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Montana State Report 7- 2005

MLA this year awarded an Honorary Life Membership award to Karen Strege, Montana State Librarian for nearly nine years, until October, 2004. Karen is enormously respected in the Montana library community for her initiative and success in developing statewide and national networking for the enhanced sharing of library resources among Montana libraries. She is also noted for her energetic and effective work with the Montana state legislature in preserving state funding for libraries. There is no library user in Montana who has not felt the positive effects of her service. Karen continues her vigorous advocacy for libraries in her current work as project director for the Western Council of State Libraries.

Festival of the Book Activities Happen throughout Montana:

Great Falls celebrated a Festival of the Book, June 24 and 25th.

Missoula: The Montana Festival of the Book will take place September 23rd-24th, in historic downtown Missoula. The Montana Festival of the Book will feature scores of the region's writers in a variety of readings, panels, exhibits, demonstrations, a literary contest, signings, entertainment, receptions, and other events. The Festival is presented by the Montana Center for the Book and the Montana Committee for the Humanities, in association with numerous other national, state and local organizations and businesses.

Helena: The Helena Festival of the Book, October 19-23, features readings by many notable authors and features panels on nonfiction and novels-in-progress, plus the annual poetics lecture and on-going book discussion groups. The festival is designed to showcase the richness of Montana culture and literature, and to bring Montana writers to Montana readers.

Trustee Training: Montana State Library will continue its series of leadership workshops for public library trustees and directors. This year's workshops, "Evaluation at Your Library," will be presented by Dr. Debra Wilcox Johnson, a professor at the University of Illinois library school and a partner in Johnson & Johnson Consulting, a firm specializing in library management issues and training. Debra will present the workshop in two Montana locations: Billings on Saturday, October 22 (tentative) and Missoula on Saturday, November 5 (confirmed).

Gates Training for Public Library Staff: Eight computer-troubleshooting workshops are being planned for public library staff during July and August. These one-day workshops are available through a Staying Connected Grant project funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for Montana's public libraries.

2005 One Book Montana: Letters From Yellowstone by Diane Smith, a 1999 novel about naturalists and nature in Yellowstone at the turn of the century was chosen by The Montana Center for the Book and the Montana Committee for the Humanities for this year's statewide reading selection.

Ask a Montana Librarian Project: This virtual reference program is starting its second year with OCLC Question Point 24/7. This fall a marketing campaign will be launched to campus the state promoting the access to professional reference by email and chat.

White Paper on Rural Libraries: Bruce Newell, of the Montana Library Network of the Montana State Library wrote a White Paper on Montana Libraries: Good Neighbors, an article about rural libraries and the importance of collaboration and consortiums. It can be found from: <http://montanalibraries.org/>