



MEMO

To: Montana State Library Commission
From: Jennie Stapp, State Librarian
Subject: Montana Library Association relationship audit
Date: September 30, 2025

The following information is provided in response to a request from the Commission at their August 13, 2025 business meeting for an audit of the relationship with the Montana Library Association (MLA). The State Library Commission requested that staff provide information about what MSL gains from a working relationship with MLA, what it costs to affiliate with MLA, and information about MLA's world view. Responses to these questions are summarized below.

Working with MLA

MLA Annual Conference

The MLA conference is typically attended by between 200 and 250 librarians, trustees, and library vendors. For many attendees, this conference is the only in-person professional development opportunity they will attend each year so it may be the only time MSL staff will see these people in person. As the largest annual gathering of Montana librarians, the conference is a time for staff to have numerous one-on-one and group meetings with librarians and library trustees. Staff answer questions, get feedback, and raise awareness of services such as Montana Talking Books, ASPeN, continuing education opportunities, Lifelong Learning programming, and the new Cadastral application. Staff also share important updates such as changes to the Courier and the Public Library Survey. These exchanges also allow staff to efficiently gather feedback from large groups of libraries and trustees to help inform and improve MSL work.

MSL benefits from the significant efficiency gained by offering trainings to dozens of people at one time rather than to individual library staff and boards. Since 2023 16 MSL staff have offered 39 conference programs at the MLA annual conference. Staff report often presenting to as many as 50 attendees, on topics such as MSL programs, policy development, budget and finance, library laws and working with local government officials.

Staff also report the benefit that comes from the serendipitous moments when a librarian says, "oh by the way, since you are here, let me pick your brain". Often these conversations are about matters people may not think to send an email about, but they come up over a shared meal, or between sessions. Answering even the smallest question helps to build directors and trustees' relationships and confidence. These moments often help MSL staff connect librarians

from around Montana who are working on similar goals or challenges who might not otherwise collaborate.

MSL staff organize a booth for the MLA conference to provide information about MSL programs and services, answer questions, and meet in person with library directors, staff, and trustees to work on local issues or concerns and troubleshoot problems. At the 2025 MLA conference MSL staff met with over 200 attendees at MSL's booth. In addition to trustees and library directors, those who visit the booth include front-line staff who MSL staff don't often meet at regular meetings. The State Data Coordinator reports that this is important interaction because it is often these staff who gather data for the Public Library Survey for the director to report.

This outreach also saves considerable expense in costs that would otherwise be incurred through travel across Montana, or time-consuming one-on-one or small group meetings. The MLA conference allows staff to meet in person with staff and trustees from dozens of libraries from across the state and different population sizes. One staff member estimated that they would have had to spend 26 hours of driving time to meet with the libraries she met with at the conference.

While online meetings can be effective for certain needs, personal face-to-face meetings are essential for MSL staff to build relationships with librarians and trustees that build trust when tackling tough problems. As a result, after the conference librarians feel comfortable contacting MSL staff to ask questions and quickly fix problems. These relationships are strengthened through follow-up calls, newsletters, webinars, and online meetings.

Also, at the conference MSL staff attend, and occasionally lead, a variety of interest group meetings including the Trustee Interest Group, the Children's and Youth Services Interest Group, the Technical Services Interest Group, and the Public Library Directors Interest Group. Through these meetings interest group attendees discuss opportunities for improved services and talk about tough challenges they face.

Because MSL staff rarely travel to school, special, and academic libraries, the MLA conference provides one of the only opportunities for MSL staff to provide in-person and hands-on training to these library professionals.

MSL staff also report that the Montana-specific education and training at MLA is useful to them as professional librarians working in Montana. Conference sessions focus on practical solutions tailored to Montana and rural libraries. At the conference MSL staff gain more information about library training needs to determine how the MSL continuing education program can meet the learning needs of public library directors, trustees, and staff. Learning at the MLA conference helps MSL staff build skills to provide better support for everyone they work with.

The MLA conference provides opportunities for the kinds of richer and deeper connections with the librarians that is necessary as staff and the library community work together to bring much-needed services to all Montanans.

Meetings

The State Librarian is an ex officio, non-voting, member of the MLA Board. The State Librarian attends most board meetings, as schedules permits. While the State Librarian cannot vote on matters, attending these meetings let's the State Librarian hear firsthand about matters concerning MLA.

The State Librarian and Lead Consulting Librarian attend meetings of the MLA Government Affairs Committee to educate committee members about federal and state matters, including federal funding, the legislative process and bills, such as property tax bills, that may impact Montana libraries.

Other services

MLA maintains the Wired-MT Listserv that MSL staff use to receive timely information from the library community and to communicate updates, issues surveys, gauge interest in topics, and solicit feedback from hundreds of people quickly and efficiently.

In many small communities the local government does not provide email support to libraries. While some libraries have made use of free services like Hotmail and Gmail, services supported by MSL, like E-rate applications, require libraries to have a .gov or .org email address. MLA hosts an email server that any library can use that gives libraries a .org email address which allows libraries to participate in these programs.

Cost

MSL is not an organizational member of MLA. Costs incurred by MSL through engagement with MLA come in the form of conference registrations. These costs do not include lodging to attend conferences which are paid to hotels directly.

FY 2025	\$	7,055.00	Conference Registrations
FY 2024	\$	8,815.00	Conference Registrations
FY 2023	\$	6,890.00	Conference Registrations

World view

The world view of the Montana Library Association is perhaps best represented by their governing documents including the resolutions passed by association members. These documents are found on the MLA website: [Montana Library Association, Inc. - Handbook](#).

Additionally, in some cases the programs presented at the annual MLA conference may reflect MLA's world view. Conference planners annually issue calls for conference program proposals. The planners' ability to be selective in which programs to select depend on the number of programs submitted. The conference keynote speakers are often selected by the current MLA president.

MSL's work with MLA is not an endorsement of their worldview.

History

MLA organized more than 100 years ago. They served as the first statewide advocates for Montana libraries. Their advocacy led to the creation of MSL in 1929 and the first Legislative appropriation for MSL in 1945. Since then, MSL and MLA have worked on a variety of issues from legislation to funding, to general support for libraries in Montana.

Appendices

MLA Annual Conference Programs for the years 2023-2025.

Program Descriptions for 2023 MLA Conference

Please note: schedules are subject to change

Montana State Library Continuing Education Credit Categories:

Red: Library Administration

Green: Library Services to the Public

Blue: Collection Management and Technical Services

Purple: Technology

Wednesday April 12th, 2023

Pre-Conference Sessions

9:00AM-12:00PM - **Framing the Future: Strategic Planning for Small and Rural Libraries** - Tracy Cook, Stu Wilson, Pam Henley

Well-designed strategic plans identify what members of the community are under-served and works toward creating inclusive services and libraries that welcome all members of their communities. This workshop gives library staff and trustees of small and rural libraries the tools to engage in community-focused planning.

Tracy Cook provides consulting assistance on a variety of topics and oversees the consulting, continuing education, and lifelong learning programs within the State Library. Tracy's areas of expertise include library law, board development, personnel, local government relations, and advocacy. Tracy enjoys hiking, canoeing, citizen scientist work, and golf. She also volunteers for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and the National Park Service whenever she can.

Stu Wilson is the former Director of Library Strategies Consulting Group, Executive Director of The Friends of the Hennepin County Library and Vice-President of The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library. Wilson has more than 25 years of fundraising and planning experience and is the founder of Fitzgerald in Saint Paul. He also served as the lead consultant in creating The Trust for Montana Libraries.

Pam Henley provides consulting and advisory services to public librarians and trustees from her office in Bozeman.

9:00AM-12:00PM – **Year of Learning: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion** - Slaven Lee, Alyssa Ramirez, Emily Wicks, Jenny Bevill, Rajiem Seabrook, Heidi Wallace

Libraries try to create spaces where everyone is welcome and to provide equitable access to information. Libraries do this for people from diverse backgrounds and origins, regardless of their beliefs or

affiliations. But achieving goals for equity, diversity, and inclusion is not easy and often takes years of undoing old systems of inequity, starting within libraries themselves.

In this 6-session series, topics related to equity, diversity, and inclusion will be discussed as they relate to libraries across Montana. Every other month will highlight a new focus area, with opportunities for Montana library professionals to learn, interact, and take action. Funding from this grant will compensate professional facilitators and content experts, ensuring safe and productive conversations that are meaningful to participants.

Throughout the first year of this multi-year program, a flipped classroom model will be utilized to incorporate synchronous and asynchronous learning. The self-guided portion will give participants the freedom to read and reflect at their own pace. During the virtual discussion, participants will explore topics even further and create action plans, with the help of the facilitator, to impact their communities.

The series will kick-off during the Montana Library Association Conference in Billings this April. During this session, EmpowerMT will help participants become leaders in ending oppression by deepening self-awareness, increasing understanding of inequities, and developing intervention and ally skills. It will be structured around participatory activities, small and large group discussions, and drawing on the experiences and expertise of workshop participants. This workshop will create the foundation for the remaining Year of Learning sessions, which will include the following topics: Optical Allyship, Serving community members with disabilities, LGBTQ2S, Indigenous peoples, and Mental health/suicide prevention.

Slaven Lee is the Director of Missoula Public Library

Alyssa Ramirez is the Director of Lincoln County Libraries

Emily Wicks is the Director of Chouteau County Library

Jenny Bevill is a dynamic educational leader with more than 20 years of experience teaching in public schools, museums, and community centers in New York City and Montana, including a decade at the Guggenheim Museum from 2004-2014. Jenny served as the Educator and Outreach Specialist at the Missoula Art Museum from 2018-2021 where she helped develop the distance learning platform, Museum as Megaphone, and the Art Host Initiative which connects Tribal nations across Montana with the museum to share contemporary Indigenous art. Jenny has taught and/or created content for many statewide arts organizations in Montana including the Office of Public Instruction, the Montana Arts Council, and Flathead Valley Community College. She has been a workshop leader for Humanities Montana since 2016 where she now coordinates the statewide Democracy Project for teens.

Rajiem Seabrook is the Director of Equity and Impact at EmpowerMT, a statewide nonprofit with a mission to create a just and inclusive society. Mr. Seabrook is an educational and institutional leader in shaping and promoting equity and diversity-based policies, partnerships, and strategic initiatives that foster inclusive businesses, schools, and communities across Montana. Rajiem is a long-standing member of the community and is passionately engaged in athletics, academics, social justice, and political reform. Rajiem is one of several co-founders of the Montana Black Collective-Missoula and serves on the MCPS IVALUE Leadership Team and the MLK Jr. Community Celebration Committee. Mr. Seabrook's devotion as a father, coach, mentor, community leader, connector and organizer fuels his commitment to creating a better world for future generations.

Heidi Wallace's life experiences as a sixth-generation non-Indigenous Montanan led her to pursue a life of creating positive change in individuals and institutions. Heidi is alumni of the University of Montana, where she was honored in 2010 with the Native American Studies Distinguished Alumni Award. Heidi has served as EmpowerMT's Executive Director since 2013 and is a certified Diversity and Inclusion leader through Cornell University. A skilled facilitator, consultant, and educator Heidi has a 20-year history of building strategic partnerships regionally and nationally to foster innovation, elevate leadership, and inspire action in the areas of racial equity, diversity, access, inclusion, and coalition building. Heidi serves on the Board of Trustees for the PacificSource Foundation for Health Improvement and other social justice-focused coalitions, advisory boards, & committees.

12:00-1:00PM – **Lunch**

12:00-1:00PM – **MLA Spring Board Meeting**

12:00-1:00PM – **Trustee Interest Group Meeting**

1:00PM-4:00PM - **Giving Montanans Their Fullest Opportunity: Working with local government officials and government budgets** - Tracy Cook

Attendees will explore the why of local governments and libraries, how they work together, and the duties of various local government officials. We'll also talk about financing library services, the requirements and limitations placed on local governments, and how to be better stewards of taxpayer dollars.

Tracy provides consulting assistance on a variety of topics and oversees the consulting, continuing education, and lifelong learning programs within the State Library. Tracy's areas of expertise include library law, board development, personnel, local government relations, and advocacy. Tracy enjoys hiking, canoeing, citizen scientist work, and golf. She also volunteers for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and the National Park Service whenever she can.

1:00-4:00PM – **Cool Tools and Taming Wild Web Apps: MSL's Digital Services to Libraries** - Bobbi deMontigny

This workshop reviews digital services available to Montana Libraries through MSL. This is where you can learn about updates & changes to some of these services, and brush up on your skills with training & tips. This session incorporates breakout groups to further discuss and explore what works & what doesn't.

Bobbi deMontigny provides Technical Support for the Montana Library Network. With an MLIS and over a decade of experience in the field she is thankful for the opportunities she has had to serve just about every kind of library across the state of Montana. In her current position she primarily supports web based services to Montana libraries. Some of these include MontanaLibrary2Go services, ASPeN, OCLC group services and the Montana History Portal. Bobbi lives just outside of Helena where she enjoys active and artistic hobbies in the summer and curling up with her dog and a good book in the winter.

1:00-4:00PM – **Montana Shared Catalog Spring Members Meeting**

1:00-4:00PM – **TRAILS 2023 Spring General Council Meeting**

5:00-6:30PM – **2023 MLA Annual Conference Opening Reception**, Billings Public Library

6:30-7:30PM - **Montana Book Awards Ceremony**, Billings Public Library, Elizabeth Jonkel, Host

Montana Book Awards author event with award winners

Thursday April 13th, 2023

Breakfast – 7:30-8:30AM

Session A - 8:30-9:30AM

Montana Library Network Overview – Amelea Kim

The Montana Library Network is a "collaborative community of Montana libraries working together to provide all Montanans with library content and services sufficient unto their needs." But what does that mean exactly? Learn more about the MLN at this session, and learn how you can help contribute to improving library services in Montana, both locally and statewide.

Amelea Kim has worked as the Lifelong Learning Librarian at the Montana State Library since June 2018. Her library interests include children's services, particularly services for ages 0 – 5, health literacy, community outreach/support, and supporting Montana librarians in the amazing work that they do! In her free time, Amelea enjoys hiking, baking cakes and consuming said cakes, and making forays into various crafting hobbies.

Tech Tools for Advocacy - Shaundel Krumheuer

Promoting and sharing all of the great activities that take place in our libraries can be daunting, so let's explore some tools that make it fun! We will use technology tools (Google Drawings & Slides, Canva, Adobe Express) to help promote all of the aMaZiNg happening in our spaces! Create posters, announcements, newsletters, and more to share in-person, via email, and on social media. Bring your device for a hands-on creation session!

The 2022-2023 school year marks Shaundel Krumheuer's 22nd year as an educator at Billings Senior High, 10 as an English teacher, 5 as a Technology Integration Specialist, and most recently as a TIS/School Librarian combined. She is the MCCE Board Treasurer and has been a 406 Tech Cadre facilitator for over 10 years. She has presented at a variety of venues, including the MEA-MFT conference, the MCCE Summer Tech Summit, the MLA Annual Conference, the NCCE Conference, as well as throughout the state in various districts. In 2019-2020, Shaundel was a member of the Negotiated Rule-making Committee working with the proposed Technology Integration, Computer

Science, and Library Media/Information Technology Standards for Montana. This fall, she served on the Library Praxis Review Panel. She's a Google Certified Educator who has been in a serious relationship with Google since the days of the invite-only status. A Montana girl who loves her Bobcats, Shaundel is a fan of mountain lakes, books, and pottery, and is owned by two feral Golden Retrievers.

What's art got to do with it? - Aaron LaFromboise

What does art have to do with a library? How do you create an art positive space? Come to learn about incorporating art into Medicine Spring Library. Hear tips and tricks on any budget and in any space.

Aaron LaFromboise is the Director of Library Services at Medicine Spring Library, the academic library for Blackfeet Community College, the community library for the Blackfeet Reservation, which also holds the Blackfeet Archives. Aaron is the Immediate Past President of the American Indian Library Association, a former Montana State Library commissioner, and a staunch advocate for Native American presence within libraries. Outside of the library Aaron spends time with family, beads, and sews.

A Greater State of Continuing Education: Updates and Access to the MSL Certification Program – Colet Bartow

This presentation will include updates to the MSL Continuing Education and Certification program that have been in the works. Help with ASPeN and an overview of continuing education sources will be highlighted. Bring your questions!

Colet's professional background is in school librarianship, professional development, and state education agency leadership. Her history with MSL started in the late 1990s as a school library representative to several committees and included time as an MSL Commissioner. She currently serves at the Continuing Education Coordinator for MSL.

100 Books Before Graduation and 1000 Books Before Kindergarten – Kathryn Murphy and Ezzie O'Clair

Introducing 100 Books Before Graduation to Montana!! We'll provide tangible information for anyone wanting to start either of these programs. We'll be answering questions, sharing info, and brainstorming program operation for any size library – please attend!

Kathryn Murphy is the Teen and Adult Services Librarian at Sidney Richland County Library. In her free time she likes to read, craft and play board games with her husband and three children.

Ezzie O'Clair is the Children's Librarian at Sidney-Richland County Library. Besides reading children's books, she loves rainbows, kindness, and music. In her free time, she is nearly always with her awesome dog, Percy.

Session B - 9:45-10:45AM

Grant Writing 101 - What You Need, How to Start, and Where to Look – Heidi Gunderson

Grant Writing 101 will outline how to begin the grant writing process, where to find available grants, and the information you need readily available before you begin.

Heidi Gunderson is the current librarian and English teacher for the Absarokee School District and she's currently working on her Master of Library and Information Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is the sole-proprietor for Heidi Gunderson Writing, a grant writing company. Over the past 16 years, she has written \$1.5 million dollars' worth of grants for her school district and the community.

Indigenous Perspectives in School Librarianship – Deborah Rinio

Learn about the Indigenous Perspectives in School Librarianship (IPSL) cohort at MSU. Listen as participating candidates share their experiences and the projects they've implemented in their schools. Discuss how you can integrate IEFA and other culturally responsive standards in your library.

Dr. Deborah Rinio is the Program Leader for the Library Media Certificate Program at Montana State University and PI of the Indigenous Perspectives in School Librarianship grant from IMLS.

Bears Books Galore - K through Adulthood - Angela Archuleta

An extended book talk with a Read Aloud that shares both fiction and non-fiction books about bears- includes resources where you can find information about real bears.

Angela F. Archuleta is in her ninth year as a school librarian this fall. She has worked as a K-6 Librarian at Kincaid Elementary in Anchorage, Alaska, Grades 5-8 Librarian in Lewistown, Montana, the Audiovisual Library at Flathead High School in Kalispell, Montana, the Junior High and High School Librarian in Lamar, Montana on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and is currently serving as the KW Vina Elementary Librarian in Browning, Montana on the Blackfeet Reservation.

Video Games at Your Library: A Presentation on How and Why - Joe Lanning

Video games are a dynamic, modern, popular medium worthy of a spot in every library, but starting a collection comes with a series of daunting tasks. This presentation provides practical information on how the Billings Public Library chose, purchased, and cataloged its collection, and how yours can, too.

Joe Lanning is Reference Librarian and Library Archivist with the Billings Public Library.

Why Diversity is Essential to the Library Ecosystem: (With Bears, Whales, and Others) - Sierra Benjamin

Diversity and inclusion are important to many of us on a personal level, but what concrete advantages do these ideas bring to the modern library, and how can we communicate this importance to the people who control our funding? We will discover the benefits of diversity with the help of some friends from the natural world. As a wide variety of organisms cause a forest or ocean to be ecologically stable and resilient, so a wide variety of perspectives, especially in collections and policies, is necessary for a library's success!

Sierra Benjamin is a Library Advisor and the Safety Officer for ImagineIF Libraries. In her free time, Sierra enjoys reading, making art and spending time in nature. She also enjoys practicing jiu-jitsu and gardening with her family.

Putting the FREE in Freedom to Read – Star Bradley

During Banned Books Week 2022, the MSU Library held an event where library staff gave away 250+ banned books. The presenter will discuss this event from idea to implementation. The session will highlight details, including: staffing the giveaway table; student feedback; and Friends of MSU Library funding.

Star Bradley is a Reference and Instruction Librarian at Montana State University Library in Bozeman, MT. Her primary focus is on instruction, both credit bearing and guest lecturing. Star is also a member of the Outreach & Events committee, and assists with many of the library's outreach efforts.

Ready Set Go: Public Librarians and Fire Prevention Awareness – Kellian Clink

Nothing is scarier than a fire. Being ready with a plan, a rehearsal, a communication scenario, thinking though the critters, the kids, the drive though a fire makes a difference. Kellian will share Montana's Firewise Programs and synthesize tips from many states' plans to make homes, families, and the aftermath easier. Public Librarians can play an important part in the fire prevention education scenario.

Kellian Clink is a librarian and has presented at MLA, PNLA, and many other venues on library research, student affairs research, and history.

Session C - 11:15AM-12:15PM

It's Not Just Print: A Primer on the Censorship of Online Databases & Technology - Hannah McKelvey

As libraries continue to respond to challenges against print materials, several states are facing legislation targeting K-12 schools and electronic content in library databases. This session will provide an overview of online database and technology censorship and suggest actions libraries can take to prepare for potential challenges to their own electronic content.

Hannah McKelvey is an Assistant Professor and Electronic Resources & Discovery Services Librarian at Montana State University Library. Her current role includes managing electronic information licensed by the Library through third-parties and to facilitate discovery and access to Library resources.

Conversations with the Commission – Jennie Stapp, Montana State Librarian; Commissioners: Elsie Arntzen, Tom Burnett, Patricia Dubosky, Tamara Hall, Dalton Johnson, Robyn Scribner, and Peggy Taylor

Conversations with the Commission is an important annual event in the work of the Montana State Library Commission. The session gives the Commission a chance to share information about the priorities of the Commission and provides an open forum to discuss the trends and issues impacting the Montana library community.

The State Library Commission serves as the governing body of the Montana State Library which is the state agency responsible for library development in Montana.

Adopt-a-Species - a Habitat Education Program for Montana, facilitated by Librarians – Liz Burke, Corie Rice, Ryan Schmaltz, Matt Ferrell

Adopt-a-Species is a habitat education program for K-5 students partnered by the Forest Service, MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks and 2 local non-profits. It features species trunks, fall assemblies, a spring art/writing contest, and a May educator workshop. Librarians play a key role delivering this program in their schools.

Liz Burke is Conservation Educator at the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest and has managed Adopt-a-Species for 22 years. Corie Rice is the Program Specialist for Montana WILD, Fish Wildlife and Park's education Center located in Helena. Ryan Schmaltz is Education Program Specialist for Montana Wild, MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks. Matt Ferrell is Conservation Educator with the Montana Discovery Foundation, a non-profit friends group of the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest.

Indigenous Titles that assist you in Building a Culturally Responsive and Diverse Collection in Your Library: K through Adulthood – Angela Archuleta

Do you want to find more quality Indigenous materials for your library? Have you wondered where to find good resources? Come explore the books and resources for finding those materials. This session will include micro-reviews on books - Kindergarten to Adults.

Angela F. Archuleta is in her ninth year as a school librarian this fall. She has worked as a K-6 Librarian at Kincaid Elementary in Anchorage, Alaska, Grades 5-8 Librarian in Lewistown, Montana, the Audiovisual Library at Flathead High School in Kalispell, Montana, the Junior High and High School Librarian in Lame Deer, Montana on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and is currently serving as the KW Vina Elementary Librarian in Browning, Montana on the Blackfeet Reservation.

Get Out There: Bike Library Outreach in the Wild! - Taylor Arnold, Victoria Cassou, Elizabeth Fellerer, Jaclynn Reaves, Kelsie Rubich

Take the library out into the wild and meet your community where they're at! In this session, you'll learn how the Billings Public Library uses a bicycle library to host seasonal outreach programs at events, parks, local businesses, the skate park, and more. No bike? No problem! These ideas work without wheels, too!

Taylor Arnold works in the Billings Public Library Circulation department and has spearheaded Skate Park outreach and skate clinics, created unique social media promotions, and managed the Adult Hygiene kit program.

Victoria Cassou is a BPL Reference Librarian with a background in Youth Services. She has participated in the Bike Library program for two years, focusing her programming on story time, baby yoga, and outreach at the Children's Hospital. She is also a graphic designer and created the program logo.

Elizabeth Fellerer is the BPL Acquisitions Specialist. She has focused her seasonal outreach efforts on representing the library at large-scale community events like 406 Pride, the Farmer's Market, the Back to School Bash, and the downtown trick-or-treat event.

Jaclynn Reaves works in the BPL Circulation department and created the Hablar Conmigo program, a Spanish language conversation group that meets at a local coffee house. She has brought this program back into the library as a year-round offering.

Kelsie Rubich is the BPL Assistant Director and oversees the Bike Library outreach program. This summer, she learned to ride a skateboard (and didn't break anything!) at some of the outreach events.

12:30-1:45PM Keynote Luncheon with speaker Jamie Jonkel – Hotel Ballroom

Session D – 2:00-3:15PM

Montana Library Association Annual Membership Meeting – Hotel Ballroom

Session E – 3:30-5:00PM

Safety, not security: promoting library safety with compassion and inclusivity – Amanda Allpress, Elizabeth Jonkel, Rick Jenkins, Brett Bloom

Learn about Missoula Public Library's new Safety Specialist position, a divergence from traditional security. Also, hear from Rick Jenkins of Safe Libraries Consulting and head of safety at Seattle Public Library on de-escalation tactics and approaching library safety with compassion and care.

Amanda Allpress is the Assistant Director of Operations at Missoula Public Library. Her previous position at the library was Reference Librarian, with a focus on senior services. In past library work she has been a Young Adult Librarian, a Library Information Technician at a community college, and a Technical

Services Librarian at a law firm. When not at the library, you may find Amanda working in the garden or doing some “outdoorsy” activities with her husband and dogs.

Elizabeth Jonkel has been Assistant Director at Missoula Public since 2009. Prior to that, she worked in government and as a consultant in Canada and in the United States. She will always look at photos of your cat.

Rick Jenkins has over 30 years of security experience, including work in San Diego, Las Vegas, and Tokyo, Japan. For the last 13 years he has proudly worked for the Seattle Public Library Security Division, winners of the “Team of the Year Award.” As a Lead Security Officer, Rick is responsible for coordinating day-to-day operations at an eleven-story downtown public Library and navigating all the issues that a dense urban environment presents. In his spare time Rick enjoys walking his German shepherd, Roman, spending time with his family, and gloating about the success of his fantasy football team.

Brett Bloom is a Safety Specialist at Missoula Public Library. He has helped MPL create the position into what it is today. He has a background in security forces, the air force, and animal control. He is a writer, currently working on his second novel.

iB4 Mindful Library Skills – Chani Craig

iB4 is the necessary, and often overlooked, framework individuals need B4 starting research in an academic or school library. Combining several modalities including mindfulness, SEL, mediation, and conscious information literacy, iB4 concepts can help librarians create more intentional FYE lessons or k-12 curriculum for the adolescents they serve.

Chani Craig is currently a school librarian in Whitefish, Montana, with over 25 years of experience in education as a teacher, coach, librarian, and (most importantly) a student. Studying and teaching in Italy, Japan, and Australia, as well as on both coasts of the US has given Ms. Craig a unique perspective on contemplative educational practices and identifying instructional methods that transcend areas and cultures.

Understanding and Accessing Census Bureau Data - Kimberly Davis

Learn how to navigate census.gov to access the most current and relevant demographic, socioeconomic, and housing statistics about your community using existing and new data products and tools. During this session we will explore sources of data, frequency, and various levels of geography data is released. With a focus on the American Community Survey (ACS), we will look at narrative profiles and quick facts about local, county, state, and national level data. Attendees will learn how to search and navigation features in data.census.gov as well as how to download tables and create thematic maps.

Kimberly Davis serves as a Data Dissemination Specialist for the U.S. Census Bureau. Her primary role is to communicate business, demographic, and economic statistics from the Census Bureau that assist with business planning, decision making, development, and grant writing. Engaging with the public, including local governments, tribal nations, businesses, media, universities, and a variety of organizations and data users, Ms. Davis is responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders

through the dissemination of Census Bureau data products and resources. Currently, Ms. Davis provides outreach services to organizations in the states and Tribal Nations of Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming. Ms. Davis holds a certificate from the Graduate School USA Executive Leadership Program, Colorado State University Program Management, Digital Fundamentals and Marketing and works with Agile Development teams as a multi-division product owner.

Setting the bait: how to land a whopper of an audience - Jennifer Birnel, Dave Colamaria

The Montana History Portal uses several ways to encourage use of our content to different audiences. We have used conference presentations and workshops to target teachers, social media to reach history lovers, exhibits for our website users and students, and now we are implementing geocaching exploration through Adventure Labs to engage tourists. Learn how changing your bait can hook a larger audience for your library services.

Jennifer Birnel is the Director of the Montana History Portal for the Montana State Library (MSL). She taught middle school for 12 years, holds a BA in communications and a master's degree in literacy. Jennifer enjoys reading, camping, and kayaking.

Dave Colamaria joined the Montana History Portal as a Specialist in 2021. He has a master's degree in History, and over a decade of previous experience working with and for the US Navy's official history organization. He also has over a decade of experience in data analysis and statistics. He enjoys running, hiking, and skiing.

Fostering Teen Civic Engagement Through the Democracy Project - Jenny Bevill

Librarians and teens will share teen-led projects, strategies, and outcomes from year two of the Democracy Project, a statewide initiative designed to increase civic engagement among 13-19 year-olds. Participating libraries receive support from Humanities Montana to build teen audiences and achieve community-based goals.

Jenny Bevill is a dynamic educational leader with more than 20 years of experience teaching in public schools, museums, and community centers in New York City and Montana, including a decade at the Guggenheim Museum from 2004-2014. Jenny served as the Educator and Outreach Specialist at the Missoula Art Museum from 2018-2021 where she helped develop the distance learning platform, Museum as Megaphone, and the Art Host Initiative which connects Tribal nations across Montana with the museum to share contemporary Indigenous art. Jenny has taught and/or created content for many statewide arts organizations in Montana including the Office of Public Instruction, the Montana Arts Council, and Flathead Valley Community College. She has been a workshop leader for Humanities Montana since 2016 where she now coordinates the statewide Democracy Project for teens.

Serial and Series Records in the Wild: How to Spot and Catalog Them in the MSC - Keiley McGregor, Laura Tretter

If you're overwhelmed looking at the MSC's instructions for cataloging serial, series, and multi-part works -- and knowing when to apply a call # analytic! -- join us! This session is intended primarily for catalogers in the MSC; however, all who are puzzled by these types of materials are welcome.

Keiley McGregor works for the State Library as Trainer to the Montana Shared Catalog (MSC) consortium. She enjoys trail running slowly, thrifting, and puzzles of all kinds.

Laura Tretter works for the State Library as System Administrator to the Montana Shared Catalog (MSC). She enjoys skiing, snowboarding, running slowly, and crafting of all sorts.

5:00-6:00PM – Happy Hour sponsored by The Trust for Montana Libraries

6:00-7:00PM - Cozy Networking with Tea-nanigans! – Amelea Kim

Come to a fun and cozy tea-themed networking hour! We will have teas available to try, delicious snacks to accompany the teas, and casual conversation with your conference peers. Anyone and everyone is welcome to come - you can stay for the whole time, or just pop in for a bit!

7:30-9:00PM – Sheila Cates Scholarship Fundraiser Event – Hotel Ballroom

Friday April 14th, 2023

Breakfast – 7:30-8:30AM

Session F 8:30-9:30AM

Go Wild with Continuing Education! How to Access and Use MSL Learn - Colet Bartow

This session will introduce you to the new MSL Learn platform and the courses offered. Online learning doesn't have to be dull or daunting! Colet will help you access the site and take advantage of the free courses offered to Montana librarians and trustees.

Colet's professional background is in school librarianship, professional development, and state education agency leadership. Her history with MSL started in the late 1990s as a school library representative to several committees and included time as an MSL Commissioner. She currently serves at the Continuing Education Coordinator for MSL.

Copyright & Creativity - Shelley O'Rourke

The materials from this online resource provide accessible and practical information about copyright and its role in encouraging creativity with the goal of offering useful and positive information about how students can successfully navigate and rely on copyright in their own roles as creators.

Shelley O'Rourke has been an educator for 27 years, 15 as a middle school English teacher and 12 as a middle school librarian. She is currently serving as co-chair of the School Library Division of MLA.

Montana, Challenged Books and Responses - Kellian Clink, Matt Beckstrom, Jasmine James

Why are books being challenged in Montana? How are library's responding? What are the outcomes? What's the future hold? Kellian Clink will share results from a November 2022 survey that queried Montana Librarians about kinds of challenges & responses, Matt Beckstrom will discuss his experiences as the chair of the Montana Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee, and Jasmine Jackson will talk about their personal journey and how they have yet to see a nonbinary character in a book and what it would mean to them to see one.

Kellian Clink is a Librarian & Professor with 35 years of experience being a responsive librarian and a researcher in the arenas of Libaryland, History, and Student Affairs. Kellian has a MA, MLS, Specialist in Ed. Leadership.

Matt Beckstrom has a MIS from University of North Texas (2012) and is Systems Librarian at Lewis & Clark Library in Helena. Matt is also the Chair of the MLA Intellectual Freedom Committee, MLA's ALA Representative, American Library Association Councilor, and LITA Liaison to the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee. He is the author of several books and articles on privacy, security and intellectual freedom.

Jasmine Jackson is the Lib Tech II Student Supervisor, at Montana State University. They have been involved in the Bozeman Poetry Collective, have a Bachelor's in Literature from Montana State University (2020) and is currently working on their MLIS degree.

Wrangling the Wild West of Hot Spot Cataloging in the MSC - Keiley McGregor, Melody Karle

The Montana State Library's Hot Spot Lending Program expanded patron access to the internet via hot spots, both in and out of the Montana Shared Catalog (MSC); however, it's presented cataloging challenges for staff. Come learn the MSC recommendations for cataloging hot spots to best support patron discovery and circulation.

Keiley McGregor works for the State Library as Trainer to the Montana Shared Catalog (MSC) consortium. She enjoys trail running slowly, thrifting, and puzzles of all kinds.

Melody Karle works as a System Administrator for the Montana Shared Catalog (MSC) consortium at the Montana State Library. She has previously worked in both public and academic libraries, and spends her free time fostering kittens, baking, gardening, and playing competitive Scrabble.

Placement to Prompt Access: Our Library's Experiment with Physical and Digital Signage - Jessica Leach, Star Bradley, and Hannah McKelvey

Presenters share the results of strategically placing physical and digital signage to increase access to library resources. They created banners in their library's discovery layer, hung large posters near the library coffee shop to engage students waiting in line, and monitored metrics to gauge increases, if any, in resource usage.

Jessica Leach is a Student Employee Service Desk Supervisor and is a member of the Student Management Team in the Learning & Research Services department of the MSU Library. While newer to the role, she spent her undergraduate career as a student employee in the MSU Library, giving her experience in working with student employees. She is currently pursuing her MLIS, and aims to understand more about the industry.

Star Bradley is a Reference and Instruction Librarian at Montana State University Library in Bozeman, MT. Her primary focus is on instruction, both credit bearing and guest lecturing. Star is also a member of the Outreach & Events committee, and assists with many of the library's outreach efforts.

Hannah McKelvey is an Assistant Professor and Electronic Resources & Discovery Services Librarian at Montana State University Library. Her current role includes managing electronic information licensed by the Library through third-parties and to facilitate discovery and access to Library resources.

Session G 9:45-10:45AM

Libraries and Telehealth: An Opportunity for Service - George Strawley

Telehealth holds promise for increasing healthcare access. However, many Montanans lack broadband, private space or digital literacy skills necessary to benefit from it. This session will discuss how libraries are beginning to address those needs and discuss some of the common questions that come up from libraries about telehealth.

George Strawley, M.L.I.S., works on providing access to health information and programs through libraries as well as on the planning and implementation of funding aimed at addressing health disparities. A former librarian in both the public and community college settings, he is based at the University of Utah, where he serves as Library Engagement Specialist in the Mountain West for the Network of the National Library of Medicine.

Grassroots Library Advocacy with the MLA Government Affairs Committee - Alissa Wolenetz, Rachel Rawn

This panel will discuss the 2023 Legislative Session, changes to State Aid, and possibilities for getting involved with efforts to advocate for libraries locally and statewide.

Alissa Wolenetz is the Director of the Lewistown Public Library and Co-chair of MLA's Government Affairs Committee.

Rachel Rawn is the Director of the Havre-Hill County Library and Co-chair of MLA's Government Affairs Committee.

Sensory Bins in the Library – Deidre McMullin, Liza Butler, Ellie Newell

How can sensory bin play transform library play spaces, early literacy programs, and library use? What are the developmental benefits of sensory play? What about the mess? Learn how to incorporate sensory activities into your storytime and play spaces in the library.

Liza Butler and Deidre McMullin work at branches of ImagineIF Libraries, and both consider storytime a highlight of their jobs at the library.

Ellie Newell is the Youth Services Department Head at Bozeman Public Library where she spends her days enchanting young children with her love of books and things cute and lovely.

The Stories We Tell: Rewilding Government Information in Montana - Natalie Bond, Jim Kammerer

This session seeks to anchor government information librarianship to place, both practically and theoretically. Presenters will discuss their efforts to engage with regionally-produced government information and reflect on the ways in which this work re-localizes their respective libraries, simultaneously connecting users to regionally-significant materials while contributing to stories of place.

Natalie Bond is the Government Information Librarian & Head of Information and User Services at the University of Montana's Mansfield Library. She also serves as the regional Federal Depository Library Program coordinator for the state of Montana. When Natalie is not ruminating on the state of American collective memory, she can be found running long miles on Montana trails with her dog, Olive.

Jim Kammerer is the Government Information Librarian at Montana State Library who works with state agencies and Montana libraries to provide permanent public access to state government information intended for public distribution. Outside of work, he enjoys being with his family, amateur radio, gardening, and trail running in the Scratch Gravel Hills.

Carving a niche for the school library program in your school - Dana Carmichael, Colet Bartow

The best defense is a good offense. Be the best school librarian you can be without working yourself to death. Target your efforts to support your students and staff to build a library community.

Dana Carmichael is a retired middle school librarian and teacher from Whitefish, MT.

Colet's professional background is in school librarianship, professional development, and state education agency leadership. Her history with MSL started in the late 1990s as a school library representative to several committees and included time as an MSL Commissioner. She currently serves at the Continuing Education Coordinator for MSL.

Session H 11:15AM-12:15PM

Engaging Youth in Poetry - Diane Sun

Diane Sun, 2022 National Student Poet for the West, will share her journey to poetry and exercises that will engage other youth in the form.

Diane Sun is a senior at Interlake High School in Bellevue, Washington, but she was born and raised in Houston, Texas. She is the president and founder of her school's art and literary publication, *The Interlake Review*, as well as the philosophy club. When she's not writing, she's debating, either for her school or as a member of the national team. When she's not debating, she's writing, merging the (terrifying) passage of time, the intersection of femininity and nature, and her love of her Chinese culture and community in a blend of tea leaves and late nights.

The 2023 International Indigenous Librarians Forum in Hawai'i - Lorie Roy, Hau'olihiwahiwa Moniz

The first International Indigenous Librarians Forum took place in 1999 in New Zealand. Nā Hawai'i 'Imi Loa (Native Hawaiian Librarian Association) is hosting IILF 2023. The program is infused with Indigenous cultural protocol. Indigenous delegates at each IILF create a key document such as a vision statement or action plan.

Dr. Lorie Roy is Anishinabe, enrolled on the White Earth Reservation, a member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. She was Distinguished Service Professor in the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin. She was President of the American Indian Library Association (AILA) and the American Library Association.

Hau'olihiwahiwa Moniz is a Native Hawaiian librarian with an MLIS from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa where she's currently completing her Hawaiian Studies Master's Degree. She is the Graduate Research Assistant for Laka me Lono Resource Center at Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies, heading programming and assisting in research.

Significant Tidings – Eileen Wright

Significant Tidings is back! A forum sponsored by MLA's Academic and Special Libraries Division (ASLD) to present library ideas, projects, or grant developments in 15-20 minute sessions.

Eileen Wright has been a Librarian/Archivist at Montana State University Billings Library since 2001. Like many of us, she has many roles at the library, which include professor for our LSCI125 course, Research in the Information Age, outreach coordinator for the many student events, running the student and staff book clubs, and of course working with our excellent faculty on projects.

Go Wild with KEVA Planks - Shelley O'Rourke

Keva Planks are a simple yet profound way to encourage creativity, iterative thinking, and design thinking for learners of all ages. Learn the why and how of bringing Keva planks into your library.

Shelley O'Rourke has been a Montana educator for 27 years. For the first 15, she taught middle school English. For the last 12 years, she has enjoyed being a middle school librarian. In 2022, she was elected to serve as a co-chair for the School Library Division of MLA.

Expanding Access to New Neighbors - Johnny Skinner, Ashley Cummins, Deidre McMullin

Valley Neighbors and ImagineIF Libraries created a partnership in 2022 to encourage immigrant and refugee families in the Flathead to learn about opportunities at the library and around the community. Public libraries are an ideal setting for newly arrived neighbors to learn about their community, make connections, and access services. Libraries across the state have an opportunity to create partnerships and build relationships that help serve immigrant and refugee communities.

Johnny Skinner, a decade long Flathead County resident, first saw a need to engage the greater Flathead community after local reactions and attitudes towards refugees in 2016. Johnny works to make our community a more welcoming community through Valley Neighbors, a non-profit dedicated to providing support and services to immigrants and refugees both locally and regionally.

Ashley Cummins is the director of ImagineIF Libraries. Prior to her move to Montana she worked in libraries in her home state of Alabama. She has a keen interest in kittens, kayaking and karaoke.

Deidre McMullin is the manager of ImagineIF Bigfork. Her favorite parts of her job include readers' advisory, messy storytime activities, and shiny new books.

Stitching the Harmonious Whole: Using quilts to build information literacy programming - Alex Anderlik, Stephanie Hohn, Megan Stark

Quilting is a powerful metaphor for information literacy. Join us to learn how an academic library used a crazy quilt pattern to redesign our information literacy curriculum. Bring your bits and pieces and discuss how we stitched together diverse elements of instruction into a wild and harmonious whole.

Alex Anderlik is the Reference Technician at the University of Montana's Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, as well as a student of UM's History, Central and Southwest Asia Studies, and English programs.

Stephanie Hohn (she/her) will be a Spring 2023 graduate of the University of Montana's English Literature Department. An employee of both the Mansfield Library's Information and User Services and Technical Support Departments, her graphic designs have been used in monthly reference displays, library zines, and promotional stickers. A commissioned series of her pattern-focused digital artwork entitled "The Method of Loci" was added to the Mansfield Library's permanent collection in 2022.

Megan Stark (she/her) is the Undergraduate Services and Outreach Librarian at the University of Montana Missoula Mansfield Library. She is keenly interested in local information, and the many ways that different people create community together.

12:30-2:00PM – MLA Division Lunches

Session I 2:15-3:45PM

Montana Book Award - Elizabeth Jonkel

The Montana Book Award is an annual award that recognizes literary and/or artistic excellence in a book published during the award year. Eligible titles are either set in Montana, deal with Montana themes/issues, or are written, edited or illustrated by a Montana author or artist. Books for all ages are considered for the award. Attend to learn about the 2022 Montana Book Award winners and the titles that were eligible this year.

Elizabeth Jonkel has been the Chair of the MBA since 2017. She is Assistant Director at Missoula Public Library. She is joined by members of the reading committee who select the annual winner and represent different geographic locations across the state of Montana.

Risks, Hazards, Danger, Oh My! Your Library's Response to Safety, Incidents, and More – Sarah Creech

What's the difference between risks, hazards, and danger? How do you start talking to your staff (coworkers, students) about safety? When should you document an incident that occurs in the library? What should follow up look like after an incident? These questions and more will be answered in this presentation.

While not an expert in safety or emergency preparedness, Sarah Creech is currently the Head of Circulation and Public Services at the Bozeman Public Library. Before pursuing librarianship as a full time career in 2016, she was a food scientist who developed freeze-dried backpacking meals for Mountain House. She hails from the east coast, a graduate of Cornell University in Ithaca, NY for undergraduate studies and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for her MLIS. She, along with her husband, has called Bozeman home for 6 years.

MSL Trunk Program Overview - Amelea Kim

Are you looking for fun activities to do at your library? Come and explore the MSL Trunk Program and learn about the themed trunk activities that are available to you! We will discuss the logistics of how to borrow and use a trunk, as well as go over the different trunks that are available for both you and your community.

Amelea Kim has worked as the Lifelong Learning Librarian at the Montana State Library since June 2018. Her library interests include children's services, particularly services for ages 0 – 5, health literacy, community outreach/support, and supporting Montana librarians in the amazing work that they do! In her free time, Amelea enjoys hiking, baking cakes and consuming said cakes, and making forays into various crafting hobbies.

What's with the buttons? - A DEI Initiative - Jessica Leach

The Learning & Research Services department at the MSU-Bozeman Library has developed an initiative to incentivize commendable work done by student employees and to create an inclusive atmosphere through custom buttons for the department.

Jessica Leach is a Student Employee Service Desk Supervisor and is a member of the Student Management Team in the Learning & Research Services department of the MSU Library. While newer to the role, she spent her undergraduate career as a student employee in the MSU Library, giving her experience in working with student employees. She is currently pursuing her MLIS, and aims to understand more about the industry.

4:00-5:00 – MLA Interest Group Meetings

6:00-7:30PM – MLA New Members Cocktail Hour with music by Counting Coup

7:30-9:00PM – MLA Awards Dinner

Saturday April 15th, 2023

Session J 9:00-10:00AM

Helping Libraries Tame Wild Technology - Suzanne Reymer

The speed and scope of technology changes and innovations can be overwhelming. We'll look at some of the latest tech developments and trends and what they might mean for your library and your community.

Suzanne Reymer is a Consulting Librarian for the Montana State Library. Prior to that, she was a Technology Librarian and has continued to be viewed by many as the techie in Library Development. She strives to stay current on new technologies and trends while seeking to remove some of the aura of

inevitability. Aiding in this endeavor are two cats who believe that nothing is more important than a warm lap and a dog who knows that walks supersede screens.

Meet the Law Library - Sydnie Tallman

Have your librarians come across legal questions that they found hard to answer? Are your patrons looking for legal resources that you do not have in your library? Let me introduce you to the State Law Library and the resources and services that we offer.

Sydnie Tallman is the Technical Services Librarian at the State Law Library. She has worked for three years in both the circulation and technical services department. Before that, she spent 15 years in the education field, as a substitute teacher and Director of Education at Sylvan Learning Center.

Guerrilla Storytime - Come Share and Learn! – Amelea Kim

Guerrilla Storytime is a peer-to-peer skill sharing event that allows storytime providers to learn new skills and show the plethora of knowledge Youth Services professionals have. Participants pick a popsicle stick with a storytime challenge on it (ex: “What’s your favorite nursery rhyme?”) and demonstrate their answer to their peers. Come share your tried-and-true storytime ideas and learn about others, and help everyone leave with new tricks and skills to share with your community.

Amelea Kim has worked as the Lifelong Learning Librarian at the Montana State Library since June 2018. Her library interests include children’s services, particularly services for ages 0 – 5, health literacy, community outreach/support, and supporting Montana librarians in the amazing work that they do! In her free time, Amelea enjoys hiking, baking cakes and consuming said cakes, and making forays into various crafting hobbies.

Genre-fy your Library - Ann Gentry and Janell Habeck

Want to help your students find a book easily to help encourage them to read? Try setting up your library by genre. We changed are high school/middle school library 5 years ago and it has been a huge success. We will share how we did it and what our students say.

Ann Gentry has been working at the Frenchtown School Library for 15 years.

Janell Habeck has been working at the Frenchtown School Library for 10 years.

Session K 10:15-11:15AM

Lifelong Learning For Everyone - Amelea Kim

Lifelong learning is important for patrons of all ages. The Montana Library Network Lifelong Learning Core Services Committee is eager to help create engaging experiences for diverse patrons around the state. Join the committee in this session to learn about how the LLL CSC helps contribute to this, to share ideas for needs and trends in lifelong learning that you see, and to help increase lifelong learning opportunities across the Montana library community.

Amelea Kim has worked as the Lifelong Learning Librarian at the Montana State Library since June 2018. Her library interests include children's services, particularly services for ages 0 – 5, health literacy, community outreach/support, and supporting Montana librarians in the amazing work that they do! In her free time, Amelea enjoys hiking, baking cakes and consuming said cakes, and making forays into various crafting hobbies.

How to Run a Successful Family Movie Night- Ann Gentry

Want to get ideas for hosting a successful Community Movie Night? Ideas for where and how to host a movie night will be shared as well as what legal aspects you might need to know.

Ann Gentry grew up in Greeley, Colorado and lived in Oklahoma and Alaska before moving to Montana. She has been working at the Frenchtown Library since 2008 - and it has become her passion. Ann has hosted a successful Family movie night for the past 12 years.

Changing Perceptions Through Outreach - Jennifer Ball

How does your community view your library? Is the perception off-base or is it time to evaluate what needs to change to better meet needs? Hear about Stillwater County Library's process of evaluation, the outreach campaign that improved the library's image, and how their experience may help you.

Jennifer Ball is the Director of Stillwater County Library. She has worked in special, academic, and public libraries and holds a Bachelors in English, a Masters in Library and Information Science, and a certificate in grant writing. Her passion revolves around providing support and arming people with the tools they need to be successful in gaining knowledge, while also encouraging inspiration and innovation. In her free time, you might see her spending time with her family, her menagerie of nearly 60 animals, or riding the trails in a side by side with her husband.

Everything is Political: Ethics in School Libraries- Hayley Botnen

A deep dive into School Library Ethics. Let's talk about how to stand firm against push back and how to respond to parties operating against library ethics.

Hayley is a Leo and an Enneagram 8. She focuses her librarianship on finding books for all students. She believes that while a library's heart is books, it's skeleton is relationships with patrons.

11:30-1:00PM – Author Lunch with Craig Lancaster

Craig Lancaster is the author 10 novels, including two High Plains Book Award winners: *And It Will Be a Beautiful Life* (2022, best fiction) and *600 Hours of Edward* (2010, best first book). His latest, *Dreaming Northward* (Gramarye Media), comes out June 27, 2023, in hardcover, ebook, and audiobook. He lives in Billings with his wife (novelist Elisa Lorello), a dachshund named Fretless, and a tuxedo cat named Spatz.

Program Descriptions for 2024 MLA Conference

Please note: schedules are subject to change

Montana State Library Continuing Education Credit Categories:

Red: Library Administration

Green: Library Services to the Public

Blue: Collection Management and Technical Services

Purple: Technology

Wednesday April 17th, 2024

Pre-Conference Sessions

9:00AM-12:00PM, 1:00PM-4:00PM (Full day) - **Understanding and Honoring Tribal Paradigms** - Lona Running Wolf and Wendy Bremner

Lona Running Wolf and Wendy Bremner, sisters raised on the Blackfeet Reservation, discuss tribal identity, culture, and policies, while also explaining historical and contemporary Indian policies.

Lona Running Wolf has served numerous capacities in education, including as a teacher, instructional coach, instructional leader, and curriculum development. She also held the role of Director of American Indian Student Achievement for the Montana Office of Public Instruction.

Wendy Bremner is a Victim Specialist for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and has received the U.S. Attorney's "Working Hard, Making a Difference" Award for "her contribution to public safety in Indian Country."

9:00AM-12:00PM – **Library Board Training with the MSU Local Government Center** - Dan Clark and Ashley Kent

The MSU Local Government Center (LGC) strengthens the capacity of Montana's local governments by providing training and support to elected, appointed, and administrative officials and staff. This support includes engaging, interactive board leadership training which, when done appropriately, can increase employee engagement, streamline decision-making, and improve board efforts to provide services to the public.

Training Topics will include:

- *Principles of good governance*
- *Roles and responsibilities of board members/trustees*

- *Montana open meeting laws*
- *Montana citizens right to participate laws*
- *Executive session/closed meetings*
- *Board member liability*
- *Meeting agendas and managing public comment*
- *Montana's code of ethics*
- *Meeting minutes*

Dan Clark, Director, joined the Local Government Center in April 2008. He has been serving Montana since 1997. Prior to joining the MSU Local Government Center, he served as the Statewide Director for the Montana Horizons program from 2006 to 2008. Previously, Dan worked as a Montana State University Extension faculty member in Teton County from 1997 to 2006. During this time, he served as Mayor of Choteau, Montana for four years. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Arizona in Agricultural Education and taught high school agriculture for three years before joining Extension.

Ashley Kent, Associate Director, joined the Local Government Center (LGC) in July 2014. She currently manages the certified education programs the LGC offers for local government officials, provides governance and leadership workshops, and is developing new educational tools to enhance the LGC training offerings. Ashley earned her bachelor's degree in Business Management from Montana State University in 2012 and her Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Montana in 2017. Prior to the Local Government Center, Ashley worked in other departments at MSU including Human Resources and Institutional Equity.

12:00-1:00PM – **Lunch**

12:00-1:00PM – **MLA Spring Board Meeting**

12:00-1:00PM – **Trustee Interest Group Meeting (TBD)**

1:00-4:00PM - **Understanding and Honoring Tribal Paradigms** - Lona Running Wolf and Wendy Bremner (continued from morning session)

1:00-4:00PM – **Montana Shared Catalog Spring Members Meeting** – MSC Staff

Montana Shared Catalog members are invited to attend the Spring 2024 membership meeting. Action items will include approval of the FY2025 budget and cost share formula.

5:00-6:30PM – **2024 MLA Annual Conference Opening Reception**, Butte-Silver Bow Public Library

6:30-7:30PM - **Montana Book Awards Ceremony**, Butte-Silver Bow Public Library, Elizabeth Jonkel, Host

Montana Book Awards author event with award winners

Thursday April 18th, 2024

Breakfast – 7:30-8:30AM

Session A - 8:30-9:30AM

One Million Staples: Stuff Management in the Library – Sierra Benjamin

As library staff, we curate vibrant collections of media through weeding. Yet sometimes, our other stuff (decorations, stuff from programs, and technology ephemera, etc.) gets dangerously out of control! This interactive presentation offers a place to start when it comes to wrangling stuff in the library.

Sierra Benjamin has volunteered and worked in various positions at Imagine! Libraries since 2013, and she has been decluttering garages, closets, and junk drawers for much longer! She is part of the Adult Programming Team and has served as the library's safety officer since 2021. When she's not doing library things, she loves to read, of course, as well as write, create art, hang out in nature, play D&D, and practice jiu jitsu.

Reach Out Where You Can! MSU Library's Diverse Outreach Efforts - Mary Anne Hansen, Star Bradley, Jan Zauha

As the state's land grant university, it's part of our mission to do extensive outreach. Thus, the MSU Library has a broad scope of outreach efforts, from community events, to student and faculty events. Come hear us talk about bunnies, book groups, and veterans, OH MY!

Mary Anne Hansen is Research Services Librarian at MSU. Now in her 36th year at the MSU Library, she loves being involved in any and all things outreach to make a positive impact on library patrons and the public, as well as raise awareness about all the things that the MSU Library offers, including the fun stuff!

Star Bradley is a Reference and Instruction Librarian at MSU Library in Bozeman, MT. Star has taught credit bearing classes, to include LSCI 121 (Library Research Skills) and LS 350 (Literature Reviews: Theory & Practice). Star is a member of the library's Outreach & Events committee, and she loves to stick her thumb into every outreach pie!

Jan Zauha is Outreach and Digital Humanities Librarian, and she chairs the Outreach & Events committee, and does such a great job of it that we call her our Outreach Goddess. Among other events, she's the mastermind behind the MSU Library's annual open house.

Guadalajara International Book Fair - Christine Call

What is the International Book Fair in Guadalajara, Mexico? It is an annual book fair that brings vendors, librarians, authors, and cultural events together for a nine day event. The American Library Association

has grant programs available to help librarians attend international events. Come find out how you can participate!

Christine Call works in the Technical Services department of the Butte-Silver Bow Public Library. She currently serves on the MLA Board as Director at Large-West, and as the Technical Services Interest Group Chair. Christine holds a BS in University Studies and English from BYU-Idaho and a MLIS from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She spent 4 years living in Mexico with her family where she worked as a school librarian in a bilingual elementary school. Christine currently lives in Butte, where she enjoys occasional visits from her children and spending her time with her spouse, books, and her standard poodle named Duke.

Election Guide: Make it local! – Kellian Clink

Participants will be introduced to my Election Guide <https://libguides.mnsu.edu/voting> which has information about where to vote (polling place locators) and how to vote (in terms of eligibility). In addition, my guide links to fact checkers, campaign donations sites, and other resources on Election 2024, including links to how MN is responding to climate change, for one example.

Kellian Clink is a librarian in Minnesota with roots in Montana as her mother grew up there. She presented with others last year on a survey of Montana's banned books and presents most years at PNLA as well.

The First Five(ish) Years: Navigating the World of Librarianship as a New Professional – Kayla Whitaker

In this session, new professionals will come together to share their journeys, learn tips and tricks on how to find mentors and advocates for your professional development, and leave with a new friend/accountability buddy to help you reach your short and long term goals.

Kayla Whitaker has been working at the Missoula Public Library since the summer of 2021 as part of the Circulation department. She is also the branch manager for Potomac Library, and recently became the Children's Librarian and Youth Services Manager at MPL. She received her MLIS from San Jose State University. In the rare instances when she is not buried in a book, she can be found in remote locations, hiking and camping with her husband.

Session B - 9:45-10:45AM

Care and Feeding of a Library - Angela Archuleta

This session will provide participants with techniques and ideas to assist them in reducing stress in their lives. Various techniques learned from several sources including the University of Montana Happiness Course will be presented.

Angela F. Archuleta is in her tenth year as a school librarian. She has worked as a K-6 Librarian at Kincaid Elementary in Anchorage, Alaska, Grade 5-8 Librarian in Lewistown, Montana, the Audiovisual Librarian at Flathead High School, the Junior High & High School Librarian in Lame Deer, Montana on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation, and currently is serving as the PK-1st Grade Librarian at Stamitsikitsikin Elementary Chatten and Bergan Branch Libraries on the Blackfeet Reservation in Browning, Montana.

Perspectives on Montana's Libraries – Pamela Benjamin, Jodie Moore, Victoria Contrarez, Jennifer Hossack, Rachelle McLain, Shelley O'Rourke, Jennie Stapp

Join us for an overview of the status of Montana libraries in the K12, public, and academic sectors. A good understanding of our respective environments strengthens our ability to work collaboratively. What are our unique and shared challenges? A recognition of trends and commonalities can improve our support for each other individually and collectively.

Pamela Benjamin has been the Statewide Academic Library Coordinator since 2014 for Montana's coalition of academic libraries – the Treasure State Academic Libraries & Information Services consortium or TRAILS – located at MSU-Bozeman. She is the MLA Director at Large, East and a co-chair of the MLA Membership Committee. Previously, Pamela worked for the Cleveland Public Library (Cleveland, OH), the Kent State University Library, the Mansfield/Richland Co. Public Library, the OSU-Mansfield Branch Library, the OH Library Council, and the Plain Dealer newspaper library.

Jodie Moore (Bresnan) is the Director of the Red Lodge Carnegie Library, a position she has held for 18 years. She gets to do a bit of everything: collection management, technical services, programs for all ages, ILL, social media and PR, budgeting, etc. She gleefully serves on the Content Management Committee of the Montana Shared Catalog and is the current Chair of the Network Advisory Council. Jodie received her MLIS from Florida State University. In addition to being Jodie the Librarian, she is also mom to two boys and two dogs.

Victoria Contreraz is the eResources and Technical Services Librarian at the Montana State University Billings Library, and the current ASLD Senior Co-Chair. She manages MSUB's databases, research guides, eBooks, and other digital resources. She leads collection development procedures and oversees the Technical Services department. Victoria received a Bachelor of Arts in English and Textual Studies from Syracuse University and an MLIS from the University of Washington.

Jennifer Hossack says "Librarianship is my foremost passion. I love finding that "just right" book for my students and empowering them to take control of their education through research skills and instilling a love for learning. I hold an M.A.T. in Elementary Education, and endorsements in Library Science, Psychology, and Dance Education. I am in my 16th year as an elementary/middle school librarian. I also serve as the Director of Libraries for Missoula Catholic Schools and librarian at Loyola Sacred Heart High School where I also teach Introduction to Psychology and Media Literacy. This is my 22nd year in the library profession. I worked for 6 years at the University of Montana's Mansfield Library in cataloging

and acquisitions and am back working there part time. I serve as School Library Division Co-Chair on the Montana Library Association Board, and as school library liaison to the Montana Shared Cataloging and Acquisitions committee for the Montana Library.”

Rachelle McLain is the Collection Development Librarian at the Montana State University Library. She manages the library’s collections budget and oversees the acquisition and deselection of resources to meet the research and learning needs of the Montana and MSU communities. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Western Washington University and an MLIS from the University of Washington.

Shelley O'Rourke is a middle school librarian from Great Falls. She has been a school librarian for 12 years and currently serves on the MLA Board as co-chair of the School Library Division. She is part of the MFPE Teacher Leadership co-host, and her capstone project is professional development for school librarians. Prior to working as a librarian, she taught English for 16 years. Her husband is a middle school math teacher, and their three children are in varying stages of education, from working on a Master's degree to finishing up the senior year of high school.

Jennie Stapp is a Montana native. She holds a BA in International Studies from Rocky Mountain College in Billings. She earned her MLS from the University of Arizona in 2002. While in library school Jennie was a Cates Scholar. Jennie worked previously for the Montana Historical Society Research Center and joined the staff of the State Library in 2005. She has been State Librarian since January, 2012

Supporting Your Friendly Neighborhood Library Student - Nicole Bernard

Are you working with someone who is getting their MLS? Do you want to support them on their journey into the fascinating world of libraries? Listen to different strategies to guide and empower your student into the most well-rounded librarian they can be.

Nicole Bernard is the Administrative Associate at the MSU Billings Library. She is currently working towards her MLS and is excited to learn everything she can about the library world.

Paper Maps in a Digital Age - Josh Braach

An exploration of the continuing importance of paper maps in the public library and how they complement digital collections. A look at the benefits of a circulating collection of paper maps that can be custom fit to your library.

Josh Braach says “I am a graduate of the University of Montana with a Bachelor’s Degree in History and a minor in Geography. I have worked at Imagine If Library in Kalispell for the past two and a half years. I have had a lifelong passion for maps and the development and maintenance of my library’s map collection is the highlight of my job.”

Our Tribal Community College Library - Kimberly Nora Old Chief

This session will be an exploration of services provided to the community at Blackfeet Community College Medicine Spring Library.

Kimberly Nora Old Chief enrolled member of the Blackfeet Tribe, a graduate of Blackfeet Community College, and works as a Library Technician at Medicine Spring Library.

Session C - 11:15AM-12:15PM

C is for Creative: A Maker's Alphabet - Ben Nielsen

Bozeman Public Library opened the Work Bench Creative Lab in October of 2023. In this session we will use each letter of the alphabet to explore why library patrons need opportunities to make and create. We will also talk about how libraries in Montana can help to facilitate creative experiences.

Ben Nielsen is the Creative Labs Librarian at the Bozeman Public Library, formerly the Software Training Manager at the BYU Library, and the author of the Creative Communities in Libraries Field Guide. He is passionate about building creative skills in everyone and helping people come together in communities.

Resource Sharing in Montana: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow – Cara Orban, Rachel Rawn, Alissa Wolenetz

Montana Code Annotated 22-1-328 established the Statewide Interlibrary Resource-Sharing Program “to administer funds appropriated by the legislature to support and facilitate resource-sharing among libraries in Montana.” What does this mean for your library? What could it mean for your library? In this session we will take a look back at Montana’s tradition of library resource sharing, discuss our current programs’ joys and concerns, and brainstorm how to create the future of resource sharing that our communities need.

Cara Orban is the Consortia Coordinator at the Montana State Library.

Rachel Rawn is the Director of the Havre-Hill County Library and Co-chair of MLA’s Government Affairs Committee.

Alissa Wolenetz is the Director of the Lewistown Public Library and Co-chair of MLA’s Government Affairs Committee.

Panic! in the Library: Facing Adversity and Caring for Yourself in a Hostile World – Emily Wicks and Maren Engen

Libraries across the nation are facing unfathomable challenges and Montana is no exception. Library staff are not always supported in their communities internally and/or externally. How do we navigate these tumultuous times? How do we care for our staff, our selves, and each other?

Emily Wicks is the Director of the Chouteau County Library in Fort Benton. She is about earn her MLS from Emporia State University in May. She enjoys the outdoors and being with her four children.

Maren Engen is the Assistant Director of the Chouteau County Library in Fort Benton. She recently received her MLS from Emporia State University. She enjoys knitting, sewing, and spending time with her husband and three cats.

Supporting Veterans at the Public Library – Kelly Ackerman

Are there veterans living in your community or visiting your library? Join MT Veteran's Affairs Division administrator Kelly Ackerman for a presentation on the many veterans benefits available and how to access important resources to support these community members.

Kelly Ackerman, an Air Force retiree and Montana native, is responsible for the veteran's services program, overseeing 9 offices statewide.

Perfection Collection: Prepping, Promoting, and Serving Up a Feast of Culinary Books - Jan Zauha

We all have pockets of underused, unknown gems in our collections. See how a hidden trove of Montana cookbooks has been carefully prepped and analyzed for “nutritional” value; then promoted and served up so more Montanans can enjoy the surprising diversity of cooks, foods, crops, and eateries in our state.

Jan Zauha is Humanities & Outreach Librarian in Archives & Special Collections at Montana State University Library in Bozeman where she's been a faculty member since 1995. She has been involved in writing a culinary history of Montana with colleagues from MSU and the Montana Historical Society (MHS) for several years but every where they turn there's another archive to explore and another cook book to savor!

12:30-1:45PM - Keynote Luncheon with speaker **Courtney Pentland**, President, American Association of School Libraries – **King Ballroom**

“Building Relationships by Sharing Your Story”

Librarians are continuing to face an issue that has challenged us for decades. Our stakeholders and the general public are not clear on what a librarian actually does. The stakes are higher now as there are members of the public who are sharing false narratives about what happens in libraries and what librarians actually do.

Courtney Pentland is a high school librarian in Lincoln, Nebraska. She is adjunct faculty for the University of Nebraska-Omaha School Library program and has served on the Nebraska School Librarians Association board as board member at large, president, and chapter delegate to AASL. She is the 2023-2024 American Association of School Librarians President.

Session D – 2:00-3:15PM

Montana Library Association Annual Membership Meeting – King Ballroom

Session E – 3:30-5:00PM

Conversations with the Commission— Montana State Library Commission

Conversations with the Commission is an important annual event in the work of the Montana State Library Commission. The session gives the Commission a chance to share information about the priorities of the Commission and provides an open forum to discuss the trends and issues impacting the Montana library community.

The State Library Commission serves as the governing body of the Montana State Library which is the state agency responsible for library development in Montana. The State Library Commission sets forth policies and funding priorities that empower the State Library to meet its mission and statutory obligations and to advocate for the State Library and the Montana library and information communities whenever possible.

Collection Analysis in the MSC Using BLUEcloud Analytics – Keiley McGregor

Managing your collection isn't just about inventory, it's about asking if there are overlaps or gaps in topics, what your collection's strengths are, and when items have aged-out, even if they're much-loved. Let's walk through running collection analysis reports in BLUEcloud Analytics (BCA) to start answering these questions for ourselves.

Keiley McGregor works for the Montana State Library as the Montana Shared Catalog Trainer. When not working she's usually thrifting, figuring out how to lift heavy weights, or loving on dogs at her local animal shelter.

Intellectual Freedom Chat Session – Beth Boyson and members of the MLA Intellectual Freedom Committee

Come to a conference session where you can share your victories and challenges regarding censorship, programs, selection, and board minutes in a safe place.

Beth Boyson chairs the MLA Intellectual Freedom Committee. She is an Adult Programming & Outreach Librarian and Cataloger at Bozeman Public Library.

There Is Only One AASL - Courtney Pentland

There is only one national association dedicated solely to the unique and essential role of the school librarian in K-12 education – the American Association of School Librarians. Since 1951, AASL has provided professional development, networking, advocacy, research, tools, and resources to meet the needs of school library professionals and advance the profession. Don't miss this opportunity to hear from AASL President Courtney Pentland and how AASL builds a community of passionate, like-minded professionals dedicated to empowering their learners.

Courtney Pentland is a high school librarian in Lincoln, Nebraska. She is adjunct faculty for the University of Nebraska-Omaha School Library program and has served on the Nebraska School Librarians Association board as board member at large, president, and chapter delegate to AASL. She is the 2023-2024 American Association of School Librarians President.

5:00-6:00PM – **Happy Hour sponsored by The Trust for Montana Libraries**

7:30-9:00PM – **Sheila Cates Scholarship Fundraiser Event - “*Strikes for Scholars*” - Star Lanes Family Sports Center**

Friday April 19th, 2024

Breakfast – 7:30-8:30AM

Session F 8:30-9:30AM

Book Repair Techniques - Ann Gentry and Janell Habeck

With library budgets dwindling and the cost up books going up, covering and repairing books can be a librarian's best tool. In this workshop we will go over techniques that we have learned (and used) to repair textbooks, hard cover books, and paperbacks. We will show the equipment we use and hopefully have others share the techniques they have used to prolong their collections.

Ann Gentry has been at the Frenchtown High School library since 2008.

Janell Habeck has been at the Frenchtown High School library since 2012.

Making Space for Dragons- Vic Mortimer

In a presentation and discussion, we will explore how we might make our libraries more inviting to the world outside our doors by making spaces for the creativity of our patrons. This might include anything from makerspaces to book clubs to murals on library walls.

Vic Mortimer is the teacher librarian at Corvallis Middle School. He taught high school and college English before figuring out that middle school libraries are his natural habitat.

Learning about Health Literacy - George Strawley

Literacy and health literacy are not the same. A person may read at a high level, and yet they may still struggle with understanding their diagnosis or reading their prescription vial. We will cover health literacy essentials and look at strategies librarians can use to address health information needs.

As an engagement specialist with the Network of the National Library of Medicine, George Strawley, M.L.I.S., works on funding and training aimed at addressing health disparities through reliable health information. George is a member of the NNLM Telehealth Interest Group. He works for the network's Region 4, which serves the Intermountain West and the Dakotas. With library experience in both public and academic settings, he is based at the University of Utah Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library.

Book Clubs and Fridges - Using a Whole Student Approach in Academic Libraries - Emily Reeb

A look into how one university library has expanded its services to work towards a whole student approach, including offering a for-fun book club and partnering with other departments to fight hunger.

Emily Reeb is the Student Success Librarian at Montana State University Billings where they work towards getting more students into the library for all their needs, not just academic.

Session G 9:45-10:45AM

Breaking News: Exploring Digitized Montana Newspapers - Dan Karalus

This just in! The Montana Historical Society recently completed two big newspapers digitization projects. Millions of pages of Montana newspapers containing obituaries, marriage announcements, and gossip are just a few clicks away! Learn about what newspapers are available, where to access them, and how to help patrons find historical information.

Dan is the Library Manager at the Montana Historical Society. He holds a PhD in History from Northern Arizona University and has lived in Montana for over 11 years, though not all in a row.

Getting Started with Grants - Cara Orban with Alyssa Ramirez and Lori Roberts

If you're interested in writing a grant proposal but aren't sure where to begin, this session is for you! We'll talk about the components of a successful grant proposal and how to find grant makers that could be a good fit for your project, using the Foundation Directory Online to search for examples. We will also talk to a couple of library directors with grant writing expertise for advice and inspiration.

Cara Orban is the Consortia Coordinator at the Montana State Library.

Alyssa Ramirez is the Director of Lincoln County Libraries.

Lori Roberts is the Director of Dillon Public Library.

A Conversation About Community Resilience Through Applied Humanities – John Knight and Megan Sundy

Humanities Montana invites MLA members to participate in a conversation about how humanities programming can support community resilience. As part of the United We Stand initiative, this listening session offers an opportunity to share the unique needs of libraries in their efforts to foster cross-cultural understanding and empathy within the communities they serve.

John Knight is the Program Director at Humanities Montana. He joined the organization in June of 2022 after many years of working in the arts as a museum professional, independent curator, and artist. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, John has a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Sculpture from the University of Cincinnati, and a Masters of Fine Arts in Visual Studies from Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, Oregon, where he co-directed two art galleries before moving to Montana in 2017. He has exhibited his own art nationally and internationally, and has worked regionally as an arts professional with the Open AIR artist residency program and the Missoula Art Museum. John is thrilled to bring his experiences in the arts and humanities across the state. He believes that the humanities serve to build strong and diverse communities throughout the state of Montana.

Megan Sunday is the Grants and Evaluations Director at Humanities Montana. She supports innovative humanities focused organizations in local Montana communities through grants counseling and participatory grant-making. She moved to Montana in 2001 to earn a BA in Classics and a BA in Liberal Studies from the University of Montana. Since that time, Megan has been serving Montanans across the state developing, implementing, and evaluating nonprofit programs in underserved and underrepresented communities. To honor her deep connection with Montana's landscape and rich sense of community, she obtained an MS in Measurement and Evaluation from American University in 2020 to ensure that community voices are heard and real needs are addressed. Megan is a champion for humanities as a means to bring people and communities together to examine, reflect, and understand the human experience.

Significant Tidings - ASLD Highlights - Victoria Contreras and Rachelle McLain

Significant Tidings is an opportunity for ASLD members to share some highlights, challenges, programs, or other news and ideas from their library in the past year. ASLD co-chairs will welcome 3-4 mini-presentations from members across the state to share. We want to hear from you!

Victoria Contreras is the eResources & Technical Services Librarian at Montana State University Billings, and senior Co-Chair of ASLD. She enjoys the dynamic work of making resources available for the MSUB community. Victoria holds a BA in English & Textual Studies from Syracuse University and an MLIS from the University of Washington. She is excited to participate in ASLD and explore serving on the MLA Board.

Rachelle McLain is an Assistant Professor & Collection Development Librarian at the Montana State University Library in Bozeman. She manages the library's collections budget and oversees the acquisition and deselection of resources to meet the research and learning needs of the Montana and MSU communities. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Western Washington University and an MLIS from the University of Washington. Shortly after joining the MSU Library in 2016, Rachelle was able to be a part of the MLA conference planning when it was held in Bozeman. She is pleased to serve on the MLA Board as the Junior Co-Chair of ASLD.

Session H 11:15AM-12:15PM

Library Drama Clubs – Crafting Storytellers - Christina Koch

Drama Clubs in a library? Yes! Performers are storytellers after all. Learn why theater arts are an important part of a child's education, participate in some improv and instructional games, and leave with the knowledge of how to organize and run a successful children's and/or teen drama club at your library.

Christina Koch is the Library Deputy Director of the Thompson-Hickman Madison County Library in Virginia City, Montana and the Company Director of the Virginia City Players theater company. She has a background in Early Childhood Education, a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Musical Theater Performance, and a Master's of Library and Information Science. In 2018, she combined her love for teaching children with her love for theater arts, to create a Children's Drama Club at her library. Over the last six years, the club has grown exponentially and now includes two children's clubs, as well as, a teen drama club.

Montana Cadastral: An Introduction to the New Application - Kenny Ketner

In early 2024 a new version of MSL's Montana Cadastral application became available to the public. Join this session to learn about the powerful new features of Montana Cadastral so that you can help your patrons find the property information that they need.

Kenny Ketner is the Information Products Lead at the Montana State Library. With 25 years of professional experience in application development, Kenny leads the team responsible for creating and maintaining websites, web applications, and other digital infrastructure at the State Library.

What is the Democracy Project? How can this program help my library with teen-led civic engagement? – Jenny Bevill and John Knight, with guest librarians and teens

The Democracy Project is a teen-led, non-partisan initiative supported by local libraries, community partners, and Humanities Montana. Teens use resources to effect change, meet a need, and know their role in democracy through direct civic participation. Students design projects that are vital to their community, ending with a public showcase.

Jenny Bevill is a dynamic educational leader with more than 20 years of experience teaching in public schools, museums, and community centers in New York City and Montana, including a decade at the Guggenheim Museum from 2004-2014. Jenny served as the Educator and Outreach Specialist at the Missoula Art Museum from 2018-2021 where she helped develop the distance learning platform, Museum as Megaphone, and the Art Host Initiative which connects Tribal nations across Montana with the museum to share contemporary Indigenous art. Jenny has taught and/or created content for many statewide arts organizations in Montana including the Office of Public Instruction, the Montana Arts Council, and Flathead Valley Community College. She has been a workshop leader for Humanities Montana since 2016 where she now coordinates the statewide Democracy Project for teens.

John Knight joined Humanities Montana in June of 2022 after many years of working in the arts as a museum professional, independent curator, and artist. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, John has a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Sculpture from the University of Cincinnati, and a Masters of Fine Arts in Visual Studies from Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, Oregon, where he co-directed two art galleries before moving to Montana in 2017. He has exhibited his own art nationally and internationally, and has worked regionally as an arts professional with the Open AIR artist residency program and the Missoula Art Museum. John is thrilled to bring his experiences in the arts to Humanities Montana. He believes that the humanities serve to build strong and diverse communities throughout the state of Montana.

Social Media and Libraries: A Critical Perspective - Mark Wetherington

While social media is an unavoidable reality of today's digital landscape, it has inherent conflicts with many values of librarianship. Is it worth reconsidering how we use this tool and examining its real value? Learn how Bitterroot Public Library minimized their social media use while still engaging with their community.

Mark Wetherington has been director of the Bitterroot Public Library in Hamilton, MT since 2014. He started working in libraries as a college sophomore in 2006 and, other than seasonal work for the US Forest Service, has worked in them ever since. He received his MLIS from the University of Kentucky in 2012. Mark is also an avid outdoor recreationist and the co-author of *Backpacking Washington*, 3rd edition, by Wilderness Press.

Montana's Open Meeting and Public Comment Laws - Kris Goss

This session will focus on conducting library board meetings in a manner which honors the constitutional rights of citizens to know and participate in government. Attendees will discuss complying with open meeting and public comment laws as a strategy to enhance community and patron engagement.

Kris Goss serves as Director of Policy Services/Senior Counsel with the Montana School Boards Association. Kris previously served as a law clerk in the chambers of the Honorable Sam E. Haddon in the United States District Court for the District of Montana. Prior to law school, Kris worked as the Governor's K-12 Education Policy Advisor and Deputy Communications Director in the administration of Governor Judy Martz. Kris earned a law degree from the University of Montana School of Law and a Bachelor of Arts from Carroll College. He anticipates completion of a Master of Arts in Library and Information Science from the University of Wisconsin in December 2023. Kris graduated from Sidney High School.

12:30-2:00PM – MLA Division Lunches (PLD, SLD, and ASLD)

Session I 2:15-3:45PM

Montana Book Award - Elizabeth Jonkel and Book Award Committee

The Montana Book Award is an annual award that recognizes literary and/or artistic excellence in a book published during the award year. Eligible titles are either set in Montana, deal with Montana themes/issues, or are written, edited or illustrated by a Montana author or artist. Books for all ages are considered for the award. Attend to learn about the 2023 Montana Book Award winners and the titles that were eligible this year.

Elizabeth Jonkel received her MLIS from the University of Western Ontario in 2000. She has worked for Canadian governments as a consultant, analyst and librarian, specializing in health services. Since 2009, she has served as the Assistant Director at Missoula Public Library in Missoula, Montana. Elizabeth also holds a M.A. in History from Carleton University and B.A. in English from the University of Montana.

Be the Change! – Suzanne Reymer

In the currently contentious library world, we may feel embattled in dealings with our funders/boards/community members. Twelve Step programs teach us we can't change others. We can only change ourselves. Applying those principles to libraries can help us focus, improve communication and set boundaries

Suzanne Reymer is a Statewide Consulting Librarian for Montana State Library. She works primarily with public libraries on a variety of issues. Suzanne has done a lot of work with broadband, technology and

digital equity. In her free time, she enjoys travel and ethnic cuisines. She's also become a seeing eye human for her vision impaired dog. The fact he has few noticeable contusions speaks to her prowess as a trainer.

Are you following the law: Legal information for library governance and managing library services and collections - Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson, Tracy Cook, and Panel

A panel of legal experts will share helpful guidance for managing library board meetings, public participation, collection management, and library services. They will discuss the open meeting law, public participation laws, the first amendment, and discrimination.

Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson is currently a board member at the Missoula Public Library. She is a librarian and lawyer. She was a former State Law Librarian and has held other librarian positions. Many librarians will recognize her as the fun and engaging presence behind the Cates' scholarship committee.

Tracy Cook provides consulting assistance on a variety of topics and oversees the consulting, continuing education, and lifelong learning programs within the State Library. Tracy's areas of expertise include library law, board development, personnel, local government relations, and advocacy. Tracy enjoys hiking, canoeing, citizen scientist work, and golf. She also volunteers for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and the National Park Service whenever she can.

Creating Committed Writers - Sneed B. Collard III

The winner of the 2024 Orbis Pictus Award for Outstanding Children's Nonfiction shares his insights into what it takes to turn young people into lifelong writers. He'll share the influence of books and teachers on his own path, as well as the writing routines that helped spark his career. Along the way, he'll offer strategies for building writers from the ground up.

Sneed B. Collard III is the author of almost 100 books for children and adults, including the acclaimed adult memoir *Warblers and Woodpeckers: A Father-Son Big Year of Birding* and the beloved Montana picture book, *Shep: Our Most Loyal Dog*. His books have won numerous awards including the 2024 Orbis Pictus Award (*Border Crossings*) and are regular selections of Junior Library Guild and other acclaimed lists. He regularly contributes to *Big Sky Journal*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, and *Montana Outdoors* magazines, and is a popular speaker at schools, conferences, and birding events. Learn more about Sneed and his books at www.sneedbcollardiii.com and keep up with his and his son's birding adventures at FatherSonBirding.com.

4:00-5:00 – MLA Interest Group Meetings

6:00-7:30PM – MLA New Members Cocktail Hour

7:30-9:00PM – MLA Awards Dinner

Saturday April 20th, 2024

Breakfast – 8:00-9:00AM

Session J 9:00-10:00AM

The Law Library in Your Classrooms - Sydnie Tallman

Government and civics subjects can sometimes be hard to find some interesting resources. The Law Library has materials that can be used in multiple ways. Come join me as I introduce some of our resources and share some ideas for lesson plans to take back to your teachers.

Sydnie Tallman is the Technical Services Librarian at the State Law Library. Before this position, she worked as a substitute in both New Jersey and Montana, finally spending 14 years teaching various subjects at Sylvan Learning Center. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education, a Masters in Science in Reading through the curriculum, and a MLIS.

AI: What's Next for Libraries? - Suzanne Reymer

Following up on last year's introduction to AI and libraries, this year we're going to take a deeper look at how librarians should be preparing for our AI future. We'll include some hands on work with chatbots and creating prompts. We'll also look at current developments and how libraries can prepare with policies.

Suzanne Reymer is a Statewide Consulting Librarian for Montana State Library. She works primarily with public libraries on a variety of issues. Suzanne has done a lot of work with broadband, technology and digital equity. In her free time, she enjoys travel and ethnic cuisines. She's also become a seeing eye human for her vision impaired dog. The fact he has few noticeable contusions speaks to her prowess as a trainer.

Volunteer Programs in the Library - Vibrant or Vanishing – Hilary Woodard and Panel

Volunteers can be a valuable resource for a library. As our libraries evolve, the need for volunteers in the library and the roles of those volunteers is changing. Some libraries struggle to find volunteers while others have more volunteers than they can use. Some libraries could not function without volunteers while some libraries have a diminishing need. Bring your questions and ideas for our panel of volunteer coordinators.

Hilary Woodard is the Volunteer Coordinator at Bozeman Public Library and has been in the role for 2 years. Additional panel members include Alyssa Ramirez (Lincoln County), Jaclynn Reaves (Billings).

Self-Care in Stressful Times - Morgan McQuillan

As human beings, we face stress every day. Heightened stress levels can lead to negative effects on the impacted individual. Throughout this session, we will look at how stress impacts both a person's personal and professional world. From there, we will discuss how self-care can help to manage one's stress.

Morgan McQuillan says "I was born and raised in Joliet, Montana. I am now the Director at the Joliet Public Library. I am also pursuing my Master's in Clinical Social Work. My goal is to remain as the Director of JPL all while building a therapy practice to service Joliet and the surrounding rural areas."

10:15AM-12:00PM – Author Brunch with Sneed B. Collard III

Sneed B. Collard III is the author of almost 100 books for children and adults, including the acclaimed adult memoir *Warblers and Woodpeckers: A Father-Son Big Year of Birding* and the beloved Montana picture book, *Shep: Our Most Loyal Dog*. His books have won numerous awards including the 2024 Orbis Pictus Award (*Border Crossings*) and are regular selections of Junior Library Guild and other acclaimed lists. He regularly contributes to *Big Sky Journal*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, and *Montana Outdoors* magazines, and is a popular speaker at schools, conferences, and birding events. Learn more about Sneed and his books at www.sneedbcollardiii.com and keep up with his and his son's birding adventures at FatherSonBirding.com.

Program Descriptions for 2025 MLA Conference

Please note: schedules are subject to change

Montana State Library Continuing Education Credit Categories:

Red: Library Administration

Green: Library Services to the Public

Blue: Collection Management and Technical Services

Purple: Technology

Wednesday March 26th, 2025

Pre-Conference Sessions

9:00AM-12:00PM - **Legal and Operational Issues Facing Montana's Libraries** - Kris Goss

This session will allow attendees to learn about the emerging legal and operational issues facing libraries in Montana. Library leaders will learn about recent legislation and court decisions affecting libraries, Montana open meeting and public records laws, and the authority of library and school boards to adopt sound and effective library policies to ensure compliance with laws. Attendees will also learn about MLA's new Montana Library Assistance helpline program.

Kris Goss is the Director of Library Learning Hub at Helena College - University of Montana. Kris also serves as an attorney and currently works with the firm of Jackson, Murdo, & Grant, P.C. in Helena. Kris previously worked with the Montana School Boards Association and served as a law clerk in the chambers of the Honorable Sam E. Haddon in the United States District Court for the District of Montana. Prior to law school, Kris worked as the Governor's K-12 Education Policy Advisor and Deputy Communications Director in the administration of Governor Judy Martz.

Kris earned a law degree from the University of Montana School of Law, a Master of Arts in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin, and a Bachelor of Arts from Carroll College. He serves as the Vice Chair of the Trust for Montana Libraries Board of Directors and serves on the Montana Library Association Intellectual Freedom and Government Affairs Committees.

9:00AM-12:00PM - **CANVA You Even Stand the Possibilities?!** - Shaundel Krumheuer & Morgan Ray

Canva is a great tool for creating posters and fliers, but there is so much more to this amazing tool! Let's explore how you can enhance your library's communications and decor, organize and share events

*and schedules, utilize their Bulk Create feature, and easily zhuzh up your library materials! Bring your device and let's create! *** Participants are asked to bring their own laptops or tablets, a project idea, and plenty of questions. ****

Shaundel Krumheuer has spent 24 years as an educator at Billings Senior High School. The latest iteration of her position has her in a dual role as Librarian and Tech Integration Specialist. A passion for learning with and from others has led her to present in a variety of venues in the state and region. She loves creating, be it digitally, in her pottery studio, or at the crafting table. A Montana girl who loves her Bobcats, Shaundel is a fan of mountain lakes, good mysteries, and her feral Golden Girl, Liberty.

Morgan Ray is the Director of Library Services at Flathead Valley Community College in Kalispell. Originally from Texas, she moved to the Flathead Valley a decade ago. After a few years in nonprofits, she made the move to higher ed. She says she has the best job on campus. She is the Montana ACRL rep, board member for the Northwest Montana Lookout Association, and part of the National Association of Parliamentarians. In her free time, she enjoys reading, hiking, cooking, puzzling, and making stained glass. She also has a feral Golden, but Eddie would describe himself as enthusiastically rambunctious.

12:00-1:00PM – **Lunch**

12:00-1:00PM – **MLA Spring Board Meeting**

12:00-1:00PM – **Trustee Interest Group Meeting**

1:00PM-4:00PM – **Roles and Responsibilities of the Library Board** - Cara Orban and Corey Sloan

In this workshop we will discuss the responsibilities of the public library board, laws that trustees should know about, the relationship between the board, director, and local government, and what resources are available to help trustees be successful in this important role.

Cara Orban is the Statewide Consulting Librarian for the South Central and Tamarack federations. She is grateful for the opportunity to help empower library directors and trustees to be the leaders that their libraries and communities need. Cara lives in Helena with her husband and two teenage boys. Her interests include music, books, knitting, gardening, and playing trivia with her friends.

Corey Sloan is the Statewide Consulting Librarian for the Broad Valleys and Pathfinder regions of the great state of Montana. She is excited to assist library directors and boards in their varied needs and continue getting to know the excellent people of Montana's libraries- she is a real people person. For 8 years Corey worked at the Bozeman Public Library in the adult programming and outreach department, first as a programming librarian and most recently as the head of the department. She lives in Bozeman with her cute family, where she enjoys being outside as often as possible, eating good food, traveling, and grooving to live music

1:00-4:00PM - **Collection Development in School, Public, and Academic Libraries** – Beth Boyson and Facilitators

(This presentation will be three concurrent sessions).

Librarians need nuts & bolts training in collection development, but they also have a need to discuss some of the concerns they have about the current climate of collection development. What are the 1st Amendment issues to consider when asked to segregate or label parts of the collection? What about when asked to remove an item? What's best practice for handling a complaint or concern – both with the policy and process? Can non-community members challenge our local items? Can libraries limit the number of challenge requests? Can libraries do away with the reconsideration process – especially if there is another avenue for filing a complaint? These sessions will also discuss Silent Censorship – the impact of libraries being caught in the culture wars on collection development, displays, and cataloging.

The Academic Library session will feature Rachelle McLain, Doralyn Rossmann, and Hannah McKelvey of MSU Bozeman as facilitators. (This session will be limited to one hour).

The Public Library session will feature Ellie Newell, Youth Services Librarian at Bozeman Public Library, Shari Curtis, Programming Librarian at Butte Silver Bow Library, and Rachel Rawn, Director of Havre-Hill County Library. MLA President Sarah Widger of Bozeman Public Library will facilitate.

The School Library session will feature Hayley Botnen of Billings West / Skyview High School Libraries as facilitator.

Beth Boyson is an Adult Programming and Outreach Librarian and Cataloger (retired) from Bozeman Public Library.

5:30-6:30PM – **2025 MLA Annual Conference Opening Reception**, Bozeman Public Library

6:30-8:30PM – **Screening of “The Librarians” Documentary Film**, Bozeman Public Library

“The Librarians” is a 2025 American documentary film, directed and produced by Kim A. Snyder. It follows librarians in Texas, Florida, and other states, as they unite to combat book banning in the United States. Director & Producer Kim A. Snyder will be in attendance at the MLA conference opening reception and film screening. A Q&A discussion with Kim will follow the screening.

Academy Award Nominee Kim A. Snyder’s latest feature documentary, *The Librarians* made its World Premiere at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival. Her short documentary, *Death By Numbers* has been nominated in the Best Documentary Short Film category for the 2025 Academy Awards®. *Death By Numbers* premiered at the 2024 Hamptons International Film Festival, immediately followed by the Woodstock Film Festival, Montclair Film Festival where it won Best Documentary Short, and received an Honorable Mention at Doc NYC.

Her documentary, *Us Kids* premiered in the U.S. Documentary Competition at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival, followed by SXSW, Sheffield, and Full Frame, where it received the Kathleen Edwards Bryan

Human Rights Award and 14 subsequent festival awards. Prior she directed the Peabody award-winning documentary *Newtown*, which also premiered in the US Competition at Sundance 2016. *Newtown* screened at premiere festivals worldwide and was theatrically released followed by a national broadcast on PBS's Independent Lens and Netflix.

Her short film, *Lessons from a School Shooting: Notes from Dunblane*, premiered at the 2018 Tribeca Film Festival and was awarded Best Documentary Short followed by the DocDispatch Award at the 2018 Sheffield DocFest and a Grierson Award nomination. *Lessons...* is a Netflix Original. Snyder's other works include the feature documentary, *Welcome to Shelbyville*, nationally broadcast on PBS's Independent Lens in 2011, and over a dozen short documentaries. Kim's award-winning directorial debut feature documentary, *I Remember Me* was theatrically distributed by Zeitgeist Films. In 1994, she Associate Produced the Academy Award-winning short film *Trevor*, which spawned The Trevor Project, a leading national not-for-profit addressing LGBTQ teen suicide.

Kim graduated with a Masters in International Affairs from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and resides in New York City.

Thursday March 27th, 2025

Breakfast – 7:30-8:30AM

Session A - 8:30-9:30AM

Pop-In, Power Up: Reimagining Library Learning – Taylor Moorman and Jacqueline Frank

Plugging into our students' need for quick and practical tips, MSU Librarians launched an experimental approach to challenge the existing library workshop structure. Our goal: transform traditional one-hour workshops into 15-minute "Pop-in Workshops" that prioritize immediate utility. Join us for successes, failures, and lessons learned for this approach to library learning!

Taylor Moorman works as an assistant professor and Instructional Technology Librarian at Montana State University. Her special interests lie at the crossroads of technology and engaged instruction, and she loves exploring how to enrich learning experiences through human-centered services.

Jacqueline L. Frank is the Instruction & Accessibility Librarian at the Montana State University Library. She teaches information literacy, helps students with research, and works to improve library resources and services to be more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

Storytime: More Than Just a Story - Kathleen McPherson Glynn

Discover and explore ways to enrich and cultivate your library's storytime programming by sharing early literacy and school readiness skills with caregivers through play-based activities.

Kathleen has been joyfully employed at the Bozeman Public Library in the Youth Services Department for over 15 years. She has her School Library Media Certificate in addition to a BS in Early Elementary Education from MSU-Bozeman. She provides weekly programming at the Library that includes a preschooler/toddler storytime and a new program, Tween Art Studio. Outside of the Library, you can find her in her home art studio, spending time with friends and family or outside immersed in nature.

"Uniquely Positioned": Lessons from an A.I. Workshop Series - Natalie Bond and Karli Cotton

This session will recount one academic library's response to the rapid emergence of generative Artificial Intelligence (A.I.), focusing on workshops developed for both students and instructors. We will discuss our use of backwards design in developing lesson plans, insights from assessment data, and the concept of failure in the technocene.

Natalie Bond is the Government Information Librarian and Head of Information and User Services at the University of Montana's Maureen & Mike Mansfield Library. Recent projects have centered on AI literacy and the responsible use of AI in libraries and archives, and she is currently working on pedagogical adaptations for fostering ecoliteracy in information literacy classrooms.

Karli Cotton (she/her) is the Online Learning Librarian at the University of Montana's Maureen & Mike Mansfield Library. Recent interests include AI literacy instruction, responsible use of AI for university libraries, and active learning and gamification techniques in information literacy instruction.

Learning and Leading: Public Library Board CE Planning – Colet Bartow

Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 10.102.1158 (4): The board receives at least three hours of continuing education each year. This standard may be easier to meet than you expect! Join this session to learn about how boards can complete this annual activity and become more successful through planning ahead.

Colet Bartow's professional background is in school librarianship, professional development, and state education agency leadership. Her history with MSL started in the late 1990s as a school library representative to several committees and included time as an MSL Commissioner. She currently serves as the Continuing Education Coordinator for MSL.

Unlocking Community Connections: Using Pickup Lockers to Extend Access to Patrons & Partners – Megan Thomas

This presentation will provide an overview of the Billings Public Library locker program, including the initial motivation, the important role of community partners, and the potential for using lockers as a

springboard for expanding community reach. Library lockers are a unique way to extend access and make connections in the community.

Megan Thomas has been the Information Systems Coordinator at the Billings Public Library for the past two years. Prior to that, she worked for fifteen years at the MSU Billings Library in various roles, including reference librarian and electronic resources librarian.

Session B - 9:45-10:45AM

Conversations with the Commission – Jennie Stapp, Montana State Librarian; Commissioners: Tom Burnett, Tamara Hall, Brian Rossman, Carmen Cuthbertson, Robyn Scribner, and Peggy Taylor

What does excellence in libraries mean to you? Annually, the Montana State Library Commission awards the Excellent Library Services Award to deserving libraries across Montana. Now the Commission is evaluating the intent and impact of this award, and we want your help. Please join us as we reimagine the Excellent Library Services Award.

The State Library Commission serves as the governing body of the Montana State Library which is the state agency responsible for library development in Montana. The State Library Commission sets forth policies and funding priorities that empower the State Library to meet its mission and statutory obligations and to advocate for the State Library and the Montana library and information communities whenever possible.

Easy History Programs – Jennifer Birnel

The Montana History Portal hosts over 92,000 digital items and plenty of topics to research and discuss in a program with your community. Learn how you can use this free platform for easy program solutions that will engage your community in meaningful conversations.

Jennifer Birnel has a Master of Education degree, a BS in Middle Grades Education, and BA in Organizational Communications. She taught middle school language arts and social studies for 12 years. She was hired by the State Library in 2011 as a technology trainer. In 2013 she became the Montana History Portal Director for the Montana State Library. In this role she oversees the ongoing implementation of this project including the addition of new collections, website design, and communication with the Portal membership. She recruits contributors and provides training.

Empowering Communities: Libraries Support Health and Wellness - George Strawley

Montana public libraries are an ideal place to get the public thinking and talking about health. This presentation will highlight programs and resources libraries offer that support health initiatives. We will

provide examples as well as information on free resources. We hope to have Montana librarians discuss their programs.

As an engagement specialist with the Network of the National Library of Medicine, George Strawley, M.L.I.S., works on funding and training aimed at addressing health disparities through reliable health information. He works for the network's Region 4, which serves the Intermountain West and the Dakotas. With library experience in both public and academic settings, he is based at the University of Utah Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library.

Advocacy, Collaboration, & Innovation in the Bobcat Browse Collection - Jan Zauha, Emily O'Brien, Rachelle McLain, Star Bradley, Molly Arrandale, and Cindy Hinson

Montana State University Library is building community through its innovative Bobcat Browse area, a curated enrichment reading collection in the center of the Library. We will explain how our emphasis on collaboration, advocacy, and on-demand purchasing to meet reader needs without judgment fosters inclusivity and amplifies diverse voices.

Jan Zauha is the Humanities and Outreach Librarian at the MSU Library where she has been a faculty member since 1995. She currently works out of Archives & Special Collections and co-chairs the Bobcat Browse Committee.

Rachelle McLain is the Collection Development Librarian & Assistant Professor at Montana State University Library in Bozeman. She manages the library's collections budget and oversees the acquisition and deselection of resources to meet the research and learning needs of the Montana and MSU communities. Rachelle serves as Co-Chair for the MLA Academic & Special Libraries Division as well as the Co-Chair for the Bobcat Browse Committee.

Molly Arrandale is the Program Manager for Print & e-Books at MSU Library. A longtime member of Bobcat Browse, Molly coordinates the purchasing and receiving of print materials and maintains the MSU e-Book collection.

Emily O'Brien is the Metadata & Mendery Technician at MSU Library, where she has been a member of Bobcat Browse since 2022. She mends, processes, and catalogues physical and digital materials as well as works on digital collections.

Star Bradley is an Instruction Librarian at the MSU Library in Bozeman. She is a new member of Bobcat Browse and currently works out of the Instruction Department where she offers research consultations, teaches courses, and assists with virtual reference questions.

Cindy Hinson is the Service Desk Bridge Supervisor at the MSU Library and has recently joined Bobcat Browse. As a Service Desk Supervisor in the Access, Information and User Services department at Montana State University Bozeman, I've found my sweet spot working with books and amazing people. My latest adventure began in the summer of 2024 when I joined the Bobcat Browse committee, bringing together my love for collection management and a particular passion for children's books and graphic novels. Staying current is key in my world, so I'm always diving into book review journals to keep my finger on the pulse of new authors and emerging literary talents. At the MSU Library, I'm most proud of

managing our juvenile book section, supporting our fantastic student employees, and ensuring every library user has a great experience.

The Democracy Project: award-winning, teen-led civic engagement in Montana's rural, Tribal, and urban communities - Jenny Bevill, John Knight, and Democracy Project teens

Hear directly from teens, librarians, and Humanities Montana staff about how The Democracy Project supports teens in engaging with local government to make their ideas a reality. This award-winning civic education program is available to all libraries in Montana. There will be time for Q & A.

John Knight, Humanities Montana Programs Director John Knight joined Humanities Montana in June of 2022 after many years of working in the arts as a museum professional, independent curator, and artist. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, John has a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Sculpture from the University of Cincinnati, and a Masters of Fine Arts in Visual Studies from Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, Oregon, where he co-directed two art galleries before moving to Montana in 2017. He has exhibited his own art nationally and internationally, and has worked regionally as an arts professional with the Open AIR artist residency program and the Missoula Art Museum. John is thrilled to bring his experiences in the arts to Humanities Montana. He believes that the humanities serve to build strong and diverse communities throughout the state of Montana.

Jenny Bevill, Humanities Montana Programs Manager Jenny Bevill is a dynamic educational leader with more than 20 years of experience teaching in public schools, museums, and community centers in New York City and Montana including 10 years at the Guggenheim Museum and 3 ½ years at the Missoula Art Museum. She holds an MA from Columbia University. Her involvement at Humanities Montana began when she joined the speaker bureau in 2016. She was invited to join the staff in 2021 specifically to build the Democracy Project and stepped into her current role as Programs Manager earlier this year. Jenny is also a musician and songwriter.

Session C - 11:15AM-12:15PM

Book Challenges: More Flies with Honey than Vinegar - Gavin Woltjer

It is easy to forget that challenging a piece of a library's collection is a right for all users. Instead of defaulting to a confrontational approach, learn how to use compassion, education, and logic to defuse the situation while defending the library's materials.

Gavin J. Woltjer is the Library Director for the Billings Public Library. When not held captive in a good book, he enjoys exploring the wilds of Montana with his wife, Rena, and their three children. His research interests include: data analytics, library leadership, librarian as public historian, economic development and libraries, and archives and record management.

Exploring Nature- Innovation, Creativity and A Sprinkling of Books – Angela Archuleta

In this presentation I will share with you nature throughout Alaska, Montana, Wyoming and a sprinkling from other places. I will discuss how nature impacts our help and helps us clear our minds. I will also share some books that I think should be in nature lover's library. The science discussed in this presentation is based on The Nature Fix: Why Nature Makes us Happier, Healthier, and More Creative by Florence Williams.

My name is Angela Archuleta. I am serving in my eleventh year as a school librarian. I am currently the librarian at Stamiksiitsiikin (Bullshoe) Elementary Chattin & Bergan Branch Libraries in Browning, Montana. In addition, I am on the Montana Library Association Board as the Pacific Northwest Library Association Representative. I have also served as the School Librarian Division Co-Chair, Vice President-President Elect, President and Past President. I live with my husband, Sabino and our labrador retriever-Alyeska.

Media Mavericks – Ann Bernard

Media Mavericks: Montana's New Frontier in Teen Storytelling is a program designed to elevate and empower youth voices throughout our state through media-making and authentic audience. Learn how to implement highly-engaging, media making projects that encourage civic engagement, freedom of expression, self-advocacy, and teach real-world skills from writing and research to technical production and editing.

Ann Bernard is a veteran middle school English Teacher currently on sabbatical and working for Montana PBS as the Youth Media Specialist. Ann has a Master's in Education and will complete her Master's of English Education from Montana State University in the spring of 2025. Ann is dedicated to reinvigorating classrooms with highly engaging media projects and amplifying student voice through storytelling.

Law for Librarians – Jen Hossack

An overview and discussion concerning the ALA training received in the summer of 2024 regarding how libraries are meant to uphold the First Amendment.

Jen Hossack holds an M.A.T. in Elementary Education, and endorsements in Library Science, Psychology, and Dance Education. She is in her 12th year at Washington Middle School and her 18th year as school librarian. This is her 23rd year in the library profession. She worked for 6 years at the University of Montana's Mansfield Library in Bibliographic Management Services, and is back working there part-time. He serves as School Library Division Co-Chair on the Montana Library Association Board, the American Association of School Librarians National Chapter Delegate for the state of Montana, and as school library liaison to the Montana Shared Cataloging and Acquisitions committee for the Montana Library.

The Secrets of a Green Library - Slaven Lee and Karl Olson

How can a public library achieve true sustainability? Intellectually, we all understand what's at stake—the future livability of the planet and our communities. But developing a library's sustainability goals in the shadow of climate catastrophe can feel daunting. In 2024, Missoula Public Library, in competition with six libraries from around the world, became the first library in the US to win the prestigious IFLA-De Gruyter Green Library-Grand Scale award. Buoyed by this achievement, MPL will launch its new Sustainable Libraries Certification journey in 2025. In this session MPL executive director Slaven Lee and MPL Foundation director Karl Olson will discuss the Sustainable Libraries "triple bottom line" (environment, economics, equity), and share MPL's three scalable planks of a library's sustainability platform (energy engineering, wellness design, and social sustainability). Participants will engage in a personalized creative visioning activity and explore the sustainability "secret sauce" already at work in their organizations.

Slaven Lee is the Executive Director at Missoula Public Library

Karl Olson is the Executive Director of the Missoula Public Library Foundation

12:30-1:45PM - Keynote Luncheon with speaker **Shannon Crawford-Barniskis**, Assistant Professor, School of Information Science, University of Kentucky – **Grand Ballroom**

Session D – 2:00-3:15PM

Montana Library Association Annual Membership Meeting – Grand Ballroom

Session E – 3:30-5:00PM

Metadata in the MSC – Keiley McGregor

Have you ever wondered how all the information in a bibliographic record translates to the MSC's online catalog that patrons use? Or been unsure which index to choose when searching WorkFlows? Learn the answers to these questions and more during our session on metadata in the MSC!

Keiley McGregor works for the State Library as Trainer to the Montana Shared Catalog (MSC) consortium. She enjoys trail running slowly, thrifting, and puzzles of all kinds. She will happily talk about her dog – Ghost – to anyone willing to listen..

Serving Patrons Through Technical Processing – Katie Burkhalter, Elizabeth Fellerer, and Courtney Lujan

We will begin this conversation/discussion by demonstrating what works for us for ordering and processing items, and then open it up to everyone to share their workflow and look for feedback.

Katie Burkhalter is a Technical Services Assistant at Billings Public Library

Elizabeth Fellerer is an Acquisitions Specialist at Billings Public Library

Courtney Lujan is a Cataloging Librarian at Billings Public Library

Montana Wild Trunks in Your Library – Ryan Schmaltz and Bobbi deMontigny

Join Ryan Schmaltz from Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) as he explains the Montana Wild Trunk program. Get a list of libraries who currently host the trunks as well as 10 other FWP sites and even more in Montana state parks. Find out what to do with the trunks, get an overview of the Growing Up Wild curriculum guide and take home your own copy of the guide. These educational sessions are full of hands on learning and fun!

Ryan Schmaltz has worked in fisheries, wildlife and enforcement before finding his niche in education. He leads Project Wild Educator Trainings all over the state for hundreds of teachers each year. He also supervises the National Archery In Schools in nearly 200 Montana schools. He leads education programming at the Montana Wild education center in Helena and visits local schools teaching the Hooked on Fishing program.

Bobbi deMontigny is the Lifelong Learning Librarian at the Montana state Library. With an MLIS and over a decade of experience in the field she is thankful for the opportunities she has had to serve just about every kind of library across the state of Montana. Bobbi lives just outside of Helena where she enjoys active and artistic hobbies in the summer and curling up with her dog and a good book in the winter.

Managing the Money: Best practice for public libraries – Tracy Cook

Managing public funds is an important duty. Understanding how to read financial reports and best manage public funds can feel like learning a foreign language. This session will cover Montana's Local Government Budget Act, the purpose of governmental accounting, how to read reports, and best practices for wise stewardship of public funds.

Tracy Cook is the Lead Consulting and Learning Librarian for the Montana State Library. She assists public and tribal college libraries in Montana with a variety of things - including library administration, policies, financial work, strategic planning and library board trainings. Tracy enjoys the outdoors and loves to hike and cross country ski. She also volunteers for Glacier National Park and Giant Springs State Park during the spring, summer, and fall.

7:30-9:00PM – Sheila Cates Scholarship Fundraiser Event – Grand Ballroom

Friday March 28th, 2025

Breakfast – 7:30-8:30AM

Session F 8:30-9:30AM

Creating a Library Levy Campaign: Preparation, Partnership and Positive Communication - Susie McIntyre and Jill Baker

In 2023, Great Falls Public Library passed a Library Levy that increased funding from \$1.5 million to \$2.7 million. This workshop will share the key ingredients for GFPL success--step-by-step preparation in the 2 years before the levy; strategic recruiting of champions and partnership building; and practical messaging discipline.

Susie McIntyre says “I am a fourth generation Montanan. I was born and raised in Great Falls. I got my Bachelors from the University of Montana and spent ten years in Seattle getting my Master’s degree in Library and Information Science and working for the Public Health Department. I am passionate about family, friends, social justice and joy. I love libraries, reading and adventures. I am a 3rd degree black belt. I was a self-defense instructor for 3 years for the Seattle nonprofit Home Alive and provide workshops in Great Falls whenever I am possible. I was a crisis line staff/volunteer for the Great Falls nonprofit Voices of Hope for 3 years. I love my job as the Director of the Great Falls Public Library where I have worked for almost 20 years. Libraries and access to information are a cornerstone of democracy and my life. I have a fabulous 28-year-old daughter and a wonderful husband. My family and I spend time reading books, watching movies, riding bikes and being fabulous. My perfect weekend would be spent hiking in the Bob Marshall with my daughter, my husband and my dad followed by cheeseburgers and conversation at the Buckhorn Bar.”

Hired in 2023, Jill Baker brings many years of nonprofit experience to her role as Executive Director for Humanities Montana. She previously served as Executive Director for the Great Falls Public Library Foundation where she worked closely with the Library Director and Board to pass the first library mill levy since 2001, nearly doubling the operational budget for the local public library. Prior to joining the Library Foundation, Jill spent 17 years with Planned Parenthood of Montana leading a statewide team to coordinate successful education and outreach programs, as well as strategic partnerships throughout the state, including with youth, rural and Tribal communities. As a fourth-generation Montanan, Jill is dedicated to lifting up the Big Sky Country’s unique voices and experiences in order to learn from our history and honor the diverse cultures that represents the Montana way of life. She is an avid reader, Master Gardener, and novice, yet determined, fly fisher.

Navigating the Future: Business Strategies and Generative AI – Rebekah Kamp and Sean Anderson

Discover how Montana State Library has leveraged Generative AI to enhance library operations, streamline reporting, and manage grants efficiently. This session will provide practical examples, best practices, and integration strategies tailored for library professionals aiming to improve service delivery.

Rebekah Kamp is the Data Coordinator at Montana State Library, blending her love for numbers with her passion for library services. With experience spanning system administration, cataloging, and youth services, Rebekah's journey in libraries has been driven by her curiosity and desire to learn about everything. When she's not wrangling data, she's out adventuring in Montana's wild places or volunteering with the Girl Scouts to help inspire the next generation of female explorers and leaders.

Sean Anderson is the Grants & Contracts coordinator for the Montana State Library, and has spent more than a decade working in Montana Libraries. Outside of his work, he can usually be found exploring outdoors with his family, drawing, or tending to his houseplants.

Teaching Truth: Developing a Course to Combat Misinformation – Star Bradley

In this presentation attendees will learn how a librarian created a course to teach students about the different types of misinformation they discover in their daily lives. Attendees will observe class activities used to teach students effective methods for spotting and debunking misinformation.

Star Bradley is the Instruction Librarian at Montana State University. Star teaches credit bearing classes and presents guest lectures on information literacy. Star spends much of her time helping undergraduate students learn basic research skills. In Fall 2024, Star developed and taught a 3 credit course titled Reason in the Age of Misinformation.

Diversity Audit: How and Why - Hayley Botnen

Have you heard of a diversity audit? Considered doing one? Take a peek behind the scenes of a diversity audit. Why we chose to do one, how we did it, and what actions we want to take. Remove the fear of "oh no the only book I know on that topic is checked out!" Learn your collection and assist patrons better.

Hayley Botnen has been a reader, a student, and a librarian. She feels passionately that everyone should find themselves reflected in a library. A graduate of University of Montana and Simmons College, Hayley lurks in the library of West High tormenting students with jokes they don't find funny.

Libraries on the Move: Building Health and Wellness in Our Communities – Kelsie Rubich

Libraries are evolving into community wellness hubs, integrating health initiatives that foster physical activity, social connection, and holistic wellbeing. This presentation highlights Billings Public Library's

innovative programming—like the Bike Library, outdoor fitness programs, skate clinics, and health partnerships—showcasing strategies, community impact, and how libraries of any size and budget can embrace wellness programming to transform their communities.

Kelsie Rubich, Assistant Library Director at Billings Public Library, has spent over two decades in public and academic libraries, driven by a passion for their transformative power in communities. Big ideas, innovation, and exploring the future of library services are her jam. She loves how these spaces bring people together, provide unique opportunities and resources, and adapt to meet changing needs.

Session G 9:45-10:45AM

Cut Through the Noise: Elevating Your Library & Engaging Users through Strategic Promotion – Kelly Sitzman

Learn key strategies to cut through the noise and increase customer engagement. Scalable techniques like developing a style guide, embracing the marketing funnel, and focusing promotion outside your walls will be shared to strengthen brand awareness, position the library publicly, and develop efficient workflows, allowing more time serving the community.

Kelly Sitzman is the Director of Communications & Employee Development for Pioneer Library System in Norman, Oklahoma. She oversees brand strategy and professional development for PLS's three-county system. Kelly graduated with a BA in English, Writing, Communications, and Global Studies from Drury University and graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 2015 with an MLIS in Library and Information Studies. Kelly is a graduate of the American Library Association(ALA) Leadership Institute, Oklahoma Library Association (OLA) Gold Leadership Institute, and civic leadership programs. She served as the ALA Chapter Councilor for the Oklahoma Library Association and chaired Norman NEXT, the city's young professionals group, in 2023. She was named a Journal Record Achiever Under 40, recognized as OLA's Outstanding New Librarian, and awarded "NEXT Under 40" by the Norman NEXT young professionals group. She currently co-chairs the ALA's John Cotton Dana Award Committee.

Montana Center for the Book Listening Session: come and share your ideas! - Jenny Bevill and John Knight

Join Humanities Montana staff to learn more about the Montana Center for the Book and share your ideas on how this program might support and benefit your library. The Montana Center for the Book is the state affiliate of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress.

John Knight is the Humanities Montana Programs Director. John joined Humanities Montana in June of 2022 after many years of working in the arts as a museum professional, independent curator, and artist. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, John has a Bachelor's of Fine Arts in Sculpture from the University of Cincinnati, and a Masters of Fine Arts in Visual Studies from Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland, Oregon, where he co-directed two art galleries before moving to Montana in 2017. He has exhibited his own art nationally and internationally, and has worked regionally as an arts professional with the Open

AIR artist residency program and the Missoula Art Museum. John is thrilled to bring his experiences in the arts to Humanities Montana. He believes that the humanities serve to build strong and diverse communities throughout the state of Montana.

Jenny Bevill is the Humanities Montana Programs Manager. Jenny is a dynamic educational leader with more than 20 years of experience teaching in public schools, museums, and community centers in New York City and Montana including 10 years at the Guggenheim Museum and 3 ½ years at the Missoula Art Museum. She holds an MA from Columbia University. Her involvement at Humanities Montana began when she joined the speaker bureau in 2016. She was invited to join the staff in 2021 specifically to build the Democracy Project and stepped into her current role as Programs Manager earlier this year. Jenny is also a musician and songwriter.

Digital Legal Help in Libraries: Innovations in Access to Justice for all Montanans - Madiera Zehnder and Linden Howard-Murphy

For Montanans living in rural communities, librarians are the first-line support for finding legal help and information. But what are the resources you should point folks to first? Join Montana Legal Services Association to learn more about how to navigate and find helpful legal information on MontanaLawHelp.org and other useful online resources available for anyone who might have a civil legal problem—from eviction, parenting plans, and more.

Madiera joined MLSA team in 2024 after working as a technical consultant in gender-based violence prevention and response within HIV programs at the United States Agency for International Development. Her work at USAID focused on strategic communications, especially within outreach, advocacy, training, and campaign development for global health programs that helped advance gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence. She holds a BA in Religion and Culture, BA in Communication from Virginia Tech and Master's of Science in Development Studies from London School of Economics and Political Science. Madiera is an avid 'crafter' who loves to cross-stitch, knit and read. In her spare time she loves to cook, get outside, and spend time with family.

Linden Howard Murphy is the Community Legal Education Coordinator at MLSA. She joined MLSA in 2022 after eight years as a High School English Teacher, Language Content Lead at Abraham Lincoln High School in Denver, Colorado. She has a BA in Communication Studies and BA in English Teaching - both from The University of Montana. Linden loves to ski, hike, and enjoy live music with her family.

The Trust for Montana Libraries: Planning for the Future - Kris Goss, Bruce Newell and other Trust Representatives

This session will be an opportunity for library leaders to learn more about the Trust for Montana Libraries and how the Trust is planning projects to support Montana's libraries. The session will include an opportunity for attendees to offer additional suggestions about the how the Trust can support libraries and their advocates. Attendees will also learn about the Trust's plans for future work in the area of operational support for libraries and their leaders

Kris Goss grew up in Richland County and graduated from Sidney High School. He credits the Sidney-Richland County Library for his appreciation of learning and dedication to public service. Kris serves as the Director of the Library Learning Hub at Helena College. He is also a licensed attorney with Jackson, Murdo, & Grant, PC in Helena. He worked as law clerk in the chambers of the Honorable Sam E. Haddon in the United States District Court for the District of Montana. Prior to law school, Kris worked as the Governor's K-12 Education Policy Advisor and Deputy Communications Director in the administration of Governor Judy Martz. Kris earned a law degree from the University of Montana School of Law, a Master of Arts in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin, and a Bachelor of Arts from Carroll College. Kris lives in Helena with his wife and two daughters.

Born in Eugene, Oregon, Bruce Newell moved to Helena in 1980 and worked at both the Montana State Library and the Lewis & Clark Public Library. Bruce was active in the Montana Library Association, and feels fortunate to having served in the global library cooperative OCLC as first a delegate and later as an elected Trustee. After retirement Bruce served on the State Library Commission from 2014 to 2022. Bruce is married to a retired librarian. He has two daughters, one a medieval historian and the other a youth services librarian. Bruce likes babies, biscuits, boats, bicycles, books, and rambling around under Montana's beautiful sky of blue.

Navigating Climate Change Anxiety Through Contemporary Dystopian Literature: Supporting Students' Mental and Emotional Well-Being - Elisa M. Schroeder

This presentation invites teacher-librarians to explore how contemporary climate fiction ("cli-fi") and dystopian narratives can support students' mental and emotional well-being in the face of climate change anxiety. We'll examine how these stories reveal new perspectives on environmental challenges and inspire pathways toward more just and resilient societies. By analyzing contemporary "cli-fi" literature, we will seek to envision a future that goes beyond despair, using these stories as a canvas for hope and sustainability.

Elisa M. Schroeder is a doctoral candidate in the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education at the University of Montana. Her current research focuses on the role of school libraries in supporting student social-emotional well-being. She serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Montana, teaching courses in children's literature, content area literacy, and library media. A former teacher-librarian in Montana schools, Elisa is a passionate advocate for libraries and educators.

How to Work Productively with Volunteers – Bev Richardson and Rosanne Kruse

How to organize and work effectively with volunteers to create and keep your library events hip and fun while also running smoothly and seamlessly.

Bev Richardson is the Manhattan 6-12 Librarian and has been in education as a teacher and librarian for almost 20 years. As a now retired ARMY spouse, she has taught in Arizona, TN, Washington DC, Maryland, and Texas before joining the faculty at Manhattan. She has a BA in both English and Communication from Fort Hays State University.

Rosanne Kruse is a mom and has been a highly effective library volunteer for over 12 years. She has an MS in Biology from MSU and currently is the director at Manhattan Senior Center.

Session H 11:15AM-12:15PM

The Power of Partnership: Enhancing Library Services Through Collaboration - Joanne Didriksen

Call To Collaborate is a workshop that explores the dynamic collaboration between librarians, educators, leadership, and community. Highlighting a variety of activities, the session promotes a spectrum of collaborative possibilities from sharing resources to fully integrated co-teaching. Attendees will discover strategies for fostering collaboration in curriculum, lesson planning, and community engagement, as well as practical tools like collaborative planning organizers and feedback forms. Perfect for educators looking to maximize library services and resources, this session will inspire innovative partnerships that enhance student learning outcomes.

Joanne Didriksen is a dedicated librarian at Helena High with a distinguished background in education, beginning her career as a high school English teacher then transitioning to her role as a Teacher Librarian. Passionate about library advocacy, Joanne excels in promoting library services and resources, with a strong focus on building collaborative partnerships. Her extensive experience and enthusiasm enrich her ability to support and inspire librarians, especially within school settings, as she continues to serve as a leader in her field.

Accessing Justice One Click at a Time: How the Law Library's Digital Collections are Meeting Your Patrons' Needs -Sydnie Tallman

The legal world is becoming more difficult to navigate over time, especially with a lack of attorneys. The State Law Library of Montana has taken steps to ensure that every Montana citizen has access to resources to help navigate the rigors of the law, including access to our digital library, digital versions of the Montana Code Annotated, and other digital resources. Come and join me as I describe and demonstrate what we can offer your patrons.

Sydnie Tallman is the Technical Services Librarian of the State Law Library. She is in charge of increasing the collection and cataloging the resources. She also helps with programing throughout the library. Previously, Sydnie worked as a substitute teacher and Director of Education for Sylvan Learning.

Building Vibrant Communities: Public Libraries and Downtown Business Associations in Partnership – Kit Stephenson

Explore how public libraries and downtown business associations can collaborate to foster vibrant, thriving communities. This session highlights successful partnerships, innovative programs, and strategies to align resources and goals, creating shared spaces that support local businesses, engage residents, and enhance cultural and economic vitality.

Kit Stephenson, Assistant Director at the Bozeman Public Library, has dedicated over 30 years to building partnerships with local stakeholders and championing the role of public libraries in the community. Passionate about raising awareness of all libraries offer, Kit also enjoys sewing and exploring creativity in the library's maker space.

Spend Smarter: State Purchasing Options for Local Libraries - Sean Anderson and Grace Waring

Did you know that you can take advantage of State of Montana contracts? Leveraging these options will help you to maximize public funds, and stretch your budget effectively. Set your library up for success, hear about real-life examples, and how libraries can collaborate with the State of Montana to spend smarter!

Sean Anderson is the Grants & Contracts coordinator for the Montana State Library, and has spent more than a decade working in Montana Libraries. Outside of his work, he can usually be found exploring outdoors with his family, drawing, or tending to his houseplants.

Grace Waring is a Contracts Officer at the State Procurement Services Division (SPSD) with a focus on IT Procurement. She has experience facilitating purchases for large IT systems, IT staff augmentation and various IT solutions from national cooperatives like NASPO, Sourcewell and OMNIA Partners.

A public librarian and two academic librarians walk into a bar...An invitation to share ideas for innovative collaboration - Xavier Kneedler-Shorten, Megan Stark, and Wendy Walker

Let's expand collaborations beyond our libraries! Join us for an open and lively discussion about how we might all create stronger connections between different libraries and organizations to benefit our patrons at every stage of life. Join us to share ideas and imagine our future together!

Xavier Kneedler-Shorten (he/him) has been the programming librarian at the Missoula Public Library for the past year. His work as a librarian aims to connect community members to programs and engagement opportunities filled with fun, learning, and understanding.

Megan Stark (she/her) is the undergraduate services librarian at the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library at UM-Missoula. In addition to teaching undergraduates and designing outreach and programming for the library, her research focuses on the value of local information and the importance of community in academic libraries.

Wendy Walker has been the digital initiatives librarian at UM's Mansfield Library for over ten years. She manages the institutional repository, leads Open Access and Open Educational Resources initiatives, and helps UM faculty, students, and staff share and manage their research and creative scholarship.

CO+LAB-orate and Create: Building a Space and Structure for an All-Ages Makerspace - Kelsie Rubich and Megan Thomas

Over the past year, the Billings Public Library has created an all-ages makerspace and a circulating equipment collection. In this presentation, we'll share the transformation of the space and the processes

developed to support its operation. Our adaptable framework can be used to launch a makerspace of any size!

Kelsie Rubich, Assistant Library Director at Billings Public Library, has spent over two decades in libraries, driven by a passion for their transformative power in communities. Big ideas, innovation, and exploring the future of library services are her jam. She loves how these spaces bring people together, provide unique opportunities and resources, and adapt to meet changing needs.

Megan Thomas has been the Information Systems Coordinator at the Billings Public Library for the past two years. Prior to that, she worked for fifteen years at the MSU Billings Library in various roles, including reference librarian and electronic resources librarian.

12:30-2:00PM – MLA Division Lunches (PLD, SLD, and ASLD)

Session I 2:15-3:45PM

Montana Book Award - Elizabeth Jonkel and Book Award Committee

The Montana Book Award is an annual award that recognizes literary and/or artistic excellence in a book published during the award year. Eligible titles are either set in Montana, deal with Montana themes/issues, or are written, edited or illustrated by a Montana author or artist. Books for all ages are considered for the award. Attend to learn about the 2024 Montana Book Award winners and the titles that were eligible this year.

Elizabeth Jonkel received her MLIS from the University of Western Ontario in 2000. She has worked for Canadian governments as a consultant, analyst and librarian, specializing in health services. Since 2009, she has served as the Assistant Director at Missoula Public Library in Missoula, Montana. Elizabeth also holds a M.A. in History from Carleton University and B.A. in English from the University of Montana.

Tapping Into Montana's Business Community for Library Support – Janay Johnson, Sara Busse, and Brianne Laurin

Learn how to engage the Montana business community to support your library. Most businesses, large and small, donate to support causes that benefit their community. In this hands-on session you'll learn how to identify business prospects, write a basic case for support, and most importantly, how to make the ask.

Janay Johnson has spent her career wrangling dollars and goodwill for causes ranging from animal shelters to national parks to large landscape conservation. She's been at the helm of the Bozeman Library Friends and Foundation for the last 8 years--a dream job for an English major bookworm.

Sara Busse is the Executive Director of ImaginELF Library Foundation. Sara has spent her 25-year career advancing nonprofits through effective communications, creative marketing, and successful fundraising.

Her first job, at 12, was shelving books at the local library, so tucked into the stacks always feels like home.

Brianne Laurin has served as the Executive Director of the Great Falls Public Library Foundation since July 2023. With 16 years of experience in the nonprofit sector, Brianne has extensive fundraising expertise from her previous positions as Director of Development at McLaughlin Research Institute and the C.M. Russell Museum, as well as development roles at prestigious institutions including Fordham University and Georgetown University School of Medicine.

Perspectives on Montana Libraries - Pamela Benjamin, Jennie Stapp, and Panel

This will be a moderated panel discussion about the state and future of Montana's libraries when looking at 4 factors: Political, Financial, Technological, and User Services. The MLA Division Chairs and the MT State Librarian will consider what might be ahead for Montana's libraries - Academic, Public, and K12 - using the 4 factors as a framework. There will be an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and participate in the discussion.

Pamela Benjamin has been the Statewide Academic Library Coordinator since 2014 for Montana's coalition of academic libraries – the Treasure State Academic Libraries & Information Services consortium or TRAILS – located at MSU-Bozeman. She is the MLA Director at Large, East and a co-chair of the MLA Membership Committee. Previously, Pamela worked for the Cleveland Public Library (Cleveland, OH), the Kent State University Library, the Mansfield/Richland Co. Public Library, the OSU-Mansfield Branch Library, the OH Library Council, and the Plain Dealer newspaper library. Although residing in Livingston, she has not yet been classified as *gone with the wind*.

Jennifer Hossack says “Librarianship is my foremost passion. I love finding that ‘just right’ book for my students and empowering them to take control of their education through research skills and instilling a love for learning. I hold an M.A.T. in Elementary Education, and endorsements in Library Science, Psychology, and Dance Education. I am in my 16th year as an elementary/middle school librarian. I also serve as the Director of Libraries for Missoula Catholic Schools and librarian at Loyola Sacred Heart High School where I also teach Introduction to Psychology and Media Literacy. This is my 22nd year in the library profession. I worked for 6 years at the University of Montana's Mansfield Library in cataloging and acquisitions and am back working there part time. I serve as School Library Division Co-Chair on the Montana Library Association Board, and as school library liaison to the Montana Shared Cataloging and Acquisitions committee for the Montana Library.”

Shaundel Krumheuer has spent 24 years as an educator at Billings Senior High School. The latest iteration of her position has her in a dual role as Librarian and Tech Integration Specialist. A passion for learning with and from others has led her to present in a variety of venues in the state and region. She loves creating, be it digitally, in her pottery studio, or at the crafting table. A Montana girl who loves her Bobcats, Shaundel is a fan of mountain lakes, good mysteries, and her feral Golden Girl, Liberty. Aaron LaFromboise is the Director of Library Services at Medicine Spring Library, the academic library for Blackfeet Community College, the community library for the Blackfeet Reservation, and the home of the Blackfeet Community Archives. Aaron has been the director for eight years and has worked in Medicine

Spring Library for a total of 15 years. In that time Aaron has achieved bachelor's and master's degrees, has been named an Emerging Leader for the American Library Association, has served on the Montana State Library Commission, has been an active member of the American Indian Library Association Executive Board, serving as president in 2022. Aaron is also an artisan who focuses on quilting and beading but also dabbles in watercolor, loom knitting, carpentry, and she loves to learn and try new things.

Rachelle McLain is the Collection Development Librarian at the Montana State University Library. She manages the library's collections budget and oversees the acquisition and deselection of resources to meet the research and learning needs of the Montana and MSU communities. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Art History from Western Washington University and an MLIS from the University of Washington. Kelsie Rubich is the Assistant Director of the Billings Public Library. She serves on the MLA board as the Public Library Division Co-Chair and is a member of the Public Relations & Marketing and Membership Development committees.

Jennie Stapp is a Montana native. She holds a BA in International Studies from Rocky Mountain College in Billings. She earned her MLS from the University of Arizona in 2002. While in library school Jennie was a Cates Scholar. Jennie worked previously for the Montana Historical Society Research Center and joined the staff of the State Library in 2005. She has been the State Librarian since January 2012.

Hilary Woodard is the Volunteer Coordinator at the Bozeman Public Library. She is currently serving as the PLD Co-Chair and is a member of the Awards and Honors Committee. She holds an M. Ed. from Portland State University and an M. S. and Ph. D. in Geophysics from the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Montana Shared Catalog Updates - Amy Marchwick

Connect with other MSC librarians as we delve into existing procedures, gather insights about member needs, and share challenges or triumphs. Join the MSC team for updates about consortium operations, the budget, and the MSC Spring Member Meeting agenda, followed by small group discussions.

Amy Marchwick is the Montana Shared Catalog Lead System Administrator. Along with the rest of the MSC Team, she manages and configures the MSC Symphony ILS and provides support to member libraries. She has been with the MSC at the Montana State Library since 2011.

Let's Talk about Library Facilities - Tiffany Christensen, Abbi Dooley, Susan Gregory, Mark Wetherington, Mitch Grady, and Cara Orban (moderator)

From everyday maintenance to long-range planning, caring for our library buildings can seem overwhelming at times. Where to begin? Please join us for a discussion with a panel of your colleagues

who will share their experiences with renovations, repairs, accessibility improvements, community engagement, and strategic planning for library facilities.

Presenters are a panel of library directors from Conrad, Polson, Bozeman, Hamilton, and Livingston.

Website Accessibility – Bringing All Users to Your Digital Welcome Mat - Colet Bartow and Corey Sloan

Your library's website is its digital welcome mat. New federal accessibility requirements will go into effect in 2026 so now is time to evaluate and make a plan to eliminate barriers that may exist on your website. Small steps can make this an impactful project. Come learn with us!

Colet Bartow's professional background is in school librarianship, professional development, and state education agency leadership. Her history with MSL started in the late 1990s as a school library representative to several committees and included time as an MSL Commissioner. She currently serves as the Continuing Education Coordinator for MSL. Digital accessibility is one of the topics she is passionate about teaching.

Corey Sloan is excited to be the Statewide Consulting Librarian for the Broad Valleys and Pathfinder regions of the great state of Montana. She is excited to assist library directors and boards in their varied needs. She joined the MSL staff in July 2024. For the past 8 years Corey worked at the Bozeman Public Library in the adult programming and outreach department, first as a programming librarian and most recently as the head of the department. She brings a wealth of knowledge in web development and design!

4:00-5:00 – MLA Interest Group Meetings

6:00-7:30PM – MLA New Member Mingler Cocktail Event

7:30-9:00PM – MLA Awards Dinner

Saturday March 29th, 2025

Breakfast – 7:30-8:30AM

Session J 8:30-9:30AM

Lifelong Learning Chat - Bobbi deMontigny

Join Bobbi to chat about how things are going. Let's talk about your community and discuss how MSL can support your role with impactful programming. Learn about the Lifelong Learning calendar in the coming year and think about how we can build future programs with your library's needs in mind.

Bobbi deMontigny is the Lifelong Learning Librarian at the Montana state Library. With an MLIS and over a decade of experience in the field she is thankful for the opportunities she has had to serve just about

every kind of library across the state of Montana. Bobbi lives just outside of Helena where she enjoys active and artistic hobbies in the summer and curling up with her dog and a good book in the winter.

Saving History: An introduction to Community Webs and the MT Digital Born News Workgroup - Susie McIntyre and Anna Trammell

News and culture increasingly exist online only. Unless libraries and their partners develop ways to preserve this digital-born information, it is in danger of being lost to future generations. Learn about the efforts of the Montana Digital-born News Workgroup and how joining Community Webs can help you preserve precious information.

Anna Trammell is the Community Archiving Program Manager with the Internet Archive where she manages community programs which support collaborative efforts to preserve and provide access to digital collections through web archiving and digital preservation. Trammell has previously managed archives in public libraries and universities. She holds an MLIS from the University of Illinois and is a Certified Archivist with the Academy of Certified Archivists.

Susie McIntyre says “I am a fourth generation Montanan. I was born and raised in Great Falls and I’ve worked at the Great Falls Public Library for 20 years—the last five as the Director. I am passionate about family, friends, social justice and joy. Libraries and access to information are a cornerstone of democracy and my life.”

Mapping Makers: Providing a Path for Patron Progress in a Library Makerspace – Ben Nielsen

Makers are the heroes of their own stories, but how do you help them go from lost farm boy to jedi maker? With the hero's journey and some educational psychology, you can be the mentor to take them from zero to hero.

Ben Nielsen is the Head of Adult Programming and Outreach at the Bozeman Public Library, previously he was the Creative Labs Librarian. He has an MSLS with emphasis in public libraries from the University of Kentucky and a Masters in Instructional Design from BYU. Ben is the author of the Creative Communities in Libraries Field Guide. He is passionate about building creative skills in everyone and helping people come together in communities.

On the road again! Bookmobile programs across Montana - Chloe Runs Behind, Benjamin Elliot, and special guests

How are libraries around the state using bookmobile programs to reach our communities? How have these services evolved over time, and what are we looking towards for the future of mobile services in Montana? Join us for a lively presentation combining various perspectives of bookmobile drivers from communities around the state.

Chloe Runs Behind (they/them) is Missoula Public Library's eager new Bookmobile Specialist. Combining their background in community organizing and academic library work, Chloe is using the new MPL Bookmobile to connect Missoula County residents to library resources.

Session K 9:45-10:45AM

Empowering Ambassadors: Creating a Communications Toolkit for Your Library - Ann Vinciguerra and Wendy Purnell

Ann and Wendy will share how MSU Library strives to empower library ambassadors. They'll present lessons learned from a year's worth of experimentation: from updated style guides and review processes, to hands-on workshops and activities. Join us and tell the story of your library.

Ann Vinciguerra is the Events and Communications Manager at Montana State University Library. Prior to starting work at MSU in 2014, she spent 15 years as a development officer for various NGOs in Bozeman and Jackson Hole. Through these experiences Ann gained experience in all aspects of fundraising, event planning, and communications. Since 2022 she has led her MSU Library team to four PR Xchange Awards from the American Library Association. Ann holds a Master of Arts in Communication from University of Wyoming and a Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies from Southern Connecticut State University.

Wendy Riker Purnell is MSU Library's Research and Creativity Coordinator, tasked with storytelling and grant management. Dedicated to the freedom of inquiry, Wendy has spent two decades at the intersection of academia, education, and public policy. Prior to MSU, she worked with students and scholars at the Institute for Humane Studies at George Mason University, the Cato Institute, PERC, and the Renewing Indigenous Economies Project at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. Outside of think tanks and universities, Wendy has served in various communications roles for the U.S. Congress, The Prague Post, J. Walter Thompson, and Paso Páifico.

Beyond the Paycheck: Creating Meaningful Student Employment Experiences - Jessica Leach

Transform your library's student employment program through proven retention strategies. Drawing from MSU Library's experience, this presentation explores effective training methods, flexible scheduling approaches, meaningful recognition programs, and assessment tools that enhance student worker performance and longevity, ultimately improving library services while developing future professionals.

Jessica Leach is a Library Tech II in Access, Information, and User Services at Montana State University Library, where she specializes in student employee training and management. She holds a BA in Asian Studies and recently graduated with her MLIS from Valdosta State University. She is passionate about developing inclusive library spaces and enhancing the patron experience.

MLN Projects: Courier, Sharing Groups & Hotspots- How Can I Best Use Them? - Savanna Sill

Have you wanted to learn more about joining a sharing group and having access to a courier service to share items with other Montana Libraries? This will be a chance to learn more about the ease of moving materials within a sharing group, and we'll discuss courier options given your geographical location! Learn if it might be a good fit to join a current sharing group, or we may find it's time to start a new one! We will also talk about Hotspot management – new developments and what to expect in the future.

Savanna Sill is the Montana State Library Network Coordinator (Statewide Project). She describes herself as “The new Cara!”

Wildfire Smoke and Clean Indoor Air: How Montana Libraries Have Partnered - Mary Anderson and Bobbi deMontigny

Montana's wildfire smoke seasons are getting longer and more pervasive. Learn about the health risks of wildfire smoke, why indoor air can be more unhealthy than outdoor air, and how libraries are protecting and educating their communities.

Mary Anderson served as a school counselor in Hoquiam, WA and Helena, MT for over thirty years. When she retired, she quickly found that although she left public education, the educator in her was still alive and well. As wildfire smoke coordinator, she works with emergency responders, health departments, the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Natural Resources and several non-government organizations to develop educational materials and a response network that is as aware of the dangers of wildfire smoke as the dangers of wildfires, themselves. She believes that community libraries have the potential to be a vital partner in wildfire smoke response; both for their community outreach efforts and the services they already provide Montana's vulnerable populations. Her hope is that as wildfire smoke becomes a larger concern for many Montanans, libraries will serve an important role in keeping Montanans healthy and informed in the coming years.

Bobbi deMontigny is the Lifelong Learning Librarian at the Montana state Library. With an MLIS and over a decade of experience in the field she is thankful for the opportunities she has had to serve just about every kind of library across the state of Montana. Bobbi lives just outside of Helena where she enjoys active and artistic hobbies in the summer and curling up with her dog and a good book in the winter.

Community Engagement in Your Library, Big and Small - Kayla Whitaker, Selya Avila, Xavier Kneedler-Shorten, Amanda Allpress

Discover innovative strategies to build meaningful connections with your community, regardless of your library's size or resources. Employees from the Missoula Public Library will explore their programs, partnerships, and outreach techniques. Gain practical tools to strengthen your library's role as a dynamic community hub.

Xavier Kneedler-Shorten has been the programming librarian at the Missoula Public Library for the past year. His work as a librarian aims to connect community members to programs and engagement opportunities filled with fun, learning, and understanding.

Kayla Whitaker is the Managing Librarian for the Youth Services Department at the Missoula Public Library, as well as the Branch Manager for the Potomac School and Community Library. She serves as a member of the Montana Book Award Committee and is part of the MLA Awards & Honors Committee. She is the co-host, along with her sister, of the podcast Literature & Libations.

Selya Avila gained her library chops through years of experience in the Circulation Department before transitioning to the role of Community Engagement Specialist at the Missoula Public Library. In her work, she values supporting her community by building collaborative relationships with individuals and organizations. She is particularly focused on working with underserved populations, ensuring they have access to resources that foster growth and connection.

Amanda Allpress is the Assistant Director of Community Engagement at the Missoula Public Library. In addition to her current role, she has served as a Reference Librarian, a YA Librarian, a Technical Services Assistant, and a Circulation Assistant. Amanda digs library work as well as digging in her garden. She loves her big family, which is mostly furry, 6 rambunctious bird dogs and 2 cats.

11:00AM-12:30PM – Author Brunch with Russell Rowland

Russell Rowland is a fourth generation Montanan who has published eight books. His non-fiction book *Fifty-Six Counties* inspired a radio show that he hosts on Yellowstone Public Radio, and he has also hosted several podcasts, including his most recent, *The Song of Rowland*, where he is interviewing artistic people around the country about their creative process and the importance of culture in today's America. His latest book, *BE A MAN: Raised in the Shadow of Cowboys*, is a memoir with a specific emphasis on what it's like growing up as a man in the West. Russell lives in Billings.