



**MOUNTAIN PLAINS
LIBRARY ASSOCIATION**

Newsletter

Big Horizons, Close Community

February–March 2025

mpla.us

Vol. 70 Number 1

From the Desk of the President

Welcome to 2025! I write this as the year is ticking over, and I'm looking forward to some really exciting new developments at MPLA and in our libraries. Unfortunately, I'm also looking forward to some unpleasant developments in our state, and possibly national, legislatures. South Dakota has already experienced an unpleasant reduction in budget that will, essentially, remove all staff, all databases, and all services – except those to the blind – from citizens of South Dakota. Other states are looking at other bits of legislation that might harm libraries in those states as well. One thing I'd like to focus on this year is advocacy for our member libraries. Letters and informational campaigns about the issues facing libraries in our 12 member states will be something that MPLA should be prepared to produce this year. The vast majority of the populace is happy with their library and is very much interested in keeping it around, with all of its services intact, but if they don't know about the threats, they can't tell their local legislators how they feel. One thing we might be able to do as an organization is make sure the local libraries are aware and have the tools they need to educate their patrons.

The membership software changeover is complete and it went over with few hitches – not completely smooth, but not too wrinkled, either! There is more info on the new software, how to log in and even more information coming on our [Facebook page](#). Follow it for updates and information on how to use the new features!

As always, if you have any questions about MPLA or want to learn more about any of our activities, please feel free to join us at a Chew & Chat (the fourth Wednesday of each month) or send me an email at president@mpla.us.

Robin Hastings
president@mpla.us



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FYI: Images and text in this newsletter are linked. Click to visit associated websites.



Announcements & More

MPLA Elections – Summer 2025

Our next election will take place this coming summer of 2025, and the individual selected for this prestigious position of Vice President will be announced before the tri-conference with NDLA and SDLA.

The term of service is three years, encompassing the roles of VP, President, and Past President. As a former VP, I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about the position.

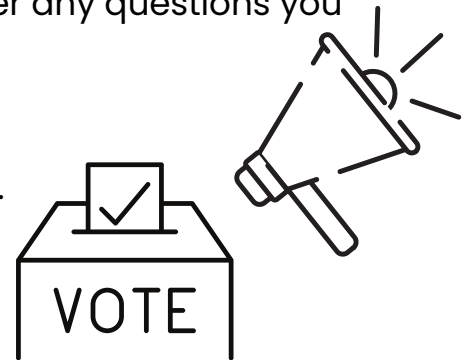
[View all requirements Here](#)

Contact membership@mpla.us for more information.

Brenda Hammelman

Nominating Committee Chair

MPLA President 2022–2023



Book Year in Review

You've seen them everywhere, Year in Review posts everyone is covering their favorites from 2024 including goals, playlists, food, travel, and even books. Why could it be helpful for a library to create a Year in Review of Books?

- A Library's Year in Review can spotlight standout books and literary trends from the past year.
- Highlights diverse voices and underrepresented stories.
- Strengthens community connections through shared literary experiences.
- Helps readers discover new genres and ideas, enriching their love for books.

These are just a few reasons why you might want to consider highlighting your library's most popular books. You could change it up and do a genre review, most listened to item, Database year end spotlight, or find the items that circulated for the first time in a long time.

NPR created a list of 351 "Books We Loved" from 2024, [you can view them here.](#)



ARIZONA

Library Program Offers Vital Resources and Support

The Our Space program at Tucson's Joel D. Valdez Main Library offers vital resources to houseless community members twice a month. Led by Jessica Miesner and the Vulnerable Populations Team, it connects participants with healthcare, housing support, and services through partnerships



with organizations like El Rio nurses and Primavera Foundation. Over a year, the team has built strong partnerships, transforming the library into a supportive hub for vulnerable populations. Library leadership praises the team's dedication and highlights the collaborative efforts that drive meaningful community change. [Click here to find more events like this on the Pima County Public Library Events Page.](#)

COLORADO

Year in Review of Digital Repository Publications

Colorado State Library created a year in review of their most popular items used from the Digital Repository. Colorado's Digital Repository houses thousands of state published documents which are available to anyone, anywhere. The top 5 viewed publications included:

- [Dominguez-Escalante Trail bicentennial interpretive master plan and final report](#) (The Dominguez-Escalante State/Federal Bicentennial Commission, 1976)
- [Colorado universal preschool recommendations](#) (Colorado Department of Early Childhood, 2022)
- [Fertilizing potatoes](#) (Colorado State University Extension, 2014)

To see the complete Top 5, along with more publications of interest you can [click here.](#)



Around the Region

KANSAS

Librarian of the Year – Tonya Foster

“So many people don’t know the true value of libraries... [they are] an incredibly safe place to go and find what you need. There are people there that can help you.” said Tonya Foster, librarian at Topeka High School, Topeka USD 501, and latest Kansas Librarian of the Year.

[Read more about the Librarian of the Year on the Kansas State Department of Education.](#)



MONTANA

Special Projects Focused on Resource Sharing and Advocacy

Montanans for Libraries, a project of the Montana Library Association, highlights the importance of statewide resource sharing and advocates for supportive legislation. Their goal is to improve access to shared collections for K-12 and homeschool students while reducing wait times for e-books and audiobooks. They believe that collaboration among libraries is key to ensuring equitable access to knowledge for all Montanans.

[Click here to learn more about Montanans for Libraries.](#)



2025 Historical Picture Prompt Short Story Contest

The Montana History Portal is hosting the 5th Annual Historical Picture Prompt contest. Using any [photo in the Portal collection](#) as a story prompt participants will write a fictional short story (650 words or less) and enter through our [submission form](#) beginning January 6, 2025. Winners will be chosen from grades 3-6, grades 7-12, and adult. The deadline to enter is February 21, 2025.

This Information was found from the [Montana History Portal](#) which offers weekly updates and navigation tips through its Highlights newsletter, with back issues available on the website's ["Highlights"](#) section.





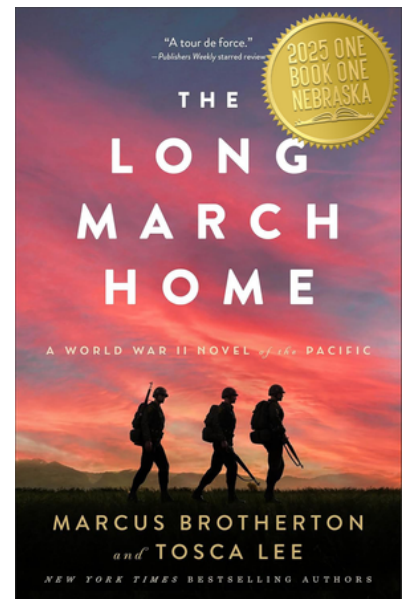
Around the Region



NEBRASKA

Dive into a Captivating Story with Nebraska Readers

The new year is here, and with it comes the official launch of this year's [#OneBookOneNebraska!](#) Nebraska library-goers can grab a copy of Marcus Brotherton and Tosca Lee's novel "The Long March Home: A World War II Novel of the Pacific" to participate in the 2025 One Book One Nebraska! [Learn more about both the book and the program on this website](#)



NEW MEXICO

Libraries are in the Legislature

House Bill 123 (HB123) is a 2025 bill in the New Mexico Legislature that aims to prevent the banning of public library materials: The bill mandates that public libraries must adopt a policy aligned with the American Library Association Bill of Rights to receive state funds. It prohibits the removal or banning of materials based on ideology or the author's race, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, or political or religious views. [You can read the House Bill Here.](#)



[You can find out more about New Mexico Library Related Laws on the State Library website.](#) This information provided on the State Library Website is a convenience and for informational purposes only.



NEVADA

Local Treasures and New Flavors at Silver Stage Library

At Silver Stage Library, creativity and community flourish through two programs:

- **Spice Club:** Introduces a monthly spice with packets, history, recipes, and a community cookbook initiative, encouraging culinary sharing and intergenerational dialogue, supported by a food pantry.
- **Rock of the Month:** Showcases a local rock each month for families, providing pamphlets on its characteristics and collection sites to promote exploration and bonding.



Both programs reflect the library's mission to enhance accessible learning and community connections. [Learn more about their programs on their Facebook page.](#)



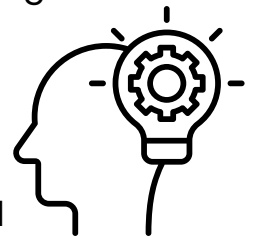
NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota's State Library provided Library Trustee Trainings

The State Library held Library Trustee Trainings in January, covering Governance, Library Ethics, Budget and Finance, and Planning. Training is crucial for trustees to effectively support libraries.

Key reasons include:

- **Good Governance:** Understanding roles for strong leadership.
- **Library Ethics:** Acting with integrity and championing intellectual freedom.
- **Budget and Finance:** Financial literacy for resource allocation and funding advocacy.
- **Strategic Planning:** Setting long-term goals and supporting growth.



Investing in trustee education is vital for libraries to thrive as community resources. This and more North Dakota State Library training events can be [found on their website.](#)

OKLAHOMA



Get ready, everyone! The OLA 2025 Conference is coming fast!

Join us standing together.. moving forward at the Oklahoma Library Association Conference in Norman, Oklahoma on March 12-14, 2025. [Explore the sessions using this link.](#)

Bethany Library Showcases Democratic Exhibits

The Bethany Library, part of the Metropolitan Library System, hosted "Voices and Votes: Democracy in America" from December 14, 2024, to January 25, 2025. In collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, this event features materials that promote discussions on democracy, including photographs, videos, and artifacts like campaign souvenirs.

[Hear more on the Voices and Votes episode of the Metro Library Podcast using this link.](#)



SOUTH DAKOTA



It is with a sad heart that I write to inform you that long time member Joe Edelen's passed on Thanksgiving Day. The obituary and information about services can be found [here on the funeral home's website](#) . You can also see a [post on the MPLA Facebook Page](#).

Logan Library Launches Model Train Display



A new model railroad display has been launched at the Logan Library, initiated by Frank Ascione, a retired professor and president of the Friends of the Logan Library. Located in a prominent window, the display aims to connect the community and capture the charm of mid-20th-century department store displays, reflecting Logan's cityscape.

[Click here to learn more about this fun winter display.](#)

Salt Lake County's Whitmore Library Celebrates 50 Years

Whitmore Library, established in 1974 in Salt Lake County, has evolved into a crucial part of a robust library system with 18 branches, ranking among North America's highest-circulating libraries. During its 50th anniversary, Library Director Joey McNamee emphasized its community significance, celebrating with 1970s-themed activities. Whitmore Manager Maggie Mills reinforced the library's mission to provide knowledge access, supporting literacy and business growth.

[Read the full news article here.](#)



Photos provided by Whitmore Library



Around the Region

WYOMING

Virtual Reality in the Wyoming Community College Libraries

Wyoming Innovation Partnership (WIP) is collaborating with all postsecondary institutions in the state to expand their capacity to integrate VR technology into courses and programs, develop and create VR applications, and coordinate the deployment of these resources to maximize return on investment. MPLA members at Central Wyoming College Library are one of the eight community college libraries in the state to receive a package of VR headsets. The WIP will also include software to help train students on soft-skills and explore virtual worlds. Each library will house and provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to learn through VR experiences.

[You can find out more about Wyoming Innovation Partnerships by clicking here.](#)



WLA / MPLA Member Conrrado Saldivar runs for [ALA Council](#) at-large seat.



You can learn more about Conrrado Saldivar in his email with the subject line: **MPLA Members List: Running in a Library Org Election? from December 18, 2024.** He asks MPLA Members, if you are also an ALA Member in good standing come March 10, 2025 when ballots are sent out, he would appreciate your voting consideration for one of the Councilor at Large positions.

If you believe you do not receive all MPLA communication please check your membership status. You can do this by following the steps listed on page 18 to enter the Member Portal and updating your Communication Preferences.



Join the Community

Chew & Chat Zooms

This fun discussion happens over the lunch hour led by lively hosts Jake Rundle and Mary Soucie. Each month a new topic is posed such as **AI, unique fundraising efforts, how to apply to national and local grant opportunities, advocacy, library services,** and so **much more.**

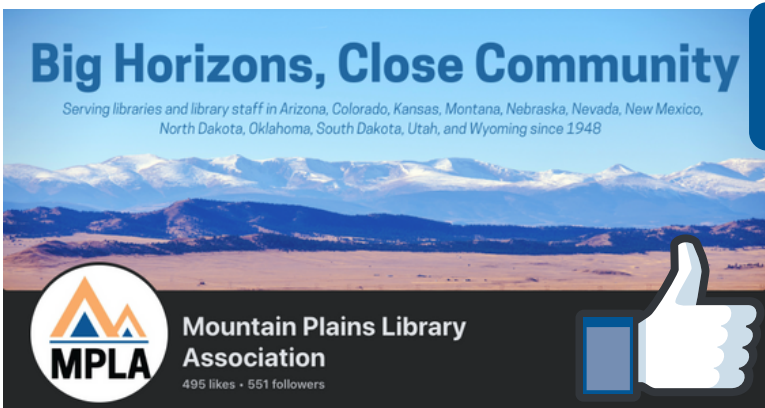


Regular Meeting Time:
4th Wednesdays of each month

11 am Pacific	Noon Mountain	1 PM Central time
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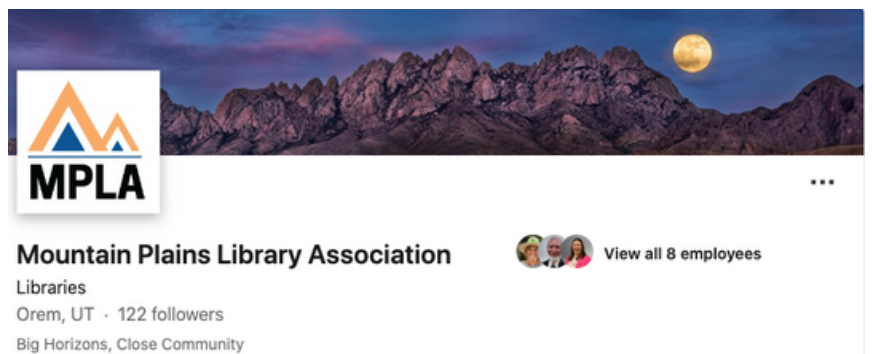
[Click here to register for the upcoming Chew & Chats](#)

Online



[MPLA Facebook Page](#)

[MPLA LinkedIn Page](#)



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Leadership Institute

2025 MPLA LI Fellow Selection

The Mountain Plains Library Association Leadership Institute has selected 30 outstanding individuals as Fellows for the 2025 class from a competitive pool, highlighting their leadership potential and commitment to community impact.

The program aims to develop future leaders through skills in strategic thinking, communication, and community engagement. Co-chairs Brenda Hemmelman and Mary Soucie noted the impressive caliber of applicants and expressed confidence in the Fellows' future achievements.

The 2025 class represents diverse backgrounds and experiences, and MPLA congratulates the selected Fellows, looking forward to a year of transformative growth.

Fellows by state include:

- **AZ:** Lisa Lewis, Caryn Nall, and Karly Scarbrough
- **CO:** Martin Martinez, Gloria Chavira, Kristen Andersen
- **KS:** Jessi Harris, Melanie Fuemmeler, Amy Brucker, Erin Verbick
- **MT:** Taylor Moorman
- **ND:** Maddie Cummings
- **NE:** Anne Price
- **NM:** Angelica Bernaert
- **NV:** Marco Antonio Veyna-Reyes, Natalie Villegas
- **OK:** Shay Beezley, Bridget Scheffler, Conner Kirk
- **SD:** Kelly Thompson, Misti Burns, Kendra Brewer
- **UT:** Erin Warnick, Rebecca West, Cara Rothman, Katherine Tucker Paterson
- **WY:** Megan Peddycord Bratton, Paige Bredenkamp, Conrado Saldivar, Samantha Griffis



Library Freedom Institute



Are you a library worker who wants defend privacy and intellectual freedom?

APPLY FOR LIBRARY FREEDOM INSTITUTE!

Library Freedom Institute is an intensive training for library workers who want to support **information democracy** in our communities.

- You'll learn **practical tools and strategies** to defend privacy and access.
- You'll gain a deeper understanding of the various **threats to knowledge** in our current information landscape, including the harms of Big Tech.
- All in a **supportive cohort environment** with other library workers from around the country.



Applications are due March 15th.
Training starts in mid to late April.

Visit libraryfreedom.org/institute for the application and more information!

MPLA – Jobline

- MPLA provides a platform for MPLA members to review jobs within and outside of the MPLA service area.
- Member states can post library job openings for free on the MPLA Jobline.

Why it's important to look at job listings, even if you're not looking for a job?

- Helps in creating your own job descriptions.
- Provides insights into emerging fields (e.g., digital librarianship, data management).
- Inspires new career goals in areas of interest, such as leadership or specialization.

[Click here to view the MPLA Jobline](#)



Conferences

Tips & Tricks for Writing Conference Proposals

This guide is meant to assist library workers in writing proposals for conference presentations. The MPLA Professional Development committee hopes it can be a valuable tool as you prepare your submissions.

[Click here to learn more about this guide](#)



Upper Midwest Digital Collections Conference (UMCC)



The theme for 2025 is "Digital Directions: Lessons Learned and Future Pathways." The UMDCC offers digital collections creators and curators opportunities to network, share best practices, attend hands-on workshops, and learn from leaders in digital cultural heritage.

[Click here to learn more about this conference.](#)



53rd annual conference

*Crafting a Future for
Information Literacy*

- Over 50 presentations and interactive workshops on library instruction and information literacy by academic librarians from all over the country
- Registration opens in mid-February

<https://www.loexconference.org/>

2025 State Conferences

[Arizona](#) - AzLA - TBD

[Colorado](#) - CalCon - September

[Kansas](#) - KLA - November

[Montana](#) - MLA - March 12-14

[Nebraska](#) - NLA - Biannual (next 2026)

[Nevada](#) - TBD

[New Mexico](#) - NMLA - October

[Oklahoma](#) - OLA - March 12-14

[North Dakota](#) - NDLA / SDLA / MPLA

[South Dakota](#) - October 1-3

[Utah](#) - ULA - May 13-15

[Wyoming](#) - WLA - TBD



Grants

MPLA & National Grant Opportunities

The MPLA Professional Development Committee supports avenues of continuing education and research experiences for individuals employed in the library or related professions in the Mountain Plains region. There are two types of MPLA grants available.

- **Individual Grants** support formal coursework in library science or related disciplines, as well as attendance to library related workshops, seminars or conferences.
- **State Association Conference Grants** supports continuing education for MPLA members through pre- or post- conference programs at annual state meetings.

[Click here to find our more about the Professional Development Committee and all MPLA Grant offerings](#)



Supporting adult and family literacy in the United States by fostering new and promoting existing adult literacy and educational programs.

[Application cycle will reopen in early 2025 : Find out more Here](#)



The Dollar General Literacy Foundation offers grants for literacy and education programs for all age groups. Nonprofits, schools, and libraries within 15 miles of a Dollar General stores may apply.

[Click here to find out more about the opportunity.](#)

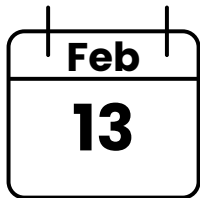


We believe we can help make a critical impact on improving the environment and we want to help a library make the same transition to green power.

[Learn more about this Green Energy Grant Opportunity](#)



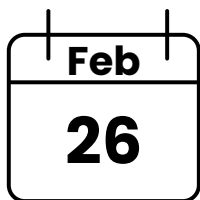
Online Learning



Cultivating Empathy, Trust, and Optimism: Strategies for Motivating Demotivated Library Teams

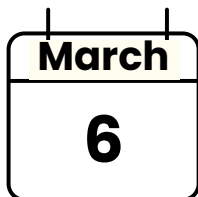
In this panel discussion, we delve into motivating a demotivated team within a library setting.

[Click here to learn more about this event](#)



ELL and Literacy on the Table: Using Board or Card Games to Foster Fun with Language

Explore how modern games like Outfoxed, What Do You Meme?, and Jenga can aid in language development, alongside innovative approaches to traditional games to emphasize language skills. **[Click here to learn more about the event](#)**



Empowering Teens through Meaningful Service

In this webinar, we'll share how our mid-sized, suburban library manages teen volunteers across departments, with the like-minded goal of making opportunities teen-centered and meaningful.

[Click here to learn more about this opportunity](#)



[Click here to learn more about Online Learning Opportunities.](#)



ALA eLearning Free Events

A collection of free on-demand webinars focusing on an array of topics. **[Click here to browse the offerings](#)**



PaperClip Communications On-Demand Trainings

90-minute, on-demand training sessions with carefully selected experts, unlimited attendees per department, materials for your team and a certificate of completion for each participant. **[Find more on demand trainings here.](#)**



Membership

Welcome New Members

We are thrilled to have you join our vibrant community of librarians and library professionals. As a new member, you are now part of a dynamic network dedicated to supporting the growth, innovation, and advocacy of libraries across the region.

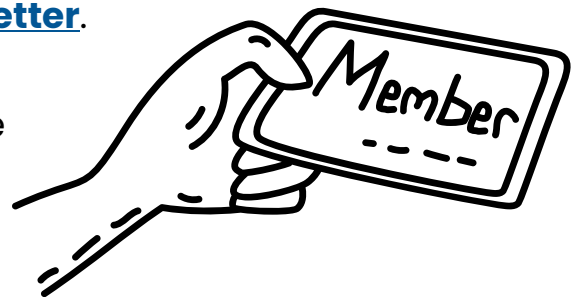
Membership Advantages:

- [Professional development grants](#) for courses and workshops.
- Continuing education through [conferences](#) and seminars.
- Information exchange and educational programs about technological developments and innovative library programming undertaken by MPLA libraries.
- [MPLA Awards](#) for outstanding library service contributions.
- [Joint annual conferences](#) for idea sharing among librarians.
- Forums for networking with members and national leaders.
- [MPLA Newsletter](#) with updates on education and library programs.
- [Grants to member states](#) for pre- and post-conference education programs.
- Opportunities for member contributions to the profession.
- Annual Report and Membership Directory via Naylor.
- Promotes regional efforts for resource sharing.
- [First-year personal membership](#) dues at half price.

New Institutional Membership Benefits include one or more:

- Free personal membership.
- One free half-page ad in the [MPLA Newsletter](#).

Learn more about committees and how to be involved on the [MPLA Website](#).





Membership

Become a Member

First Year MPLA Membership Dues
Are Half Price For New Members!

[Click here to learn more about
being a MPLA Member on the
Membership webpage.](#)

MPLA Membership:

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

Sherrie Mortensen
Executive Secretary
PO Box 1014
Orem, UT 84059

execsecretary@mpla.us

Member Portal – Renew your Membership

MPLA is pleased to invite you to log into your new MPLA Membership
account on our website.

**If everyone can follow these steps (even if you know your password)
it will get you into the new membership system. THANK YOU!**

1. Go to <https://my-mpla.us/login.asp>
2. Use your email address as your user name
3. **Click on Forgot your Password?** and follow the instructions found on
the [First Time Log In sheet attached here.](#)
4. Renew your MPLA membership for 2025 (All MPLA memberships expire
at the end of each calendar year).
 - a. Click the Membership Renewal link found on the bottom of the left-
hand menu under Account Details and follow the prompts.

If you encounter any questions or problems resetting your password or
renewing your membership, please reach out to our executive secretary,
Sherrie Mortensen, at execsecretary@mpla.us.



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Awards

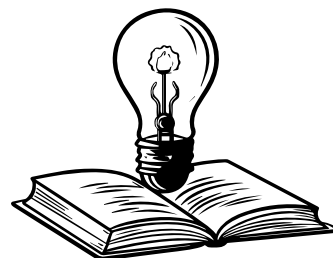
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Quick Links



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Newsletter

The MPLA Newsletter is published bimonthly online by the Mountain Plains Library Association. [Click here to find current and past MPLA Newsletters.](#)

ISSN 0145-6180

Editor: Rebecca Chavez,
Central Wyoming College

Copy deadlines for articles, news, and advertisements:

- January 1
- March 1
- May 1
- July 1
- September 1
- November 1

Advertising:

There is no charge to MPLA personal or institutional members for classified advertising.

Non-members are charged \$1.25/line. Display advertisement copy rates are available from editor@mpla.us

