

Marketing and Public Relations

January 22, 2005 – April 5, 2005

- 1) **Statewide Marketing Campaign** – The statewide marketing campaign is moving forward. Additional librarians from all parts of the state, and from all types of libraries, have agreed to serve on the committee. The entire committee met in mid-February, and discussed the campaign, our proposed target markets, and marketing tools and materials they felt Montana libraries would most need and use. The committee voted to spend the first year focusing on senior citizens, using a “libraries as fountain of youth” concept. We will use the most current research that demonstrates that keeping your mind active and engaged is considered the best way to ward off disease, including Alzheimer’s Disease and dementia. A portion of the committee met with Q Communications Group in Helena to discuss the campaign, and the potential of our working together. Q will be responsible for the visual aspect of the campaign, and will also assist with coordinating things like media buys, mailings, events, etc. I will also assist with these efforts, and will do all of the writing for the campaign.

The committee wants to coordinate an all-encompassing marketing effort, and provide a wide range of tools for librarians to easily implement in their own libraries. All of these tools will be specifically targeted toward senior citizens. A list of tools to be developed, in no particular order, includes:

- a. Press releases
- b. Op-eds
- c. Letters to the editor
- d. Talking Points
- e. Speeches for different audiences, such as Rotary, Lions Club, etc.
- f. Information for their Web site – develop information that can be put on patrons’ Web sites
- g. Information for library Web sites
- h. Brief articles for library newsletters
- i. Sample articles that can be submitted to the local newspaper
- j. PowerPoint demonstrations
- k. Posters
- l. Clip art
- m. Art that can be personalized for their library
- n. Brochures
- o. Reading Lists
- p. Web site lists
- q. Latest research
- r. Programming ideas, including available speakers
- s. Statewide partnerships
- t. Statewide media events
- u. A guide as to how to develop partnerships with local businesses, etc. that might provide potential program funding
- v. A guide as to how to plan certain events
- w. Placemats for restaurants with facts, figures, knock-knocks, crossword puzzles, etc. about libraries

The committee wants to offer all materials to all libraries, but they want to work with a group of pre-selected libraries (volunteers) that will agree to implement as many of the marketing tools and materials provided and serve as "test centers." This way, we will be able to accurately measure some items (yet to be determined) that will help us identify whether or not we feel our marketing efforts are successful. Money is being donated by MLA for the campaign, and they have asked to have some kind of a measure of our success.

A draft of a Web site has been designed to help us share all of these tools with librarians. The look of the Web site will be further refined as we work with Q to determine the overall look and feel of the campaign.

I have also scheduled meetings with potential partners for the marketing campaign – some have been identified as partners that will contribute cash to the marketing effort so that we may further leverage our marketing dollars. Additionally, OCLC has agreed to partner with us to assist with production costs. We do not currently have a dollar value associated with this partnership.

- 2) National Library Week – National Library Week 2005 takes place the week of April 10 – 16. Governor Brian Schweitzer will visit the State Library and read to a group of 15-20 four – six year olds on Thursday, April 14 from 1:30 – 2 p.m. I am preparing a press kit with fast facts about Montana's libraries, and will include information about the State Library's programs. I am also working with Lee Newspapers to get a weeklong series of articles to run during National Library Week in all of Lee Newspapers around the state (Helena, Bozeman, Butte, Billings, and Kalispell). The proposed articles will focus on both the State Library and our most innovative programs, as well as on issues that affect libraries around Montana.

The proposed article ideas are: Recruitment, Patriot Act Resolution/Privacy/First Amendment, Library Funding, Something for everyone @ your library.

NOTE: I am not hopeful about getting this series of articles placed, but I am working on it.

- 3) Early Literacy – In March, I attended the Public Library Association Conference in Chicago in order to participate in a three-day training on "Every Child Ready to Read @ your library." This innovative program, spearheaded by ALA, is designed to reach out to caregivers and parents of young children (from birth to kindergarten age) to help teach parents how to work to develop literacy skills in their children.

From a marketing standpoint, "Every Child" is a homerun for Montana libraries. This program helps to position libraries as an important part of a child's education, and as an important part of families' lives. With proper marketing, statewide implementation of this program will position the State Library (and indeed all Montana libraries) as educators and involved in the health and well-being of Montana's families – an enviable position when it comes to funding issues. I also see us developing statewide partnerships with organizations as wide-ranging as the Department of Public Health and

Human Services to Starbucks (who support literacy efforts with funding) that will help put the State Library in the limelight.

The program has not really been introduced on a statewide level anywhere in the country, but is, instead, being implemented on a library by library basis. Therefore, we will have to revise some of the program's aspects to make it work on a statewide level. After talking with Bob Cooper, I can see the value of having a federation or two identify the "Every Child" program as "their program" and running with it. This would allow us to test wider implementation of it. Additionally, I see the statewide marketing committee focusing their efforts on young children and families in the year following the senior citizen campaign. By focusing on this demographic, we would have the double punch of marketing materials and programming – a sure winner. More details to follow as I work on the development of the program.

5. **Big Sky Libraries** – The second "new" issue of Big Sky Libraries will be mailed within the next week. This issue's focus is on library funding.
6. **Legislative Brochures** – We continue to receive comment cards from legislators on the legislative booklets we distributed. All of the cards have said how useful the booklets were/are during the session, and that the booklets helped the legislators to understand the value of the State Library for their own purposes and for the purposes of their constituents. The people who worked on putting this brochure together met and talked about ways to improve our efforts for the 2007 Session.
7. **Annual Report** – The annual report was mailed the first week of March to a list of approximately 350 individuals, including all legislators, Montana libraries, and Montana State Library supporters.