

Mountain Plains Library Association

Big Horizons Close Community

Newsletter

February 2021—March 2021

www.mpla.us

Volume 66 Number 1

NEWS...Virtual Mini Conference in April

Hear ye, hear ye! You may have seen this very exciting news on the website, but allow me to repeat: The Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA) is excited to announce its first MPLA Virtual Conference, an online event that will include the annual member's meeting, awards ceremony, and lightning talks April 28-30, 2021! What exciting news, and what a fantastic way to end the MPLA year on a high note.

We have so many accomplishments to celebrate, and now we need you! From nominations for awards to submissions for lightning talks all the way to participating in the days, come. Here's how the schedule is going to break out:

Wednesday, April 28 - The Current Board will have our last meeting, the Membership Committee will host a Chew & Chat, and the Lightning Talks!

Thursday, April 29 - The current Board President will host the business/membership meeting, and we will have the Annual Awards Presentation

Friday, April 30 - The newly installed Board will have their first meeting

All three of these days promise to have so much information about the force for good that MPLA has been during this pandemic time, and we will be able to celebrate all those things. Please join us!

Stephen Sweeney

Mountain Plains Library Association
President

St. John Vianney Seminary, Cardinal
Stafford Library
Denver, Colorado



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MPLA Chew and Chats



Please join us on the
4th Wednesday of each month to connect
with fellow MPLA Members.

February 24

March 24

April 28

1:00 Central time
Noon Mountain time
11 am Pacific time

Please forward the information to any who might be interested.
The always charming Jake Rundle continues to lead our chats and this
month will feature a potpourri of topics.

[Click here to register for future meetings](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meetings.

Topics for future chats
can be submitted to membership@mpla.us

Big Horizons, Close Community

HOW MANY TIMES CAN A LIGHTNING TALK STRIKE ON A BRILLIANT IDEA?



Let's find out! Thanks to the pandemic, library service staff have gone through a long season of interesting times.

While scary and stressful, it has also enabled us to be innovative troubleshooters – be it through discovering how to offer programs and classes differently or being forced to redesign service models in new and unique ways.

As part of the MPLA Virtual Conference in April 2021, the Professional Development Committee will be hosting a series of 15-minute lightning talks. We are thrilled to invite anyone who is interested in sharing their ideas, challenges, successes, and lessons learned to be part of this program.

If you are interested, please submit your idea by 5:00 p.m. Central Time on Wednesday, March 3, 2021.

[Submit Your Proposal](#)

You will receive confirmation by the end of the day on Friday, March 12, 2021.

Lightning Talks will be presented on Thursday, April 29th, 2021 (exact times TBD).

Have questions? Contact the Professional Development Committee by emailing us at prof_development@mpla.us



MPLA Awards are going Virtual!



This has been a unique year with unique approaches to our field and we need to recognize those people who have excelled during these times. Now is the time to nominate your colleagues for one of our awards.

<https://mpla.us/services/awards/>
nominations must be in by March 1, 2021.

Nomination Descriptions



MPLA Dan Chaney Unsung Hero Award

To be given to an MPLA member who has consistently worked behind the scenes to create, administer, or support a library-related organization or project and who has not previously been recognized to the degree their work merits.

MPLA Beginning Professional Award

To recognize an MPLA member who, as a librarian/media specialist within the first five years after being awarded a library/media degree, has made a positive impact on the quality and role of library service. Factors such as innovative programming and planning, use of resources, and special projects will be considered.

MPLA Innovator Award

To recognize an up-and-coming individual(s) or group(s) in the MPLA region for a creative, inventive, trail-blazing project that has significance to the library community.

MPLA Distinguished Service Award

To be given to an MPLA member who has made notable contributions to the library profession, furthered significant development of libraries in the Mountain Plains region, or performed exemplary service for an extended period of time. If the individual is retired, the nominee may be a past member of MPLA.

Carl Gaumer Library Champion Award

To be given to the individual, organization or company whose positive support of the Mountain Plains Library Association is demonstrated by repeated conscientious endeavors towards libraries, library staff, trustees and professional activities.

MPLA Literary Contribution Award

To be given to an author whose published writings have successfully furthered an understanding and appreciation of the Mountain Plains region. The author need not reside in the region. The nomination may be based on either a single work or a body of works. Published works will be evaluated on the basis of literary worth, readability, and evidence of responsible research.

Election Information

An online ballot will be emailed to all eligible voters via MemberClicks for our next MPLA Officers. The ballot will be sent to the email listed in MPLA member profiles, so now is a good time for members to login at mpla.us and update their profiles as needed. Thanks to all of the candidates for their willingness to serve!

President Elect / Vice President



Mr. Victor Baeza serves as the Graduate Initiatives and Engagement Coordinator, and Business Librarian, for the Oklahoma State University (OSU) Libraries. He provides leadership to the library in all areas of services to graduate students, and provides research support to the School of Business. He continuously works to develop new outreach opportunities and collaborations locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. A member of MPLA since 2006, he has frequently presented at MPLA conferences, and has served on several committees including currently serving on the Professional Development Committee. His 25 years of involvement in library instruction has given him diverse experience in designing, directing and delivering workshops and training sessions to the academic community. Victor has a BS in Communication from Eastern New Mexico University. He earned his MLS from the University of North Texas and received his MBA from Texas Christian University.

Hello! I'm Brenda Hemmelman, Collection Services Librarian at the SD State Library. I've been an MPLA member since 1994 and over the years have served in different capacities in the organization.

In 2010, I became chair of the membership committee. I served two terms (2012-2018) as the MPLA state representative for South Dakota. After that, I served as Recording Secretary for 2018-2019. Currently I serve as a member of the Professional Development Grants Committee.



I have also served in various capacities on the SD Library Association Executive Board. I was the SDLA Executive Secretary/Treasurer for almost 10 years as well as a committee chair and conference planner. I currently serve as the chair of the SDLA Professional Development Grants Committee.

I was privileged to be selected to attend the MPLA Leadership Institute in 2014. Through that, I was able to focus on improving not only leadership skills, but project management skills. Since then, I served as a trustee on my local library board, and currently serve as the president of the local Friends of the Library group, organizing fundraisers and other activities. I have organized a craft show to raise scholarship funds for a local service organization, and also serve on the board of a local educational support organization.

We are all experiencing strange and historical times right now. In South Dakota and every other state, I have been humbled and impressed with how libraries have stepped up in innovative, creative ways to continue to serve their patrons. Library associations, including MPLA, have stepped up too. I would be privileged to help move MPLA forward as the next VP/President Elect.

Recording Secretary



Whitney Vitale is Associate Professor and Head of Access Services at Oklahoma State University's Edmon Low Library where she oversees the Circulation & Information Desk, Interlibrary Services, stack management, course reserves, and the Edmon Low Creative Studios. Prior to this position, she served as Assistant Head of Access Services at OSU and as the Associate Library Director at the Boston Architectural College in Boston, MA. Whitney received her MLIS from Simmons College and has over a decade of experience in library public and access services. She is a member of several library organizations and served on numerous statewide, regional, and national library committees. She has been active in MPLA since 2015, presenting and attending at the annual conferences, serving on the MPLA Membership Committee from 2015 to 2017, and, currently serving as Recording Secretary.

Find us on 

MPLA on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/MountainPlainsLibraryAssociation/>



MPLA on Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/MPLAtweets>

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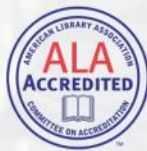
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Salina Public Library Takes Gallery 708 Online

Virtual exhibits connect patrons and artists during pandemic
Amy Adams, Salina Public Library Assistant Director

Dec. 30, 2020 — Like many other organizations, Salina Public Library in Salina, KS went through periods of full stay-at-home orders to no in-building service to limited in-building service throughout 2020. This meant the regularly scheduled plans for the library's exhibit space, Gallery 708, were quickly abandoned.

"The Salina Public Library's Gallery 708 is an important access point to the arts and for artists in the Salina community. Gallery 708 is one of only a handful of public gallery spaces in Salina offering an unbiased community space for local artwork to be shared," Glory Benacka, programs coordinator and gallery manager, explained.

As months of pandemic restriction wore on, Benacka developed a plan for taking the gallery's exhibits online at salinapubliclibrary.org/virtual.

"Art is uniquely positioned to provide entertaining, meaningful, and empowering experiences. During this stressful year, I thought it was important to prioritize resuming some normalcy in the library's gallery schedule and trying to continue having shows to improve public and artist morale in Salina," she said.

The virtual exhibit space includes a photo gallery of work by a selected local artist, an artist statement and bio, and links to an interview with the artist. Artists featured so far include Brenda Smith, a Zentangle artist, painter J.D. Nelson, mixed media artist Harley Elliot, and photographer L.H. Sven Johnson.

Reactions have been positive. Salina artist and library patron, Rick Frisbie, noted the new insight the recent Elliot exhibit, "Allies," gave him. The interview "was terrific ... so well done. It was direct and personal. I feel like I spent some time with Harley and not only learned about him but learned from him," he said.

Transitioning the gallery from a traditional format has led to new ideas and connections.

"We've already been able to exhibit some art that we wouldn't have been able to in-person and I'm scheduling a new show with an experienced local artist who interestingly wants to do an online-only show. We're able to extend our reach and relevance in the community by putting together the virtual gallery shows. The positive press has already started leading to new connections between the library and people in Salina. As we build the digital gallery workflow, I'm already seeing a lot of opportunities to improve the patron experience and hoping to continue some of the virtual gallery services in the future, even once we can offer the in-person gallery again," she said.

Visitors have the option of purchasing work by contacting the library. Artwork has been purchased from as far away as Louisiana. As with the in-person gallery, all virtual Gallery 708 sales go 100% to the artist.

"People connected to Salina who may live out of town or state or have friends and family here are checking out the online gallery, purchasing art, and commenting. Though we serve people locally, I think to be seeing people from out-of-town interested in Salina's artists is a good thing for everyone and perhaps a new and exciting extension of library services beyond traditional community borders," Benacka said.

The appeal of the project doesn't surprise Benacka who hopes the exhibits can act as a beacon for the community during challenging times.

"After the plague of the Middle Ages came the Renaissance," she said. "I hope that in its own very small way Gallery 708 reminds people of life, hope and beauty that can come out of this time."



Work by artist Brenda Smith

Bringing STEAM to Libraries During COVID-19

STAR Library Network
Boulder, Colorado

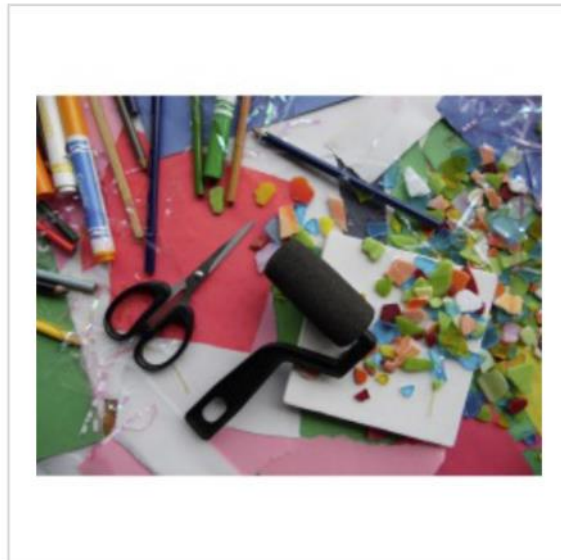
The STAR Library Network (STAR Net) is a national network of over 8,000 library professionals that connects libraries to STEAM learning resources. STAR Net provides free virtual trainings, exhibit programs, funding opportunities, and offers access to monthly newsletters, blogs, and over 500 interactive activities through the online STEM Activity Clearinghouse. As the COVID-19 pandemic began sweeping through communities, library operations around the country faced unprecedented challenges. When it became clear that in-person programming would be stopped for the foreseeable future, STAR Net pivoted alongside libraries to provide flexible, adaptable support.



As many libraries began shifting their programs to virtual platforms, STAR Net adjusted its webinar series to focus on tips, strategies, and resources for delivering virtual STEAM experiences. Starting in April, each webinar placed emphasis on delivering STEAM programming through virtual platforms and various tools and resources that could be used in doing so. The Virtual Programs 101: Behind the Scenes with STAR Net webinar (May '20) walked library staff through STAR Net's process of putting on virtual programs and allowed library staff to share lessons learned from their first few weeks of doing virtual programs.

Virtual programs, of course, can only reach patrons with broadband access, and as the pandemic stretched on even those with reliable internet access were combating "Zoom fatigue." Many libraries created kits for patrons to checkout via curbside services. STAR Net supported these libraries by developing a Take & Make online activity collection on the STEM Activity Clearinghouse. Additionally, STAR Net partnered with NASA GLOBE Observer to distribute thousands of citizen science Take & Make kits for libraries to give to their patrons.

Looking for ways to find support for your STEAM programs? Check out STAR Net's STEAM Ahead @ Home website, featuring activities ready to share with patrons, free professional development opportunities, and virtual programming resources. Be sure to sign up to be part of the STAR Library Network for ongoing support as we continue to navigate the pandemic together.



Take & Make

Zoom Culture

By Eric Green MLS MA

In the last year, the world has gone through so much rapid change, primarily because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the USA we are also dealing with social unrest, protests and hostile politics. In the midst of all this, libraries of all types are trying to adjust to be able to provide as many services as they can.

Traveling to visit the public and academic libraries the last few weeks in Southeast Kansas, I have been amazed at how creative and dedicated libraries are in helping their patrons through these strange times. One of the biggest changes is that there have obviously been fewer face-to-face interactions with fewer programs overall.

With all this going on, there has been an increase in the use of online services like *Zoom* that have replaced in- person meetings and activities. Communicating with each other through *Zoom* has been a blessing in terms of the dissemination of information and also has helped many overcome feelings of isolation during this time. Not that long ago, these types of communication services were not very reliable or didn't even exist.

When someone has to change the major way they receive or learn information, there can be a sense of insecurity. Several library staff members have confessed to me that they have some frustration with the amount of "*Zooming*" they have to do these days. In the past an occasional *Zoom* meeting was not an issue, but the dramatically increased *Zoom* usage is making many anxious.

The good news is the more you do something, the more comfortable you are likely to feel about it. As a personal example, I mostly hated doing public speaking in the past, even though I had experience in acting and music. In my 30's I attended library school where I had to do many presentations. This experience helped me become more confident in public speaking and, in time, I came to feel that giving presentations wasn't so bad. The same can be said for using *Zoom*; the current experience of having to rely on it so much these days is likely to make us comfortable and competent *Zoom* users in the future.

The anxiety about learning something new can be due partly to our feelings about social change, like the rapid development of technology, but it also might have to do with differences in learning styles. One of these anxieties might stem from the "unknown" future for the world and our society, and others might be at the personal level. Whatever the cause, the important thing to remember is that **we're not in this alone**. When someone confesses to me they are sometimes finding the difference in communicating through *Zoom* a concern, I tell him or her that I often feel the same. To some degree, everyone is facing this challenge, and no one should feel that they are in anyway unusual or incompetent.

Remember that all of us, working together, will continue to move forward and find ways to help the communities we serve through outreach and a myriad of other services. Even though there are often simple answers to the challenges we face and progress may be slower than we'd want, as with any rapid change, don't forget that we humans are great at adapting because of our shared values and hope for the future.



Grocery Rewards—King Soopers/Kroger

There are no longer grocery gift cards linked to MPLA. Instead, you can link your loyalty card to our MPLA Community Awards Program account.

To do so: Go to <http://www.kingsoopers.com>

Once logged into your King Soopers/Kroger account, search for Mountain Plains Library Association by name or our account: KK820. Then click Enroll. New users will need to create an account which requires some basic information, a valid email address and a loyalty card. If you previously purchased grocery cards they may still be used and reloaded but they will no longer provide rebates for MPLA. Instead, there is a quarterly designated funding amount which is shared by all Community Rewards organizations. Amounts are determined by the percentage of purchases by each organization.

If you are in an area with Kroger stores this is an easy way to support MPLA!

King Soopers/Krogers

COMMUNITY AWARDS PROGRAM

There is a change!
There are no longer grocery gift cards linked to MPLA.
Instead, you can link your loyalty card to MPLA to continue raising funds for MPLA's professional development, leadership, and educational programs!

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Bakers
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Fred Meyer jewelers
Littman & Barclay Jewelers
Loaf and Jug

Professional Development Grants

Grants are awarded to support the following:

- Formal course work leading to an advanced degree in library science or a related discipline.
- Formal course work not leading to an advanced degree but directly related to an individual's library position.
- Attendance as a participant or a presenter at a library or scholarly workshop, seminar, or conference, including the MPLA annual conference.
- Visits to another library to receive or provide significant advanced training in library services or procedures.
- Library related research projects.

Value of Grants

Annual budget equals the funding for grants approved but not yet awarded from the previous year plus the funding awarded for grants in the coming year. Funding for grants that have been approved but are not awarded is returned to the MPLA general fund.

MPLA sponsors the two categories of grants:

Mini-grant

Funding for projects requiring minimal financial support. (Maximum amount: \$150)

Regular grant

Funding for projects requiring substantial financial support, and for occasional funding of professional development opportunities requiring travel outside the United States. (Maximum amount: \$600)

Grant Funding

- Reimbursement of actual expenses incurred during a project.
- Transportation reimbursement for the lowest possible fare or for personal vehicles, mileage for the shortest route at the amount per mile allowed for deduction for federal income tax deductions.
- Grant funding for course work limited to tuition, fees and books.
- Funding approved but not needed to reimburse expenses is returned to the MPLA general fund.
- Expenses in excess of the grant funding approved are not reimbursed.

Find out more: <https://mpla.us/about/professional-development-grants.html>

Robin Hastings
Professional Development, Chair
E: prof_development@mpla.us

Judy Kulp
Executive Secretary
Lakewood, Colorado 80228
E: execsecretary@mpla.us

Around the Region

AZ ARIZONA

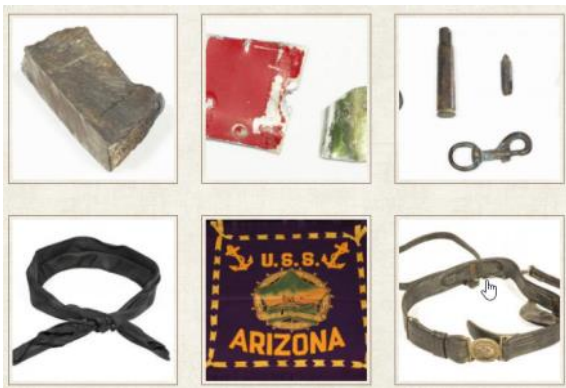
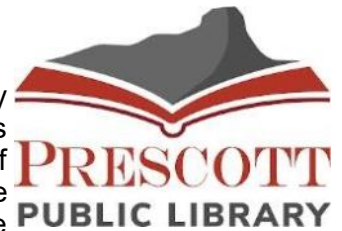


Teen Services Summit

On January 15, the Arizona Library Association presented its first all-virtual Teen Services Summit, in partnership with the Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records. Sessions included an introduction to restorative justice, a panel discussion about virtual programming for teens, and a discussion of One Summit, One Book selection *Cemetery Boys*, by Aiden Thomas.

Zoom for the Community

Prescott Public Library is now offering virtual meeting rooms for community organizations, book clubs, and other members of the public via a Zoom Business account. The library has traditionally been a hub for community meetings, and staff saw a need to offer this type of service in a new format during the pandemic. The Zoom Business account is funded by a CARES Act grant from the Arizona State Library, and more information about the program is available [here](#).



Preserving USS Arizona Historical Information

The University of Arizona Libraries' Special Collections is home to a unique collection of more than 15,000 photos, documents, and artifacts related to the USS Arizona, which was destroyed at Pearl Harbor. The collection includes everyday items that were used onboard, as well as the champagne and water bottles that were used to christen the ship in 1915. Only the Pearl Harbor National Memorial in Hawaii has a more extensive collection. You can read about the USS Arizona collection [here](#), and view the online exhibit [here](#).

Eat Local Program

The Cochise County Library District is partnering with member libraries and local food producers to increase awareness of local food options and resources in southeastern Arizona. The Eat Local program is supported by a Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA) grant administered by the Arizona State Library and will include two countywide Big Read events along with materials for area libraries, activities for children and families, and a growing directory of local food growers. Read about the project [here](#).



VIRTUAL BOOK ENJOYMENT AROUND COLORADO

Taking a Pause and Looking at Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*



NOW IS THE WINTER OF OUR DISCONTENT...oops! Wrong play! To beat the winter blues, the Bud Werner Memorial Library in Steamboat Springs will be hosting a 7-week in-depth reading and discussion of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* in January.

Shakespeare aficionado Carl Steidtmann will be leading participants through reading excerpts, discussing the play, studying theatrical presentations, and learning about Shakespeare and his world. Of course, the overall goal is to have some fun in the winter months while learning a bit more about this famous playwright.

Shakespeare's Celebrations - Stratford-upon-Avon - sign - Measure for Measure by ell brown is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

You can check out the details [here](#).

Or, Take a Moment to Smell the Flowers – Carefully!

If not interested in Shakespeare, how about a nice cozy mystery? Starting January 4th, the staff of the Denver Botanic Garden's Helen Fowler Library will be holding their **Rose & Thorn: Story Time for Adults** program when they will read stories from Kate Collins' *A Flower Shop Mystery series*. Go ahead, join the program for \$20 and enjoy having a story read to you as you sip a drink or enjoy working a puzzle or craft. Register for tickets by following [this link](#).



Perhaps Learn How We Are Water? – and Cross State Lines?!

The flow of water isn't stopped by state boundaries and neither is this book discussion. The City of Aztec in NM, the Pine River Library in Bayfield, CO, and the High Plains Library District in Weld County, CO are all partnering with University of Colorado, Boulder's CIRES team and a host of others to host a series of programs

on the importance of water in the Four-Corners region and how it unites us.

The program, We are Water SW, is starting off with a book discussion program that starts on January 6th focusing on Craig Child's *The Secret Knowledge of Water*. If you are interested, learn more about the upcoming discussions at <https://wearewater.colorado.edu/events>

New Facility and Expansion of Services

The Helen Fowler Library at the Denver Botanic Gardens packed up in 2019 for a move to a new facility. Our expected move-in was set for March 2020. Of course, that got pushed back a little bit, but we did move into our new library, with all the expected challenges of a normal library move wrapped up in a global pandemic. While we wait for



the day we can open our doors to the public, we continue to serve Gardens' staff with their research.

One of our biggest accomplishments has been moving our current programming online and expanding it. We are hosting book clubs, nature writing classes, poetry classes, and an online story time for adults! Without having the opportunity to build an in-person audience with our patron base for the better part of two years, we have still been able to engage our community in ways we hadn't dreamed of in the before times.

Virtual spaces have allowed us to continue with our plans to collaborate with and engage with people. Being able to have successful programming at this time and in this space gives us hope, and we are so looking forward to opening our doors and serving our community in multifaceted ways the future.



#checkoutmymask in Kansas

The Kansas Library Association (KLA) council members were invited to attend a Kansas Beats the Virus brainstorming session to come up with ideas to combat the spread of the COVID virus. Kansas Beats the Virus is a public health partnership launched by the Kansas Leadership Center in partnership with the State of Kansas. The group from KLA had some great ideas and they selected an action plan to invite libraries across the state to flood their social media with photos of staff and community members wearing masks, using #checkoutmymask to help normalize mask wearing.

KLA is has challenged libraries of all sizes and types, be it academic, special, public or school, to post as many #checkoutmymask pictures as possible before December 31. Social media templates were available at <https://kslibassoc.org/checkoutmymask>

“Library Historians”

Humanities Kansas recently awarded \$1,250 to Atchison Public Library to support “Library Historians: Stories of Atchison, Kansas.” with Patrick Glaney as project director.

“Library Historians” is a podcast project exploring tales of Atchison’s historical public figures and storied places, illuminating lesser-known people and events that have shaped the community’s identity. Planned topics include Jesse Stone, an early pioneer of rock and roll; Oscar “Heavy” Johnson, baseball player for the Kansas City Monarchs in the Negro Leagues; and stories of Atchison’s unique architecture and haunted places.



“Libraries are a great resource for local history,” said Julie Mulvihill, Humanities Kansas Executive Director. “This project highlights the research expertise of librarians and the role of community libraries in preserving local history while presenting fascinating stories of Atchison in an accessible way.”

Humanities Kansas is an independent nonprofit spearheading a movement of ideas to empower the people of Kansas to strengthen their communities and our democracy. Since 1972, our pioneering programming, grants, and partnerships have documented and shared stories to spark conversations and generate insights. Together with our partners and supporters, we inspire all Kansans to draw on history, literature, ethics, and culture to enrich their lives and serve the communities and state we all proudly call home.

Visit humanitieskansas.org.



Libraries serving those living with dementias during COVID restrictions

Written by Amanda Allpress, Senior Outreach Librarian with Missoula Public Library, and Marje Doyle, retired Senior Outreach Librarian with Missoula Public Library

The Memory Café at Missoula Public Library has been a thriving program since its inception in 2018. When the COVID pandemic made it evident that this monthly program could no longer be held in-person, the library looked into virtual programming as an option.

There are a variety of helpful webinars on the topic; see the [JF&CS Percolator Memory Café Network](#) for many resources and ideas. However, we have found that a good knowledge of resources and people in the community is important to putting together engaging cafes, both live and prerecorded. Also, the more interactive a program, the more successful. Similar to in-person programming, monthly reminder emails and phone calls help increase attendance. Attendees include individuals in their homes, with or without care partners, as well as groups from local senior residential facilities. Our programs have included a tour of the University of Montana herbarium, interviews and talks with local authors, and in December a seasonal musical program by Missoula Community Chorus. Coming up we have scheduled a creativity and movement program with Turning the Wheel Missoula and a presentation of useful artifacts used over the past 100 years from the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula's collection, both live. To see examples of Missoula Public Library's past virtual programs, please visit the [Memory Café](#) page.



The Alzheimer's Association describes dementia as a loss of memory or cognitive decline serious enough to impact quality of life. Programs for those with dementia should offer a safe and welcoming environment that provides entertainment, educational opportunities, and recreation, all while engaging the senses. Library programs increase quality of life by giving care partners an experience outside of the daily caregiving routine and also help decrease the feelings of isolation that often occur after dementia diagnosis, for both the care partner and the person experiencing dementia. We can recommend [A Whole New \(Virtual\) World: Creating Connections with Online Dementia-Friendly Programs](#) for ideas and resources for virtual programs.

Ready 2 Read

The Montana State Library is excited to announce that the Ready 2 Read website has been revamped and is now available for patrons and families to use. Designed as a public/community-facing resource, the Ready 2 Read website provides information on the importance of early literacy, how parents/families/caregivers can find support for early literacy at their local library, and gives tips and additional resources on how to further encourage early literacy learning. We are eager to share this with Montana, and we would love any and all Montana libraries to include this on their webpages. Please feel free to share any useful early literacy resources to add to the Ready 2 Read website. We hope to update this website regularly, and any new resources are welcome additions.

You can find the new website at <http://ready2readmontana.org>.



Winter Reading Challenge: Read away the Doldrums

The Norfolk Public Library is encouraging you to read more and to read books you might not have chosen by taking part in the winter reading challenge. Patron Services Supervisor Anneka Ramirez says there are ten categories on the challenge log, starting with a novel in translation and historical fiction set in the great depression. "The other

categories include a sports memoir biography, contemporary romance, literary western with a female protagonist, non-fiction regarding any current event topic, a poetry book by a

Nebraska author, a cozy mystery featuring an animal sidekick, and an OwnVoices novel or memoir." Ramirez says that anyone who completes any five categories will receive a button and a gift certificate from a number of local businesses that have donated for the challenge. Anyone who reads a book in all ten categories will also receive a Norfolk Public Library mug.



Membership....Membership...Membership

During the first week in January Nebraska Library Association will be holding a random drawing for 125 free memberships for anyone who has either never been a part of the NLA, or for those whose memberships have been lapsed for at least 5 years.



Nevada Libraries Update

Like so many states, Nevada has been hit hard with an increase in coronavirus cases, which, in turn, has caused issues for libraries throughout the state. As much as possible, libraries are providing some sort of service.

The largest district, Las Vegas Clark County District, did have to close down completely for a few weeks but has just reopened. They are required to operate at 25% capacity but have several branches offering in-person services, including computers & wifi, browsing & borrowing, one-stop career services for job seekers, art galleries, magazine & newspaper browsing, workshops & lectures, and curbside service at several of their branches.

Washoe County Library System, located in Northern Nevada, had to shut down for in-person services until at least January 19 but continues to offer telephone reference service, online services, and virtual programs including daily story times.

Some rural libraries have been able to provide some in-person services. The library in Pahrump can have up to 25 guests at a time and does provide critical services in copying, printing, and computer use up to an hour, in addition to virtual programs. Humboldt County Library in Winnemucca is open and offers limited computer availability up to one hour, online virtual programs, take & make craft kits, book deliveries within a 5-mile radius for daycares and homebound individuals, and bookmobile service to the more remote areas.

Other rural libraries throughout Nevada have been able to continue offering curbside service even when they have not been able to keep the in-person services available. Elko County Library System, located in Northeastern Nevada, has virtual story times with craft kits available for the youth and a monthly craft kit for Adults 18+. Carson City Library expanded their virtual programs for all ages and Douglas County Public Library offers take & make crafts for kids.

Explore History Hub

This past summer the New Mexico State Library proudly joined the National Archives' History Hub project as an institutional partner.

History Hub is a crowdsourcing platform sponsored by the National Archives. It is a place to ask questions and share information. Experts from the National Archives as well as other experts, (including the New Mexico State Library), history enthusiasts, and citizen archivists are available to help with your research.

History Hub offers tools like discussion boards, blogs, and community pages to bring together experts and researchers interested in American history. Think of it as a one-stop shop for crowdsourcing information related to any research subject.

Anyone can create an account and start asking questions or participate in helping other researchers find what they are looking for.

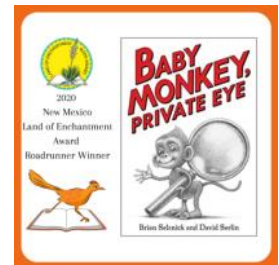


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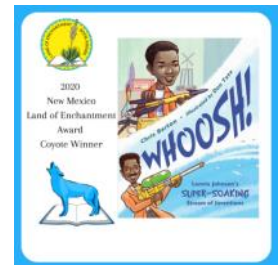
Land of Enchantment Book Awards

The Land of Enchantment Book Award is the New Mexico's best book of the year, voted on by students around the state. It's typically voted on by New Mexico students in April, but it's 2020 so everything was a little different this year and voting ended in September. There were 4 winners announced in the different categories:

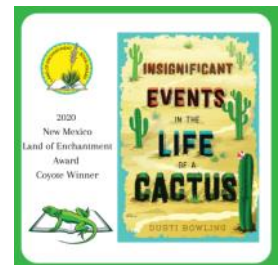
Roadrunner (grades K-3)



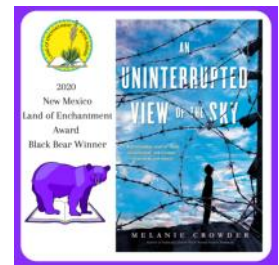
Coyote (grades 3-5)



Lizard (grades 6-8)



Black Bear (grades 9-12)



North Dakota Wheelie Award

This award highlights the bookmobile that excels in its contributions to libraries through total circulation per capita, the number of stops made, and the miles traveled to promote literacy. The 2020 award winner was the Ward Public Library.

12 Days of Holidays - Virtually!

The Williston Community Library created a 12 Days of Holidays virtual arts & crafts program kit for kids, teens and adults. Each kit included everything patrons needed to complete twelve activities starting December 21 through January 1. We also provided instructional videos posted via Facebook and YouTube each day to help them complete the activity. They were so popular we ran out in 45 minutes!

College SAVE Summer Reading Champion

The North Dakota State Library partnered with Bank of North Dakota to bring the College SAVE Summer Reading Champions Campaign to participants of the 2020 Collaborative Summer Library Program. Julia Hausauer of Bismarck was randomly selected as the recipient of \$529 deposited into a College SAVE account for her participation in the summer reading program at Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library. Julia has always been an avid reader. She loves going to the library and discovering new books. Julia also likes reading with her mom, coloring, and being outside. She recently started feeding the outside birds, and she loves to watch them eat. Some of her favorite books are *The Little Red Caboose*, *Llama Llama Red Pajama*, and *Red House*, *Tree House*, *Little Bitty Brown Mouse*.



Outdoor Book Sale

The Friends of the Bismarck Public Library held Flash Sales of used books outside on the plaza at the Library on Fridays in August and September. They also held their two-day annual Fall Used Book Sale in September. Proceeds from these sales have benefited the programs and services of the Library. Their “above and beyond” generous support of the Library in 2020 provided new and additional programs and services to our community during a year filled with extraordinary changes and challenges.

Lego Mini Kits

The Bismarck Veterans Memorial Public Library held not one but two very successful "drive-thru" LEGO Take and Create events – one in September and one in December. LEGO mini-kits were prepped and ready for patrons to pick up and build at home. Patrons entered the south parking lot and drove through the book drop lane to the loading dock, where the kits were distributed, first come first served until supplies ran out.

Personalized Visits

Miss Sparkles is on the go and is encouraging and celebrating young readers in Bismarck with personalized visits. As outdoor story times ended with the coming of winter, Miss Sparkles had to come up with a new way to stay connected with the families she has gotten so close with. She has been bringing a bit of the library to families' homes, with special story times and personalized yard signs letting everyone know that "An Awesome Reader Lives Here!" Thank you to the Bismarck Lions Club for helping recognize the awesome young readers around our community by donating funds to purchase the Miss Sparkles Awesome Reader yard signs.



Local Superheroes aid in Library Card Sign ups!

During Library Card Signup Month, Grand Forks Public Library featured local "Superheroes" who use their library cards to escape from reality, de-stress, learn a new skill or hobby, check out books for their kids, and much more. These local heroes included a nurse, activist, farmer, teacher, fire and police chiefs, moms and dads, distance learners, and other essential workers.



The campaign, which featured photos and heartfelt testimonials from 16 community members, had a total reach on Facebook of over 20,000 people. During the month, Grand Forks Public Library issued 150 new library cards to patrons, three times the monthly average in 2020! Lesson learned:

personal connections and stories have power to influence others.

Renovation Updates

The Chester Fritz Library at the University of North Dakota continued its ongoing major renovation. Begun in November 2018, it is very close to completion – we're at punch lists! A few things were delayed due to COVID, and remain delayed, but we should be totally finished over the course of the Spring 2021 term. The renovation is completely transformational, and features (just to name a few things) a new centralized "Knowledge Commons" that will ultimately offer services from the Library, University IT, data services, career services, and more; a 4-room Artificial Intelligence/Big Data & Visualization/Virtual & Augmented Reality/Robotics suite (created in partnership with the Office of Research & Economic Development and High Performance Computing); University IT, including 3D printing and more; the Writing Center; a One Button Studio; and much, much more. We are limiting some services, but most are open. We were remote-only for a period between March-July, and continue to offer many services remotely. All instruction is remote only – and interestingly, is more heavily subscribed than ever!

EOLS Holiday Music Showcase

Eastern Oklahoma Library System (EOLS) hosted a virtual Holiday music showcase. Residents in Adair, Cherokee, Delaware, McIntosh, Muskogee, and Sequoyah counties were invited to submit a one-minute musical sample of their original musical performance. Based on the entries of local talent, librarians sent an invitation to selected artists to provide their full-length song to be featured in the virtual program.



Dec. 17th – 18th @ 12pm

Join us on Facebook or Youtube!

Thursday, December 17th Showcase: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCKKi-RFcGM>

Featuring the talents of:

Elizabeth L. from Muldrow Public Library
 First Christian Church's Children's Choir from Stilwell Public Library
 Colson J. from Grove Public Library

Friday, December 18th Showcase: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRO4mTFu3A>

Neal & Sarah W. from Tahlequah Public Library
 Kayla B. from Hulbert Community Public Library
 Jenaly & Rebecca Y. & Jennifer N. from John F. Henderson Public Library & Muskogee Public Library

Britton, SD Area Residents help build library in Africa

A new library will open in 2021 in Susu Village, Zambia, Africa and Britton, SD residents are a big part of how it became possible.

Britton native Lana Lynn, now of California and founder of Elizabeth's Library International, points to the new library set to open early next year in Susu Village, Zambia, largely due to donations from Britton area residents. Lynn was in Britton on Thursday and gave a slide presentation of the progress of the new facility.



Lana Lynn, now of California and founder of Elizabeth's Library International, points to the new library set to open early next year in

Lana Lynn is the board chair of Elizabeth's Library International, a non-profit that "invests in people and their communities by establishing libraries and supporting educational opportunities in underserved areas of the world."

Growing up in Britton, Lynn spent many hours in the local library. When she had read almost all of those books, she took advantage of additional books that were loaned by the SD State Library. "I never imagined that one day, I'd be part of an organization sending cardboard boxes of books around the world to start libraries where there are none," Lynn shared.

Britton area residents provided funding to purchase the land for the new library and also help with construction costs. Construction has caused a ripple effect, and now gardens and a corn crop have been established, and plans are underway for other beneficial services for the community.

Story from the [Marshall County Journal](#).

2021 ULA Virtual Conference May 19-21

We Are the Heart. Our libraries are the heart of our communities. You each are the heart of your library, to keep them going. There are many successes happening across Utah libraries and communities because of you, and in spite of pandemics, fires, winds, earthquakes, unrest, stress, and other 2020 challenges. There will be much to share at our 2021 conference.



Early Literacy Development & Utah Kids Ready to Read!

Utah Library Association is proud to help sponsor the Uintah County Library Early Literacy Video Project. The best ways to prepare your child to read are talking and reading with them. It can be as simple as narrating your day together. Spread the word and share the video! [Early Literacy Tips Video](#)

Want more early literacy information? Utah Kids Ready to Read! provides information, training, technical assistance, and resources on emergent literacy for parents and caregivers, Utah librarians and their community partners.

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Early literacy skills are what a child needs to know before he/she learns to read and write. The goals of early literacy are to increase the frequency and intention with which parents and caregivers:

- Talk to their children
- Share books with their children
- Bring their children to the library

Early literacy is important because:

- 35% of children enter kindergarten without the necessary skills to be successful students (*Ready to Learn, a 1991 Carnegie Foundation report*).
- There is a 90% probability that a child who struggles with reading in kindergarten will struggle with reading in fourth grade.
- The Nation's Report Card (2005) states that 36% of fourth graders and 27% of eighth graders are reading below basic skill level.

Early literacy and libraries go hand in hand because:

- no one organization is responsible for teaching these skills to parents of 0 – 5 year olds. there is research-based proof of the value of storytimes and other children's services.

it increases the value of libraries and librarians to the community.

- it ensures creation of future library users.
- it increases awareness of library materials and library use.

Visit [Utah Kids Ready to Read!](#) for more resources on early literacy.



Wyoming Reads 2021 Books

The six books for next year’s Wyoming Reads have been selected, and the state’s first graders are going to have a hard time picking only one of these fabulous books to keep and cherish:



- *Brick by Brick* by Heidi Woodward Sheffield
- *The World Needs More Purple People* by Kristen Bell and Benjamin Hart, illustrated by Daniel Wiseman
- *Stretchy McHandsome* by Judy Schachner
- *On Account of the Gum* by Adam Rex
- *Alma and How She Got Her Name* by Juana Martinez-Neal
- *This Is a Seahorse* by Cassandra Federman

Wyoming Reads is a statewide celebration focusing on the joy of reading. The highlight is that every first-grade student in Wyoming receives a hardback book with their name printed inside the cover, donated by the Sue Jorgensen Library Foundation.

Laramie County receives Compassion-In-Action Award

Laramie County Library System was honored with the Compassion-In-Action Award from Compassionate Cheyenne in a small ceremony at the library. The award, which seeks to recognize organizations or individuals who are helping foster compassion throughout the community, acknowledged the library’s efforts to welcome and support every single member of the Laramie County community. The award extends to all library facilities including the libraries in Cheyenne, Burns, Pine Bluffs, and the Bookmobile.



Pictured left to right: Ed Boenisch of Compassionate Cheyenne, Beth Howard of Compassionate Cheyenne, Carey Hartmann Executive Director Laramie County Library System, Linda Franklin of Compassionate Cheyenne

Welcome Katrina!

Katrina Brown, Library Director, Goodstein Foundation Library in Casper, WY was elected to serve on the MPLA Executive Board. Here is what she had to say when asked “What made you want to get involved with MPLA?”



“I chose to join MPLA for the opportunity to connect, and learn from, other librarians. As a community college library director in a small rural community, I did not have many opportunities to interact with peers. From the first MPLA conference I attended in Billings, MT in 2011 to the most recent in Albuquerque, NM, I met other librarians who understood some of my challenges (and opportunities). I learned and laughed and came back a better librarian.

I chose to get involved with MPLA as a way to give back to the library professional associations that supported me. Professional organizations in many fields and industries are struggling with declining membership and engagement. I want to help our library associations continue to be vibrant communities that provide relevant and accessible education and professional development opportunities to all library staff. I hope as the state representative for Wyoming, I can help each association. “



Welcome, New Members!



Contact Name	Title	Institution / Library Name	City & State
Amy Soma	Library & Instructional Resources Coordinator	Fargo Public Schools	Fargo, ND
Brad Allen	Director	Lawrence Public Library	Lawrence, KS
Brenda Marshall	Assistant Director	Pine River Public Library District	Bayfield, CO
Jennifer McCulley	Youth Services Coordinator	McPherson Public Library	McPherson, KS
Jeremy Gill	Kansas Room Coordinator	Hays Public Library	Hays, KS
Julia Thomas-Glennon	Library Assistant	High Plains Library District	Erie, CO
Kat LeFevre	Assistant Manager, Martin Regional Library branch	Tulsa City-County Library	Tulsa, OK
Katie Fox	Research Analyst	Colorado State Library, Library Research Service	Denver, CO
Lori Juhlin	Executive Director	Dodge City Public Library	Dodge City, KS
Margie Sheppard	Outreach and Technology Coordinator	Network of the National Library of Medicine/	Kansas City, KS
Marianne Potje	Adult Services Assistant	Delta County Libraries	Delta, CO
Melissa Haderlie	Branch Manager	Star Valley Branch Library	Afton, WY
Millie Dearden	Youth Services and Programming	Scott County Library	Scott City, KS
Paul Amberg	Outreach Librarian	Dickinson Area Public Library	Dickinson, ND
Stephanie Galeazzo	Director	McKenzie County Public Library	Watford City, ND
Tiah Frankish	Library Service Coordinator	Adams 12 Five Star Schools	Thorton, CO



MPLA State Representatives



Arizona

Amadee Ricketts
Cochise County Library
Bisbee, AZ
arizona@mpla.us

Colorado

Elena Rosenfeld
High Plains Library District
Greeley, CO
colorado@mpla.us

Kansas

Maribeth Shafer
Central Kansas Library System
Great Bend, KS
kansas@mpla.us

Montana

Rachel M. Rawn
Havre-Hill County Library
Havre, MT
montana@mpla.us

Nebraska

Evonne Edgington
Omaha Public Library -Millard Branch
Omaha, NE
nebraska@mpla.us

Nevada

Luise Davis
Douglas County Public Library
Minden, NV
nevada@mpla.us

New Mexico

Dale Savage
New Mexico State Library
new_mexico@mpla.us

North Dakota

Randi Monley
Minot Public Library
Minot, ND
north_dakota@mpla.us

Oklahoma

April Miller
Southwestern Oklahoma State
University
oklahoma@mpla.us

South Dakota

Nita Gill
Brookings Public Library
Brookings, SD
south_dakota@mpla.us

Utah

Joe Fraizer
Summit County Library
Park City, UT
utah@mpla.us

Wyoming

Katrina Brown
Goodstein Foundation Library
Casper, WY
wyoing@mpla.us

King Soopers/Krogers

COMMUNITY AWARDS PROGRAM

There is a change!
There are no longer grocery gift
cards linked to MPLA.
Instead, you can link your loyalty
card to MPLA to continue raising
funds for MPLA's professional
development, leadership, and
educational programs!

**SUPPORT
MPLA!**



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- Fred Meyer
- Ralphs
- Fry's and Fry's marketplace
- King Soopers
- Dillons
- Smith's Food & Drug City Market
- QFC
- Food 4 Less
- Owen's
- Foodsco
- Hilander
- Pay-less Cala-Bell
- Bakers
- Jayc
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MPLA Board & Staff



President

Stephen Sweeney
St. John Vianney Seminary
Cardinal Stafford Library
Denver, CO
president@mpla.us

Vice-President/President Elect

Robin Newell
Emporia Public Library
Emporia, Kansas
vicepresident@mpla.us

Past President / Administration

Leslie H. Langley
Southeastern Public Library System,
Wister Public Library
Wister, OK
pastpresident@mpla.us

Recording Secretary

Whitney Vitale
Oklahoma State University
Edmon Low Library
Stillwater, Oklahoma
secretary@mpla.us

Executive Secretary

Judy Kulp
Lakewood, Colorado
execsecretary@mpla.us

Newsletter Editor

Melanie Argo
Madison Public Library
Madison, SD
editor@mpla.us

Leadership Institute Coordinator

coordinator@mpla.us

Webmaster

Roy Degler
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK
webmaster@mpla.us

MPLA Archives

Abby Hoverstock
Denver Public Library,
Western History and Genealogy
Denver, SD
archives@mpla.us

Awards

Mary Ann Thompson
Hays, KS
awards@mpla.us

Nominating

Leslie H. Langley
Southeastern Public Library System,
Wister Public Library
Wister, OK
nominating@mpla.us

Bylaws and Procedures

Frances Brummett
Salt Lake City Public Library
Salt Lake City, UT
bylaws@mpla.us

Communications

Shanna Smith-Ritterhouse
Mulvane Public Library
Mulvane, KS
communications@mpla.us

Leadership Institute

Tom Taylor
Andover Library
Andover, KS
leadership@mpla.us

Membership

Mary J. Soucie
North Dakota State Library
Bismarck, ND
membership@mpla.us

Professional Development

Robin Hastings
Northeast Kansas Library System
Lawrence, KS
prof_development@mpla.us



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The Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA) is a twelve state association of librarians, library paraprofessionals and friends of libraries in Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. Its purpose is to promote the development of librarians and libraries by providing significant educational and networking opportunities.

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For matters pertaining to individual or institutional memberships and address changes, contact:

Judy Kulp
Executive Secretary
14293 West Center Drive
Lakewood, Colorado 80228
(303) 985-7795
execsecretary@mpla.us