Table of Contents

Welcome from the Editor ....................................................................................................................... 2
Washington Representative .................................................................................................................. 3
A Word from Our President ............................................................................................................... 4
Family Study Room – Clark College ................................................................................................. 5
Flathead County teen services librarian continues to carve out space for adolescents ............. 6
New Teen Connection Kits for 2024 ................................................................................................. 10
The Supportive Library ..................................................................................................................... 11
Upcoming Election Announcement and Participation Request ....................................................... 12
Alaska + PNLA Joint Conference Invitation .................................................................................... 13
YRCA Chair Ad .................................................................................................................................. 14
Your Work Matters ............................................................................................................................ 15
Welcome from the Editor

I’m happy to welcome you to the second issue of the PNLA quarterly newsletter.

It is my hope the following issues will showcase all the wonderful programs taking place in our regional libraries. I want to share your triumphs through pictures and articles.

I also want to share news articles about what is happening in all our libraries, states and provinces. Are you having a conference, special event, an election that needs publicized or just need to spread some news! This newsletter is the place! Read I great book that you would like to review, this newsletter is the place. Is something news worthy happening at our State Libraries or Provinces, this newsletter is the place.

In the first edition I introduced the PNLA officers with pictures and information from those who chose to add something personal, but missed our Washington representative. She will be introduced in this edition. This edition features another article from our president, Jenny Grenfell. Several articles from libraries in our area sharing their library programs and triumphs. PNLA is still looking for candidates for our upcoming election. Please consider serving your PNLA association. Check out the promo from the AkLA+PNLA Conference committee promoting their upcoming conferences in August and advertisement for a new chair for the Young Readers Award chair. And another timely article from four former Montana library commissioners-- Evaluating Base Level Library Services in Montana.

I hope you enjoy the second issue of the PNLA newsletter and will gladly contribute in the future. The deadline for the Fall issue is September 4th.

Debbi Kramer, Editor
Email: debkpnla@hotmail.com
Regional Representatives

Washington

Shawn Schollmeyer
Washington Digital Newspapers Coordinator
Washington State Library
A Word from Our President

President

Jenny Grenfell
North Mason Timberland Library
Belfair, WA

Hello Pacific Northwest Library world!

A couple of reminders to help us keep rolling along:

1) We are really devoid of nominations in several areas this year!!! If you were thinking about it, but just didn't get the email sent, here's your chance! We need a Vice-President/President-Elect, and representatives for Alberta, British Columbia, and Oregon. Having folks in these positions makes it possible for PNLA to run smoothly and keep improving at what we do. Participating on the Board is a great way to build your resume, create a wider network of friends and professional contacts, and have a richer professional library experience. Please consider, and let me know if you have any interest at all!!! (ktfjen@gmail.com)

2) Our Annual Meeting will be timed differently this year. Usually we hold this general membership meeting at the annual conference, but because we are in Juneau this year we decided to move the annual meeting to make it easier for everyone to attend. The General Membership Annual Meeting for PNLA will be held via Zoom on August 20 at 6:00 Pacific / 7:00 Mountain / 5:00 Alaska time. The Zoom link will be sent out closer to the date.

We look forward to seeing you in Juneau and/or at the Annual Meeting!

Jenny Grenfell
PNLA President
Library Family Study Room open at Clark College, Vancouver, WA

For students (or community members, staff, or faculty) looking for a quiet space to study or work with their kids, we created the Family Study Room. In addition to several adult workspaces, there is a small table and chairs as well as activities for kids of all ages:

- Activity kits developed by Clark Early Childhood Education students, each with a book and related activity (counting, felt board, coloring, puzzle, etc.)
- Short books
- Coloring books, crayons/colored pencils, stickers, and paper

We’re excited to make the library more welcoming to caregivers and children and appreciate the inspiration from local and national libraries who have done the same!

Provided by: Laura Nagel (she/her)
Reference & Instruction Librarian
Clark College - Vancouver, WA
From Our Vice President-President Elect

The article highlights Starr White's journey becoming the Teen Services Librarian at Flathead County Library. It discusses her background, transition to teen services, and current endeavors like revamping the Teen Zone and curating the Young Adult collection. White emphasizes her dedication to supporting teens and fostering a love of reading in the community.

Flathead County teen services librarian continues to carve out space for adolescents

Teen Services Librarian Starr White in the young adult section at Flathead County Library on Friday, March 22. (Casey Kreider/Daily Inter Lake)
Casey Kreider

by TAYLOR INMAN
Daily Inter Lake | March 25, 2024 12:00 AM

Starr White wants to make the library a go-to place for teenagers in the community.

As the Flathead County teen services librarian, her efforts are already proving successful — with the revamping of the Teen Zone at the Kalispell branch, new programming and an up-to-date collection, she said more teens are already coming into the library.

White joined the staff at Flathead County Libraries, then ImagineIF Libraries, in 2021. She was hired as a professional librarian with a focus on adult and teen services. Her time was mostly spent on adult services until last year when former library director Ashley Cummins asked which age group she would prefer to focus on.

White, who had spent much of her career working with children, knew she didn’t want to dive fully into adult services just yet, saying her “passion is with the kids.”

“I had some ideas of how I wanted teen services to go. But, I did not have the ability to dedicate my time to it. So being able to do that now, I'm very thankful,” White said.

Up to that point, the Young Adult collection, which is housed in the Teen Zone, did not have a dedicated librarian. Previously, it fell under the umbrella of youth services along with the children's department and later under the adult services position. Since the appointment of a dedicated teen services librarian, White said staff have seen an uptick in young adult readership, an area of the library that had largely seen a decline since 2015.

White grew up in Las Vegas, but as a member of the Eastern Shoshone tribe, she spent many summers and winters with her grandparents on the Wind River Reservation in Fort Washakie, Wyoming. She was always a library kid and remembers adoring her childhood storytime librarian Tracy Johnson.
“Talk about looking up to someone — she was a wonderful storyteller and an incredible artist. Those crafts and activities after storytime really helped build my confidence and gave me a world of creativity like no other place did,” White said.

White had significant challenges with reading and writing due to a learning disability, but Johnson encouraged her to persevere. She asked White to volunteer at the library when she was 11 years old during summer reading, where it was her job to listen to younger children talk about the books they read for the program and give them their prizes.

“Soon enough, I wanted to read all the books that these kids were reading. So I went back, at 11 years old, and started reading picture books like crazy. I must have read almost every picture book in that library,” White said.

Hired as a page at 15, she helped shelve books and set up crafts for storytime. Those early years in the library were a transformative experience for White, who said the confidence instilled in her by Johnson has inspired her throughout her career.

“Through her support, I discovered that having accommodations wasn't something to be ashamed of. It was an opportunity for growth and self-discovery,” White said. “Tracy created a supportive community where I felt comfortable asking for help, and where I found solidarity with others facing similar challenges. Despite my struggles with reading and writing, I always felt like I belonged in the library.”

When it was time to go to college, she wanted to pursue a career as a clinical laboratory scientist. But, her school of choice didn’t offer the program, and selecting another school would have meant moving away while her grandfather was in hospice, so she looked inward.

“I had to do a lot of soul searching of what I wanted to do, and becoming a librarian came up again and again,” White said. “It was my safety net. I knew what I loved, I grew up in it and I decided to embrace becoming a librarian.”

Once she decided to follow this path, White said she “quickly rose through the ranks,” starting in the Las Vegas Clark County Library district and moving to nearby Henderson Libraries soon after to work as a library advisor. After finishing her master’s degree, she moved to Kingman, Arizona, to work as a library assistant senior at the Mohave County Library.

**WORKING AS** a librarian department head had always been her goal, and in 2021, an opening in Flathead County piqued her interest.

“My great grandfather's tombstone actually has Flathead on it, because he wanted to be recognized as a Flathead. So, I looked into [the library district] and the people there were amazing, what they were doing, the programs that they had — the organization of the library system was impressive,” White said.

After changing hats a few times at Flathead County Libraries, she is now fully “team teen” and has been focusing on how to make the library a welcoming environment for teenagers. She and other staff redecorated the Teen Zone at the Kalispell branch with vines and a neon sign, including plenty of spaces to work and read.

They also have a slat wall, called the gem wall where White can pose programming ideas to the teens and they can submit their answers by filing the correlating colored gem into a slot. Typically, there are about 500 responses from the monthly poll.
“Most of our programs come from those, we’ll ask what kind of crafts they're looking forward to, what tech sounds exciting. Sometimes we're in agreement and I can predict it a mile away, others I’m like ‘What you mean you're not interested in Legos?’” she said with a laugh.

One program called Level Up provides a more open-ended type of activity for teens regularly, where they work with the same tools and materials, like polymer clay, and get better at using it over time. White said teens love coming in and knowing those same crafts are there waiting for them.

With the purchase of a Nintendo Switch, the staff started organizing Mario Kart and Super Smash Bros. tournaments and other game nights for the teens. It has been so popular, that requests are coming in from younger kids to have tournaments set up as a youth services program too.

Another popular program making a return this year is the merch making event, where teens can use freezer paper to iron designs onto merchandise.

**IN ADDITION** to working to create fun and engaging activities, White also wants the Young Adult section to be up-to-date and in line with what the community is checking out.

It’s a section that might undergo further changes, as Flathead County Library Board trustees recently floated the idea of removing the designation altogether. Board Chair David Ingram cited concerns about its wide age range that might confuse parents when picking age-appropriate books for their children. He suggested removing the designation and replacing it with books for either “minors or adults.”

The board could decide on the topic at their meeting on March 28, where they will discuss options regarding the Young Adult section, according to White.

However, White has already engaged in an audit process of the Young Adult section. A list of all the books in that section looks at the recommended age range as provided by publisher Baker & Taylor, Novelist, Syndetics Unbound and nonprofit Common Sense Media, which provides ratings for media and technology.

After looking at these age range recommendations, she and the staff found less than 1% of the books in the section had a “general adult” rating or no age range provided, all others listed the recommended age as 18 or below.

Audits are an important tool librarian use to understand what is in collections. For this audit, White said some books will probably end up moving to the adult section.

“It's a hard decision. But if book one of a series is in the right age group, but two, three or four really are for adults, guess what? It's a hard one, but that comes down to my choice as a librarian in our community,” White said.

In revamping the Teen Zone, the library looked at graphic novels and manga that were previously classified as either juvenile or general. To avoid teens picking up something that had mature content, staff relocated the general manga and graphic novel collections. Additionally, they initiated the curation of a Young Adult collection for both graphic novels and manga in the Teen Zone.

Curating the collection and ordering books is one of her favorite parts of the job, says White.
About 60% of the books she orders are new titles from authors who are proven popular at the library – which she determines by looking at circulation data. Thirty percent of orderings go toward requests from patrons or “filling gaps” in the collection, which includes damaged books or novels missing from popular series.

The final 10% comes down to her intuition as a librarian, and she looks at what books are trending nationwide that readers locally might soon be interested in checking out. To do this, she looks at lists like the New York Times Bestseller list, among others.

This process mostly applies to young adult fiction, White said. For young adult nonfiction, she looks at mostly book lists to get recommendations.

**WORKING WITH** teens has been eye-opening and very rewarding. As library kids grow up, they don’t lose their passion, and White said they aren’t shy to express what they’d like to see.

“I've learned that it's my job to listen way more than I speak. I do interject at times because they can tell you what they want, but they don’t really understand the nuances of what it is. I have fun sometimes figuring out that we're both talking about apples, even when I thought they were talking about tangerines,” White said.

She’s amazed at what teens create at the library too, and mentioned a zine making program last year.

“For the longest time, we had an art board at Kalispell where they could pin up their artwork. And we had zines pinned up and I was amazed that these teens took the time to write a little comic, even a few pages, and put it up for another person to find and discover,” White said.

When she thinks about the kind of librarian she wants to be, she remembers her childhood librarian who helped her reach new heights by not seeing her challenges but rather seeing only her potential. It’s something White hopes to pass along to her own patrons.

“As a librarian, I aspire to be a beacon of support and encouragement, just as Tracy was for me,” White said “I am dedicated to fostering a love of reading, providing resources and support to those in need, and advocating for the rights and dignity of all members of our community.”

More information about teen services at Flathead County Libraries can be found at https://imagineiflibraries.org/education/teens/.

*Reporter Taylor Inman can be reached at 406-758-4433 or by emailing tinman@dailyinterlake.com.*
New Teen Connection Kits for 2024

By Jennifer Redford  May 10th, 2024  Public Libraries, School Libraries, Teen Programs

The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) is excited to offer another round of Teen Connection Kits to help teens reestablish social connections and create learning experiences to help them build practical skills and resiliency. Here is a list of the Teen Connection Kits offered this year:

- Mindfulness for Teens*
- Teen Anxiety*
- Teen Mental Health*
- Rock Tumbling
- Sketching

*If you order any of the Teen Mental Health Kits, we encourage you to reach out to local mental health providers or partners in your community for additional information, pamphlets, or resources to add to the kit. Thanks to Lauren Silva and Molly Nota from Ada Community Library for their help in creating these kits.

Funding for the Rock Tumbling and Sketching kits is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under a provision of the Library Services and Technology Act.

The kits are yours to keep for your library. We will send a survey in six months to gather feedback on how you used the kits and how many teens you served. There are two different ways that your library can use the kits:

- **Circulate them.** If you choose to circulate a kit to teens in your community, your library is responsible for adding it to your catalog and creating circulation procedures. You can add items to the kits and use different containers if the ones that we send don’t work for your library. The ICfL is unable to replace lost or damaged items.
- **Use them for library programs.** The kits can be used during in-house library programs or during outreach events. You may need to purchase supplemental materials for your programs. The ICfL is unable to replace lost or damaged items.

This year, each library location can select up to two kits for free, while supplies last. Check out detailed descriptions for the kits here. The order form for the kits will open on Monday, May 20, at 3:00 p.m. MT / 2:00 p.m. PT. A link to order the kits will be updated on the Teen Connection Kits webpage and sent out on the LibIdaho and Idaho Teen Services listservs at that time. In past years, the kits “sold out” within a few days, so please get your order in ASAP. Also, please plan on ordering only one or two kits. If you order more than two kits, it impacts the inventory and everyone else’s access to the kits.

We will mail out the kits in early to mid-June. If you are in the Boise area, you may choose to pick up your kit directly from the ICfL office and receive it sooner. If you are a school library that will be closed in June, we can hold off on mailing your kit until school starts up again at the end of the summer.
The Supportive Library: Helping Patrons Experiencing Homelessness

Library 2.024 mini-conference: "The Supportive Library: Helping Patrons Experiencing Homelessness," will be held online (and for free) on Thursday, June 20th, 2024, from 12:00 - 3:00 pm US-Pacific Time.

REGISTRATION:

This is a free event, being held live online and also recorded. [REGISTER HERE](supportivelibrary.eventbrite.com) to attend live and/or to receive the recording links afterward.

Please also join the [Library 2.0 community](library20.com) to be kept updated on this and future events.

Everyone is invited to participate in our Library 2.0 conference events, which are designed to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among information professionals worldwide. Each three-hour event consists of a keynote panel, 10-15 crowd-sourced thirty-minute presentations, and a closing keynote.

Colet Bartow – Colet rhymes with Olay!
Continuing Education Coordinator

Colet.Bartow@mt.gov
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We are Looking for You… yes…. YOU!

The PNLA Board is our primary means of keeping this organization running and ensuring that communications and events stay current with what is happening in the larger library world. With such a far-flung and diverse region, it is vital that the leadership continue to change, bringing in fresh perspectives on a regular basis. This year we are seeking nominations for several positions. They are listed below, with a brief description of the responsibilities. If you are interested in running for the position, or just want to find out more details, please contact Jenny Grenfell: ktjen@gmail.com. We will shortly be sending out an official Call for Nominations, and the nomination process will close on June 10. Elections will be held in June.

Please consider participating! The Board meets quarterly via Zoom, and then in-person (when possible) at the August conference. The additional time commitment for each position tends to come in spurts, rather than being an ongoing responsibility, and this is an awesome way to make connections with library staff all over the Northwest.

Open Positions this year:

**Vice-President /President-Elect** – We elect this position every year. The position is actually a 3-year rotation. The VP/President-Elect becomes the next President, who becomes the next Past-President.

- Vice-President/President-Elect: This is primarily the “learning year”. It gives folks a chance to learn how PNLA works from the inside before taking over as President. Duties include covering meetings in the President’s absence and assisting with projects that come along.
- President: responsible for running the Board meetings and maintaining the connections between PNLA and the states/provinces. Sometimes has the potential to attend conferences as the PNLA representative.
- Past-President: responsible for assisting the Conference Coordinator with the annual conference and manages the election in the spring.

**2nd Vice-President** – This is a 2-year position and is largely responsible for membership – communication, recruiting, and records. This person also assists with the elections in the spring.

**Treasurer** – While PNLA does have a Financial Manager, the Treasurer is an important Board member, responsible for working with that person to review financial statements and transactional records. This person signs the paychecks and works on the budget along with the Financial Manager.

**State / Provincial Representatives:** Some of our state organizations elect or appoint the PNLA representative for their state, but for the states and provinces that do not do this that person is elected for a 2-year term by the PNLA members from that location. This year we are looking for representatives from:

- Oregon
- British Columbia
- Alberta

This person is responsible for being the connection between PNLA and their state/provincial library and library association. In a year when the conference is held in their state/province they assist with that event.
Early bird prices end May 31st!

Secure early bird pricing now and pay later!

*Invoices not paid by July 5, 2024 will be charged the regular rate(s).*

AkLA Members, Non-Members, Friends/Trustees/Students please register here.
PNLA Members, Non-Members, Friends/Trustees/Students please register here.

(Registration Types & Rates)

Exhibit and Sponsor Registrations can be made online here or with the mail-in option.

(Exhibits & Sponsors)

More information can be found on the conference website.

*NEW* The conference schedule has been posted! Check out the website for more information. Full session details will be available June 1st.

The Alaska Library Association (AkLA) and the Pacific Northwest Library Association (PNLA) are hosting a joint conference to be held August 1-3, 2024 in Juneau, AK.

The Alaska Library Association and the Pacific Northwest Library Association have chosen "Stronger Together: Amplifying Voices, Strengthening Communities" as our 2024 conference theme. Libraries are at their strongest when they endeavor to provide collections, forums, and programs that actively uplift the diverse voices, stories, and experiences within our communities. The partnership between a library and its community is crucial in ensuring that our services are actively enriching the lives of every resident.

Use the hashtag #AKLAPNLA2024 on social media. (AkLA Facebook / PNLA Facebook)

Thanks,

-Duncan
Chair, Young Reader’s Choice Award (YRCA)

The Pacific Northwest Library Association (PNLA) is looking for a dedicated, enthusiastic individual to Chair the YRCA! Since 1940 young readers in the Pacific Northwest have been participating in the Young Reader’s Choice Award (YRCA). The award was established in 1940 by Harry Hartman, a Seattle bookseller, who believed every student should have an opportunity to select a book that gives him or her pleasure. It continues to be the longest-running children’s choice book award and is also the only international award with young readers in both the United States and Canada participating in the program.

Purpose
The Chair manages all aspects of the YRCA awards process and ensures the awards program continues to be sustainable, relevant and supports the founding goals of the program. The Chair reports to the PNLA Board and is a non-voting member of the PNLA Board. This is an ongoing, active role for twelve months a year. This position is the first point of contact for the PNLA Board and the public for all matters pertaining to YRCA.

Scope
Committee chairs are non-voting members of the PNLA Board. The YRCA Chair is expected to attend all virtual Board meetings, support the annual conference and any other duties as assigned by the PNLA board.

Essential Functions
• Plan and organize the yearly YRCA schedule for nominations, shortlisting and voting.
• Recruit and coordinate volunteers in each participating State and Province on the YRCA team to assist with the awards process, including but not limited to nominations, shortlisting, promotion and communications.
• Submit reports and attend all PNLA Board meetings (currently meeting every 8 weeks, subject to change).
• Create communication and marketing documents, social media posts and emails to promote YRCA.
• Respond to all inquiries regarding YRCA

Qualifications
• Strong commitment to the ALA and CFLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom
• Library experience in a public, academic or school setting

Skills and Abilities
• Strong writing and verbal communication skills.
• Experience responding to censorship challenges or participating in discussions pertaining to censorship in children’s or teen reading spaces.
• Coordinating or supervisory skills.
• Knowledge of current children’s and teen literature.
• Ability to learn new technology platforms or programs

Apply
Please express your interest for this role by sending a cover letter and resume to yrcachair@gmail.com Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted. Please direct questions regarding this process to yrcachair@gmail.com.

About PNLA
PNLA is the oldest regional library association in the United States and the only binational association in North America. Members come from Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and beyond. Since 1909, PNLA has provided a professional and social forum for librarians, library workers, and library supporters throughout the vast Pacific Northwest region.
Your Work Matters No. 13: Evaluating Base Level Library Services (for library staff and board members)

“Base: …a conceptual structure or entity on which something draws or depends… something used as a foundation or starting point for further work; a basis…” (Oxford Languages and Google).

‘Base level library services’ is a key and pragmatic concept as we contemplate which common services any Montanan might reasonably expect to find in their local library. We know that there are differences in service levels between libraries. We’re certainly not suggesting that communities work towards growing mirror image libraries. We are suggesting is that all Montana citizens have a need and right to ready access of a certain base level of library services. What are these common, base level services?

On its on-the-web introduction of Public Library Standards, the Montana State Library states: “All Montanans deserve access to library services that meet their needs. The public library standards identify a base level (authors’ emphasis) of service that residents and visitors should receive wherever they are in Montana.”

We suggest that this ‘base level’ of service is not one thing, but rather many possible services built around the idea of ‘sufficiency’. While base level services will vary from library to library and community to community, there will be commonalities. And we predict that where there are differences, these differences will be understood by whether what’s being offered is sufficient to satisfy community members’ needs. This is the test centered around ‘sufficiency’, whether individuals find in their library sufficient resources to satisfy their needs.

Base library standards don’t formally exist, as such, in Montana’s Public Library Standards. In fact, most of Montana’s standards focus on the means by which libraries fulfill their mission rather than if library users’ needs are being addressed or met. (1)

A portion of the Public Library Standards, however, titled ‘Service the Community’ (2) focuses on outcomes, and these outcomes suggest a set of sufficiency’s, basic level library services, applicable to any Montana public library, and locally definable. Here are these standards in slightly abbreviated form:

(1) The library is open during convenient hours.
(2) Everyone has comfortable, and convenient access to the library and its services.
(3) Everyone has content and services. (4) Everyone can find library materials online.
(5) Everyone has access to virtual and face-to-face programming.
(6) Everyone has access to information about local community and government activities that assists them with understanding local community issues and allows them to engage civically in the community.
(7) Children and caregivers have access to early literacy programming and materials either through the library or by being directed to another community organization that specializes in early literacy.
(8) Everyone has access to information about library programs and services through internal and external marketing efforts of library staff.
(9) Everyone has access to a library website or social media site.
(10) Everyone can obtain materials and services from another library through interlibrary loan services.
(11) Everyone has access to the Internet via wired and WIFI connections.
(12) Reasonable accommodations are made so that people with disabilities have access to the library's services.


This is a very useful basic list. Your library will want to emphasize some of these services and deemphasize others, but this is a reasonable start towards defining what’s included in ‘base level library services’. We
encourage libraries of all types to consider their library’s performance in light of these standards, and then to reflect upon these standards themselves.

Clearly, they are written as aspirations, not as quantifiable requirements; a tip-off is the repeated word “Everyone”. ‘Everyone’ is an impossible target, regardless of our best aspirations and intent. However, delightfully, with just a tiny bit of mental gymnastics, this list becomes a useful tool to qualitatively measure your library’s success. Instead of ‘everyone’, substitute specific individuals (or groups of individuals) you serve or wish you were serving. Try setting each standard in a personal, concrete context. For instance:

“1) Frequent library user Mary Doe finds the library is open during convenient hours.” True or false, and if false, how can you make this a true statement?

Or turn the proposition on its ear, and ask:

“1) To attract at-risk teens, a group observably not using our library, what hours would make the library more attractive to them?”

We hope that with this feedback, assuming each of these base level services is available to some degree to your community, that you can look at your library’s base levels services and make decisions that lead to your library more sufficiently meeting all your users needs.

Written and approved of by these four former State Library Commissioners:  
Kenning Arlitsch  
Cheri Bergeron  
Aaron LaFromboise  
Bruce Newell

(1) Most standards focus, for instance, on governance, finance, facilities, human resources within the library, and so forth. (Administrative Rules of Montana 10.102.1158 through 10.102.1162.)

(2) These standards were recently created by a task force of librarians with input from the larger Montana library community, and adopted by the MSL Commission. (See Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM) 10.102.1159)