

### *MCH Offers Traveling Exhibit*

The Montana Committee for the Humanities is bringing the Smithsonian Institution to our state again! Following the success and excitement of *BARN AGAIN!: Celebrating an American Icon* in 2003, the traveling exhibition *Key Ingredients: America by Food* is commissioned to arrive in Montana, May 2006, and will focus on an important and favorite part of everyone's life and heritage – food. Six grants of \$2,000 each will be awarded to rural museums in Montana to host the exhibit. For additional information on this exhibit and the grant application, please contact the Montana Committee for the Humanities at 311 Brantly Hall; University of Montana; Missoula, MT 59812-7848; (800) 624-6001; or [yvonne.gritzner@umontana.edu](mailto:yvonne.gritzner@umontana.edu).

### *Training/Education Funds Available*

The Montana SHRAB is pleased to announce the availability of training and education funds to archivists around the state. Through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, the SHRAB is offering scholarships of up to \$1,000 to attend training and/or educational workshops and courses on topics related to historical records. These funds can be used for any type of training or education as long as it related to the management or preservation of historical records. The funds are available for local, statewide, regional, and national courses. For an application for these funds, please contact Molly Kruckenberg at 444-7482 or [mkruckenberg@mt.gov](mailto:mkruckenberg@mt.gov).

### *Board Meeting Held in Whitefish*

The Montana SHRAB met in Whitefish on October 30, 2004, for the second of its biannual meetings for this year. Board members present included Judy Ellinghausen, Donna McCrea, Sami Pearson, Jodi Allison-Bunnell, and Molly Kruckenberg. Kim Allen Scott of the Montana State University Archives attended as a guest. The Board discussed the status of its 2004 administrative grant from NHPRC and the application for a 2005 grant, which has since been awarded. Board members heard an update regarding the Northwest Digital Archives. Other topics addressed included further discussions about updating the Board's strategic plan, a project which will occur over the next two years; a second traveling archivist grant, a project which was temporarily postponed; and the need for a state-

### *Upcoming Events*

**March 10-11:** Museums Association of Montana conference, Glasgow

**April 23-26:** Montana Library Association conference, Billings

**April 14-16:** Northwest Archivists Conference, Las Vegas, NV

wide survey of archival resources and needs in Montana.

The group entertained further, in-depth discussion regarding conducting a survey of all organizations in Montana that hold archival material. This survey will gather information not only on the types of materials that they have, but also the training and support needs of those who administer the collections. The Board will use the results from the survey to guide their actions, plan future projects, and to update their strategic plan. Donna McCrea of the University of Montana will oversee the project. Board members also discussed and agreed to ask representatives of the museum, local government, history, and historic preservation communities to join our membership. Molly Kruckenberg will contact members of these groups and ask them to join the SHRAB. The input from these communities will greatly assist the Board in providing funds and projects that our constituents need.

Finally, the Board, upon an invitation from the Idaho State Historical Records Advisory Board, agreed to a joint meeting with both the Idaho and Wyoming SHRABs to discuss possible joint projects. The meeting will occur in May 2005 in West Yellowstone. For full minutes of the SHRAB meeting, please contact Molly Kruckenberg at 444-7482 or [mkruckenberg@mt.gov](mailto:mkruckenberg@mt.gov).

## *Digitization Workshop Planned for Summer*

In cooperation with the Colorado Digitization Project and other local organizations, the Montana SHRAB is planning a two-day digitization workshop to be held this summer. The workshop, which will include both lectures and hands-on demonstrations, will cover the basics of digitizing and managing digital projects. The workshop will be held in Bozeman on the Montana State University campus. Additional information on this workshop will be available in the future.

# *Marketing the Historical Records Repository*

By Donna McCrea

**E**ffective marketing presents your organization to your customers in a way that helps them understand who you are, appreciate what you do, and recognize your value. Many businesses have adopted a model called the 'marketing mix' or the '4 P's' to guide their marketing strategy. The Ps stand for Product, Price, Place and Promotion. I've added a P at the beginning for Purpose, because I believe this is a critical component to any marketing plan.

### ***Purpose*** \_\_\_\_\_

To market effectively you must begin with an articulation of who you are, what you do, why, and for whom. A clear mission or statement of purpose will help your organization identify its primary customers (and this may include your boss or your board) and set relevant goals to meet their needs. These goals, then, direct the marketing process – they are what you hope to accomplish and a way to measure success. As the saying goes "if you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there." Established goals help keep your marketing program on track.

### ***Product*** \_\_\_\_\_

Product has been defined as 'anything that can be offered to a market to satisfy a need.' Probably the most obvious product of a historical records repository is its records or collections, but many of our products are actually services, such as the research we do and the reference assistance we provide. Exhibits and public programs are also products and they can be an excellent way to catch the attention of your customers. Ultimately, products provide solutions. As someone once said, "people don't buy 1/2 inch bits ... they buy 1/2 inch holes." Think about your products and the customers they serve. What is the demand or need for your products - and how do you know? The time you spend articulating your mission, identifying your primary customers, and setting your goals will be regained when you produce effective products that serve your customers and help you reach those goals.

## **Price**

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Price is what your product costs you to produce - in both dollars and time. How many hours does it take to put together an exhibit? How much staff time goes into processing a collection or researching for a customer? Price is also what it costs your customer to acquire your product - in both dollars and time. Ultimately it is the value of your product, not the dollar amount, which will determine whether your customers will take the time (or pay the price) to acquire or use your product. An 'expensive' product that meets your customers needs and moves you towards your goals will be worth the price. For example, it takes many hours to put together a good exhibit, but if your goal is to solicit new donations of similar materials - and you get them - the price was likely well worth it. Understanding the price of your product, and understanding the needs of your customers, allows you to make effective decisions about how to allocate your resources.

## **Place**

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Place is how and where you distribute or provide access to your product. The most obvious place to access our products is at our institutions, but many of us also provide access to our products outside the physical space of our repositories. For example, for customers unable or unwilling to travel to us, many of us answer reference requests via telephone, e-mail and regular mail. Place or method of distribution can have a great impact on price, of course. Traveling exhibits can be expensive to produce, digitization of documents for online access takes time and equipment. If providing your product to your customers in a way that is most convenient for them is one of your goals, place will be an important component of your marketing strategy.

## **Promotion**

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The most obvious P of the marketing mix is promotion, and your method of promotion should be based on the way your customers like to receive information. But even with the best promotion, if your product isn't one your customers want they won't use it. Likewise, if you are not offering your product in the right place or at a price that makes it a value, you won't attract your target customers. Unfocused marketing is ineffective; it's not worth the price in time or dollars. The

key is to know your goal and tailor your product and message to your customer.

## **Phollow up**

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Finally, you have to continually evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing strategy by comparing your goals with the results you are getting. Are people looking at your exhibits, attending your programs, using your collections, or visiting your organization? Are you getting relevant donations, or more attention from your funders? Follow up is a critical part of marketing. Setting measurable goals helps you determine how effective your marketing strategy really is.

Marketing can seem overwhelming, but just about everything you do can be considered marketing of some sort - from the way you answer the telephone, to the way you share information about your collections, to the way you provide reference assistance. The idea is to get away from unfocused marketing. You likely already have a good understanding of your mission; your message should convey how that mission serves your customers. You probably have established goals, they say that 80% of your results come from just 20% of your goals so spend the majority of your time on those that are most important. We all have a range of products we offer, the key is to think about them from our customer's perspective. We can determine what our products cost, but we have to be sure they are a value to our customers. You already have a place where you provide access to your products; think about place from the perspective of your customers. And we all do some sort of promotion, just concentrate your efforts on your target customers and have a specific goal in mind.

Effective marketing comes from providing the right product to the right person at the right price in the right place, and promoting in the right way. It takes time up front to plan your marketing strategy, but you'll know that time was well spent when your effective marketing allows you to meet your goals and convey the value of your repository.



## *Northwest Digital Archives Update*

The NWDA has made great strides during the summer and fall of 2004 towards the completion of the first phase of this project. The re-designed website was "quietly" released in early September, with a formal, public announcement made in October, in conjunction with Archives week. The database is accessible at <http://nwda.wsulibs.wsu.edu>. Over 1000 finding aids were added to the database during the summer and fall. As of early December, the database includes over 2000 or 98% of the finding aids promised. All participating institutions are now representing in the database. The NWDA is an NEH grant-funded project to provide enhanced access to archival and manuscript materials in the northwest. A second phase of the project is planned for 2005-2007.

## *Publications Still Available*

Copies of the Montana SHRAB's manual, *Preferred Practices for Historical Repositories* are still available, free of charge. This publication is a checklist and self-assessment manual and provides information on a wide variety of management and preservation topics related to archives and museums.

Copies are available from Molly Kruckenberg, 444-7482 or [mkruckenberg@mt.gov](mailto:mkruckenberg@mt.gov). Copies of the SHRABs other publications, including *So You Have a Box of Papers...* and the quarterly newsletter are also available.

## *Board Members*

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Published Quarterly

Molly Kruckenberg, Editor

# The MONTANA *Archivist*

FALL 2004, VOL. 5 NO. 4

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