

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 Contreras, 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 Contreras 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 to 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 Librarians – **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.sneedcollardiii.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.