

CO-3

MPLA Awards Committee

Final Report

April 12, 2010

Chair: Ellen Fockler (NV – 2010)

Committee members:

Janet Ahrberg (OK – 2012)

Steve Decker (UT – 2010)

Deborah Hogue (CO – 2010)

JaNae Kinikin (UT – 2010)

Katie Jones Lynn (WY – 2012)

Karen Neurohr (OK – 2012)

Lisa Priebe (CO)

Judith Wolfe (NE – 2012)

Eileen Wright (exofficio) (MPLA President)

Oliver Pflug (MT) asked to be excused from the committee.

Nominations were solicited for five awards: Carl Gaumer Library Champion Award, the MPLA Beginning Professional Award, the MPLA Distinguished Service Award, the MPLA Literary Contribution Award, and the MPLA Unsung Hero Award.

Nominations were solicited through emails to state representatives, state and local library associations, and state association newsletters. Awards information and the nomination form are also available on the MPLA website. The deadline for submission of nominations was moved forward to January 22, 2010.

The following were nominated: (Award winners are marked with **)

Distinguished Service Award

**Connie Lamb

Provo, Utah

Beginning Professional

**Tom Taylor

South Hutchinson, Kansas

Literary Contribution

Rilla Askew

Hartshorne, Oklahoma

**N. Scott Momaday

New York, NY

Valerie Horton and Bruce Smith

Centennial Colorado and Madison, Wisconsin

Unsung Hero

Dawn Pilcher
Valley Center, Kansas

Malavika Muralidharan
Phoenix, Arizona

**Valerie Horton and Susan Burton
Centennial, Colorado and Independence, Missouri

Carl Gaumer Library Champion Award

**Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma (FOLIO)
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Paul Heimer
Laramie, Wyoming

Originally, there were five nominations for the Unsung Hero Award, and none for the Carl Gaumer Award. However, after consulting with those who nominated FOLIO and Paul Heimer, both agreed that FOLIO and Paul Heimer could be nominated for the Carl Gaumer Library Champion award instead.

Nominations were published via an Airset “cloud computer,” at www.airset.com. Committee members read and commented on nominations; a conference call on March 4, 2010, allowed discussion. Winners were selected by voting following the conference call.

Letters were sent to award winners and to those who had nominated award winners. Letters were also sent to those whose nominees were not selected, thanking them for their participation. Letters were followed with an email, giving award winners more information about the Conference and the Awards Banquet.

Committee members participated in writing press releases for each winner, to be sent to appropriate publications after the awards are presented on April 19th, 2010, at the MPLA/OLA joint conference. Steve Decker, Lisa Priebe, Karen Neurohr and Janet Ahrberg assisted. Biographical information and a picture was requested from award winners and will be sent to Judy Zelenski for inclusion in the MPLA newsletter and on the website.

Recommendations:

The most difficult part of the committee’s work – aside from choosing award winners-- is soliciting nominations. Although a description of the awards and the nomination form were sent to state representatives and state publications, I would welcome suggestions for wider distribution of the award information and nomination form, and would recommend using the MPLA listserv, if possible, to encourage nominations.

Notice of nominations to state publications should go out early – perhaps as early as the first of October, to be sure that the notices meet publication deadlines and allow time for nominations to be submitted before the January deadline.

Airset.com has proved a very useful tool in allowing communications between award committee members. There are other equally effective online resources for communication, some that might be a bit easier to use. Google docs might be used effectively, since most people have some experience in using Google, and DimDim might also be considered. Email communication with committee members is also helpful and necessary.

I liked both the ability to post nominations and supporting information to Airset, and the fact that committee members could post comments. However, those comments do not provide a substitute for conversation. I do believe that the conference call is a very necessary part of the committee's determinations. Occasionally, discussion makes a difference in voting, and at the very least, it helps all committee members to learn more about the nominees.