**March 2025**

**The MPL Mission**

Spark curiosity. Make connections. Thrive together.

Missoula Public Library achieves its mission by fostering community engagement, providing core services, and promoting sustainability and wellness.

* **Circulation**

**Community Engagement**

* Three members of the Circulation team attended MLA 2025 in Bozeman: Jon Tweeten, Dory Athey and Elizabeth Jonkel. MLA 2027 may be in Missoula, MT. A downtown location for the conference has been requested. All MLA members now have access to the Ryan Down Homeless Training modules as part of their membership costs.
* Kayla Whitaker and Elizabeth Jonkel presented on the Montana Book Awards as a panel discussion at MLA.

**Core Services**

* Jon Tweeten and Elizabeth Jonkel attended the first in person meeting of the Partner Sharing Group on March 26 from 1:00-4:00. Points of interest for MPL include
  + The MSC will refresh its contracts with all Partner and Shared Catalog members. This will cement MPL’s relationship and terms of agreement with the State Library.
  + Great Fall Public Library proposes a Partners sub-group on acquisition efficiency and shared collection development. MPL’s participation would lead to enhanced, efficient enhancement of the shared collection.
  + Lewis & Clark Public Library in Helena is considering joining Partners within the next two years. Addition of a large library would greatly enhance the shared collection and relieve MPL of some hub and holds fulfillment obligations.
* Lyngsoe conducted a tech site visit on March 20 to maintain the AMH. While on site, the tech upgraded the self-check software, assisted with installation of ADA compliant speakers in one kiosk, and trained key staff on configuration of the self-check system.
* Ava Sweet has transitioned as a Library Assistant 3 from the Circulation Department to Youth Services. She will assist the YS team in providing public service, programming, and collection management.
* Jon Tweeten composed a new SOP for staff on Overdrive mergers of replacement library cards.
* Caroline Campbell of the Cataloguing Department and Ava Sweet with Youth Services streamlined the toy & story kits, physically reviewing each kit, seeing if anything needs to be replaced, updating inventory sheets & price lists to match templates in the Toy & Story Kit binder, fixing catalog records, and labeling items.

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* Two ottomans and three chairs located in the 3rd floor Periodicals section were reupholstered using Montana Correctional Enterprises. Fabrics from previous work orders were used and MPL was invoiced for labor costs only, at great savings.
* **Community Engagement**

**Community Engagement**

* We hosted, in partnership with Fact and Fiction Bookstore and in conversation with Chris La Tray, Blackfeet author Stephen Graham Jones, for a reading from his new book “The Buffalo Hunter Hunter”. We had about 110 people in attendance. SGJ did a book signing after the talk.
* First Friday in March was with the Hellgate art students and jazz band. They had an art showing which remained up on the 4th floor through the month of March. It brought in a lot of teens and their families to the library.
* We held an Oscar watch party and had around 35 people attend.
* The Five Valleys Seed Swap continues to grow. It was hosted in March and over 400 people came through during the day.
* The Bookmobile visited some new places:
  + The Frenchtown Highschool Sciencepalooza
  + Connect Academy
  + Bee Hive Homes

**Core Services**

* At the annual MLA conference the CE department presented several sessions
  + Community Engagement in Your Library Big and Small (Amanda, Selya, Xavier, Kayla)
  + On the road again! Bookmobile programs across Montana (Chloe in collaboration with Bookmobile employees from Lewis and Clark and Bozeman Public Library
  + A public librarian and two academic librarians walk into a bar…An invitation to share ideas for innovative collaboration (Xavier in collaboration with librarian from Mansfield)
* We received three awards at the Annual MLA conference
  + Mary Wooldridge – Outstanding Support Staff of the Year
  + Project Community Connect – Program of the Year
  + Alma Jacobs Diversity Award

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* In partnership with Basal Hospitality we hosted a program on making bone broth
* Resource Access Day continues to grow in attendance. This month we had 130.

* **Reference**

**Community Engagement**

* One reference librarian attended the MLA conference in Bozeman.
* The winners of the Missoula Writes annual contest and the Family History Writing contest were notified.

**Core Services**

* Selectors are moving away from purchasing books from Amazon, choosing instead to support local businesses like Fact and Fiction.
* Updates to the book chat kit collection (removing under-used kits, purchasing new kits, replacing worn discussion folders) are underway.
* Department staff are concerned about how budget cuts to the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) will impact our programs, interlibrary loan services, and other crucial library initiatives.

**Sustainability and Wellness**

* Working with two Occupational Therapy students who are interested in Memory Cafe and who are creating other dementia-friendly programming.
* **Youth Services**

**Community Engagement**

* Continued high turnout for 0-3 Playgroup weekly program
* Cooking for Kids! program this month; spring rolls in celebration of spring and to introduce fresh vegetables to kids

**Core Services**

* Replaced broken or worn-out materials from several STEM and story time kits; updated Toys & Kits binder to reflect these changes
* Cleaned Teen Space and started updating furniture for the area
* Kayla attended MLA 2025 and attended sessions on engaging teens with media-based programs and opportunities and health and wellness programming in the library

**Sustainability & Wellness**

* Yoga Story Time program – children and their caregivers doing yoga poses together
* Upcycling discarded JC items for future use in Altered Books program, button making, and free giveaways for the Bookmobile
* Cooking for Kids! program this month; spring rolls in celebration of spring and to introduce fresh vegetables to kids
* **Branches**

**Community Engagement**

* **Big Sky**
  + Began planning summer programming. Considering eliminating Writers’ Group and starting weekly drop in D&D games instead of doing them once a month like last summer. Engagement for March was down, along with general library use. Possibly due to spring break since no students were in the building for a week and some regular neighborhood patrons were on vacation. Communicated via email with several more patrons about 3D printing services at Big Sky but none of them came in this month.
* **Frenchtown**
  + Book Club met in March to discuss Tom Lake by Ann Patchett. Twelve attended.
  + Lego Club stopped due to lack of interest. The Legos are always here and easily gotten out if anyone is interested.
  + Family movie night showed Maona 2. Twenty-three showed to watch and enjoy.
  + Katie Cross, a local fantasy author, presented a writer’s workshop. Eight local people attended. All seemed to enjoy. She answered their questions on writing as well as getting your writing published. Wonderful presentation as she answered their questions and talk about writing and how she does her writing.
* **Lolo**
  + Social media informational updates on library services and programs.
  + Open library available to students accompanying adults to gym and evening school activities.
  + Facilitate monthly book discussion including email notifications of meetings and ordering/distributing books for discussion.
  + Bi-monthly knitting group.
* **Potomac**
  + Hosted monthly book club
  + Spring craft program during the Wednesday of spring break – paint flowerpots (with seeds to take home) and spring coloring pages
* **Seeley Lake** 
  + Connecting with program director of the Summer Outdoor Education program in Seeley regarding the Summer Reading Program.
* **Swan Valley**

**Core Services**

* **Big Sky**
  + Continued ordering books via Baker & Taylor 360. Still planning to redo Big Sky branch signs with accurate hours (4 PM instead of 4:15 PM starting time) but the Makerspace has been so busy when I’m working it every other Saturday that I haven’t had time. Planning on starting Wednesday morning walk-in hours there soon, so that should give me more time to get to that task.
* **Frenchtown**
  + Continue to cover all types of books for MPL.
* **Lolo**
  + Collection development, removal of outdated and seldom checked out items and shelf reading.
  + Continuing a running list of missing items for the Lolo School collection. Sent file to the school media specialists.
* **Potomac**
  + Helped resolve account issues regarding lost items and replacing damaged items
* **Seeley Lake**
  + Book Club is amazing—these folks have such meaningful conversations. As far as ideology, they are all very different. Yet they have respectful and engaging conversations about the things that really matter.
  + Ongoing weeding of the collection.
  + After School Book Club still going strong. The group wants to continue through the summer—exploring schedules to see if we can make it happen.
* **Swan Valley**

**Sustainability and Wellness**

* **Big Sky**
  + Swapped a shift with Elizabeth Lofts so that she could cover Big Sky while I covered the Home Library Service stops for Chloe Runs Behind while they were at MLA.
* **Frenchtown**
* **Lolo**
  + Helping to facilitate a clean air monitoring system for the Lolo community and located in the Lolo school library.
  + During the school's spring break, I shoveled the sidewalk leading to the library and placed gravel on the sidewalk to make it safe from falls.
  + Provided curb service to elderly patron who was having mobility issues.
* **Potomac**
  + Facilites installed updated A/C system to better regulate library temperatures resulting in better energy efficiency
* **Seeley Lake**
  + Climate Smart Missoula came up to the branch to assess what may be needed to become a clean air respite space during wildfire season.
* **Swan Valley**