

Mountain Plains Library Association

Big Horizons Close Community

Newsletter

June 2021—July 2021

www.mpla.us

Volume 66 Number 3

President's Message

I really wanted to go nostalgic with my first presidential column and tell you all about my journey with MPLA, the relationships that were built through almost twenty years of membership, the wonderful joint conferences attended, the Leadership Institute as a fellow and then as a mentor. Perhaps during this year of responsibility and reflection I will share bits and pieces of those experiences as they are relevant. If you know MPLA members at all, you know there are stories, and stories are made to be told.



As we reconnect after this long period apart to tell our stories, the time that we now spend together with each other is even more meaningful. We know what it was like to not have a joint conference, to not have a Leadership Institute. Using the knowledge of those losses and speaking to them will help us as we move into the future to provide lasting learning experiences at our conferences and seek to discover how best to present a Leadership Institute for librarians who live and work in a highly changing environment.

MPLA is made up of people who have something to give. People who care about their work, their libraries, their personal growth in their profession and especially helping others grow. Paying it - or in many cases - mentoring it forward is something that MPLA is known for in the library profession. We have much to do this year - revisiting our long range plan, preparing for a tri-conference in 2022, providing a Leadership Institute. Please bring forward your talents and gifts and help make this a year of growth and organizational development for you and for MPLA. We need you. I need you. Please reach out and let me know where your strengths and interests lie and let us work together towards a strong future for MPLA.



Robin Newell
MPLA President
Executive Director,
Emporia Public Library
Emporia, KS

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Guiding Principles



1. Pursue outreach opportunities

- Foster relationships
- Increase professional sharing
- Include diverse communities



2. Encourage caring, respectful relationships

- Mentoring
- Networking
- Collaborations
- Learning



3. Realize our potential

- Leadership development
- Professional growth opportunities
- Engagement with library community

Source: Agreement was made by Gregor Oester; Timeline was made by Cheryl; Network was made by Steve from www.fairfax.ca

LONG RANGE PLANS 2018

www.MPLA.us



Congratulations to newly-elected officers of the Mountain Plains Library Association for the 2021-22 term:

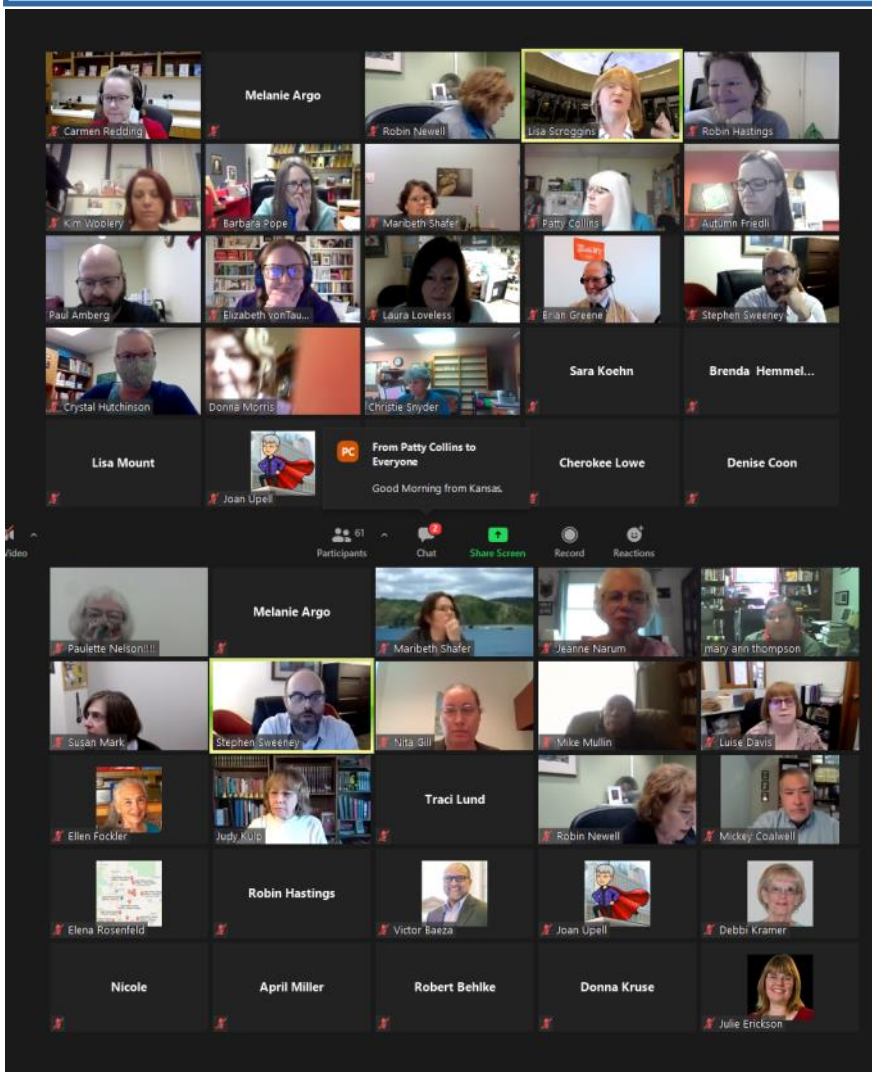


Brenda Hemmelman, Vice-President/President-Elect. Brenda is Collection Services Librarian at the South Dakota State Library



Whitney Vitale, Recording Secretary. Whitney is Assistant Head of Access Services at the Oklahoma State University Edmon Low Library.

Thank you to all candidates for supporting MPLA in such an important way.



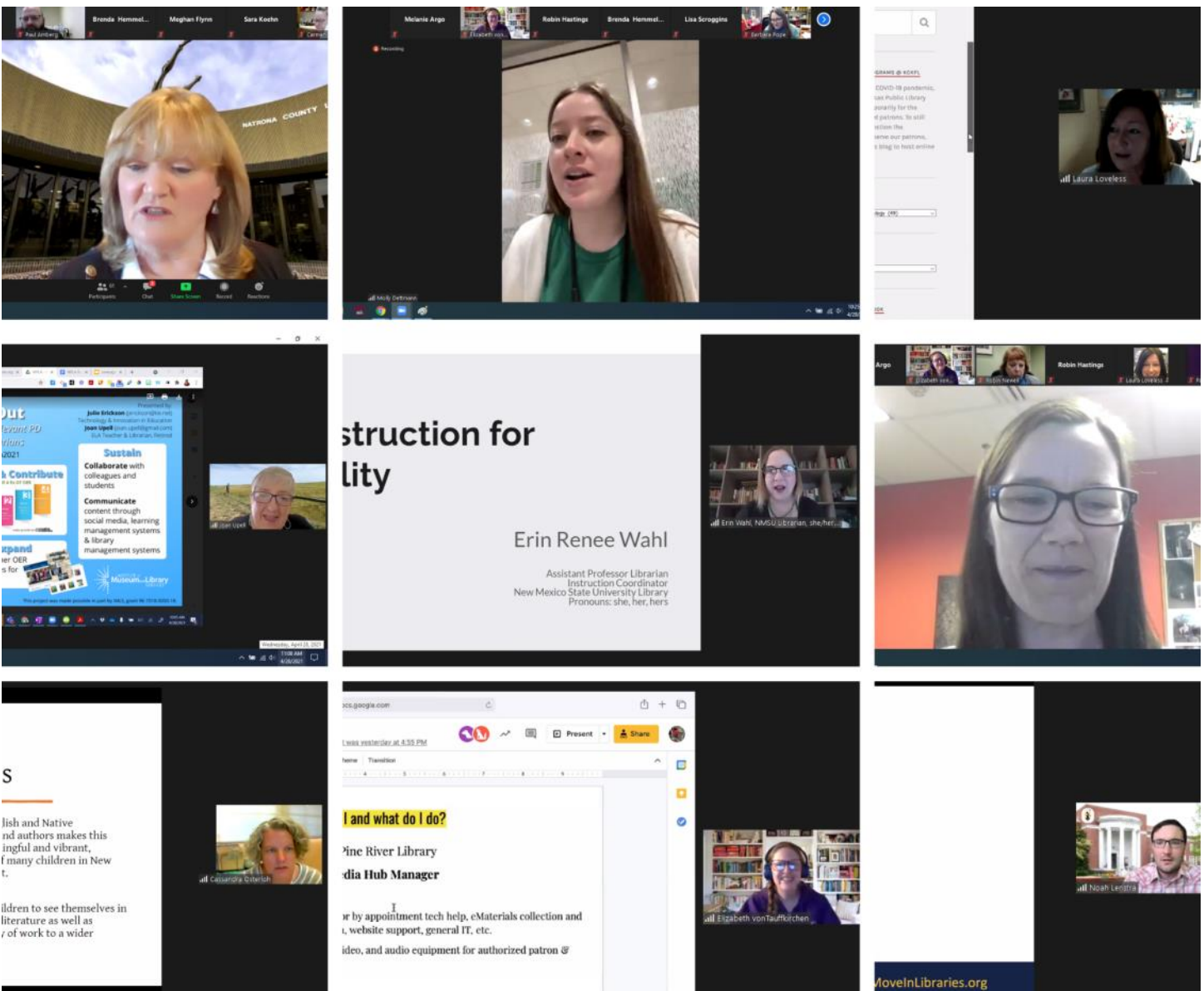
MPLA VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2021 IN REVIEW



It was good “seeing” everyone, learning, and growing Brady bunch style.

Miss the Lightning Talks?
 No fear they were recorded.
 Check them out here on
 MPLA's website:

[Lightning Talks April 2021](#)



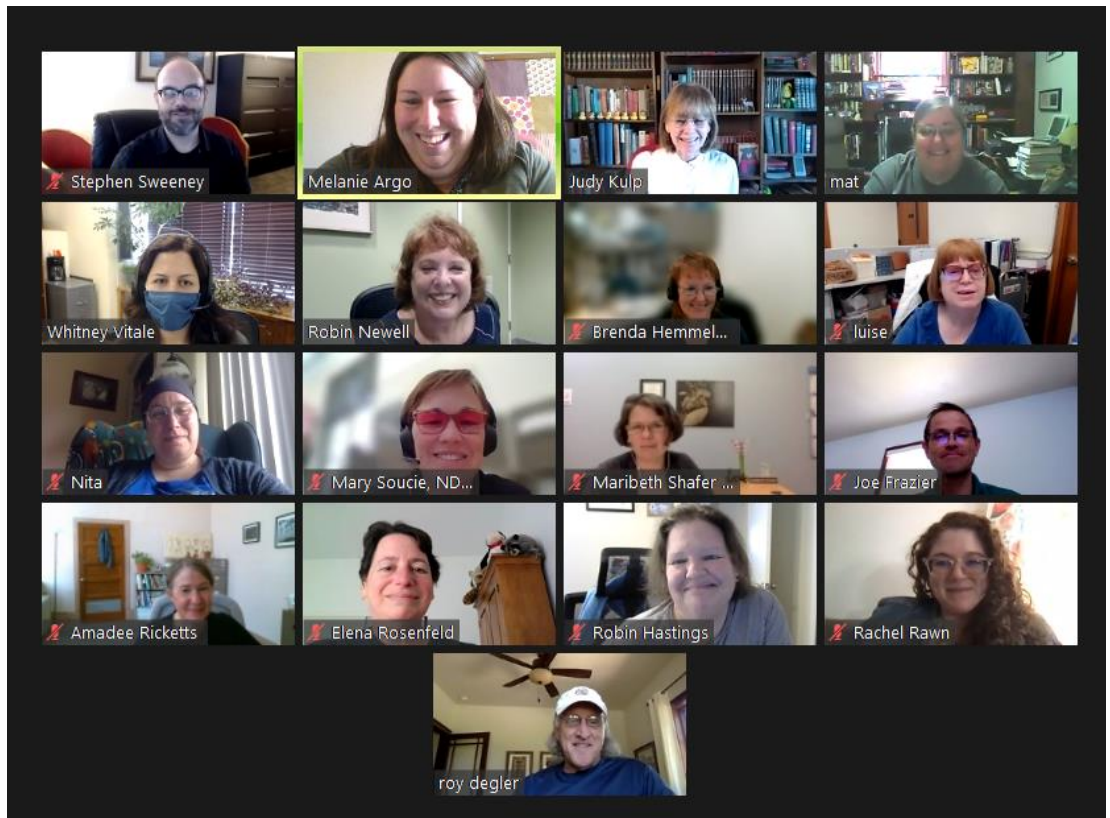


2020-2021 BOARD PHOTO ~ZOOM STYLE~

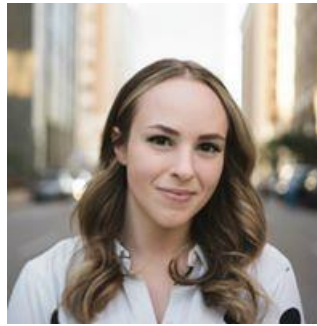


2021-2022 BOARD PHOTO ~ZOOM STYLE~

We thank Joe Frazier, outgoing Utah Rep, his service on the board and Welcome Sherrie Mortenson Children's Librarian at the Wasatch County Library



MPLA AWARD WINNERS



MPLA Beginning Professional Award is given to recognize a 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. This year's winner is Elizabeth Szkirpan from Tulsa, Oklahoma. As her nominator says, She has worked in the library field

since 2012 and has held a professional librarianship position since 2016 when she was hired at Tulsa Community College.

Elizabeth has been an active member in several library associations and she has been accepted to the MPLA 2020 leadership institute that will take place at some point. But, her

true passion is technical services, always trying to improve patron access to the collections. She has been part of several projects that highlight the importance of technical services and their tie to patron access.

The MPLA Innovator Award recognizes an up-and-coming individual or group in the MPLA region for a creative, inventive, trail-blazing project that has significance to the library community. This year's winner is Julie Erickson from Rapid City, South Dakota.



Her nominator tells us that Julie is truly a library innovator as evidenced in her leadership role in the development of the Reaching Out: Meeting the Needs of Rural School Librarian project. She recognized a professional development gap for school librarians who lacked opportunity due to geographic, financial, and organizational barriers. The three year project is funded by an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant and is a collaboration with the state libraries in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

The MPLA Literary Contribution Award is given to an author whose published writings have successfully furthered an understanding and appreciation of the Mountain Plains region. This year's winner is Linda M Hasselstrom from Hermosa, South Dakota. Linda moved to a ranch near Hermosa when she was nine years old. The move to the ranch as a child began her deep love of landscape that has shone throughout her work. Seven of her published books are about her ranch and her life, the first being published in 1987, *Windbreak: A Woman Rancher on the Northern Plains*. She also has 5 published books of poetry, her first, *Dakota Bones*, was published in 1993.



MPLA AWARD WINNERS



MPLA Dan Chaney Unsung Hero Award is given to a 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. In 2017 this award was renamed for Dan Chaney, a true unsung MPLA hero who we lost in 2016. We honor a friend, as well as a colleague, of Dan's with this year's award going to Mickey Coalwell.



Mickey is retired now but held several library positions including executive director of mid-america library alliance, regional director of library systems and services and library development consultant for the northeast Kansas library system.

Mickey has been a member of MPLA since 2005 and has held many positions during that time, including: Kansas Representative, recording secretary, administration committee member and chair, communications committee chair, task force on archives and preservation chair, vice-president, president, and past president as well as being a participant in the mpla leadership institute and then becoming a mentor for the institute. We are presently trying to create a new position for Mickey to fill. His dedication to MPLA is extraordinary, he is a cheerleader for the association and its members.

MPLA Distinguished Service Award is 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.



What do you call a person who has been a member of MPLA since 1981 and whose email address is librarylady52? You call her our distinguished service award winner, Paulette Nelson.

Paulette has been the children's librarian at the Minot public library for 40 years, retiring last may. She has contributed to the profession in a multitude of ways, but the best judge is the children whose lives she has touched. The children that remember storytime so vividly that they invite her to come to their high school graduations. Or the man who was in jail, but because Paulette taught him the dewey decimal system, he was able to be the librarian there and that was the best job in the place.

Paulette served as the North Dakota rep for many years for MPLA. As the North Dakota state librarian, Mary Soucie, remembers, Paulette has a passion for libraries, a sense of humor second to none and truly cares about her colleagues and her patrons. She shared ideas with colleagues, solicited information for the MPLA newsletter and highlighted the benefits of being a MPLA member at every opportunity and to anyone who would listen.

Led by lively hosts Jake Rundle and Mary Soucie, the informal discussions will occur every 4th Wednesday of the month. Advance registration is necessary with link below:



MPLA CHEW & CHAT

Mountain Plains Library Association “Chew & Chats”

When: 4th Wednesdays of each month.

1 PM Central time; Noon Mountain; 11 am Pacific.

Register in advance for this meeting at [https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAuc-6sqT0iGtbqUkVclDcjtIzmJuvf87D1](https://zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?jmtk=JmT0iGtbqUkVclDcjtIzmJuvf87D1)

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

Feel free to forward this information to others interested in MPLA.

Find us on 

MPLA on Facebook:

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



MPLA on Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/MPLAtweets>



MPLA on LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3041358/>

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Special Features



Amy Dobson, Director of Douglas County (NV) Public Library recipient of two ALA Affiliated Awards

2020 Downs Intellectual Freedom Award

For supporting the value and necessity of equity, diversity, and inclusion as a part of her library's mission and service, Amy Dodson has been named the 2020 recipient of the [Robert B. Downs Intellectual Freedom Award](#). The award is given annually by the faculty of the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and cosponsored by the Freedom to Read Foundation (FTRF), a nonprofit legal and educational organization affiliated with the American Library Association (ALA).

Dodson, director of the Douglas County (NV) Public Library, faced enormous public criticism last year for posting a diversity statement on the library's Facebook page that included the line, "We support #Black Lives Matter." The Douglas County sheriff equated this statement with the Black Lives Matter movement and perceived it as support for violence against law enforcement. He posted a letter on the sheriff office's Facebook page stating this and adding that library staff should no longer call 911 for help with disturbances.

The sheriff's letter led to national media coverage and protests in Douglas County, and Dodson was told to take down the diversity statement by county officials. Some of her most strident critics were members of the library's board of trustees, which voted to investigate Dodson's actions using \$30,000 of the library's budget to pay for a third-party investigation. The law firm conducting the investigation found that the library, Dodson, and her staff had not violated any laws or policies in introducing the diversity statement.

According to the letter of nomination, "Throughout the investigation, Dodson steadfastly supported the need for diversity initiatives while working to assure the safety and comfort of her staff."

The Robert B. Downs Intellectual Freedom Award acknowledges individuals or groups who have furthered the cause of intellectual freedom, particularly as it affects libraries and information centers and the dissemination of ideas. Each year, the recipient is recognized at the ALA Annual Conference. The award was established in 1969 by the iSchool's faculty to honor Robert Downs, a champion of intellectual freedom, on his twenty-fifth anniversary as director of the School.

2021 Paul Howard Award for Courage

The Paul Howard Award for Courage Jury is pleased to announce that Amy Dodson, director of the Douglas County Public Library (DCPL) in Nevada, is the recipient of the 2021 American Library Association (ALA) Paul Howard Award for Courage. The award, consisting of \$1,000 and a gold-framed citation, honors individuals who have exhibited courage for the benefit of library programs or services in the face of adversity.

Dodson and DCPL made national news in July 2020 after she and her staff drafted a statement of solidarity with #BlackLivesMatter – openly denouncing racism and racial inequality – and posted it to the library's social media. In response, the library began receiving negative messages and threats via mail, email and social media. Dodson also experienced backlash from local county agencies, including the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, which issued a letter threatening to withhold police protection from DCPL. Local supporters of Black Lives Matter came to Dodson's defense, peacefully protesting the statement issued by the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, and were met with an armed counterprotest.

- *continued on page 11*

Additionally, on Aug. 25, 2020, the DCPL Board of Trustees voted to spend up to \$30,000 on a third-party investigation into the actions of Dodson and her staff. That investigation exonerated Dodson of wrongdoing and concluded that she had not violated DCPL policy in drafting and posting the diversity statement.

For more information on these events, please see Lisa Peet's [article](#) published in Library Journal and Holly Eberle's [blog post](#) on the ALA Intellectual Freedom Blog.

Paul Howard defined courage as "the quality of mind which enables one to face adversity, difficulty, or danger with resolution and fortitude . . . it is that characteristic which enables librarians to seek the achievement of goals in spite of all opposing forces." Dodson rose to meet the challenges and threats of these opposing forces, while continuing to support and advocate for racial justice, equality, and the roles libraries play in developing both. As Jim DelRosso wrote in his nomination letter: "Amy Dodson faced months of adversity and danger with a steadfast commitment to her principles and to the goals set forth by her library. She has demonstrated rare and powerful courage.

Please join us in congratulating Amy Dodson as the 2021 recipient of the ALA Paul Howard Award for Courage. The award will be presented Sunday, June 27 during the American Library Association virtual Annual Conference.

More information about the Paul Howard Award for Courage Award, including how to submit a [nomination](#), is available on the ALA website (www.ala.org).



Join A Conversation about Acequia Irrigation Systems with Libraries in the Four Corners

Live Event Date: June 8, 2021 at 4pm Mountain Time

Location: We are Water [Facebook book page](#)

Host: Eric Gordon

Guest: Eugene Jacquez, a local acequia farmer in Chama, Colorado and community leader

Book: *Enduring Acequias* Wisdom of the Land, Knowledge of the Water by Juan Estevan Arellano

Join the Aztec, High Plains, and Pine River libraries as they partner with the *We are Water project team* who is hosting a conversation on their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WeAreWaterSW to learn more about the traditional acequia irrigation systems and their importance to communities and families in the Four Corners.

These traditional systems are still in use and, with an anticipated year of extreme drought, critical for local farmers. Clean-up of the systems are already starting in New Mexico as reported by the [Albuquerque Journal](#) on April 23, 2021. Take some time this June to learn about acequias through the eyes of farmer Eugene Jacquez from Chama, Colorado and learn more about the book [Enduring Acequias](#) by Juan Estevan Arellano.

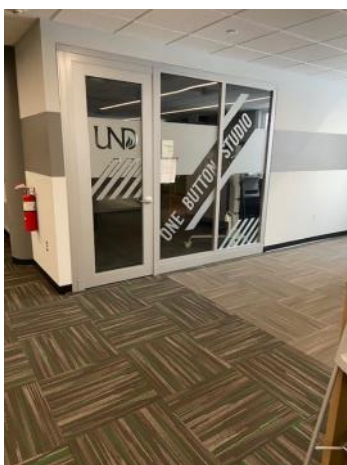
Want to delve into the subject right now? Check out this videos on how acequia irrigation systems are an important part of history, communities, and families in Southern Colorado by watching this video brought to you by the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association, <https://wearewater.colorado.edu/stories/videos/el-aqua-es-vida-acequia-communities-southern-colorado>. El agua es vida!

With support from rural communities and their libraries We are Water creates a place to meet and share stories about water, and explore and learn about water together. <https://wearewater.colorado.edu>

Special Features

Completed Chester Fritz Library Renovation

The University of North Dakota's Chester Fritz Library has long been the largest library in the State of ND, but in recent years, as higher education changed and evolved, its physical space had lagged a little behind. Now, all that has changed, with the completion of a renovation that is nothing short of transformational! The building was originally built in 1959, and an addition was constructed in 1981 to hold growing collections. In April 2015, the architectural firm Stantec, which has extensive expertise in academic libraries, began a series of campus visits to learn what UND faculty, staff, and students needed and wanted in a library. In September 2015, Stephanie Walker, UND's first Dean of Libraries & Information Resources, was hired, and began working hard on moving renovation planning forward, among other projects. In October 2016, the first "mini-renovation" was unveiled, with upgrades to the Reference area, new furniture (that students helped select), and a newly redesigned computer area.



Changes began coming thick and fast thereafter. In 2017, a One Button Studio was added; aside from coffee and more electrical outlets, a recording studio was students' #1 request. In November 2018, Hallett movers came to box up print periodicals and government documents and move them to temporary storage, and renovation began in earnest.

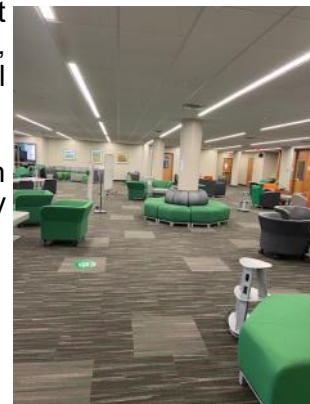
A Strategic Plan was also completed in late 2018, and you can see photos of the Library before renovations, at <https://library.und.edu/about/files/docs/cfl-strategic-plan2019.pdf>. In July 2019, University IT moved into the ground floor, centralizing library and technology services for the entire campus. The Writing Center moved to the 3rd floor in March 2020, adding to the centralized services. A new Knowledge Commons offers an "Academic One Stop" of services, including library services, IT, Writing Center, data support, Peer Research Consultants, and a "perch" for periodic offering of other campus academic services, e.g. Career

Services, Orientation, and others will all offer services via the Knowledge Commons at various times, as needed.

In 2020, another partnership opportunity arose, and Dean Walker, working with Aaron Bergstrom, Advanced Cyberinfrastructure Manager in the Office of the VP of Research & Human Development, planned and created a multi-use Artificial Intelligence/Virtual Reality Lab, that also offers facilities for student and faculty research and collaboration. Now, Chester Fritz Library's major renovations are officially complete! A first "welcome" video has been created, at <https://vimeo.com/499780603>, though it was a bit early – more features have been added since, and a new video will be shot in summer, when the beautiful new landscaping can also be showcased.



A Grand Opening is planned for Homecoming Week, in October 2021, tentatively scheduled for October 22. Stay tuned for more news!



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**

Link your loyalty card to MPLA to continue raising funds for MPLA's professional development, leadership, and educational programs!

SUPPORT MPLA!



Cards Are Accepted By

- Kroger
- 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
- Fred Meyer jewelers
- Littman & Barclay Jewelers
- Loaf and Jug

Around the Region

AZ ARIZONA



Mural Tribute to Books and Nature

In April, Pima County Public Library's Kirk-Bear Canyon Library welcomed a new 800-square-foot mural by Tucson artist Joe Pagac. The mural offers a whimsical tribute to books and nature, with fluffy clouds and desert animals cheerfully mixing with unicorns and storybook images. Read more about the new mural, and check out some great pictures, [here](#).

Libraries are for Everyone!

Staff members Mala Muralidharan and Nicole Umayam, from the Arizona State Library, put together a [short video](#) explaining how libraries can help community members sign up for the Emergency Broadband Benefit. The State Library is also a partner in the [Connect Arizona project](#), which helps Arizona residents find free and affordable internet access, and offers one-on-one help from library staff trained as [Digital Navigators](#).



Moving on Up

MPLA member Stephanie Fulton is the new Director of Library and Community Services at the Huachuca City Public Library, after spending six years as Branch Manager of the Cochise County Library District branch in Elfrida. The library in Huachuca City is already a busy community hub, and Stephanie has big plans to build on that success. Congratulations, Stephanie!



Big Horizons, Close Community



CO COLORADO

Finalists for the 30th Annual Colorado Book Awards

The Colorado Book Awards is an annual celebration of Colorado's authors, editors, illustrators, and photographers. Of the 190 entries, finalists were announced in 17 categories: anthology, biography, history, historical fiction, juvenile literature, literary fiction, mystery, pictorial, poetry, romance, science fiction/fantasy, thriller, and young adult literature. The Colorado Book Award Winners will be announced on June 26th. To see the list of finalists and register for the award event, just [follow this link](#).



Building Connections through Bad Art

The **Lyons Community Library** connected community members to the [Museum of Bad Art](#) (MOBA) which has built a collection of art that is too bad to be ignored. Program attendees enjoyed a Zoom program hosted by Louise Reilly Sacco, MOBA's Permanent Acting Interim Executive Director; Those of us interested in learning more can check MOBA's curator talk, [Museum of Bad Art 101](#) on YouTube.

Finding Connections in the Family Tree

Meanwhile, the **Denver Public Library**, **High Plains Library District** and **Pikes Peak Library District** have been helping people connect with their family trees. While the Denver Public Library focuses on leveraging DNA results in genealogical research, the High Plains program connects Nancy Drew's detecting skills to research techniques. The Pikes Peak's program helps attendees avoid mistakes that may lead researchers in the wrong direction.



KS KANSAS

Hiawatha StoryWalk

The Morrill Public Library, in Hiawatha, Kansas kicked off their StoryWalk project — just in time for the Big Kansas Road Trip. Library Director Erin Verbick announced this newest project that is an interactive reading experience like never before — a Hiawatha StoryWalk! She said anyone participating can read along with the story "Is Your Mama a Llama?" written by Deborah Guarino and illustrated by Steven Kellogg, and answer fun questions along their way around Hiawatha.

Those interested can go to hiawathalibrary.org/storywalk to find the business directory and even print out a personal challenge booklet that has all the same questions and activities posted on each business window.

The StoryWalk Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, Vermont and developed in collaboration with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library. StoryWalk is a registered service mark owned by Ms. Ferguson.

Business Directory for StoryWalk® Stops

1. Thrivent Financial | 523 Oregon
2. Horizon Mental Health | 120 N 6th
3. Citizens Bank Main Branch | 610 Oregon
4. Tice Health Mart | 618 Oregon
5. Just For You Jewelry & Gifts | 620 Oregon
6. Heartland Realty | 720 Oregon
7. Rainbow Communications | 628 Oregon
8. RehabVisions Hiawatha | 819 Oregon
9. Rogue Street Tacos | 715 Oregon
10. Halbert Law | 112 S 7th
11. Hiawatha World | 607 Utah
12. Wisdom CPA | 201 S 6th

Your last stop will be at the library!
13. Morrill Public Library | 431 Oregon



Fully Online Degree Opportunity

Dear fellow librarians,

Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Management (SLIM) has been providing an ALA-accredited Master of Library Science (MLS) program in a hybrid format since 1988. Faculty would travel to our regional locations for weekend class intensives twice a semester and our regional directors served as academic advisors. This high-quality learning experience brought in-person learning to many states for decades. However, due to COVID-19 and travel restrictions, SLIM has had to pivot to a fully online model with virtual weekend classes. During the pandemic, our faculty has continued to deliver the same high quality of instruction as was possible during the pre-COVID era and we have decided to offer this fully online program starting this fall.

Our new fully online MLS program will offer convenience and affordability with a total cost of about \$19,000 for the whole degree. Most of our students complete the 36 credit hour program in 2 years by taking 6 credits a semester while working full time. ESU and SLIM offer high-impact learning and generous scholarship opportunities to support our students during and after their education.

We are currently admitting students for the Fall 2021 semester. For more information, please visit our application page at <https://www.emporia.edu/school-library-and-information-management/admissions-costs-scholarships/admissions-process/applying-master-library-science/> or contact us at sliminfo@emporia.edu.

Sincerely,
Wooseob Jeong
Dean, SLIM



Author Membership

Published authors, including those who write for children and young adults are eligible. Author membership includes a credit which can be used toward an advertisement or combination of advertisements in the MPLA Newsletter.



In Gratitude to Lois Dissly

Lois Dissly is retiring. Those few words carry a huge impact. Lois Dissly, a Cascade native, joined the Bozeman Public Library staff in 1982 as the Head of the Children's Department at the Lamme Street location. After ten years working at BPL, Lois was awarded a 10K grant to attend Library School at Emporia College and earned her Master's degree in Library Science there. Upon rejoining the Library staff as head of Technical Services, Lois oversaw the transformation from a computer-less, not one trace of internet, paper card catalog to the Library we all enjoy today. Among the dozens of accomplishments and projects Lois has overseen are the InterLibrary Loan service, the Collection Management of circulating materials, the shift to streaming materials and content, the Library Volunteers program, and the social media and webpage, as well as the first shared catalog in the entire state and Gallatin County. Lois served as PLD Chair, Chair of the Tech Services Interest Group and – a record no one will ever break – co-chair of the MLA conference. Twice.

MSU Library offers new podcast series inspired by Ivan Doig

A new podcast series inspired by famed Montana author Ivan Doig and offered by the Montana State University [Library](#) is now available to the public.

The podcast series, called "The Wind from Eden: Montana Weather Stories," explores how weather shaped the history, culture and literature of central Montana. The episodes include interviews with residents of Meagher and Pondera counties and uses the writings of Doig as a literary lens through which to view these conditions.

The project was funded with a grant from Humanities Montana. MSU Library partnered with Jeff Rice, who edited, produced, and hosted the series. Rice is an independent radio producer whose stories have appeared on NPR's "All Things Considered," "Here and Now" and "The Best of NPR." He is also the program director at the library's [Acoustic Atlas](#), a collection of natural sound recordings from Montana and the western U.S.

The episodes range from five to 15 minutes in length and explore the history of ranching in the region known informally as "Doig Country," touching on the fierce weather conditions during the early to mid-20th century. The first five episodes address the weather-related themes of wind, extreme cold, isolation, spring rebirth and the celebration of summer.

"For Montanans along the Rocky Mountain Front, weather was a factor during every season," said Rice. "The area's brutal winters made travel difficult and often separated families. By contrast, warm or sweltering summers were a period of celebration but brought challenges such as thunderstorms, fire and hazards for livestock."

To enhance the interviews, Rice also spoke with meteorologists, historians and literary scholars. Doig's widow, Carol Doig, was an adviser to the series.

"We're pleased to work with Jeff on the podcast series," said Kenning Arlitsch, dean of MSU Library. "By capturing these stories, we are able to preserve historic information about Montana's rapidly changing ranching culture."

The podcast is available at ivandoig.montana.edu/projects/sounds/, all major podcasting platforms, and Public Radio Exchange (PRX), allowing for potential broadcast on radio programs throughout Montana and beyond. Audio from the podcasts is also included in MSU Library's Ivan Doig Writer's Quest Traveling Trunks, a learning experience designed to introduce students to the works of Doig and available for loan to 7th through 12th grade teachers throughout Montana.

Doig, who died in 2015, grew up in White Sulphur Springs and Dupuyer and set the majority of his 16 books in the Big Sky State. His first book, "This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind," a poetic memoir published in 1979, was a finalist for the National Book Award. Doig then turned to writing fiction that perennially hit bestseller lists. Carol Doig [donated his archive](#) to MSU Library in 2015.

The Ivan Doig Archive can be accessed at ivan-doig.montana.edu/.

Happy Spring from the Schmid Law Library!

By Keelan Weber, Head of Cataloging and Resource Management
Lincoln, NE

This year we are celebrating our colleagues and the books they love with our monthly display titled, "We Love Books!" Every month we feature three people (staff, faculty, and administrators) and four of their favorite books, no explanation required. There's been a mix of all time favorites and current favorites but overall, no shortage of great books to explore. To make the display available to those working remotely as well as in person, we've created a [LibGuide](#) to go along with the physical display. Highlights of the displays include "grab slips" that a passersby can take with a list of books and authors, and a QR code that leads to the [LibGuide](#). The LibGuide contains every month's book lists.



Earth Day Display

Cathy Kaus, Chadron Middle School
Chadron, NE

Prior to Earth Day, Chadron Middle School Library paraprofessional, Maria Wollesen, created a beautiful springtime book display. She then started collecting trash from the school grounds. The week of Earth Day she placed the trash on the display. The students inquired where all the trash came from and were astonished when she said it was trash from the school. The "found" lunch container asking "How about saving your part of the earth?" provided a meaningful message. There was also a display about ocean pollution. The week after Earth Day, the students "cleaned" the display by removing trash and placing it in proper recycle bins.



Book Vending Machine

Located at Governor Bent Elementary, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Inchy's Bookworm Vending Machine lets students buy a book using gold coins they earn by reading outside of school. To earn a coin students need to read 20 minutes a day for 20 days, totaling 400 minutes. The machine is the first of its kind in the state and was purchased with proceeds from school book fairs.

For more information and to see the short news story see the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZ8l_DiPX9s

Let's Explore Backpacks

Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, in Las Cruces, NM, is pleased to offer new kits available for checkout called Let's Explore backpacks. Let's Explore backpacks were made available Monday, April 19th.

The Let's Explore backpacks encourage families to explore the Mesilla Valley's precious outdoor resources. The backpacks are geared toward youth, ages K-5, and each highlights a different park in the region. Let's Explore backpacks include maps, books, activity tools, and first aid supplies. Parks featured in these kits include Organ Mountains National Monument, Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, White Sands National Park, Prehistoric Trackways National Monument, Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park, and the Night Sky.



The Let's Explore backpacks are available for check-out on a library card and can be kept for 3 weeks. The backpacks may also be placed on hold (just like books and DVDs) using your library card. Let's Explore backpacks include a checklist to ensure kit contents are accounted for and a pricelist for replacing elements of the kit if lost.

For more information or to register for the program, contact the Children's Department at (575) 528-4225 or library.childrens@las-cruces.org.



National Community Science Grant

The Carson City Library in Carson City, NV was one of 15 libraries selected nationwide for a Network of the National Library of Medicine (NNLM) Community Science Month Mini Award. This \$5000 mini grant was used to purchase supplies for Community Science backpacks that can be checked out for use in the Library's Secret Garden outdoor space. Backpacks include binoculars, a magnifying glass, bug catching tools, a mini iPad with pre-loaded community science apps, a local wildlife guide, and more! Community science books were also integrated into the collection and weekly themed virtual storytimes were facilitated throughout the month of April. Learn more about the project [here](#).



Message from Kevin Watson, New Executive Director of the largest library system in Nevada

Libraries are America's most democratic institutions. We provide our communities with free access to accurate information and technology and a forum where we can exchange ideas and opinions, take part in our democracy, and improve the quality of life for all.

I am a great believer in the transformative power of libraries, which, by their very nature, embrace and promote equity, diversity, and inclusion. Throughout the challenges we have faced as a country over the past year, libraries have remained a beacon of hope and normalcy. Through our doors, on our websites, and in conversations on social media, Nevada's libraries have helped to hold our neighborhoods and families together by providing a place of refuge, entertainment, escape, and lifelong learning opportunities, a place where knowledge and truth are valued and celebrated.

We could not achieve all of this without the people who make it possible – our dedicated library employees.



Library workers have always been on the frontline of community service, but beginning in March of 2020, this role was heightened like never before due to COVID-19. I want to take this opportunity to thank our dedicated library employees across the entire state of Nevada for your fortitude during this crisis.

As we all did during this time, the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District closely followed the governor's mandate to close our doors. However, thanks to our robust website at LVCCLD.org, we remained open 24/7, providing access to free digital resources, information about free community services, and hundreds of timely book lists and other recommendations compiled by staff. We also established a Curbside To Go service that gave customers that human touch while remaining safely distanced. We look forward to opening our buildings to full capacity on June 1 and will continue to reinforce a "clean and safe" message.

It is an honor to have been named executive director of this strong and vital library system. Our 25 branches cover 8,000 square miles across Clark County, offering 3.1 million items for circulation to more than 600,000 active cardholders. In my visits, I have seen how our buildings play a pivotal role as community gathering places, in spite of the challenges that the pandemic has presented. This is the solid foundation that I have already begun to build upon.

During the past few months, as I have been getting to know the beautiful state of Nevada and Clark County specifically, I have already started conversations with community stakeholders about some unique ideas that were successful in my previous leadership roles at Broward County Libraries Division in Florida and Queens Borough Library in New York. To learn more about my career journey, please go [here](#).

Thank you for giving me this time to introduce myself and share my perspective. What drew me to this profession was my unwavering belief that libraries can create **a future where equity, diversity, and inclusion are achieved through technology and innovation**. I am honored to be leading the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District into that future, and I look forward to working with all of you.

Kelvin Watson
Executive Director
Las Vegas-Clark County Library District

Promotion in Information Services

In January, Tonya Palmer became Grand Forks Public Library's new Information Services Supervisor. Tonya has nearly 17 years of experience at Grand Forks Public, with steadily increasing responsibility, peer mentoring and training experience, and excellent problem-solving and people skills.



Library Director Wendy Wendt shares, "Tonya brings a positive, can-do attitude to everything she does and has the trust of everyone who works with her."

In the early 2000s, Tonya volunteered at the library before joining the team in 2004. She worked in the then-Reference department as an aide, and then as an associate. When the Reference and Circulation departments combined in 2018, she became an Information Services Senior Associate. Through the years, Tonya has worn a variety of hats, including publishing a library newsletter, planning events, teaching computer classes, ordering books and music, and troubleshooting our computer system.

When asked what she's most excited about in this role, Tonya shares, "Trying out new ideas, both mine and my coworkers'. I want to see what the library will become, and I want to be a part of it."

Outside of work, Tonya enjoys reading (of course!), writing, and crafting. She is also working on learning a second language. Congratulations, Tonya!

Research Grant Award

The Government Documents Round Table (GODORT) of the American Library Association has announced Susanne Caro, government information librarian, Main Library, North Dakota State University, will receive the NewsBank/Readex/GODORT/ALA Catharine J. Reynolds Research Grant. The grant will further Caro's valuable research into identifying at-risk items in microform collections. This will make a valuable contribution to the library community as a whole, not only to the field of government documents. As many libraries have extensive microform collections,



identifying deterioration is vital to prioritizing digitization. Having a more accurate means of identifying at risk items can also prevent the premature discarding of items as well.

The Bismarck Library Foundation, Inc. hires Beth Schatz Kaylor as Executive Director

The Bismarck Library Foundation, Inc. has recently hired Beth Schatz Kaylor as their Executive Director. Kaylor will be responsible for



developing the Foundation's donor base and growing the level of support for Foundation operations, special projects, and their endowment, currently at \$1.7 million.

"I'm very excited to step into this role leading the Bismarck Library Foundation. The work of the Foundation and its generous donors has been integral to ensuring our dynamic Library continues to evolve with our growing community and ever-changing technology," said Kaylor. "I look forward to working with the Foundation Board, Library staff, and our donor partners to ensure our Library is a vibrant, welcoming place for years to come."

As a life-long patron of the Library, Kaylor brings to this position valuable knowledge and experience with marketing, public relations, editing, and communication. She studied at the University of North Dakota, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Studies with an emphasis on business and Spanish. Kaylor served as the Chief Operating Officer and Account Manager at Agency MABU here in Bismarck. She will continue her work as an independent consultant for marketing and strategic planning.

Kaylor served on the Friends of the Bismarck Public Library Board as a board member, Vice President, and President for six years beginning in 2011. She recently served as President of the BisMan Community Food Co-op board.

Virtual Library Advocacy Day

The 2021 Virtual Library Advocacy Day took place on Friday, April 9th. The event was sponsored by the OLA Advocacy Committee and featured a moderated panel of legislators led by OLA Advocacy Chair Aiden Street.

Library staff from across the state joined the virtual event to hear remarks and ask questions of the panel. Lisa Wells, Pioneer Library System Executive Director, began the event with an update on the ALA Virtual Advocacy Fly-In activities with the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation.



Featured legislative speakers were:

- Senator Kevin Matthews (D-Tulsa), Chair of the Oklahoma Legislative Black Caucus, Chair of the Democratic Caucus, and member of the following committees: Appropriations, Government and Transportation, Public Safety, Retirement and Insurance, Transportation, and the Select Committee on Redistricting
- Senator Brenda Stanley (R-Midwest City), Vice Chair of Veterans and Military Affairs and member of the Education, Retirement, and Insurance Committees
- Representative Toni Hasenbeck (R-Elgin), who serves as the Vice Chair of Public Health, Vice Chair of the State and Federal Redistricting Southwest Oklahoma Subcommittee, and on the Administrative Rules, A&B Transportation, and Higher Education and Career Tech Committees

The panelists shared their personal library stories, spoke about the role of the library in their communities, discussed civic engagement, and addressed the impact of broadband access on schools and business in Oklahoma. Street also asked the panelists to discuss factors that impact funding decisions and to share tips about forming working relationships with legislators both in and out of session. Video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vP2rwHyLcxg>

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- Fred Meyer jewelers
- Littman & Barclay Jewelers
- Loaf and Jug



New Digital Inclusion Program

The Southern Oklahoma Library System (SOLS) was recently featured in both Library Journal and American Libraries magazine for the Digital Inclusion project that they have implemented in the past year. This program was made possible by a \$12,100 CARES Act grant which allowed SOLS to purchase hotspots for patron check out and outfit a library van to create a digital bookmobile. This bookmobile makes weekly visits to rural communities within the SOLS service area who do not currently have direct access to a library branch. Below is an excerpt of the article in American Libraries in which SOLS was featured:

Before the pandemic, 50% of residents served by the five-county Southern Oklahoma Library System (SOLS) didn't have access to a library branch, and 36% of the system's rural residents lacked broadband internet at home. But with school and library closures brought on by COVID-19, SOLS Executive Director Gail Oehler believes access to digital devices and broadband internet has gotten even worse.

The 990-square-mile Atoka County, for example, has only one library branch. "The people who live in rural areas lack the ability to get Wi-Fi because there is no cellular service or because of their low economic status," says Oehler. Like many libraries nationwide, SOLS has seen the digital divide exacerbated at a time when adults urgently need internet access to apply for jobs or government assistance and children require it for remote learning and homework.

In August 2020, SOLS received a \$12,100 grant from the federal CARES Act, which was distributed by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. The library system used the money to convert a library van to a Wi-Fi hotspot. By November, two staff members began taking the van out every Friday and making three community stops lasting up to two hours each. The van also has computers and a small number of books, and staff members can issue library cards.

"By having access to [Wi-Fi] in these rural communities, we are living up to the American Library Association's [code of ethics]," says Oehler. The number of residents who show up for the Wi-Fi van in rural locations might be small by city standards, she acknowledges. "In a very rural community, having 11 people is a very big deal."



The Prairie Awards

The Prairie Awards, the South Dakota children’s book awards, were announced during National Library Week in April. Prairie Bud winners are determined by pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade students. Prairie Bloom winners are determined by second and third grade students. Prairie Pasque winners are determined by fourth and fifth grade students. This year, the Prairie Bud award was given to *Tiger Vs. Nightmare* by Emily Tetri. The Prairie Bloom award was given to *The Epic Adventures of Huggie & Stick* by Drew Daywalt, and the Prairie Pasque award was given to *Bob* by Wendy Mass.



New Card Design

Siouxland Libraries let their patrons vote on new library card designs. 2,600 votes were cast and the four highest voted designs became their new official library card.



Peeps Diorama Contest

The Rapid City Public Library held their 6th annual Peeps Diorama Contest. The library provided Peeps for patrons to make a scene of a favorite book or author or animal story. The dioramas were posted on Facebook for people to vote and three winners were picked – one for People’s Choice, a winner of the library’s choice, and a winner for best animal themed diorama.



ALA Grant Winners!

Two libraries in South Dakota are recipients of the ALA Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries grant. The Briggs Library at South Dakota State University is tying this grant into SDSU’s 2021 Common Read program. The Common Read Committee partners with the Brookings Human Rights Commission and other campus and community groups to sponsor and support Common Read events on the SDSU campus and within the Brookings community. The Common Read selection for 2021 is *What the Eyes Don’t See* by Mona Hanna-Attisha. The Grant County Library in Milbank received the second grant.



Utah Film Festival

The Orem Public Library hosted the 10th annual Utah Film Festival in the Library Hall. The three-day festival showcased award-winning films from all over the world, as well as from some of Utah's finest filmmakers. The festival will take place on April 8, 9, and 10, from 12 to 9 PM in the Library Hall's Ashton Auditorium. More information, including the complete schedule of screenings, film synopses, trailers, production information, and award nominations, may all be found at <https://www.theutahfilmawards.com/>. The Utah Film Festival is



free and open to the public, but tickets are required for each screening. Each screening is limited to 100 people and masks are required. A [stand-by list](#) is available for certain film screenings.



UW Libraries to Partner in \$10 Million National Library of Medicine Cooperative Agreement

University of Wyoming Libraries will partner with the [Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library](#) (EHSL) at the University of Utah to implement a five-year, \$10 million cooperative agreement from the National Library of Medicine (NLM).



The award solidifies EHSL's national distinction as a regional medical library (RML), one of only seven in the nation. Since 2001, EHSL has served as the RML for Region 4, which encompasses Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. UW Libraries will serve as a subsite, continuing its 20-year support of the RML program.

The renewed cooperative agreement will focus on improving access to quality health information, giving special attention to underserved communities.

"We are thrilled to continue our long-term participation in supporting increased access to health information for the citizens of Wyoming and the region," says Cass Kvenild, associate dean of UW Libraries.

Regional and national programs will be implemented to support the NLM's mission to provide researchers, health professionals, educators, and the public with equal access to biomedical and health information resources and data. These efforts will include training, funding, and engagement opportunities for member libraries and other organizations to carry out regional and national programs.

As a subsite, UW Libraries will assist with all of these initiatives, with a special focus on Wyoming, North Dakota and South Dakota.

David Brown, an assistant librarian at UW Libraries, will serve as a public health engagement specialist for the region. "This is an exciting time for the NLM as the regions are changing, and the desire for health information is at an all-time high due to the COVID-19 pandemic," Brown says. "Also, this is a great opportunity to work with similar states to enhance the health information access in the region."

For more information about the cooperative agreement and the other institutions selected, go to www.nlm.nih.gov.



Welcome, New Members!



Name	Title	Institution/Library Name	City & State
Anna Szczepanski	Western Regional Consultant	Colorado Library Consortium	Centennial, CO
Cari Cusick	Director	Newton Public Library	Newton, KS
Christopher Cunningham	Materials Handler in Collection Services Department	Imaginelf Libraries-Kalispell	Kalispell, MT
David Darby	Trustee	Billings Parmley Library	Billings, MT
Debbie Stewart		Great Falls Public Library	Great Falls, MT
Eric Green	Consultant	Southeast Kansas Library System	Iola, KS
Sara Koehn	Director	Haskell Township Library	Sublette, KS
Jennifer Neset	School Library Media Specialist	Stanley Community School District	Stanley, ND
Jo Ann Eisenzimer	Trustee	Wedsworth Memorial Library	Cascade, MT
Karen Ketchu	Director	Madison Valley Public Library	Ennis, MT
Ken Adams	Retired	Montana State Library/Montana	Montana
Melissa Emo	Library Assistant	Emporia Public Library	Emporia, KS
Sara Linder-Parkinson	Public Services Librarian	Great Falls Public Library	Great Falls, MT
Shander Bawden	Founder	The Children's Collection	Albuquerque, NM
Stacey Craig	Assistant Librarian	Bicentennial Library (Colstrip)	Colstrip, MT
Sydney Tallman	Technical Services Librarian	Montana State Law Library	Helena, MT
Valerie Landeraaen	Library Director	Daniels County Library	Scobey, MT
Wendy Moulton	Director	Abilene Public Library	Abilene, KS



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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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