membership, they can send as many librarians as they would like.

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Yearly cost is \$50 for individual membership, \$150 for institutional membership.

**PNLA Leads** information and application materials are up on the PNLA site, <http://www.pnla.org/leadership-institute>. Take a look and consider applying for this highly acclaimed leadership institute.

**The PNLA Quarterly**, with Jan Zauha and Leila Sterman at the helm as editors, has published its Fall 2014 issue. You will find many wonderful peer reviewed articles including many sparked by the PNLA Conference 2014 in Helena. Take time to read this issue, and I'm sure you will be duly impressed.

## School Library Division Report

By Dana Carmichael,  
MLA School Library Division co-chair

January 24, Dana Carmichael attended the MEA-MFT Conference planning session in Billings, MT. MEA-MFT has generously budgeted \$600 toward an MLA presence at the teachers conference, as it has for many years. This year we've agreed to partner with MATELA and MWP to host Alan Sitomer as a keynote speaker and session presenter. Mr. Sitomer writes realistic YA fiction. A former teacher of English in California for many years, his perspective is often very sympathetic to the difficult choices teens face on a daily basis with a celebration of students who chose to do the right thing. MLA will also partner with MWP to provide a hospitality room for school librarians. Be prepared to go on a treasure hunt, because we usually end up somewhere over the rainbow. The conference should be quite dynamic this year, as planners spent a great deal of time talking about updates such as poster sessions and presentations by vendors often found at national conventions. Fun fact: MEA-MFT draws approximately 3,000 teachers together annually. It is the largest teachers conference west of the Mississippi.

Niki Keuch and Dana Carmichael, SLD co-chairs, have spent the last few months revisiting the SLD bylaws and examining the role of MLA in school libraries. Mostly that means we've asked a lot of questions, both rhetorical and procedural. With help from Sheila Bonnard, Colet Bartow, and the WIRED bunch we've come to realize that teacher-librarian membership is not what it should be. One of the reasons for this decline we suspect is the timing of the dues deadline. September is the first pay period for teachers after a long unpaid summer drought. Having been a late dues payer myself, I can attest to Debbi Kramer's willingness to accept dues right up to conference time. So, if you are thinking about joining late—please do. This hurdle is so small, attaching MLA dues to the MEA-MFT online conference registration in October may help. Unfortunately, MEA-MFT will only allow a flat rate to be added to their registration. From the questions and thoughts posted on WIRED, it should be an interesting discussion at the board meeting.

In our quest for knowledge, we've sent out a teacher-librarian survey directly related to professional memberships and available networks. We will share the results of this survey at the SLD meeting during April's conference. As my two-year term comes to an end, I am confident that Niki Keuch is moving the School Library Division in the right direction. I look forward to continuing my membership in MLA. I love being a librarian so much I sometimes feel it's the best kept secret of the professional world.

## Lewis & Clark Library Celebrates National Poetry Month

By Patricia C. Spencer,  
Program Information Officer  
Lewis and Clark Library

Celebrate National Poetry Month at the Lewis & Clark Library with two fabulous annual events! The first event, Poetry on Fire will take place Wednesday, April 29 at 7:00 p.m. Poets in 6-12 grade will arrive at 6:30 p.m. to register for the 9th annual LCL Teens Poetry Slam. The public is welcome.



The Lewis & Clark Library Foundation will celebrate National Poetry Month by hosting its 7th annual Community Leaders Poetry Reading on Tuesday, April 28 at 7:00 p.m. in the second-floor Ambrose Reading Room. The Lewis & Clark Library Foundation is a local nonprofit dedicated to making a great library even better.

**Competition!**

**Laughs!**

**Join us for the Cates  
fundraising event!**

Friday, April 10, 2015, 8:15 p.m.

In the Atrium

*We put the fun in fundraising!*

**Celebrities!**

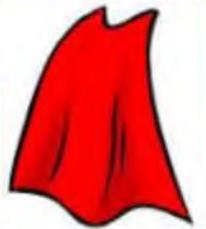
**Excitement!**

# Scholarship SQUARES

\$12 at the door!

And don't forget to visit the Cates Silent Auction room for great stuff! It's in the Aspen Room at the GranTree!

Get Caped for Cates!  
Look for members of the Cates Committee running around with capes at conference!



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**All proceeds from the above go to the Cates scholarship for librarians!**

## Lewis & Clark Middle School Library Pop-up Makerspace

By Elizabeth Waddington,  
Librarian

Lewis and Clark Middle School Library, Billings

A big shout out to the Montana State Library for providing the portable Makerspace goods. It was like a birthday to open the trunk and pull out circuit kits, paints, duct tape, more circuits, crochet hooks, knitting needles, and yes, even a sewing machine!

We held a Meet the Makerspace Lunch & Learn the week we unpacked the trunk. Students signed a responsibility contract (based on one in the LEGO brick kits) and indicated their top 3 choices on a survey. We created purple passes with date spans for specific activities. The students can come down before school most days and during their lunch if we are not scheduled for teaching. LEGO kits are always available, but we staggered the other activities so that we could continue being a school library for class projects.

We cleared magazine display shelves to set up labeled pop flats for supplies for each activity. We also used the boxes for unfinished projects.

March 4 the VISTA volunteer Denise Blike and her assistant from the Billings Public Library teen TECH (Teaching Education and Creating Hub) came for a Lunch & Learn to share their program and special events for Teen Tech Week.

During Teen Tech week we had the Makerspace open for Circuits, Duct Tape, and textiles. Students could choose from patterns selected for “forgiveness” in final product (stuffie monsters, hedgehogs, etc. as well as a couple simple quilt squares). We created QR code sheets for instructions which included youtube videos (chosen because they were kid created). Because the library does not have dedicated digital devices, we invited the students to use their own to access the instructions. Classes from a flipped classroom social studies teacher, Jamie Jarvis, came two days in a row. It was so cool to see them engaged and helping each other test the limits of each kit. We had lights flashing, bells buzzing, game controllers out of playdough, a radio receiver, a helicopter, and more. Some of the kids came back the next day hoping class was going to be in the library again! Talk about creating a culture of learning and making!

A few lessons learned:

- Conductive and insulating “play dough” had to be made for the Squishy Circuits, but you can’t make it too far ahead of time because it molds!
- You can never have too much duct tape.
- Two sewing machines are not enough (we brought in a third one).
- Knitting needles and crochet hooks need only be one size—big!
- Plastic lidded storage tubs would corral small parts better than a pop flat.

In the next week or so we’ll be putting up photos and files of our nitty gritty forms/instructions/patterns via the Lewis Library website: <https://sites.google.com/a/billingsschools.org/lewis-clark-middle-school-library/>

I’ll be at MLA to answer questions. I’ll be the one with “seemed like such a good idea at the time” stamped on her forehead.



Students show off their maker projects at the Lewis & Clark Middle School Library in Billings. The Makerspace Kit was borrowed through the Montana State Library.

## ImagineIF Library Foundation Welcomes New Executive Director

By Kim Crowley,  
Director  
ImagineIF Libraries

Sarah Johnson began as executive director of the ImagineIF Library Foundation March 9. She will spearhead the Foundation's mission to enhance and support the programs, facilities and patron services of ImagineIF Libraries.

Johnson is a small business owner, attorney and long-time advocate and volunteer for nonprofit organizations. She is a graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law and received her undergraduate degree in public policy studies from Duke University. Along with her husband, Renny, Johnson co-owns Montana Adventure Sports, a bicycle retail and services store they have operated in Bigfork since 2012. Prior to opening their shop, Johnson was a litigation attorney at Diamond Baker Mitchell LLP in Grass Valley, California. She currently resides in Kalispell with her husband and three children.



ImagineIF Foundation Director Sarah Johnson with Foundation President Carla Fisher and Library Power User Hazel Fisher at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Loud at the Library Fundraiser.

The ImagineIF Library Foundation raises and accepts funds for projects and services not covered by the county library system's operating budget. In the past three years it has provided more than \$150,000 in support for ImagineIF libraries in Bigfork, Columbia Falls, Kalispell and Marion. "We are thrilled to have Sarah on board," said Library Foundation President Carla Fisher. "Her enthusiasm and excitement for the mission of ImagineIF Libraries will help to expand the scope of our fundraising efforts in the coming months and years."

Johnson jumped in with both feet to coordinate the Foundation's 6th annual Loud at the Library Fundraiser held on March 19. With only nine days on the job, she pulled off the most successful Loud event to date. With Johnson's leadership, the ImagineIF Library Foundation will work to assist the Flathead County Library Board, staff, and other library support organizations to improve library services throughout the county.

## Big Read Kicks Off with "Wednesdays with Willa"

By Dee Ann Redman,  
Assistant Director  
Billings Public Library

Beginning in April, The Writer's Voice and Billings Public Library will be kicking off the Big Read program featuring Willa Cather's beloved American novel *My Ántonia*. The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts dedicated to encouraging reading and celebrating the power of literature to transform lives.

"Few books pack so much vibrantly genuine life into their pages as *My Ántonia*," says Corby Skinner, director of the Writer's Voice. "It is a classic novel of the American immigrant experience, teeming with romance, tenderness, cruelty, comedy, and tragedy—all bustling side by side in a narrative at once compassionate and gripping."

The six weeks of events will include lectures, book discussions, and writing workshops. Programming will run from April 15 to May 30. Teachers and book groups are invited to come to Billings Public Library to receive free copies of the novel.



Author Willa Cather.

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Copies of *My Antonia* are now available at Billings Public Library. Pick up your free book and sign up for a book discussion beginning April 20. All the book discussions are led by a local scholar and are free and open to the public.

A weekly lectures series, “Wednesdays with Willa” invites award-winning contemporary women writers and others to reflect on the influence of Willa Cather and present a selection of their own work. Lectures will be in the Common Room of the Billings Public Library every Wednesday from April 15 to May 30 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Lectures are free and open to the public.

- **April 15:** Montana Poet Laureate Tammy Haaland will discuss the late MSU Billings professor Sue Hart’s research and writing on Cather’s novels.
- **April 22:** a viewing of the American Master’s documentary “Willa Cather: The Road is All,” courtesy of WNET, and panel discussion with authors Bernie Quetchenbach and Cara Chamberlain.
- **April 29:** “‘Geography of the Heart’ Willa Cather and the Legacy of Western Women Writers.” Willa Cather Award winner Carolyn Patterson will provide a survey of Montana women writers, from early Native American writers to contemporary poets, memoirists and novelists.
- **May 6:** A reading by Willa Cather Award winner Julene Bair. Bair will discuss Cather as well as her own award-winning memoirs *The Ogallala Road*, *A Memoir of Love and Reckoning* and *One Degree West: Reflections of a Plainsdaughter*.
- **May 13:** A reading by Willa Cather Award winner Sandra Dallas. New York Times best-selling author Sandra Dallas, the author of thirteen adult novels, two young reader novels, and ten nonfiction books, dubbed “a quintessential American voice” by Jane Smiley, in *Vogue Magazine* will be reading from her work.
- **May 20:** Christene Meyers will present “‘Lilian’s Last Dance’—Exploring the Immigrant Experience in the West.” Award-winning reporter and arts writer Christene Meyers will read from her newly published novel.

## MSU Library Trout and Salmonid Lecture Series presents Trout Unlimited President and CEO Chris Wood

By Angela Tate,  
Program Coordinator  
Montana State University Library

The MSU Library Trout and Salmonid Lecture Series is pleased to present Chris Wood, president and CEO of the national chapter of Trout Unlimited, as the 2015 speaker.

Wood will present “Changing the World: One Trout at a Time” on Thursday, April 23 at 7:00 p.m. at the Museum of the Rockies Hager Auditorium in Bozeman. A reception will follow the lecture.

Wood is the President and CEO of the National Chapter of Trout Unlimited, which is the largest and one of the most active cold water conservation organizations in the world. Before coming to TU in 2001, Wood served as the senior policy and communications advisor to the chief of the US Forest Service and had also worked for the Bureau of Land Management. In addition to speaking on conservation issues around the country, leading TU, and advising on trout friendly legislation at the state and federal levels, Chris has found the time to author or co-author three books on conservation, stream management and watershed restoration.

Thanks to contributions from generous donors, this event is free and open to the public.

Each year, the MSU Trout and Salmonid Lecture Series hosts a world-renowned speaker and offers a free lecture event to the MSU and Bozeman communities on the general subject of trout and salmonid studies.



Chris Wood, president and CEO of the national chapter of Trout Unlimited.



**From the 2015 MLA Planning Committee:** Haven't registered for the MLA conference? Never fear, you can still get in on the incredible learning opportunities, excellent networking possibilities, great vendor exhibits, wine tasting, historic downtown Bozeman tour, and of course, the Cates events! Hurry, offer ends soon! The website you ask?

<http://mtlib.org/2015Conference/default.asp>

See you in Bozeman!

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Rebekah Kamp  
Youth Services Librarian  
Belgrade Community Library  
Phone: (406)388-4346  
Email: [rkamp@mtlib.org](mailto:rkamp@mtlib.org)

Please send address changes to:  
Debbi Kramer,  
Executive Assistant  
Montana Library Association  
PO Box 1352  
Three Forks, MT 59752  
Phone: 406-285-3090  
Fax: (406)285-3091  
Cell: (406)579-3121  
E-mail: [debkmla@hotmail.com](mailto:debkmla@hotmail.com)



**Montana Library Association  
PO Box 1352  
Three Forks, MT 59752**