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## **Librarian of the Year Award Issued to Hailey Public Library Director LeAnn Gelskey**

### **Idaho Library Association Scholarships & Awards Committee Issues Award**

Mayor Fritz Haemmerle and Hailey Public Library Board of Trustees President April Macleod are pleased to announce that LeAnn Gelskey, Hailey Public Library Director, has been awarded the prestigious title of Idaho's Librarian of the Year. The award is issued each year by the Idaho Library Association Scholarship and Awards Committee. The announcement came this week from ILA Scholarship and Awards Committee Chair Rami Attebury, who stated in a correspondence to Gelskey, "The Committee received numerous well-qualified applications this year, making it a difficult decision. Your nomination emphasized the contributions you have made to the Idaho library community, and we felt that such efforts should be recognized at the state level."

Gelskey's efforts were recognized at a local level this past weekend during the Hailey Public Library's Centennial Bash, wherein the library board, elected officials of Hailey, staff and community celebrated the library's 100-year anniversary in a street party outside the library. The location of the celebration was designed to give the community a pop-up vision of the use and feel of a town square in that location. Gelskey's talent shone through that event, as it does in all the library work about which she is so passionate. Library Board President April Macleod says, "LeAnn so deserve this honor. She has worked to be the best."



One of Gelskey's most significant projects was the Phoenix project of a few years ago, in which the library was given a fresh, modern function and appearance within the space of the historical Fox/Brown building. Mayor Haemmerle notes, "Libraries are a very important community asset. LeAnn shows considerable talent and tenacity in managing the Hailey Library. We are proud of her."

Gelskey has developed a well-trained staff, mentoring several employees over the years to obtain Masters' degree training in library sciences. Gelskey herself is accredited through The American Library Association/Allied Professional Association. She was the first in the state of Idaho to receive this certification, and has guided several of her employees toward higher education. She is an expert in library policy and politics, and used her skills by working with the Idaho Library

Association as Co-Director in the past and overseeing the Legislative Committee during the last legislative session.

Gelskey works with a Board, the Friends of the Hailey Public Library and most of the non-profits in the community. She is a promoter of life-long learning and community connections in any setting and through every opportunity. Friends of the Hailey Public Library President Sara Baldwin states, “This award is well deserved. LeAnn provides leadership in bringing our community the very best library services and she is devoted to our community at large. We are indeed lucky to have her.” Gelskey implemented the Little Free Library book-houses around town, and has distributed books through the Hunger Coalition’s summer lunch program and to prisoners in the local county jail. She launched a city-staff Souper Supper group, leading city staff and volunteers in the task of serving dinner once a month through the Souper Supper program.



Gelskey assisted with a large project to digitize the Mallory collection several years ago. Local historian Rob Lonning, the Hailey Historic Preservation Commission, the Mallory family and the library staff worked to digitize the Martin Mallory photos and make them available to the public through the Hailey Public Library. Rob Lonning states, “The generous gift of Martyn’s photographs, made to the City of Hailey by Rose and Bill Mallory, has created a legacy that continues, to this day, to be of great interest to many of the citizens of Hailey. My personal interest in what Hailey used to look like, was initiated, in large part, by Martyn’s wonderful photographs. LeAnn Gelskey continues to be an excellent custodian of the Martyn Mallory Photographic collection.”

Gelskey has worked for the Hailey Public Library since 2001, when she joined the library as a part-time employee. She was soon promoted to a Youth Programs librarian position, then to co-director with Nancy Gurney, and finally to Library Director in May, 2010. The time in which Gelskey has worked for and led the Hailey Public Library has brought significant change to the role of libraries within our communities. According to City Administrator Heather Dawson, “Gelskey is an inspirational steward of thoughtful change within the Hailey Library. She balances well the traditional elements of a library with the need to modernize.”

Geegee Lowe, who worked with LeAnn as library staff in the past and interfaces with her through the Friends of the Hailey Public Library says, “LeAnn has brought to the Hailey Library such amazing energy. She has created an incredible community gathering place as well as a progressive library for all ages. And its still a great place for a good read. I so appreciate LeAnn’s perseverance to make the Hailey Library an outstanding treasure for our town.”

The Idaho Library Association will formerly present the award to Gelskey during its annual conference in October.