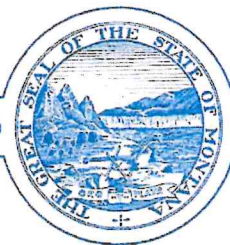


# MONTANA STATE LIBRARY



TED SCHWINDEN, GOVERNOR

1515 E. 6TH AVENUE

## STATE OF MONTANA

(406) 444-3115

HEF PMS MONTANA 59620

June 21, 1984

Retha Jakeway  
Juanita Hill  
Bicentennial Library  
P.O. Box 817  
Colstrip, Montana 59323

*Some beginning  
thoughts.*

Dear Retha and Juanita,

It was a pleasure to speak with Megan Fite about library services in Colstrip. I'm sorry I have not had the opportunity to visit your Bicentennial Library. I hope to be able to do this in the fall.

I asked Alene Cooper on our staff to make inquiries of the Department of Commerce about unincorporated areas. Not being incorporated as part of a city or town means this area serves as a part of the county. It has no legal identity for providing services and any service would need to come through the county. There are a number of examples of branch libraries in the state which have been established in both incorporated and unincorporated areas. The degree of autonomy of branch libraries varies. Some are called community libraries and have advisory boards of trustees. There appears to be much flexibility to work out arrangements which could be agreeable to both the main and branch libraries.

I know you have under consideration the relationship with the county library in Forsyth. Another option for library service might be to work through the school district in a combined program of school-public library service. A third option might be to explore with your own legal counsel or the county attorney whether or not the library could be a non-profit corporation, and if so whether or not it could receive public funds.

You may wish to have some specific examples of the ways Montana has found to offer services when several libraries exist within a county or through public and school cooperation. If you would like Alene Cooper to supply you specific examples within the state, please contact her or me. I will be pleased to learn of your efforts in strengthening the library services you provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sara Parker".

Sara Parker  
State Librarian

SP/bf

cc: Alene Cooper  
Esther Dean  
Megan Fite