



Volume 39, Number 3  
Fall 2008

# Newsletter

## President's Message—

*Bill Peterson, President, Museums Association of Montana*

*The Museums Association of Montana (MAM) promotes professionalism and cooperation among the Museums of Montana. MAM is an organization for all types of museums—art, history, science and general—and individuals who are interested in improving and strengthening Montana's museums.*

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### THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS December 31, 2008

The MAM Newsletter is published quarterly by the Museums Association of Montana, a nonprofit organization of institutions and businesses, dedicated to promoting communication among all types of museums in Montana. MAM is an all volunteer organization whose support comes from its membership and from occasional public and private grants.

As a forum for exchange of information and ideas, the MAM Newsletter needs your contributions. Deadlines for submitting articles and announcements are: December 31, 2008. Please send information to:

MAM Newsletter Editor  
Montana Historical Society  
PO Box 201201  
225 North Roberts  
Helena, MT 59620-1201  
Phone 406-444-4713  
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email: [dmitchell@mt.gov](mailto:dmitchell@mt.gov)

## Greetings Members,

I have always felt that messages from Presidents of such organizations like the Museums Association of Montana should be uplifting and full of good news. When times are tough as they have been lately, it is often hard to focus on the good but that is what we must do in these uncertain times. I cannot help but look to the future, for the historian in me knows that better times are ahead.

I am pleased to report that the 2009 MAM conference planning is going smoothly thanks to many of the dedicated board members of this group. I see many quality sessions in the schedule and I look forward to seeing our members at the conference. We continue to work with the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) on new forms of future funding for Montana's museums. And on a really bright note for MAM, we have once again scored well and have been recommended for some operational funding through a Montana Cultural Trust Grant. We still have to testify before the Committee when the legislature is in session but I feel confident we will be successful there as well.

Times such as these are also cause to reflect. How can our museums stay competitive given all the current challenges? I wish I had a magic answer but all I can say is we need to look to our strengths. Each museum in Montana has unique strengths in their collections, facilities, programming, volunteers, and staff. For us here in Alder Gulch, we will continue to capitalize on our ability to offer educational opportunities and programming that allow people to experience history first hand through direct interaction with our resources. I urge our membership to do the same, find your strengths and don't be afraid to try new things.

**Happy Holidays** from all of us at the *Museums Association of Montana* and we look forward to seeing everyone in Billings.

Sincerely,  
Bill Peterson



**2008-2009  
Museums Association of  
Montana  
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**BE A MAM BOARD MEMBER!**

If you'd like to expand your knowledge of museum happenings statewide, be involved in setting the course for a stronger museum community in our state, or want to make a significant contribution to Montana's cultural community, then consider placing your name in nomination for a seat on the Museums Association of Montana Board.

Significant changes and challenges are on the horizon for Montana museums—also some great opportunities! MAM needs representation from all areas and disciplines in our museum community. To find out more, contact MAM President Bill Peterson at 843-5247, or billpeterson@mt.gov.

New Board members will be voted on at the annual meeting in March.

► **PEOPLE IN THE NEWS**

◆ **Patty Dean** is the new Curator of History at the *Montana Historical Society*. This is a homecoming for Patty who worked at the Society from 1979-1984. She held positions at the Arkansas Arts Center Decorative Arts Museum (1984-1988) and the Minnesota Historical Society (1988-2004). Patty returned to Montana where she has been active in the Montana Preservation Alliance, Drumlummon Institute and teaching at Carroll College. We are happy to have Patty back in the museum world!

◆ **Ken Egan** is the new Executive Director of *Humanities Montana*. Egan is a specialist in the literature of the West. He will take the position of executive director on February 1, 2009. Currently a professor of English at Drury University in Springfield, Missouri, Ken is no stranger to Montana. He is a native of Polson and was on the faculty at Rocky Mountain College in Billings from 1985 to 2002. He also served on the Humanities Montana Board from 1989-1993. A reception to welcome Egan back to Montana and Humanities Montana, and to say goodbye to retiring Executive Director **Mark Sherouse** will be held in mid-March.

**MAM's address:  
P.O. Box 1451  
Helena, MT 59624**

# 2009 MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION OF MONTANA CONFERENCE COMING SOON!!!!

## Preserving the Past, Facing the Future

MSU Billings Downtown Campus

208 North Broadway, Billings

The 2009 annual MAM conference will be held in Billings, March 12, 13, and 14. We hope to have another record attendance—lots of exciting sessions and workshops are planned. The website should be updated with the agenda and registration, along with a list of motels close by providing the conference attendees with special rates by mid-January. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Mitchell at 406-444-4789, [dmitchell@mt.gov](mailto:dmitchell@mt.gov) or Kevin Koostra-Manning at 256-6809, [kevinkm@ywhc.org](mailto:kevinkm@ywhc.org)

A Progressive Reception of cultural offerings provided by the Yellowstone County Museum, Moss Mansion, Western Heritage Center and the Castle as hosts along with special transportation being provided by vintage busses, circa 1930, from Yellowstone will be opening the annual conference.

The conference will offer some self-guided tour opportunities of the Billings area and three different workshops, *Past Perfect*, *Museum Board Development*, and *Basic Preservation and Care of Textiles* on Thursday. Friday and Saturday will be filled with presentations on topics ranging from the basics of collections care to the fine points of exhibit lighting.

Plans are being made for MAM to participate in the St Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, so watch the website and email for more details.

This conference is probably the best place for museum folks in Montana to network and learn from each other—it's good to know that none of us are alone with our problems. Every year we meet new friends and greet those we've known for years. It's also an opportunity to become more involved in MAM's work to promote and help Montana's museums.

The conference, along with the silent and live auctions, are the primary vehicles through which MAM earns its operating income. That money goes right back to the organization, and the MAM board is busy putting the details on the 2009 conference in Billings. We hope you can make it!

## **SMAC OFFERS FELLOWSHIPS FOR 2009 AAM ANNUAL MEETING**

The **Small Museum Administrators' Committee (SMAC)** is offering four \$500 fellowships to assist in underwriting the costs (registration, hotel and travel) to attend the 2009 American Association of Museums Annual Meeting scheduled for April 30 - May 4, 2009 in Philadelphia PA. Applicants must be current SMAC members through AAM and be a full-time paid or unpaid employee of a museum with a budget of \$350,000 or less. Only one applicant per museum per year is eligible.

To apply, submit a letter (no more than 2 pages) discussing your current responsibilities, activities (previous workshops, conferences, professional service) and career goals. Indicate how attendance at the AAM conference will benefit both you and your museum. Please include a resume, a brochure from your museum, proof of museum's budget size, and a letter of support from your institution (i.e. board member, executive director). Make sure your letter includes contact address, e-mail and telephone number.

Mail three (3) copies of your application postmarked by January 5, 2009 to Janice Klein, 1103 East Redondo Circle, Tempe AZ 85282. Faxed applications will not be accepted. The fellowship awards will be announced and the winners notified by January 23, 2009 to take advantage of the AAM Early Registration discount. The fellowship recipients are expected to attend the SMAC Business Meeting at the AAM conference and submit a summary of one SMAC-AAM sponsored session for publication in the newsletter.

For more information contact Janice Klein, SMAC-AAM Fellowship Chair, [jkhm@mindspring.com](mailto:jkhm@mindspring.com).

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## ***We the People* Challenge Grants from NEH**

The National Endowment for the Humanities has a February 3, 2009 deadline for *We the People* Challenge Grants. This program is designed to help institutions and organizations secure long-term improvements in and support for humanities activities that examine American history through the lens of the nation's founding principles.

Proposals must demonstrate how the challenge grant would strengthen the institution's ability to explore significant themes and events in American history, so as to advance knowledge of how the founding principles of the United States have shaped and been shaped by American history and culture for more than 200 years. NEH welcomes proposals for programs that not only articulate the theories of governance and assertions of human rights that have embodied the founding principles, but also lead to deeper exploration of how these principles have been tested and interpreted since the Founding Era. For further information, please contact the NEH staff at [challenge@neh.gov](mailto:challenge@neh.gov) or 202-606-8309.

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

### **Museums Association of Montana**

March 12–14, 2009—Billings, Montana  
406-256-5908, [kevinkm@ywhc.org](mailto:kevinkm@ywhc.org); Kevin Kooistra-Manning  
[www.montanamuseums.org](http://www.montanamuseums.org)

### **2009 Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation**

March 30-31, 2009—Helena, Red Lion Colonial Hotel  
406-443-1160, [skopec@rmsmanagement.com](mailto:skopec@rmsmanagement.com)  
<http://travelmontana.mt.gov/conference>

### **2009 American Association of Museums Annual Meeting**

April 30 - May 4, 2009—Philadelphia PA  
[www.aam-us.org](http://www.aam-us.org)

### **American Association for State and Local History Annual Meeting**

August 26–29, 2009—Indianapolis, Indiana  
615-320-3203, [www.aaslh.org](http://www.aaslh.org)

### **Montana History Conference**

October 15-17, 2009—Great Falls, Montana  
406-444-4741, [klambert@mt.gov](mailto:klambert@mt.gov); Kirby Lambert  
Montana Historical Society; [www.montanahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.montanahistoricalsociety.org)

## **PastPerfect Software for Museum Collections**

Introducing PastPerfect-Online, the first easy, affordable way to share your collection on the World Wide Web

### **PastPerfect-Online, powered by MWeb®, gives you the power to touch the world!**

- ⇒ Works with PastPerfect 4 to create a true online catalog of your collections. Simply select the records, information, and images you want to share and PastPerfect Online does the rest.
- ⇒ PastPerfect-Online provides web-based searchability for your catalog database, including key word search, advanced search, and click & explore.
- ⇒ PastPerfect-Online Software, powered by MWeb, provides instant access to your collections via the internet. No Web programming or online database management skills are required. We do it all for you!
- ⇒ Security to protect your online images is built in by using PastPerfect 4's watermark capabilities. We've got you covered.

### **Call 800-562-6080 for more information**

Special AASLH Organizational Members price:  
Software \$199 Hosting starting at \$28 per month (paid annually).

For FREE PastPerfect Evaluation Software and more information, visit our web site at [www.MuseumSoftware.com](http://www.MuseumSoftware.com)



**PASTIME** museum collection management  
software tools & products **SOFTWARE**

AASLH Organizational Members receive a 20% Discount on all PastPerfect Products

## 2009 Federal Grant Deadlines

### **National Endowment for the Humanities – NEH**

#### Family and Youth Programs

Deadline: January 28, 2009

#### Challenge Grants

Deadline: May 1, 2009—see <http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/challenge.html>

Questions? Contact: 800-NEH-1121 or 202-606-8269, [publicpgms@neh.gov](mailto:publicpgms@neh.gov), or [www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov)

### **Institute for Museum and Library Services – IMLS**

#### National Leadership Grants

Deadline: February 1, 2009

#### National Medal for Museum & Library Services

Deadline: February 17, 2009

Questions? Contact: 202-653-IMLS, [imlsinfo@imls.gov](mailto:imlsinfo@imls.gov) or [www.imls.gov/grants](http://www.imls.gov/grants)

### **National Endowment for the Arts—NEA**

#### Access to Artistic Excellence

Deadline: March 12, 2009

Go to: [www.arts.gov/grants/apply/Museums.html](http://www.arts.gov/grants/apply/Museums.html) or [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov)

**See [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) for more grant opportunities**

**Note:** All Federal Grant applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number

## **BOOKSHELF GRANT**

## **AGAIN AVAILABLE—**

## **LAST CHANCE!!!**



Have you heard that there will be a third round of the **Connecting to Collections Bookshelf**? American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) is proud to again partner with IMLS to offer libraries and museums one more chance to win this valuable resource. One thousand sets will be awarded during this last round. **January 5, 2009 marks the opening of the next application process and it will run through March 9, 2009.** If you have not applied, or you were declined during the first two rounds, mark your calendars and prepare your answers to the twelve easy questions on the application located on the AASLH website.

You do not want to miss out on this opportunity to receive these conservation and preservation publications! The resources were recommended by a committee of the best in our field who chose reference material they believed was critical to us as our nation's collection custodians.

The application will be on the AASLH website at [www.aaslh.org/Bookshelf](http://www.aaslh.org/Bookshelf) on January 5. Also on this web page are the bibliography, the *User's Guide*, and the application questions. Print the questions and have your answers ready to enter on the morning of January 5. This may be the last opportunity to receive these free publications. If you have any questions, please contact Terry Jackson at [jackson@aslh.org](mailto:jackson@aslh.org).

## 2009 Montana Grant Sources



### Humanities Montana

Several grants are available through Humanities Montana. For grant descriptions and proposal deadlines see the Humanities Montana's website at: [www.humanities-mt.org/grants.htm](http://www.humanities-mt.org/grants.htm) or call 406-243-6022.

### Montana Arts Council



The Montana Arts Council offers several grant opportunities including: *Artists in Schools and Residencies, Opportunity Grants, and Professional Development*. Application deadlines and processes vary. See the Montana Arts Council website at: [www.art.mt.gov](http://www.art.mt.gov) or call 406-444-6548.

## Advertise in the Museums Association of Montana Quarterly Newsletter

The Museums Association of Montana has great opportunities for advertising in our Quarterly Newsletter, great rates and an expanding subscription base. Our newsletter goes out to all members; over 100 at this time. With your support we can increase that to over 300 quarterly issues. Our advertising rates below can be received at a discount if you are a MAM member at the Benefactor and Corporate levels!

<u>Advertisement Size</u>	<u>Dimensions - H X W</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>MAM Benefactor/Corporate Member Rate</u>
½ page (horizontal)	4 ½" X 7 ½"	\$100.	\$90. / \$80.
¼ page (vertical)	4 ½" X 3 ½"	\$ 50.	\$45. / \$40.
1/8 page (horizontal)	2 ½" X 3 ½"	\$ 25.	\$22.50 / \$ 20.

For more information regarding membership and newsletter advertisement opportunities! Call Deb Mitchell at 406-443-8219 or 444-4789, or email: [dmitchell@mt.gov](mailto:dmitchell@mt.gov).



# MEMBERSHIP FORM

(Membership Year July 1, 2008–June 30, 2009)

## MEMBERSHIP FEES:

### Institutional Member

- Newsletter
- Membership decal
- Listing on the MAM map (2008 map)
- Listing on the MAM website
- One vote at annual membership meeting

### Annual Operating Budget

Below \$50,000      \$ 25 \_\_\_\_  
 \$50,000 - \$100,000    \$ 35 \_\_\_\_  
 \$100,000 - \$200,000    \$ 45 \_\_\_\_  
 Above \$200,000      \$ 55 \_\_\_\_

Extra Newsletter      \$ 10 \_\_\_\_

### Benefactor

\$100 \_\_\_\_

- Newsletter
- 10% advertising discount in Newsletter
- Listing on the MAM website

Corporate (for profit) \$300 \_\_\_\_

- 3 Newsletters
- Membership decal
- 20% advertising discount in Newsletter
- Listing on the MAM website

Individual Member      \$ 20 \_\_\_\_

- Newsletter (published quarterly)



## Join or Encourage Others to join MAM Today for 2008-2009

Current MAM Membership runs through June 30, 2008. If you haven't already—please send in your renewal to keep connected to your peers! And tell others about all that MAM has to offer small museums!

Use this convenient membership form or download the form at our website:

<http://www.montanamuseums.org>

MAM provides access to lots of museum resources—the annual conference, quarterly newsletter, technical workshops, annual awards, conference scholarships, and a network of support and promotion of museum issues. With your membership or donation we can continue to bring professionalism to and cooperation among all of Montana's museums.

**MEMBERSHIP SUPPORTS MAM AND YOUR MUSEUM!**

So that we can better serve you, please fill in all information and return form and payment to address below.

Organization (you are associated with): \_\_\_\_\_

Individual/Contact (year round contact): \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (City/State/Zip): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address (City/State/Zip—need for map): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (year round contact number): \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

(Circle One) Tourist Country Region — **Custer Glacier Gold West Missouri River Russell Yellowstone**

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Seasons/Hours of Operation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to: Museums Association of Montana**

Send above form and check to:

**P.O. Box 1451, Helena, Montana, 59624**

## The Getty Leadership Institute calls for MLI Applications

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**MLI: The MUSEUM LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE 2009**  
**July 11-31, 2009 at the Getty Center in Los Angeles, California**  
**Closing Date: January 13, 2009**

MLI is a thought-provoking in-depth residential program designed to enhance the leadership of experienced executives and strengthen their institutions' capabilities. The program is open to highly committed museum directors and senior executives who influence policy, effect change, and typically have had a minimum of five years of challenging work experience in museums.

Admission is competitive.

Tuition: \$5,500 per participant. GLI will consider need-based requests for reduced tuition fees from eligible museum professionals.

For further information and to apply visit [www.getty.edu/leadership/programs/mli/](http://www.getty.edu/leadership/programs/mli/)

Getty Leadership Institute  
1200 Getty Center Drive, Ste 800  
Los Angeles, CA 90049  
Tel: (310) 440-6300  
Fax: (310) 440-7765

## Preserve America Subgrants

The Montana State Historic Preservation Office, a division of the **Montana State Historical Society** recently re-granted approximately \$97,000 in **Preserve America** funding to six Preserve America-designated communities. Successful communities are Billings, Butte, Great Falls, Kalispell, Laurel, and Missoula that plan to document and/or nominate buildings to the National Register of Historic Places.

Billings grantees will be surveying and nominating approximately 50 commercial buildings on and near Minnesota Avenue. Once National Register-listed, commercial properties become eligible for federal and state historic rehabilitation tax incentives. Butte received funds to update information on 100 South Central neighborhood properties in the Butte-Anaconda-BA&P Railroad National Historic Landmark. The effort will assist the communities planning efforts. Efforts at Great Falls will focus on 48 properties in the West Bank area, where several outstanding New Deal buildings are located.

Successful Kalispell grantees will be updating 60 properties and potentially expanding the Main Street historic district. The community of Laurel plans to document 96 buildings along their commercial core. Missoula grantees will be potentially expanding the Downtown Missoula historic district. And again, federal and state rehabilitation tax incentives may be available to commercial building owners. Missoula also received funds to research and possibly nominate buildings at the Fairgrounds and additional residential properties to the University of Montana historic district. Finally, Missoula will research national sources and make comparisons with similar properties to determine if Fort Missoula is eligible for National Historic Landmark status.

For more information on Preserve America activities in Montana contact Rolene Schliesman at 444-47742, or [rschliesman@mt.gov](mailto:rschliesman@mt.gov)

## MUSEUM ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (MAP) APPLICATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 15, 2009

*“Give Your Museum a Higher Education”*

The **Museum Assessment Program (MAP)** helps maintain and improve operations through a confidential, consultative process. Guidance is provided in meeting your museum’s priorities and goals and understanding how your museum compares to standards and best practices.

If your museum is facing challenging financial times, participating in **MAP** can help:

- ▶ prioritize goals so you can allocate resources wisely,
- ▶ document your needs so that you can make a stronger case to funders,
- ▶ provide recommendations on ways to become an even stronger institution.

### **Choose from one of these four programs:**

***Institutional Assessment***—reviews a museum’s entire operations

***Collections Management Assessment***—focuses on collections management issues

***Public Dimension Assessment***—assess the public perception, experience & involvement with the museum

***Governance Assessment***—examines the structure, roles & responsibilities of the museum’s governing authority

The Museum Assessment Program (MAP) is a free or low cost way to strengthen your museum’s operations and achieve excellence. If your museum has an annual budget of less than \$125,000. MAP Assessments are free. In less than a year your museum can complete a self-study, have an onsite consultation with a museum professional and gain the tools to become a stronger institution.

The MAP Program is administered by the American Association of Museums (AAM). For more information go to the AAM website at:

<http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/map/index.cfm>

Or contact AAM at:

1575 Eye St, NW Suite 400, Washington, DC 20005

202-289-9118

[map@aam-us.org](mailto:map@aam-us.org)

## 2008 Montana Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) Grant Awardees have been announced!



The following organizations recently received TIIP grants:

- \$63,770 **Myrna Loy Center**—Helena
- \$67,270 **Museum of the Rockies**—Bozeman
- \$25,190 **International Choral Festival**—Missoula
- \$67,270 **Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center**—West Yellowstone
- \$46,500 **Yellowstone Art Museum**—Billings
- \$30,000 **Rialto Theatre**—Deer Lodge

Travel Montana's Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) provides grant funding non-profit project sponsors to facilitate the development of new tourism-related products, and the enhancement of existing products to encourage visitors to stay in the state of Montana longer. These developments and enhancements should strengthen Montana's attraction as a competitive tourism destination.

For more information contact: Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator, 444-4366, FAX 444-1800, E-mail: [victor@visitmt.com](mailto:victor@visitmt.com)

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### YAM Part of Fifty State Art Program

New York collectors **Dorothy and Herbert Vogel** are distributing 2,500 works from their personal collection of contemporary art throughout the nation, with fifty works going to a selected art institution in each of the fifty states. The gifts program entitled *The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection: Fifty Works for Fifty States*, was established with the help of the **National Gallery of Art**, the **National Endowment for the Arts**, and the **Institute of Museum and Library Services**.

The 2,500 works the Vogels are donating include drawings, paintings, sculptures, photographs and prints by more than 170 contemporary artists, mainly working in the United States. Gifts to the first ten institutions were announced in the spring of 2008.

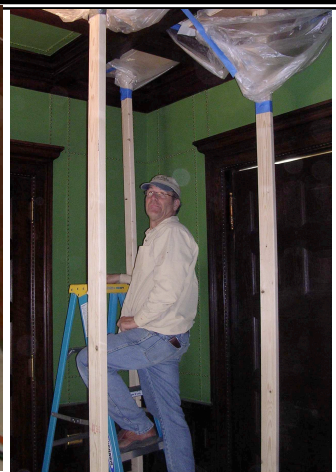
In connection with the program, the National Endowment for the Arts is funding the publication of a book, *The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection: Fifty Works for Fifty States*, scheduled for release this month. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is providing funds for the disbursement of the art (under the supervision of the National Gallery of Art) to the fifty institutions and for the development of a Web site, [vogel5050.org](http://vogel5050.org), to serve as both an information center and exhibition area for this project.

The **Yellowstone Art Museum** in Billings has been chosen to represent Montana. Contact YAM at: 401 N. 27th St., Billings, MT 59101; [artinfo@artmuseum.org](mailto:artinfo@artmuseum.org); 406-356-6804

## IN MEMORIAM

### John Kjelland

1942-2008



John Kjelland breathed life into rundown museum pieces and smoke-stained bar murals with a patient eye and a pair of steady hands. Kjelland was a largely self-taught conservator who approached each project — whether chairs once owned by Montana copper king Marcus Daly to the hearse that carried renowned cowboy painter Charlie Russell — with a dogged determination to restore its original essence.

At times, this meant tedious progress. It took Kjelland six months to restore a massive wooden map of the United States that hangs in Yellowstone National Park’s visitor center in Mammoth, and in time the sight of Kjelland hard at work became a “living exhibit” that visitors and staff alike viewed with intrigue. “He touched all the pieces just as he touched our lives,” said Jim McDonald, a historic architect for Yellowstone National Park.

After a childhood in North Dakota, Kjelland joined the U.S. Navy and served aboard the USS Bon Homme Richard during the Vietnam War. He moved to Missoula in 1972 and eventually set up a shop that gave the self-described “tinkerer” the room to tackle various projects. Often working with his grandfather’s tools, Kjelland saw life and possibility in wood. The furniture he created looked as though it could dance across the floor, one of his closest friends noted.

His conservation work provided support, structure and renewed vigor to bureaus, bar counters, and other objects that had grown brittle with age. Though this art rarely bore his name, Kjelland didn’t mind the artistic anonymity. Instead, he embraced the resuscitative nature of his work. “The intent of a conservator’s effort is not to improve or alter the historic or personal record of the object but to preserve its integrity for future generations to appreciate and to study,” Kjelland wrote on his Web site.

During a career that spanned more than three decades, Kjelland’s work took him to such far-flung states as Alaska, Minnesota and Florida. In February, the craftsman officially became a professional associate with the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. Works restored by Kjelland’s hands currently sit in several Montana museums, including the National Historic Sites of Virginia City and Grant Kohrs Ranch, Yellowstone National Park, the Montana Historical Society, the C.M. Russell Museum, and the Museum of the Rockies. A specially-designed display case, crafted by Kjelland and holding the jacket of renowned painter George Paxson, will soon be displayed in the Missoula County Courthouse. His colleagues remember John as quick witted, maybe a bit quirky, innovative, and utterly dedicated to his craft.

At his funeral service in Missoula, friends and loved ones remembered Kjelland as a kind and patient man, who enjoyed pancakes, popcorn and a good joke. A neighbor once spotted Kjelland sitting atop his home in Hall and looking toward the horizon for hours on end. The neighbor finally asked him the reason behind the strange behavior.

Kjelland replied he was taking in the light to know where to properly place his windows.

Less than a week before his death, Kjelland had fittingly dressed as the famous Mexican artist Diego Rivera, with his sweetheart Connie Staudohar playing the part of Frida Kahlo. Like Rivera, Kjelland’s work was frequently inspired by the mundane, such as a can of Del Monte green beans that gave him inspiration for the colors of a cabinet he planned to put in his bathroom. Unlike Rivera, Kjelland thrived on subtlety — his work often all but undetectable to a passing glance.

In later years, Kjelland worried his back was giving out after years of hard work in his shop. Instead, it was his big heart that finally expired. On Nov. 6, he took his last breath on a field near his home in Hall after suffering a massive heart attack. He was 60.

## Montana County History Initiative Moving Forward

The **Montana County History Initiative** (MCHI) is the *Montana Historical Society's* latest statewide outreach effort. Rich Aarstad, archivist/oral historian, and Jeff Malcomson, government records archivist, spent the past year working with staff from all programs of the Historical Society to create the MCHI. The goals of this broad-based initiative are to build relationships among people working with Montana's local history and heritage resources, and to provide support in the form of training and expertise. With more than two dozen county centennials approaching over the next dozen years, the Montana Historical Society hopes to assist counties and local governments, museums, librarians, and educators alike to celebrate the riches of their own community heritage. Through the MCHI, the Society's staff offers numerous workshop-type programs on topics as diverse as historic preservation, archaeology, community history, archives and museum methods, oral history, and utilizing heritage education in the classroom.

The first phase of this initiative was to create a steering committee of 24 individuals (four persons from each of Montana's six tourism regions) to help promote the effort. Members were selected from among the state's museum professionals, librarians, historic preservationists, and educators. The steering committee met in May 2008 in Helena for a two-day workshop during which members listened to presentations about the broad range of assistance offered by the MHS staff to local institutions. Steering committee members also received numerous publications and resources to support training in local and community history, **including digital recorders for oral history projects**. These resources are **available for public use** from an institution in each region.

The second and current phase of the initiative is the holding of six regional meetings or workshops around the state to provide training to a broader base of professionals and volunteers. Steering committee members planned these regional meetings and are handling the local arrangements while MHS offers funding and staff for any workshops (chosen from a workshop menu) requested by the regional planners. The first regional meeting took place on Nov. 7 & 8 in Forsyth, Montana, covering the southeastern part of the state from Billings to the Dakota line. The other five regional meetings, each reflecting the particular needs and interests of its local planners, will take place over the next five months reaching every corner of Big Sky Country.

Here's the list of remaining regional meetings:

- **Gold West Country, February 2, 2009 – Clancy, MT:** “Documenting the Golden Treasures of Our Past: A Montana County History Initiative Conference”
- **Russell Country, March 28, 2009 – Great Falls, MT:** “Preserving County History: The Resources You Need to Get the Job Done”
- **Yellowstone Country, April 24-25, 2009 – Columbus, MT:** “Digging Up Treasure: Preserving Your Past Through Objects & Oral History”
- **Missouri River Country, May 1-2, 2009 – Sidney, MT:** “Celebrating Counties and Communities: A Montana County History Initiative Conference”
- **Glacier Country, May 7-8, 2009 – Missoula, MT:** “Changing Landscapes: A Montana County History Initiative Conference”

More details about specific programs and workshops for the up-coming conferences will be available soon-watch for announcements. For questions or further information please contact Jeff Malcomson at [jmalcomson@mt.gov](mailto:jmalcomson@mt.gov); 444-7427 or Rich Aarstad [raarstad@mt.gov](mailto:raarstad@mt.gov); 444-6779.

Visit the MAM Website at  
[www.montanamuseums.org](http://www.montanamuseums.org)

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## CALL FOR PROPOSALS — WORKSHOPS AND SESSIONS

Mountain Plains Museums Association's 2009 Conference  
 October 5-9, 2009  
 Cheyenne, Wyoming

*New West Solutions in Old West Settings*

MPMA's Proposal Form for sessions and workshops is now available.  
 Visit MPMA's Website at <http://www.mpma.net/>

Proposals Due: January 23, 2009

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Big Sky. Big Land. Big History.  
**Montana**  
**Historical Society**



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