



## MSL Learn Webinar Series

Learning about Libraries and the Montana Legislature

March 22, 2024

# How We Gather



- Rename with Name and Library or Town
- Share Questions in Chat
- Raise Hand to Speak

# Today's Hosts



**Jennie Stapp**



State Librarian

**Tracy Cook**



Lead Statewide  
Consulting Librarian

**Cara Orban**

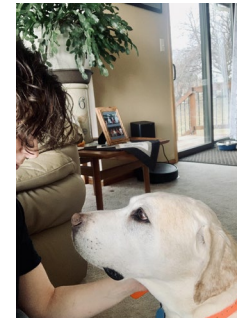


Library Consortia  
Director



**Montana Library Association**  
*From the Mountains to the Prairies*

**Alissa Wolenetz**



MLA Government  
Affairs Committee  
Co-chair

**Rachel Rawn**



MLA Government  
Affairs Committee  
Co-chair



## Today's Agenda

Learn about the legislative process in Montana

Understand the role of the Montana State Library and the role of the Montana Library Association.

Understand how YOU can become involved in the legislative process.

# A Long Partnership and History of Action

1906

Montana State Library Association Incorporated

1915

County Library Law Passed

1929

State Library Extension Commission Law Passed

1939

MSLA Bulletin Starts

1945

Commission funded

At the recent meeting of the Montana State Library Association in Helena it was decided to issue a bulletin every second month, with the cooperating libraries each sponsoring an issue. This first issue comes from the Missoula Public Library and the Missoula County Free Library.

New officers of the Association for the year 1939-1940 are: President - Margaret Fulmer, Parmly Billings Memorial Library, Billings; Vice-President - Bessie Sestak, Great Falls Public Library; Secretary - Doris Wilson, Montana State College Library, Bozeman; and Treasurer - Lucille Grove, Kalispell Public Library.

The meeting in Helena was well attended, and all in attendance report a pleasant and profitable time. It was decided by vote of the membership to hold the 1940 meeting in Billings.

The Association needs more members and larger representation from the smaller libraries if it is to serve Montana to the best advantage.

Of the three "library bills" introduced at the last session of the Legislature, one became law, that permitting two or more counties to join in establishing and supporting a central library, or contracting for countywide service from an existing library. The purpose of this law is to provide a way for counties of low valuation to have adequate library service. With the maximum support for a county library limited to one mill many counties can not adequately support a county library, while two or more acting together could provide countywide service for themselves. Such a regional library if established need not abolish any existing library or curtail its activities. Rather it should supplement the service already existing. Would your county benefit by such a regional library?

Featured speakers at the Helena meeting were Miss Jeannette Rankin, former congresswoman from Montana, and Miss Edith Gantt, specialist in public libraries from the Library Division of the Office of Education, Washington, D.C.

Committees appointed for the current year are:

Revision of the Certification Bill: Miss M. Winnifred Feighner, Miss Erin Janzig, Miss McDonnell.

Consideration of appropriation: Miss Lucille A. Herian, Miss Catherine White, Miss Inez Ratekin.

Planning: Miss Nina M. Ford, Mrs. M.C. Burlingame, Miss Dorothy Phelps, Mrs. Elizabeth Garber, Miss Mary Botten.



# Then and Now



# The Legislature



# Structure of the Legislature

- Bicameral and biannual
- Job of the Legislator
  - from “A Guide to the Montana Legislature”
- Role of committees
  - Interim
  - Session
- How a bill becomes law



## A Legislator's Job

The job of a state legislator is very demanding, even though it's only part-time.

Your legislator must be dedicated and committed.

Your legislator must study hard to understand many different subjects — from agriculture to health to transportation.

Your legislator must make important decisions under heavy pressure from people with many different beliefs and interests.

Your legislator must balance the needs of **constituents** with what is best for all Montanans.

Ultimately, your legislator helps to determine the quality of life in Montana. It's an important job!



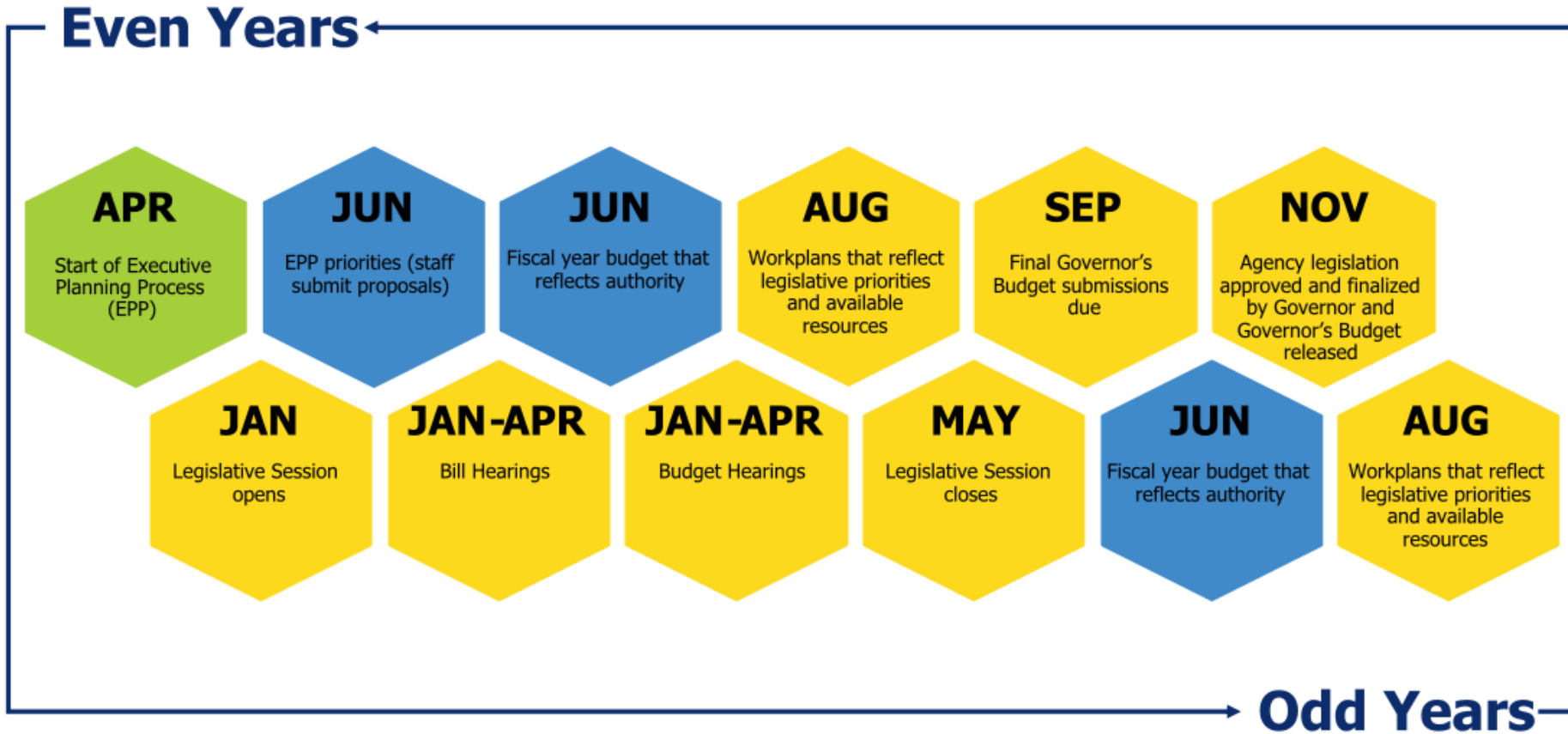
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Contribute  

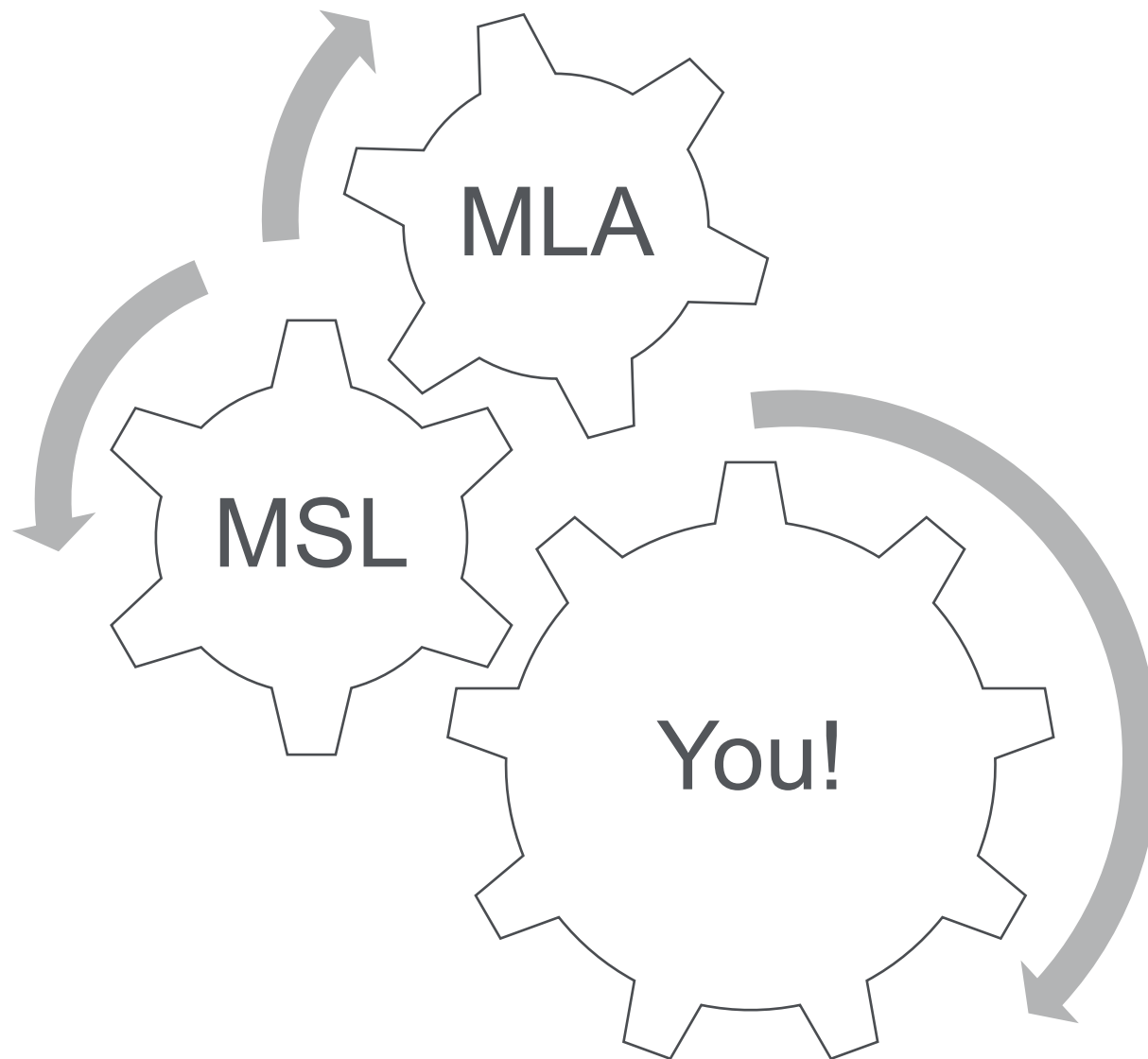

Monitor  


## Executive Planning Process and the State Library Budget and Legislation

[Return to Calendar](#)



# The Key Players



# Role of MSL

## What We Can Do

- Work with stakeholders, the Commission, and the Governor's office to identify and propose funding and legislative needs
- Support legislation that has been approved by the Governor's office
- Provide information about legislation that impacts libraries or MSL
- Provide data and information to answer questions related to legislation

## What We Can't Do

- Support budget requests or legislation that hasn't been approved by the Governor's office
- Take positions on legislation that are outside the scope of MSL's authority

# What You Can Do!



## Participate and Stay Informed

Join MLA  
Volunteer for the Government Affairs Committee  
Talk to your local legislator between sessions. It really makes a difference!  
Attend legislative night during the session.



## Communicate with Trustees, Friends, and Foundations



## Communicate with Local Government Officials

Statewide elected officials  
County officials  
City officials



## Connect with Civic Organizations and Leaders

# Role of MLA

## What We Do

- Act on Resolutions of the Membership
- Role of Government Affairs
- Process during and between legislative sessions
- How we handle tricky issues – involvement of the executive board

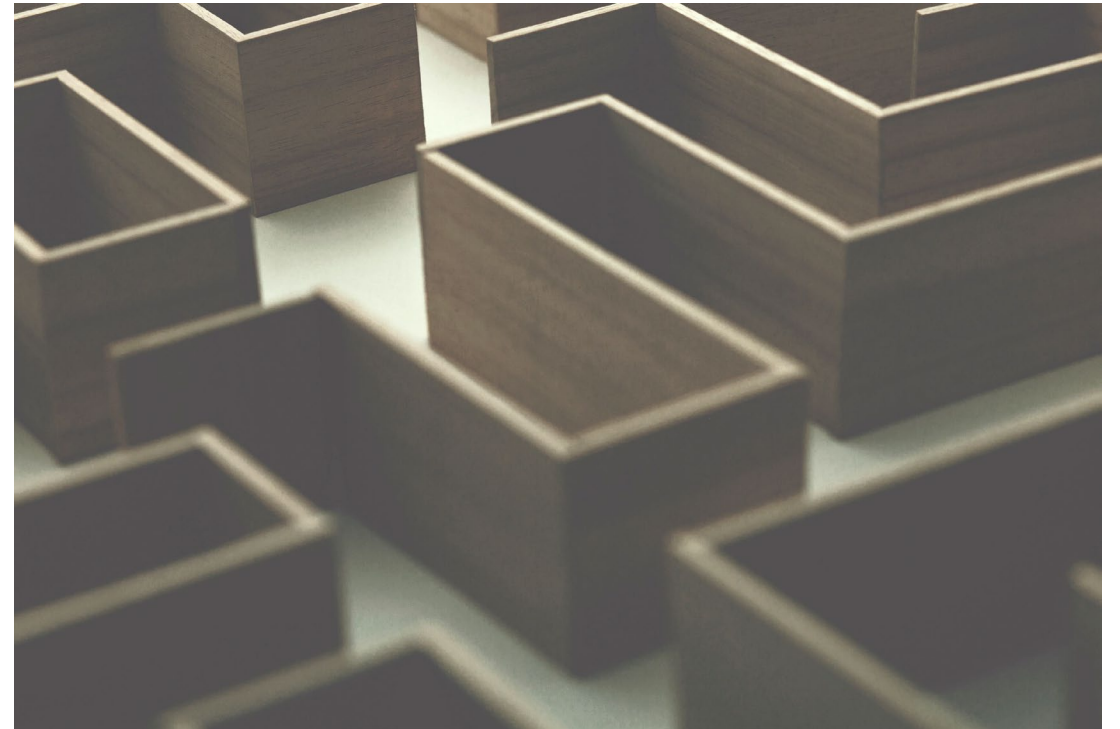
## What We Don't Do

- Act on items that haven't been discussed by MLA
- Intentionally harm relationships



# Your Boundaries

- Check with your employer
- Public employees have limitations on engaging in advocacy
  - [Lobbying FAQ from the Commissioner of Political Practices](#)



# Call to Action

Choose something you will pursue in the coming year!



All ideas are worthwhile!

Reach out to MSL or MLA with legislative items



Be proactive!

Laying the groundwork for future legislation takes time



Review the 2024 MLA Resolutions



Attend MSL Commission Meetings

# Links from Live Webinar

- [History of MLA \(MLA Website\)](#)
- [1939 MLA Bulletin](#)
- [MSL History Playlist](#)
- [Montana History Portal - MSL Newsletter Collection](#)
- [ASPeN Event Calendar](#)
- [How to Access Resources in the Event Calendar](#)
- [Guide to the Montana Legislature](#)
- [Legislative Interim Committees](#)
- [MT Legislature Website](#)
- [MSL Commission Calendar](#)
- [MLA Website](#)
- [Lobbying FAQ from the Commissioner of Political Practices](#)

Questions?



# Up Next



April 9

Montana's Water Information Resources



NEW - April 11

Digital Opportunities Planning Webinar



April 17-20

MLA Annual Conference



April 23

Connecting with Local Government Officials



April 30

MontanaLibrary2Go: Filling Local Holds with Advantage



# MSL YouTube Channel

- Look for the MSL Learn Webinar Series Playlist
- Access new recordings
- Subscribe!

**Montana State Library**  
@montanastatelibrary 157 subscribers 131 videos  
The Montana State Library helps all organizations, communities, and Mont...  
msl.mt.gov

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### MSL Meetings

State Library Commission Meeting	2023 Public Library Standards Task Force Meeting	MT Land Information Advisory Council	Network Advisory Council Meeting:
October 11, 2023, at 9:30 a.m. Ace Stillwater Civic Center, Columbus, MT and Zoom	August 22, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. Zoom	June 23, 2023	February 1, 2023, 9:30 am
55 videos	2 videos	14 videos	25 videos
<b>MSL Commission Meetings</b> Public · Playlist Updated 5 days ago <a href="#">View full playlist</a>	<b>2023 Public Library Standards Task Force</b> Public · Playlist <a href="#">View full playlist</a>	<b>Montana Geospatial Information Advisory Council</b> Public · Playlist <a href="#">View full playlist</a>	<b>Network Advisory Council (NAC)</b> Public · Playlist <a href="#">View full playlist</a>

### Learn with MSL

MSL Learn Webinar Series	Tiny Tech Trainings	Montana Shared Catalog	2023-24 MLN Virtual Programming Series	Webside Chats
Hosted by Pam Healey	Tiny Tech Training			
20 videos	10 videos	4 videos	2 videos	
<b>MSL Learn Webinar Series</b> Public · Playlist Updated 7 days ago <a href="#">View full playlist</a>	<b>Tiny Tech Trainings</b> Public · Playlist <a href="#">View full playlist</a>	<b>Montana Shared Catalog</b> Public · Playlist <a href="#">View full playlist</a>	<b>2023-24 MLN Virtual Programming Series</b> Public · Playlist Updated 4 days ago <a href="#">View full playlist</a>	<b>Webside Chats</b> Public · Playlist Updated 3 days ago <a href="#">View full playlist</a>

# Access Resources, Recording, and Claim Credits

- Visit today's event in the ASPeN Event Calendar
- Download Resources
- Access Recording
- Claim Credits



## ASPeN: Library Directory

### Events Search

Search by event title, location, etc

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[Search](#) [Reset](#)

< > today

April 2024

month week day

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
		9a MSL Consulting and CE 10a MSC Office Hours 2p MSC Office Hours	1p MSC Content Managem		10a Sagebrush Federation	10a South Central Federati
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		10a 2024 MSL Learn Webin	6:30p MLN Virtual Program	1p Digital Opportunities Pla	11a Broad Valleys federatio	10a Roosevelt County libra
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
			12a 2024 Montana Library Association Annual Conference 9:30a MSL Commission Me			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
		9a MSL Consulting and CE 12h Connecting with Local		10a Golden Plains library fe	11a Spring 2024 Tamarack Federation Meeting	

# MSL Evaluation Survey



Thank you!



This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.