

State Librarian's Report April & May 2012

Prepared for the June 6, 2012 Commission meeting
by Jennie Stapp, State Librarian

As was the case in February and April, this State Librarian's report will document progress towards the successful fulfillment of the State Librarian's Work Plan.

Complete the State of Montana Leadership Challenge

According to the Department of Administration this training is currently only available for agencies with union employees that conduct collective bargaining. Because MSL has no union employees, we do not have a seat available for this training. Based on feedback I received about this training it seems like it would be valuable for the MSL management team to take together. Once we have a full management team we will consider scheduling it for the group.

For your information, over the last four years I have completed three management training courses also offered by the Professional Development Center. They are Essentials of Management I and II and the Principles of Upper Management. These were intensive training programs over a total of twenty-one days. Topics covered included: organizational leader, strategic planning, performance management, team building, personnel policy, conflict resolution, project management, ethics, and state budget administration.

Build successful working relationship with contacts in the Governor's office and keep office informed of present status of library services and future needs.

Because much of this probationary period is dedicated to relationship-building, I believe it is important to expand this goal to include the State Legislature, Montana's Congressmen and county representation and other state officials. To that end:

On April 3 Kris Schmitz and I met with Dan Villa, Governor's Budget Director and Ann Brodsky, Chief Legal Counsel regarding proposed legislative concepts for the 2013 Legislative Session. MSL will support housekeeping changes to (MCA) 90-1-404 thru 90-1-413 or the Montana Land Information Act, (MCA) 7-11-1014 regarding reporting of special district boundaries; and (MCA) 76-6-212 regarding the management of Conservation Easement data. These changes are required to legally complete the transfer of the Base Map Service Center to the State Library. At the direction of the Governor's Office these legislative changes will be carried by the Department of Administration. Additionally, we shared with the Governor's Office the status of the

draft Attorney General's opinion regarding library boards' authority to determine library budgets and the possibility of legislative changes to (MCA) 7-6-4035 based on the outcome of that opinion. Ann Brodsky asked who might carry the possible legislative changes, indicating that MSL may not be allowed to as an executive branch agency.

On April 16th Kris did formally submit to the Governor's Office proposed legislative changes related to the transfer of the Base Map Service Center and submitted, as a placeholder, proposed changes to (MCA) 7-6-4035. We await final approval from the Governor's Office for these changes.

On April 20 I sent a letter to Congressman Rehberg encouraging him as the Chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee for Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, to support level funding for LSTA for FY13 as was requested in a letter from nearly 50 of his congressional colleagues. In a response, I was told that mark-up on the appropriations bill will occur later this summer.

Judy Hart, MLA Government Affairs Representative, Commissioner Colet Bartow and I attended National Library Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. April 22-24. April 23 was dedicated to briefings sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA). It was made clear that because of the election year and other pending critical items such as the extension of unemployment benefits and the debt ceiling debate, few legislative items may make it through the gridlock this year. ALA is supporting additional funding for school library programs and is monitoring cyber security legislation which threatens to be an even larger threat to personal freedoms than the Patriot Act. ALA's top priority is support for President Obama's Fiscal Year 2013 request for level funding for LSTA. Support for level funding for LSTA was the message that we carried to Montana's Congressional delegation on April 23. We were able to meet with Senator Tester and his staff as well as staff from Senator Baucus' and Congressman Rehberg's offices. In those meetings we shared with them the critical foundation of statewide library support that is funded through LSTA. We also had the opportunity visit about the benefits of the BTOP program and the need for broadband standards from the federal level that can be used to measure Montana's success and to then secure on-going funding and support for Montana libraries to attain those standards.

On May 1 Kris Schmitz and I met with Dan Villa, Governor's Budget Director, Amy Sassano, Deputy Budget Director, and Nancy Hall, MSL's Budget Analyst regarding MSL's EPP requests. I had the opportunity to present each proposal and then Dan shared with us his priorities for the Governor's budget which include the need to wait for additional revenue estimates before making final budgetary decisions, the desire to not inflate the budget just prior to leaving office, assistance to existing state employees whose salaries have been frozen for nearly five years and the need to provide additional funding for the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Corrections. We also learned that the Governor's Office will not support requests for

the reinstatement of General Funds cut during the previous two legislative sessions. Details regarding the results of the meeting are shared under Goal 3 below.

According to a May 17 email from Patti Keebler, three people have applied to fill two seats on the State Library Commission. I am awaiting a response from Patti regarding when these seats will be filled.

On June 6 MSL managers will present a recommendation to the State Library Commission for a modest pay incentive for staff that includes small raises for the three lowest paid staff as well as one-time-only bonuses for all staff. I shared this recommendation with Viv Hammill, Governor's Chief of Staff on May 9 for her endorsement. She told me that it was a "very good plan" and that we should with "go with it."

On May 22, at his request, I will share our EPP requests with Jon Sesso so that he can continue to monitor them as they move through the legislative process.

Identify and pursue new funding and marketing opportunities for the State Library.

On April 10 I discussed with Judy Hart the need for MLA to take a more active role in the Library Legislative Day in order to relieve the pressure on MSL Data Coordinator, Stacy Bruhn. Following the 2011 Legislative Day, Stacy spent more than 130 hours prepping and printing READ posters for legislators who had their photos taken at the event. Although the posters are incredibly popular, MSL does not have the resources to continue to sustain this effort and, more importantly, we question the appropriateness of doing so because it is considered by some to be lobbying. MSL does not wish to see MLA give up this program but would like to help MLA find a way to continue it without relying on MSL staff time. Judy will share this concern with the MLA board with enough time that opportunities for different options and funding can be explored.

At the April Commission meeting the State Library Commission approved the prioritized list of EPP requests as presented.

As stated above, Judy Hart, MLA Government Affairs Representative, Commissioner Colet Bartow and I attended National Library Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. April 22-24. Again, ALA's top priority is support for President Obama's Fiscal Year 2013 request for level funding for LSTA. Support for level funding for LSTA was the message that we carried to Montana's Congressional delegation on April 23. We also had the opportunity visit about the benefits of the BTOP program and the need for broadband standards from the federal level that can be used to measure Montana's success and to then secure on-going funding and support for Montana libraries to attain those standards.

Also as stated above, on May 1 Kris Schmitz and I met with Dan Villa, Governor's Budget Director, Amy Sassano, Deputy Budget Director, and Nancy Hall, MSL's Budget Analyst regarding MSL's EPP requests. Based on instructions we received from Dan during this meeting on May 7 Kris formally submitted the following EPP requests:

- Base Map Service Center transfer to MSL - \$1,487,252
- Early Literacy, placeholder
- Inflationary increase for statewide databases, placeholder
- Water Information Systems Manager, placeholder
- State Publications Digitization Project, one-time-only placeholder
- Talking Book Library digital transition, one-time-only placeholder

Although no dollar amounts are currently attached to most of these proposals I am very pleased that so many of our proposals may be considered for possible funding. I am particularly pleased that the Early Literacy proposal may move forward as that request will not only benefit Montana Libraries, it will free up time for our Communications and Marketing Coordinator to focus more fully on marketing priorities.

On May 22 I will communicate the status of our EPP priorities to Judy Hart for further consideration and planning by the MLA board.

I have been asked to serve on the Steering Committee for the MontanaPBS LearningMedia initiative. This program brings together content in an online platform for use by teachers to support the Common Core Curriculum. The platform includes content from PBS, NASA, the Library of Congress, and many others. I see the potential for this partnership to benefit our early literacy program, the Montana Memory Project, the Natural Heritage Program, our State Government and Geographic Information programs, statewide libraries' partnership with their local schools and more. A kick-off meeting of the Steering Committee is scheduled for July 10, 2012.

In early May the OPI Cabinet met to review and prioritize their EPP requests which included a request for FTE to support school libraries in the Montana Shared Catalog. On May 9 I emailed Dennis Parman, Deputy Superintendent regarding the status of this request. He said that he would let me know as soon as he found out more.

MSL programs are currently working on their work plans for the coming year. Based on the identified objectives the Communications and Marketing Coordinator will create a work plan that prioritizes those program objectives that will require marketing. On May 2 Sara led a session on MSL marketing with MSL managers and supervisors so that Managers can become more proactive about their marketing needs.

Expand knowledge of the Montana library community and the needs of public libraries through in person visits and other outreach methods.

- **Discuss findings with the Commission and make recommendations for future collaboration with the library community.**

I attended the Montana Library Association Conference from April 11-15 in Big Sky. In addition to the Commission meeting on the 11th, other highlights are noted below:

- Following the Commission meeting, I attended the MLA board meeting on April 11. There I shared with them our current EPP priorities and the news regarding the draft AG opinion. If legislative changes are needed MSL would need solid backing from MLA and, if MSL is not allowed to carry legislative changes, MLA could have to do so. At that meeting Judy Hart briefly discussed possible MLA legislative funding priorities including the possibility of seeking additional funding for state aid.
- On Thursday, April 12, I participated in the Conversations with the Commission session. The format allowed for good participation from the audience. Key take-aways for me is the need for on-going Library Trustee training, the need for the State Library to provide training and talking points for librarians and board members to help them be better advocates in their communities and with their legislators, and the need for the State Library to monitor the horizon to prepare libraries for the future.
- On Friday, April 13, I shared the State Library report with the MLA membership. I focused on current priorities including the launch of the Ebsco Discovery Service, the addition of the Base Map Service Center, EPP requests and legislative priorities for 2013, and the draft AG opinion and possible related next steps.
- On Saturday, April 14, I co-presented with Anita Scheetz and Teresa Keenan on the addition of newspapers to the Montana Memory Project and specifically Antia's grant project to digitize the Fort Peck Tribal newspapers.

Since my last report I have attended the remaining four federation meetings and I have visited the Meagher County Library, the Harlowton Public Library, the Miles City Public Library, the Miles Community College Library, the Roosevelt County Library, the Lewistown Public Library, the Belt Public Library, the Chouteau County Library and the Whitefish Community Library. Librarians truly appreciate having staff from the State Library visit and attend federation meetings. I am pleased that the federations are focusing on how to write better outcome statements to report the impacts of their Plans of Service to the Commission. Not only will this type of reporting help the State Library better understand the benefits of federation funds, I think, by spending time analyzing the benefits they would like to see from the funds, it will help the federations plan to make the most of these monies.

As stated above, Judy Hart, MLA Government Affairs Representative, Commissioner Colet Bartow and I attended National Library Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. April 22-24. Support for level funding for LSTA was the message that we carried to Montana's Congressional delegation on April 23. In meeting with Montana's Congressional delegation we shared information about the critical foundation of statewide library support that is funded through LSTA. We also had the opportunity to visit about the benefits of the BTOP program and the need for broadband standards from the federal level that can be used to measure Montana's success and to then secure on-going funding and support for Montana libraries to attain those standards.

I attended the Network Advisory Council meeting and retreat on May 15. At this meeting, Sarah McHugh and I challenged the Council to develop a work plan and to think about a number of important issues. For example, we asked the NAC to help us develop parameters for what should be considered pilots, projects and programs to help us determine, in part, the need for on-going funding. The NAC also gave us some helpful suggestions on how we can better communicate with the Montana Library Community.

On May 24 Sarah McHugh and I will attend the trustee training offered by Tracy Cook in Lewistown. This will be an excellent opportunity for me to listen to the questions and needs posed by some of Montana's library trustees.

I will attend the Federation Coordinators meeting on June 5. I am pleased that more and more federations are beginning to discuss how to pool their federation dollars for common federation goals with outcomes that benefit the entire federation.

Although no further action regarding the draft AG opinion has been taken since we submitted our comments to the AG's office on March 20, MSL staff did begin to openly discuss the draft opinion and the possible impacts on the library community. I shared what we currently know about the opinion with the MLA board and with the membership at their membership meeting on April 13. It was also a topic of conversation during the Public Library Interest Group at MLA and it is being discussed at Federation meetings. In order to try to allay fears within the library community, Sarah McHugh, Tracy Cook and I worked with Jim Scheier to prepare a frequently asked questions document that addresses the questions we've heard from librarians and outlines steps librarians can take now to ready their boards and local governments pending the outcome of the decision. This FAQ was shared with public library directors on April 25. And, as I stated, MSL submitted draft language to the Governor's Office as a placeholder should MSL decide to pursue legislative change. In discussing this draft opinion with librarians across the state I am hearing mixed responses. While many of us strongly agree that library boards need autonomy to make budget decisions in order to prevent libraries from being impacted by the political whims of local governments, I have heard from numerous libraries around the state that their budgets are already subject to approval by their local governing bodies and that this draft opinion might not change much in the way of current practice. This issue brings home to me, the need for continuous dialogue about the value of libraries throughout local communities and, particularly between local librarians, their boards and their local governing bodies.

Spend significant time becoming more familiar with the program and needs of Statewide Library Resources.

As previously reported, I completed my orientation with SLR staff in March. Since then, I have devoted much of my time in this area to learning more about LSTA.

Although MSL staff was frustrated with the quality of the LSTA 5-year evaluation that was prepared by Communication and Management Services of Helena, participating in

the evaluation process helped me to become much more familiar with the LSTA priorities and how MSL programs such as consulting and training align with those goals. That evaluation was approved with caveats by the Commission on March 28. Those caveats were documented in a letter to the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS) that was included with the report that was submitted to IMLS on March 30.

MSL staff is now preparing the 2013-2017 LSTA 5-year plan. In this plan period IMLS will change their approach to reporting which will require MSL to align our priorities with LSTA's focal areas for measuring success. These areas include lifelong learning, human services, employment and economic development, information access, and library capacity building. Along with our plan, MSL will have to submit a crosswalk between our priorities and these focal areas. Later this fall IMLS will begin to develop a reporting tool that is intended to aggregate reporting across the country in these focal areas in order to present a cohesive national picture of the impact of LSTA funds. Initially each state will be required to report the outcomes for each priority at the State level and the local library level. Eventually IMLS plans to have outcomes reported at the individual patron level as well. Plans are due to IMLS June 30.

Additionally, Sarah McHugh and I have recently been discussing the organizational structure of Statewide Library Resources. Historically there has been an organizational separation in the division between what is considered Statewide Library Resources and what is considered the Library Development Department. As the division administrator, Sarah is taking a much more holistic approach to the division with the understanding that all staff is involved in library development in one way or another. In order to create a more cohesive program Sarah is working hard to encourage more communication, especially with the remote consultants, through more frequent face-to-face meetings, shared email lists and calendars, and later this summer, staff will begin to shadow one another and coordinate outreach trips together. This is an approach that I support because communication is critical to this program's success, especially with staff spread across the state. Further, I think removing artificial barriers like the title "department" encourages staff to realize their common goals and to find more ways to work together.

Assist the Commission with the development of its strategic plan, including aligning the plan with the Montana State Library long range plan.

Following the April Commission meeting I reviewed the notes from previous Commission work plans. I am currently drafting a current Commission work plan that I believe more appropriately aligns the Commissions goals with the new strategic plan and their roles in areas of advocacy and policy and budget setting. I will present the draft work plan for discussion at the June Commission meeting.

Further develop, articulate and pursue a vision for the Montana State Library.

With the adoption of a new long range plan, staff and the Network Advisory Council are now drafting work plans that will put the plan into action. Additionally, staff is drafting the next LSTA 5-year plan which reflects our priorities as well as the priorities IMLS. These plans will reflect a focus on resource sharing in a variety of forms as well as support for library capacity building at the local level. These work plans will be presented to the Commission when they are complete.

This vision is also reflected in the LSTA budget prepared for FY12 and the EPP requests that we are pushing forward support my vision for resources sharing which, as stated, includes an affordable, shared information discovery and management platform for all MT libraries; a courier service that facilitates the delivery of traditional library resources at a state or regional level where the economies of scale make sense; data development, electronic resources procurement and digitization of unique local materials that can then be shared, discovered and accessed online by all Montanans; minimum standards for connectivity that are met by all Montana libraries so that librarians have the technology resources they need to facilitate access; and training and consulting services that ensure that librarians and other library partners have the education and resources they need to take advantage of these opportunities.