

ST-6 - Nevada
May 2013 Board Report
Ellen Fockler

- Sent a reminder about MPLA Professional Development Grants to all Nevada Library Association members, along with a suggestion that the availability of grants is a good reason to join MPLA
- Sent information about nominations for MPLA Awards to all Nevada Library Association members, based on Mary Ann's post
- Recommended that NLA members and other librarians check out the MPLA page on Facebook
- Sent information about MPLA Awards, including mention that Holly Van Valkenburgh, from Nevada's State Library and Archives, was the winner of the Distinguished Service Award last year, to the NLA Newsletter

The Nevada Reading Week Conference for librarians and teachers took place on February 22 and 23rd, 2013, and was very successful this year, with 283 participants, of which 71 registrants and 24 other participants were school and public librarians. Keynote speakers this year were (from left to right)



author / illustrators Eric Rohmann and Candace Fleming, (Ellen Fockler, chair) book reviewer Sharon Levin, and children's literature consultant Judy Freeman. The conference offered three keynote presentations and 56 different breakout sessions related to children's and young adult literature. Reading programs for school and public children's libraries, music, science, photography, nature, history, and many, many booktalks kept participants busy for a day and a half. Next year's conference is scheduled for February 28th and March 1, 2014. Although most participants come from northern Nevada, everyone is welcome – one of the best bargains in school and library

conferences available! For more information, see www.nevadareadingweek.com.

The 2013 AHA Moment Tour visited Carson City Library on Monday. The mobile TV studio was in town Monday and Tuesday, recording Americans' "aha" moments in a 20-city, 7300-mile tour. Between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m, those who would like to contribute may simply show up at the Carson City Library, ready to record their experiences.

The Elko-Lander-Eureka County Library System held their major fundraiser early in May, the "Just Desserts" evening. Tickets entitled partygoers to multiple desserts, coffees from around the world, a Margarita bar, wines, specialty beers, and champagne. A chocolate fountain with strawberries graced the children's library.

In the Las Vegas – Clark County Library District, the Big Library Read begins May 15th. Three LVCCLD libraries will participate. A joint effort between Sourcebook, Overdrive, and over 2000 libraries world-wide, the project is similar to the one-book or "big read" programs of the past – except that this project

will give patrons around the world the opportunity to read the same eBook. The title selected for this pilot project is Michael Malone's *Four Corners of the Sky*.

Matters of concern...

Another Nevada library system is in jeopardy. While the economy in Nevada is beginning to improve, available funding is still in shortfall, and county entities are still making cuts to budgets, even after all the cuts made in the last five years. Lyon County libraries are facing a 23% budget cut in 2014, bringing the total of budget cuts to 52%. Lyon County system will lose one full-time and three part-time positions, leaving them with only 7 staff members to cover 5 branches. Like so many states in the MPLA area, Nevada has small counties with wide-open spaces, and libraries are an essential part of these communities.

In other matters - concern about school libraries all over the state becomes greater. School libraries provide resources for children who have little access to books and computers at home, and because of this, they provide a level of equity for such children. School libraries also build life-long patrons, introducing children to the concepts of borrowing and returning books and other materials. In spite of multiple studies that provide evidence that children score higher on standardized tests in schools where there is a viable, well-stocked library with a trained librarian, more and more principals are electing to save money by removing their certified librarians and replacing them with classified assistants, many of whom are untrained and often without library experience. (They are only required to have a high school diploma.) The Carson City school district and the Lyon County school district have both been placed in this position; certified library positions have been removed from all elementary schools. In Washoe County, middle school librarians are being replaced by assistants, in Clark County, even some high schools are no longer staffed with certified, trained librarians. The effectiveness of school libraries is being minimized by the lack of expertise. I'm seriously worried about the future of our school libraries, and by extension, of all of our library systems. If school libraries are not a valued part of the education system, public libraries will also become less valued as this generation of children grows up without the habit of library use.

OK, off my soapbox for today.....

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Fockler

Washoe County School District Library Coordinator, Retired