Program Descriptions

Sunday, October 6, 2024

11:00-12:00 Session 1

1A) Building Relationships with Faculty: Reflections on Department Liaison Efforts and Instructor-Driven Outreach (Victoria Contreraz, MSU Billings)

MSUB’s institutional setting creates a unique opportunity to build relationships with faculty in a departmental-liaison structure. These partnerships can be instrumental in supporting student success through instructor buy-in. This session will talk about the highs of those partnerships, and the ways we’re still learning to successfully build them.

Victoria Contreraz is the current ASLD Junior Co-Chair, and the eResources & Technical Services Librarian at MSUB. She earned her MLIS from the University of Washington and BA in English & Textual Studies from Syracuse University. Victoria enjoys long walks to de-stress, playing D&D, and loves a good reality TV deep-dive.

1B) Intellectual Freedom: Talking about Race in Libraries (Shari Curtis, Butte-Silver Bow Public Library)

How to address racial issues in libraries and create a discussion that benefits the public.

Shari Curtis is the Adult Services Librarian at Butte-Silver Bow Public Library.

1:30-2:30 Session 2

2A) Law for Librarians (Matt Beckstrom, Lewis & Clark Library)

The American Library Association recently relaunched its Law for Librarians program to provide trainings to library professionals so they will have the legal knowledge to address censorship and other challenges to intellectual freedom and privacy in libraries. Matt Beckstrom attended this training and in this presentation he will share what he learned.

Matt Beckstrom is the Systems Manager/Librarian at Lewis and Clark Library. He served as the Chair of the Intellectual Freedom Committee for many years and is currently an active Intellectual Freedom Committee member while also representing the Montana chapter on the ALA Council.

2:35-4:05 Session 3

3A) Legal Issues Confronting Montana Libraries (Kris Goss, Trust for Montana Libraries, with Jennifer Hossack, Shelley O’Rourke, Matt Beckstrom)

As part of MLA’s ongoing focus on providing legal assistance to libraries, this session will provide library staff, trustees, and friends the opportunity to receive responses to questions about any and all types of legal matters in libraries. Attendees may submit questions in advance of the retreat so presenters can
research the issues and provide detailed responses. The question and answer format will allow for full audience engagement to exchange perspectives, best practices, and experiences.

Kris Goss serves as Director of Policy Services/Senior Counsel with the Montana School Boards Association. Kris is the Vice Chair of the Trust for Montana Libraries Board of Directors. Kris previously served as a law clerk in the Great Falls Division of the United States District Court for the District of Montana. Prior to law school, Kris worked as the Governor’s K-12 Education Policy Advisor and Deputy Communications Director. Kris earned a law degree from the University of Montana School of Law, a Master of Arts in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin, and a Bachelor of Arts from Carroll College.

3B) Empowering Your Staff: Games to Explore the Treasures of Leadership (Eileen Wright and Victoria Contreraz, MSU Billings)

Building leadership skills doesn’t have to be boring! This interactive session featuring leadership-growth activities is designed for participants to take and use in their own libraries as homegrown professional development for staff. These tools will help empower & energize your team to reach their leadership goals and have some fun!

Eileen Wright: Eileen has been at MSU Billings for the past 23 years, where she is the Library Director. On the fun side, she has an Airstream which has only just begun to take her to wonderful, beautiful places in our country. Or course her my two pups love it when they see mom loading up the camper. They know it will be a weekend of running the mountain trails and sitting by the campfire at night - hopefully sharing a smore. Victoria Contreraz: Victoria is the current ASLD Junior Co-Chair, and the eResources & Technical Services Librarian at MSUB. She earned her MLIS from the University of Washington and BA in English & Textual Studies from Syracuse University.

4:30-5:30 Session 4

4A) Teaching with AI: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly (Star Bradley, Montana State University)

Explore AI in college classrooms through assignments highlighting its research limitations. This presentation demonstrates how educators can use AI to enhance students’ critical thinking and information literacy skills while emphasizing human expertise in academic research. Learn to teach students about common pitfalls of AI in scholarly inquiry.

Star Bradley is the Instruction Librarian at Montana State University. Star teaches credit bearing classes and presents guest lectures on information literacy. Star spends much of her time helping undergraduate students learn basic research skills.

4B) Addressing Challenging Book Challenges: More Flies with Honey than Vinegar (Gavin Woltjer, Billings Public Library)

In these moments of intense debate, it is easy to forget that challenging a piece of a library’s collection is a right for all users. Instead of defaulting to a confrontational approach, learn how to use compassion, education, and logic to defuse the situation while also defending the library’s collection.

Gavin J. Woltjer is the Library Director for the Billings (MT) Public Library. When not held hostage in a good book, he enjoys exploring the wilds of Montana with his wife, Reno, and three children. His research interests include: data analytics; library leadership; economic development and libraries; archives and record management; and, librarian as public historian.
Monday, October 7, 2024

8:30-9:30 Session 5

5A) Ireland: A Tour and Book Recommendations (Angela Archuleta, Stamiksiitsiikin Elementary)

An exploration of Ireland through travel and books.

*Angela Archuleta is currently the PK-1st Grade Librarian at Stamiksiitsiikin Elementary in Browning, Montana. She is beginning her eleventh year as a school librarian. In addition, she serves on the MLA Board as the PNLA Representative.*

5B) The Future of Libraries is YOU (Shelley O’Rourke)

Librarians need future skills now more than ever. To triumph over the adversity that we are bombarded with daily, we must embrace our future power. We will learn the basics of foresight and the components of urgent optimism, which help us face the future with confidence and enthusiasm.

*Shelley O’Rourke is a retired school librarian from Great Falls. Her husband teaches middle school math, and their three children are in varying stages of higher education. Shelley recently held the post of co-chair of the School Library Division and now chairs the Retired Library Lovers interest group. She is also a newly minted Law for Librarians trainer and Teacher’s Leadership Institute graduate. After 30 years in education, Shelley is pursuing a second career as a novelist and story editor.*

9:40-10:40 Session 6

6A) Rethinking Wikipedia from a Library Perspective (Nathan Sonnenschein, Montana State University)

As information professionals, how do we think about Wikipedia? What are we telling our patrons and students? With the rise of generative AI, the time has come to re-evaluate our approach to this critical information resource, whether at the reference desk or in the classroom.

*Nathan Sonnenschein (he/him) is the User Services & Experience Librarian at the Montana State University Billings Library. He applies UX research and design to the experiences of library users, leads the website team, and administers the library’s Alma instance. Nathan earned an MSLIS from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and undergraduate degrees from the University of Wyoming and Central Wyoming College.*

6B) The State of the State Library (Corey Sloan, Montana State Library)

Every state has a State Library, but do you know what the Montana State Library offers? Join Corey to put names with faces, know who to contact when something is awry, and learn about the many ways the state library supports your library to ensure the very best for Montanans!

/Corey Sloan is the newest Statewide Consulting Librarian for the Broad Valleys and Pathfinder regions of the great state of Montana. She is excited to assist library directors and boards in their varied needs and continue getting to know the excellent people of Montana's libraries- she is a real people person. For the past 8 years Corey worked at the Bozeman Public Library in the adult programming and outreach department, first as a programming librarian and most recently as the head of the department. She lives in Bozeman with her cute husband and even cuter dog, where she enjoys being outside as often as possible, eating good food, traveling, and grooving to live music. She loves the spooky season.*
7A) **Libraries at the Legislature** (Ella Smith and Dani Hess, Central House Strategies)

Knowing who's who and what's what at the state legislature can be head spinning. This 60 minute session will prepare librarians, library supporters, and patrons to effectively engage at the capitol during the 2025 legislative session.

*Ella Smith: Before joining Central House Strategies, Ella was the Program Director for Montana Women Vote and Lobbyist and Community Organizer with Northern Plains Resource Council. They also played a significant role in numerous political and issue-based campaigns, including Medicaid expansion, state legislative seats, US Congress and Senate, and protecting a clean and healthy environment. Ella has been a lobbyist and organizer in the Montana Legislature since 2015 on health care access, Medicaid expansion, childcare, economic justice, LGBTQ rights, Indigenous rights, sexual and reproductive freedom, and decriminalizing poverty. With relationships at the core, Ella's work centers around building community and fostering nuanced conversations. Ella has a zeal for coalition building and strategic planning, believing that the more we are in community with one another, the stronger our movements are.*

*Dani Hess: Dani’s experience is in engaging community in policy development and planning in local government. From designing streets and parks, to developing housing policy and zoning codes, Dani has led collaborative efforts to reduce barriers to meaningful participation in government. After graduating from Montana State University with a degree in Community Health and minor in Hispanic Studies, Dani worked in bicycle and pedestrian planning with MSU’s Western Transportation Institute. As Community Engagement Coordinator at the City of Bozeman, Dani introduced a new framework for community engagement and co-led the development of the city’s first equity and inclusion plan. Driven by curiosity and connection, Dani asks questions and creates spaces from which new solutions and partnerships can emerge.*