

ST-4

## MONTANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

### LEGISLATIVE CHALLENGES

The Montana State Library Association, along with the Montana State Library, face a very challenging legislative year, with a major state deficit and a governor who is has already demanded major cuts in State Library funding and promises to cut more as well as seek money from the Coal Trust, which has been until now a fairly secure source of library funding. Cuts to federations are already making themselves felt in the library community, and the Library Commission projects cuts for Interlibrary Loan reimbursements and other projects. Also at risk is the state funding which enables Montana's libraries to subscribe to InfoTrac for low enough cost to include just about all libraries. Montana Library Association pays two lobbyists to work for libraries during the legislative session, and in the past they have been very successful with the guidance and input of Lois Fitzpatrick and the Legislative Affairs Committee of MLA.

### LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Three Montana librarians attended the MPLA Ghost Ranch Leadership Institute this fall, and their input is going to be part of the January meeting of MLA as well as part of presentations throughout the year. We are looking forward to their sharing of experiences and their continued leadership in our state.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

The MLA Strategic Planning Task Force, under the leadership of Debbie Schlesinger and Bette Ammon, has completed their data collection and analysis. They are in the stage of roughing out goals and objections and have drafted both mission and vision statements. This process promises to be valuable to MLA, and we will be sharing insights and changes with MPLA as the task force continues their work.

### 2003 CONVENTION

The Montana Library Association Annual Conference will take place in Butte, Montana, on April 23-26, 2003. MLA President Coby Johnson will be leading with a theme and complementary activities related to her love of weaving, which lends itself well to the atmosphere of collaboration in the association. One session for the convention will be "Working Smart" Using Your State, Regional, and National Library Organizations", and the ALA, MPLA, and PNLA Representatives will all be collaborating on that presentation, with the MLA Chair of Professional Development.

### INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

The MLA Board sent a resolution supporting a school librarian whose principal removed a magazine from the school library without due process, a situation escalated by the fact that the student body had selected the magazine. The Board expressed disapproval of the actions of the school board in this matter. In January the MLA Board will consider a letter to our Congressmen asking them to support the proposed bill to repeal the parts of the US Patriot Act that deal with confiscating records and monitoring computers without notification of patrons.