



Annual Report Fiscal Year 2003

July 2002 – June 2003



*Karen Strege, Ph.D.
State Librarian*

MSL has faced many challenges during the past year, from budget shortfalls to an increased demand for services. The shortfalls in state revenues in Fiscal Year 2003 caused a decrease in state funding for MSL, resulting in cuts to library programs, the loss of one staff position, and the loss of a significant

percentage of the funds we use to provide information resources.

Like the cliché says, the going, indeed, got tough, and indeed, the tough got going, especially the State Library Commission and staff members -- all of whom worked incredibly hard to fashion a Fiscal Year 2004 budget that would preserve the best of our services. Of course, 2003's budget problems were a prelude to the 2004-05 budget woes faced by our legislators in early 2003.

Notwithstanding 2003's budget crisis, good things happened at MSL last year. These activities and accomplishments are highlighted in this report. In fact, choosing among the highlights of the past year was difficult for those of us involved in assembling this publication -- we have much to report!

This past year made me realize that those of us in Montana are rich in many ways, if not in the amount of revenues arriving in state coffers. In particular, we have dedicated and talented staff members at MSL and at each library throughout the state. We have determined and responsible library boards working hard to improve their library's service. In addition, and perhaps best of all, we share the attitude that working together is a privilege and a joy. It has been my privilege and joy working with all of you during the past year.

*Karen Strege, Ph.D.
Montana State Librarian*

As we struggled through the past two legislative sessions, with all the budget and program cuts that were mandated, serving on the commission was not always an enjoyable experience. Because of reduced funding, we were often locked into decisions before the commission even met, and were often forced to vote with our heads, not our hearts.



*Al Randall,
MSL Commission Chair*

Many difficult decisions were made, ranging from staff cuts and reorganization at MSL, to prioritizing all existing state programs to meet the requirement of reduced funding. Although many programs were reduced in funding, commission members and MSL staff worked hard to ensure that the core services which all Montana libraries depend upon were continued. At the top of the list were the statewide contracts for a full-text magazine periodical index, our membership in OCLC, and continued educational training opportunities for the library community.

When the dust settled, we had a leaner but even stronger library system across the state. As part of our fall vacation across Montana, my wife, Marbie, and I were given the opportunity to tour eastern Montana -- including twenty-eight library visits, two federation meetings (Havre and Baker), and a commission meeting in Miles City.

What we saw from Red Lodge to Plentywood to Ekalaka were libraries of every size and shape, from original Carnegie buildings to remodeled facilities. What we found inside were dedicated librarians who were proud of what they had done to make their libraries successful in their communities. Every librarian has a story about how they not only keep the doors open in these hard times, but how they manage to keep good books on the shelves, Internet-connected computers on the desks, and happy patrons coming back day after day.

My new shirt says "End of the world: nine miles. Ekalaka, Montana: twelve miles." If you accidentally get past the end of the world, do not panic! Ekalaka has a great library, too.

*Al Randall
Chair, MSL Commission*



MONTANA

Natural Resource Information System

... a comprehensive system for acquisition, storage, and retrieval of information relating to the natural resources of Montana ...

Geo-Spatial Data Central

Long recognized for its **extensive holdings of geospatial information** used by GIS professionals throughout Montana, NRIS cemented its role as the **primary point of access** for this information through the implementation of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Administration that clarifies the relative roles of the two agencies regarding GIS and geospatial information. NRIS also added depth and breadth to its information holdings and improved its set of interactive mapping and analysis tools to make this information more accessible to a wider range of users.

Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure

The Montana Geographic Information Council recognizes a set of twelve data layers that are necessary for most GIS analyses. Previously known as "framework" data layers, the **Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure** is of vital importance to the Montana GIS community, state and local government, and Montana businesses. The NRIS clearinghouse contains the most current version of each of these layers, along with supporting information relating to their development and maintenance.



The National Map

The National Map is a project of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) aimed at providing users an electronic version of their topographic quadrangle maps on demand via the Internet using the most recent and highest quality data available. The Montana State Library, the Department of Administration, and USGS recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding whereby NRIS will serve as the **National Map portal for Montana**. As a result, NRIS supplies much of the information displayed when users view areas in Montana using the National Map.

New and Improved Data

To fulfill its mandate as the **primary point of access to geospatial information** in Montana, NRIS has significantly augmented and improved its holdings, including: extended **aerial photography** to cover over 97% of the state; deployed the **National Hydrography Dataset**, the first comprehensive stream network for the state; added **FEMA floodplain mapping**; acquired statewide **noxious weed** coverage; developed near 'real-time' data access to the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation's **water rights database**; integrated the Department of Administration's **Cadastral** (land parcel ownership) GIS layer and the Department of Revenue's **CAMA** (Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal) database; and deployed a **water**

quality data access system, with information on over 27,000 locations of state and federal agency water quality monitoring sites.

Self Service or Staff Assisted - Better Ways to Access Information

NRIS strives to extend access to its information storehouse to users of all abilities and needs, through constant improvement of its **web-based access tools**. To that end, funded in part through a grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), NRIS improved its core information-access tools. **"Topofinder II,"** a new version of our very popular topographic map browsing tool, was developed based on technology recently made available that improves the usability of the tool for non-professionals.

NRIS' primary on-line information access tool, the "Thematic Mapper" was renamed the **"Digital Atlas"** and saw improvements in its interface, its search tools, and in the breadth of information available. For users wanting a pre-built map for viewing, printing, or inserting into a report or presentation, NRIS' **Map Library** was extended to include county and watershed maps for various data themes. For GIS professionals, a **Data Bundler** now provides "clip, zip, and ship" functionality – users can easily select and download multiple datasets for a particular geographic area.

Not all users are able to find what they need on their own. For users in need of assistance, NRIS deployed a new on-line **"Request Tracker."** This Internet application allows users to log on to the system and enter new requests, view the status of current requests, or view their history of completed requests.

Information Development

Although NRIS primarily acquires and disseminates information created by other public agencies, NRIS's **Natural Heritage Program** conducts field work in order to fill critical data-gaps and augment existing information. The Heritage Program updated its **Montana Plant Species of Concern** report as well as the **Animal Species of Concern** report, which was completed in conjunction with Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, for the first time providing Montanans with a single comprehensive source. Also funded in part by IMLS and completed in cooperation with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the Heritage Program unveiled a new **on-line Animal Field Guide**.

Web Users Survey

According to a **web-based survey** of NRIS users conducted in September 2003, two thirds of NRIS users represent government and education, with the remaining

34% representing the private sector. About 70% of respondents said they visit the NRIS website several times per month or more often; over **87% said NRIS services were essential or valuable** to their business, agency, or personal needs.

An overwhelming number of respondents (73%) said they primarily use NRIS web-based services as opposed to accessing NRIS information through staff assistance, an increase of 5% over last year's survey results.

LIBRARY information services

... serving the professional information needs of state government and Montana librarians and providing public access to state government publications for Montana citizens...

Services to State Government

LISD continues to expand its menu of valuable licensed information resources available to state officials and employees via the state government network. New resources last year included **Lexis-Nexis State Capital Universe** and **Environmental Universe**, bringing the constitutions, laws, bills, administrative codes, environmental regulations of all fifty states, plus current news and professional literature on hazardous wastes and toxicology, to desktops.

Registered state employees were able to use two other new resources over the Internet: **BioOne** includes the full-text of more than 70 biological science journals, and **EJS**

Electronic Journal Access

provides password-protected access to the full-text of online journal subscriptions, plus abstracts and table of contents to thousands more.

The **new online catalog** makes it easy for employees anywhere in Montana to locate and request materials in MSL's collection. The new catalog also provides an inventory of materials at the Montana Historical Society Library, the Montana Law Library, and the Montana Department of Transportation Research Center. And, our new online interlibrary loan system, **Illiad**, makes it faster to obtain materials we don't own.

State employees now average more than **4,000 monthly visitor sessions on LISD webpages**, a steady increase over 2002's numbers.

Another major component of LISD services are free, hands-on workshops on searching Google, ReferenceUSA Business Directory, and other business databases, searching the new LexisNexis databases, using the InfoTrac full-text periodical databases, and

Survey results revealed **planning** as the primary reason respondents use NRIS information, followed by **research, resource management, and conservation**. About two-thirds of users download geographic information system (GIS) data, such as stream and road information, which enables them to make their own customized maps.

NRIS responds to thousands of inquiries each month via its website. During the months of September and October, when the survey ran, NRIS' web site served over 124,000 visitor sessions, which lasted approximately 12 minutes each. That translates to about **406 person-hours each day** spent on the NRIS site.

Foundation Center resources for grantseekers. LISD staff developed the courses and provided the training.

Large reductions in revenues available for book and journal collections forced another round of revisions to MSL's subscription list. Library users were again involved in the decision process, and agreed that selecting **online-only versions of journals** was preferred to more title cancellations.

Book purchases were limited and made on the basis of careful consideration of patron requests, not all of which could be accommodated.

All new state employees received an email **introduction to library resources and services** and an invitation to visit and/or receive a monthly email with an update on library resources. Over 1,500

employees now receive this update.

A **major evaluation and deselection process** resulted in a smaller, more pertinent and up-to-date book collection. Similar evaluation and consultation with interested persons from a variety of agencies resulted in a more focused and pertinent collection of federal documents.

Survey of State Employees

A **web-based survey** conducted in November 2003 garnered 1,424 responses from employees based in Helena and 57 other communities in every corner of the state. Eighty-two percent of the respondents were professional or management level employees.

Respondents again "strongly agree" or "agree" that using the library improves the quality of their research (88%), saves time in obtaining needed information (87%), finds information they wouldn't otherwise locate (80%), is essential to their work (70%), improves the quality of decision-making in their agency (62%), and has contributed to cost savings to the state (59%).



Services to Montana Librarians

Reference staff **continued to support Montana's librarians** by helping them locate answers to questions from their patrons for which they had exhausted their resources.

Internet-based resources selected especially for librarians were developed in a directory format on the LISD webpage for librarians. Also included were descriptions of new professional books and videos helpful to librarians. **New publications in librarianship and information science** continued to be purchased for the collection and publicized to the library community.

Worthwhile materials from our collection were offered on Wired-MT and **distributed hundreds of books** to school, tribal, academic and public libraries across Montana.

State Publications Center (SPC)

The new SPC coordinator met with librarians from state publication depository libraries throughout the year. The contract and annual selection survey were revised and a **handbook created** to provide guidance for processing and managing state publications distributed through the network. **Collection policy guidelines** for

the State Publications Center were also developed.

The number of liaisons within agencies was increased to **boost the percentage of agency publications deposited in the library and distributed** across Montana through the depository library system. Staff also monitored state government news releases to learn of new publications and solicit copies for the SPC as appropriate. Descriptions of recently received agency publications of interest were distributed monthly to librarians statewide through the Wired-MT librarian listserv.

Guidelines for **best practices for agency print publishing** were posted on the SPC webpages. A first draft of a policy governing electronic publications was developed and conversations with staff from the Montana Historical Society Archives and Secretary of State's office initiated to consider preservation issues.

Staff evaluated shelves full of older state publications donated over time by agencies; needed materials were added to the collection. Original cataloging was contracted from a regional library service center and the **number of state publications added to the inventory of our collection increased substantially**. Staff received extensive **training** in standards and best practices of contemporary cataloging practice.

Montana State Library Commissioners

Donald Allen of Billings has served as Chair of the Pamly Billings Library Board for the past three years, and has been a member of Board for the last six years. Prior to his involvement on the Pamly Billings Library Board, Mr. Allen was President of the Pamly Billings Library Foundation; he has been a member of that organization since 1994.



Al Randall, MSL Commission Chair recently retired as Lincoln County Libraries Director. Prior to that, Mr. Randall was a high school librarian in Libby. He lives outside of Troy and enjoys skiing and canoeing.



Linda McCulloch currently serves as Montana's Superintendent of Public Instruction. Prior to her election in 2000, Ms. McCulloch was a teacher and elementary school librarian for 20 years. From 1995-2001, she served as a state representative from Missoula County's House District 70.

Caroline Bitz of Box Elder served as a trustee/board member of the Havre-Hill County Library from 1990 - 2000. From 1998 - 2000, Ms. Bitz served as Chair of the Pathfinder Federation region of the Montana Federation of Libraries. She is a rancher.



Bruce Morton has served as Dean of Libraries at Montana State University in Bozeman since 1993. Mr. Morton began his career in 1969 as a Russian linguist in the United States Army Security Agency.

Toni Broadbent is a Helena businesswoman who serves on several local and state organizations. Ms. Broadbent has had a life-long interest in libraries and the arts, and looks forward to helping the Commission develop successful strategies for the future of Montana's libraries.



Gail Staffanson of Sidney is Superintendent of Schools for Richland County. Ms. Staffanson also substitute teaches and takes an active interest in books and libraries. She and her husband are raising four young daughters on the family farm.



This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Six-hundred copies of this newsletter were published at state expense. Publication and distribution expense information are on file with the Montana Department of Administration.



Library Public Awareness Campaign

As part of a statewide effort designed to boost awareness of Montana's libraries, our "Need it? Find it! @ your library" campaign ran September through December. This promotion tied in with the American Library Association's national "@ your library" campaign, which was designed to increase library usage across the country.

Montana's promotion was made possible by a collaboration between MSL and the Montana Library Association's Public Relations and Marketing Committee, and was funded through the use of federal Library Services and Technology Act funds and the MLA.

Three television and radio public service announcements (PSAs) were produced as the main component of "Need it? Find it! @ your library." The PSAs, which featured noted Montanans as spokespeople, emphasized the resources and expertise the state's libraries offer patrons. Musician Wylie Galt Gustafson and authors Tom McGuane and Stephenie Ambrose Tubbs generously donated their time to tape the announcements.

Thanks to community involvement programs through our partners in the media, we received **sixteen times** the amount of our investment back in air time across the state, enabling our messages to reach more of our neighbors more often via radio, network television, and cable television.

In addition to the PSAs, a **website** was launched to serve as a central resource for Montana libraries participating in the campaign. Librarians are now able to find sample press and public relations materials, as well as information on how to develop their own marketing plans. This website is linked to MSL's homepage, which is at <http://msl.state.mt.us>.

Toolkits containing media contact information, sample promotional items, and a library PR/marketing bibliography were also distributed to libraries around the state. Librarians attending fall workshops and federation meetings received **training** regarding the "Need it? Find it! @ your library" campaign and how to use the related toolkit at presentations which were part of those events.

The PSAs aired on radio, TV, and select cable stations across Montana from September through December.



MONTANA Talking Book Library

Talking Books: so the blind and physically handicapped have the same access to information and the enjoyment of reading as everyone else.

In 2003, The Montana Talking Book Library (TBL) served nearly 3,000 Montanans. TBL patrons received almost 145,000 talking books, descriptive videos, and large print books. In addition, TBL provided Braille services to almost 60 Montanans.

Volunteers continue to be an essential part of TBL services. TBL utilizes over 100 volunteers (equal to six FTE) to supplement the work of its six employees to circulate, inspect, and maintain collections, as well as to narrate, monitor, and review for the Montana cassette book recording program. Over 60 books, magazines, catalogs, and special project items were recorded in the TBL recording studios.

On April 22, 2003, the Montana Talking Book Library became the first regional library in the nation to install a low complexity mastering (LCM) digital audio recording system in its Helena recording studio. The



LCM offers many more options in the recording process than the previous analog system. One of the greatest benefits is the superb sound quality the system produces, enabling TBL to be prepared for the next National Library Service digital format.

In August 2002, the Montana Talking Book Library's recording program submitted its first magazine recording to the National Library Service's (NLS) Quality Assurance Review Program. This informal evaluation reviews locally produced audio books or magazines and judges the recording's format, announcements, production quality, narration, monitoring, and synopsis.

Participating in a "formal" NLS quality assurance process enables us to have Montana cassette books recognized by NLS as top quality, as well as having NLS duplicate and distribute copies of accepted Montana cassette books nationwide.

MSL Expenditures



MSL Funding



Library Development Department including the Montana Library Network (MLN)

Offering networking and consulting services to help Montana libraries provide Montanans with the best possible library services, share resources, and make the most information available statewide for the least cost.

LDD continues to offer consulting services to Montana's libraries and responded to **over 450 libraries** with questions on over 100 topics, ranging from anti-virus software to Young Adult Literature. Staff members also made over 240 visits to libraries throughout Montana.

In 2003, LDD posted a significant new online resource called **Montana Authors**, and renegotiated and renewed the **OCLC contract**, resulting in significant cuts in enrollment costs for small libraries.

The LDD team issued a Request For Proposal for a **statewide full-text magazine periodical index and selected Gale/InfoTrac**. They also participated in presentations for several groups, including MEA/MFT, the Pacific Northwest Library Association, the Washington State Library, as well as at many venues, including the Montana Library Association's annual conference, Federation meetings, and Montana Information Technology Day.

LDD provided **training** on many topics in 2003, including the MLN gateway, marketing, planning, trustee pointers, WorldCat, CatExpress, ILL web interface, CatME, and the Connexion cataloging tool.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided funding for the **Gates Summer Institutes**, which drew over 70 attendees in 2002.

The **Montana Shared Catalog** went live in 2002 with 17 libraries (ten public, five special, one academic and one school) in the northwestern and central areas of the state. Throughout the rest of 2002 and into 2003, MLN

offered training in cataloging, reports, circulation, acquisitions and public interface. In 2003, MLN began adding more libraries from the eastern part of the state (five public and one school).

In an effort to see how library services are organized by our neighbors, LDD sponsored a **bus tour of libraries** in Northern Idaho and Wyoming to visit their library districts.

MSL's Fifth Annual Fall Workshop was held September 26-27 in Lewistown. Training was offered on 13 topics, including: collection development, using MicroSoft Access, change in the workplace, digital image databases, customer service, CIPA and computer filtering, marketing, forming community partnerships, weeding, using policies and procedures, the future of libraries, and Young Adult services for school and public libraries.



LDD arranged for **trustee training** featuring Denver-based consultant Pat Wagner. Held in Billings and Great Falls, Pat's programs emphasized the importance of understanding laws governing library boards; the necessity of building working relationships with decision-makers in the library community; and the need to respect boundaries relating to the duties of the board, the director, and the staff. Seventy-three library board members and directors attended the two sessions.