

December Newsletter

Humanities Montana Receives Schwartz Prize

Humanities Montana has been honored with the Helen and Martin Schwartz Prize for Excellence in Public Programming, given by the Federation of State Humanities Councils. The award was presented Nov. 6 at the National Humanities Conference in Omaha, Neb. Humanities Montana was recognized for its Public Affairs Initiative, a series of programs focused on civil discourse and civic engagement funded through a generous appropriation from the U. S. Department of Education. U.S. Sen. Max Baucus was instrumental in securing funds for this initiative. This is Humanities Montana's fifth Schwartz Prize. **Thanks so much to the Federation for this honor—and congratulations to board members, staff, and participants.**

Need a Community Conversation? Contact a Gracious Space Facilitator

Does your community or organization need a frank, respectful conversation? Contact a Montana citizen trained to lead just such a discussion at the [Montana Gracious Space Facilitators page](#). Each facilitator has agreed to donate time to help groups tackle their issues in a constructive way. Gracious Space is an approach to discussions that emphasizes welcoming the stranger and listening to alternative points of view. Visit the [Center for Ethical Leadership website](#) for much more information.

Letters About Literature—Deadline December 12

Letters About Literature, a national reading and writing promotion program of Humanities Montana and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, invites young readers in grades 4 – 12 to enter this year's LAL letter writing competition. Young readers simply write a personal letter to an author explaining how that author's work somehow changed the reader's view of their world.

LAL awards both state and national prizes on three competition levels: Level 1 for children in grades 4 – 6; Level 2 for children in grades 7 – 8; and Level 3 for children in grades 9 – 12. Six national winners will each receive cash awards and will nominate a school or community library to receive a \$10,000 LAL Reading Promotion grant. Twelve national honor winners will likewise receive cash awards and also nominate a school or community library to receive a \$1,000 LAL Reading Promotion grant.

Teachers, librarians, and parents can download free teaching materials on reader response and reflective writing, including blackline masters and assessment checklists, at the [LAL website](#). Submission deadline is postmark December 12, 2009. State winners will be notified in March 2010 and national winners by mid-April.

The Great Depression, Then and Now: A New OpenBook Reading Series

We're pleased to announce a new reading and discussion series focused on the Great Depression and the (current) Great Recession. Tim Lehman, professor of history at

Rocky Mountain College, has carefully culled the many fine books about the 30s and our own time and has assembled this list of readings: Timothy Egan's *The Worst Hard Time*, John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, Mary Murphy's *Hope in Hard Times*, Russell Rowland's *In Open Spaces*, and Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickle and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*.

Books and discussion questions will be available by mid-January. Dr. Lehman will also provide a list of recommended films and additional readings. For more information, contact [Kim Anderson](#) or call 406-243-6022.

Major NEH Grants go to Montanans

Montanans have recently received major grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support study and teaching of Native American cultures. Congratulations—we look forward to learning from your work and talent.

Fort Peck Community College has received \$100,000 (two years at \$50,000 each) to fund tribal language revitalization summits, tribal histories resources development, and tribal histories and literature across the humanities gatherings.

University of Montana linguistics professor Mizuki Miyashita and computer science professor Min Chen have received a \$24,999 Digital Humanities Start-up Grant to develop a database to store and manage sound clips of the Blackfoot language.

Homesteading? Civil War? Indian Sovereignty?

Humanities Montana is considering building programs (conferences, reading series, Speakers Bureau threads) around several historical issues. What do you think of these issues? To share your thoughts, visit [this forum](#) on the Humanities Roundtable.

- The Homesteading Boom, 1909-1919
- Montana and the Civil War (Montana Territory was formed in 1864)
- 1972 Montana Constitution
- Montana Tribes: Sovereignty and Interdependence
- Changes to the Land: Land Use and Sustainability since 1864

Find Out about Humanities Events— Visit the Humanities Roundtable

Our social network now features a "Member Calendar" where you can post and find out about humanities events in your area. Go to the [Roundtable](#) and scroll down the homepage to the list of upcoming events.

Upcoming Grant Proposal Deadlines

Our next deadline for major grants (over \$5,000), fellowships, and book subvention grants is December 20. Full information on grant guidelines and deadlines is available at [Grants](#).

December Humanities Montana-Supported Events

- December 2, 2009, MSU A-Z Philosophical Lecture Series: The Koran, Islam in Montana, 3:10 pm, outside the Procrastinator Theater, MSU Student Union Building
- December 3, 2009, Dances with Words, Robert Stubblefield, 7:30 pm, The CUP Coffeehouse, University of Montana-Western, Dillon
- December 9, 2009, MSU A-Z Philosophical Lecture Series: Differing Roles of Money, 3:10 pm, outside the Procrastinator Theater, MSU Student Union Building
- December 16, 2009, Mark Twain Portrayal, Michael Delaney, 2:00 pm, Seeley Lake Historical Museum and Visitor Center, Seeley Lake
- December 17, 2009, Our Nation, Our Neighborhood: Montana Perspectives, 12:00 pm, Western Heritage Center, Billings

Support the Humanities in Montana Donate This Month

Funding for our work is provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities and a variety of other agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals. Your gift—whether through Humanities Montana’s annual fund drive, its endowment with the Montana Community Foundation, a bequest, or some other way—will bring the humanities, their insights and joys, to ever more Montanans, now and in the future. We especially welcome planned gifts, which often qualify Montana donors for generous tax credits. Gifts are tax-deductible under the IRS 501(c)(3) category of non-profit educational organizations and may be donor-restricted to specific programs or purposes. Gifts may also be matched by the National Endowment for the Humanities or other funding entities. If you would like to donate today via credit card [click here](#) or contact [Ken Stolz](#).

Thanks to our Generous Supporters November 2009

Organizations

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Ellen Marshall
Marvin Morgenstein
Kathleen Mulvahill

***Current Board and Staff Members**

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For More Information...

Humanities Montana is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the humanities to Montana, enriching the intellectual, cultural, and civic lives of its residents. Much more information on Humanities Montana and its many programs and services is available on our [website](#). Write us at 311 Brantly, Missoula, MT, 59812-7848, or info@humanitiesmontana.org, or call us at 406-243-6022, toll-free in Montana, 1-800-624-6001.

Learn ■ Reflect ■ Together