

# Memo

**To:** Commission Members  
**From:** Sue Jackson, Library Development  
**Date:** July 28, 2008  
**Re:** Trustee Blitz update

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During May 13-24, Jim Connor from the Trustee College presented fifteen workshops for Montana public library directors and board members. Below are the locations of the workshops, the number of workshop participants at each location, and the libraries represented at each workshop:

Fort Benton = 9; Fort Benton, Great Falls, Lewistown and Stanford  
Cut Bank = 4  
Valier = 5  
Chinook = 9; Chinook and Harlem  
Havre = 4  
Clancy = 4; Jefferson County and Helena  
Red Lodge = 6; Red Lodge, Bridger and Big Timber  
Polson = 13; Polson, Kalispell and Ronan  
Drummond = 6; Drummond and Philipsburg  
Deer Lodge = 8; Deer Lodge, Butte and Anaconda  
Hamilton = 4  
Darby = 5; Darby and Stevensville  
Superior = 4  
Hot Springs = 4  
Libby = 2

**Total number of participants = 87**

At the conclusion of the two weeks, the trainer submitted a report with his comments about trustee training and leadership issues in the state, including challenges and needs at specific libraries. Jim's comments included:

"The issues related to governance and policy development and implementation consumed much of the discussion with some variation in the practices and procedures. Several trustees showed surprise to discover their personal responsibility for financial and policy development, and the related legal and fiduciary exposure to which they could be held. Others needed some clarification about the division of duties between the board and the director when it came to the daily management responsibilities.

I had the opportunity to meet some very interested and dedicated members of the library family who care about their community. We have a mutual challenge to provide them with the tools and support needed to turn their good intentions and valuable time and talents into effective champions of our intellectual freedoms through the sustainability of a powerful public library system."

Evaluations were sent to all workshop participants; 11 directors and 21 trustees provided feedback on the training. The evaluations overall were very positive and 94% of respondents said they would recommend the training for other trustees.

MSL staff accompanied Jim during the two weeks of trustee training. Following the workshops, Maggie, Tracy and I met to discuss the impact of this localized training effort. We felt Jim was responsive and flexible and that he reached people we'll never see at any other training. Trustees were impressed that he came to them; that really seemed to mean a lot. For the most part, participants were paying attention and taking notes during the workshops. The larger groups were more dynamic and had more interaction; the smaller groups received more attention on specific issues, but some times it was a struggle to get the discussion started.

We recommended to Darlene that plans for another week of trustee workshops in the fall go forward. The workshops are beneficial and we need to offer this training on the east side of the state. Libraries that have expressed an interest in having Jim come in the fall include Jordan, Glendive, Denton, and Miles City. The cost for the initial two weeks was \$10,500, which leaves sufficient balance in the FY 07 Trustee Training/Summer Institute budgets for the final week of workshops scheduled during September 23-27. Darlene has approved this final Trustee Blitz effort.