

Your guide
to the
Nebraska
Library
Commission

Summer/Fall
1998

Vol. 5 No. 2/3

N_EW S L E T T E R

Compass



Nebraska Selected for Community Library Advocacy Project

Nebbraska is one of eight states to participate in the Community-Library Advocacy Project funded by the Viburnum Foundation. Libraries for the Future and Friends of Libraries U.S.A., are coordinating this advocacy training effort. Co-hosted by the Library Commission, the Regional Library Systems, and the Nebraska Library Association's (NLA) Legislative Committee and Trustees, Users and Friends Section, this initiative will strengthen library advocacy by building relationships between communities and public libraries and developing tools and resources for local library advocacy. The project will focus on existing library trustees and friends groups, while reaching out to new types of



▲ John Clark, Director and Chief Strategist of the Northern Virginia Citizens Against Censorship and Maggie Harding, NLA Executive Director and Coordinator.

library supporters.

Ellen Van Waart, Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator, and Maggie Harding, NLA Executive Director and Project Coordinator, recently spent a weekend at an orientation retreat in Connecticut where advocate/mentors told about their efforts to promote superior library service for

their communities. Maggie shared the following advocacy tips from the retreat: carry the message to your community via organizations you belong to; recruit new members to your cause, encouraging them to be proactive in promoting the need for strong, progressive libraries; develop a vision of outstanding library service for your community and spread the word; become active politically by working with elected officials; become a part of local and state calling trees when there are issues to get excited about; and remember to keep in touch with your local representatives when there is nothing pressing.

For more information, contact Ellen Van Waart, 402-471-4004 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>, or see the Community-Library Advocacy Project home page at <<http://www.nol.org/home/NLA/advocacy/>>. ▲



▲ Terry Preston, (center), pub-adv e-mail group moderator, with the Joint LFF/FOLUSA Advocacy Committee.

▲ In this Issue:

**From the Director:
Open Letter to
Nebraska
Leaders**
page 2

**Creating a
County Library
or County
Library System**
page 3

**A Fresh Look
at the Library
Bill of Rights,
part nine**
page 9

**News of
Nebraska
Libraries and
People**
page 11



From the Director...

Open Letter to Nebraska Leaders

The following open letter to our state elected officials is printed with the hope that this legislature and administration will help provide leadership to help Nebraska libraries achieve excellence in the 21st Century.

Nebraska is nothing without good libraries and quality library services. Nebraska library supporters launched the *Libraries for the 21st Century* initiative with the goal of providing the quality library services essential for the education, well-being, and vitality of all Nebraskans. The following issues face Nebraska libraries as we near the millenium.

Some 20 percent of Nebraskans still do not live in a community that contributes local tax support for basic public library services. Budget and tax limits for cities and counties dim prospects for universal library service without additional state assistance and effort.

People want libraries to have the most recent bestsellers, the classics, and much in between. They want libraries to have computer equipment and Internet access. They also want qualified staff to help find the right resources and information. Libraries are a tremendous public value, but need adequate funding to provide the kind and quality of services expected.

The use of library services continues to rise. A recent Gallup survey, conducted for the American Library Association, found that two out of three Americans are using the library, 13 percent more than 20 years ago, despite the proliferation of bookstores, video stores, and home computers. The survey also found that 17 percent of library patrons used the Internet on site, and nine percent connected to the library online from a remote location. Ninety percent believed that libraries will still be needed in the future, despite advancements in information available from computers.

Library services are especially vital to preschoolers and school-age children. Children who have and use good community libraries develop effective reading and study skills and outperform children who don't.

Good libraries are a source of pride and a significant community asset. New and renovated library facilities are busy and active places as Nebraskans of all ages seek a variety of services, from reading materials to online computer search services, to public programs.

Libraries have a history of cooperation and sharing of resources. Collaboration and partnerships are nothing new to libraries. Nebraska libraries are among the state's leaders in innovative programming, finding new ways to get things done for the benefit of their customers.

Governor Johanns and the legislature will provide the leadership for Nebraska's future. Quality library services must be a part of that future. ▲

Rod Wagner

Databases Available Statewide

New state funding approved by the Legislature and

Governor in the amount of \$400,000 was added to the

Library Commission's budget for fiscal year 1998-99. This funding is the result of efforts by the Nebraska Library Association, State Advisory Council on Libraries, Nebraska Library Commission, and many other Nebraska library supporters.

The new state funds will be used to contract for online databases, including full-text of articles from hundreds of journals and periodicals, for local public libraries, school media centers, and college libraries across the state. Up to \$250,000 of the new state funds will be used to provide unlimited public access for all Nebraska libraries to the OCLC FirstSearch reference service at no charge to any Nebraska libraries for this service. Databases include:

WorldCat (online catalog of materials in libraries worldwide); NetFirst (bibliographic citations describing Internet-accessible resources); FastDoc (index of journal articles); MEDLINE (abstracted articles from medical journals); GPO Monthly Catalog (index to U.S. Government documents); ERIC (guide to educational

journal articles and reports); World Almanac (database of The World Almanac); ArticleFirst (index of journal articles); ContentsFirst (index of journal tables of contents); PapersFirst (index of papers presented at conferences); ProceedingsFirst (index of proceedings of conferences); OCLC Union List (listings of periodicals in libraries); OCLC Electronic Collections Online (index and abstracts for journals on a variety of subjects); H.W. Wilson Select (full text of over 470 journals); and New York Times (all articles published within 90 days for delivery as full-text documents; abstract and index of NY Times from January 1994 to the present).

Funds will also be used to offer libraries online access to *Books in Print with Reviews*. Nebraska is the first state in the nation to offer statewide access to the most complete database of books available in print. This service is offered at no charge to participating libraries. Training on the use of this database will be offered by Ed McBride, of R.R. Bowker, in six sites across the state in early 1999. For more information, see the Library Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on FirstSearch or Books in Print. ▲

Compass

NCompass is a quarterly publication of the Nebraska Library Commission, The Atrium, 1200 N St., Suite 120, Lincoln, NE 68508-2023. Phone: 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665 (in Nebraska only). Fax: 402-471-2083. ISSN: 1075-9719. Director: Rod Wagner
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Summer/Fall 1998 Vol. 5 No. 2/3

Commissioners: Jean Sanders, Lincoln, term expires 1999; Karen Warner, Norfolk, term expires 2000; Robert King, Holdrege, term expires 2000; Wally Seiler, Alliance, term expires 2001; Richard Jussel, Kearney, term expires 2001. Commission meetings are held the second Friday of every other month, or as scheduled by public action of the board.

Preparation of this newsletter was supported in part by funds allocated through the Library Services and Technology Act administered by the United States Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Special Report: Creating a County Library or County Library System

In 1997, the Nebraska Legislature enacted legislation to clarify and change methods for establishing and governing public library services. A primary statutory change involves creation of county libraries and county library systems. The following questions and answers provide guidance for creating county libraries or county library systems.

What factors might prompt Nebraska local governments to consider establishing a county library or system?

The Legislature, in 1997 and in 1998, passed legislation placing limits on local property tax levies and budget increases. The Legislature has also encouraged local governments to pursue collaboration, since cooperative efforts can lead to service efficiencies by enlarging library service areas for more efficient services. The library laws revisions add new options and methods to consider.

What is the difference between a county library and a county library system?

A county library is a single entity and is the only public library facility in the county. A county library system has two or more facilities administered under a single administrative unit.

How can a county library or system be created?

The creation of a county library requires voter approval. It can be placed on the ballot by:

- A county board (county commission or county board of supervisors) can place issues on the election ballot. Only areas within the county that do not have a public library can vote on the issue.
- The registered voters within a county can petition to create a county library.

If a citizen petition drive is pursued, what are the requirements to get the issue on the ballot?

Petition requirements are spelled out in the statutes. The law provides that 10 percent of the voters registered at the last statewide general election in the areas to be included in the election issue must sign.

Could county library services be arranged without the issue being placed on the election ballot?

Yes. The county board of supervisors or county commission could levy taxes and arrange for library services through an agreement with an established library or libraries.

If a city, village, or township within a county already has a public library, must it become part of a county library if one is being formed or exists? No.

How can a community that has a public library merge with a county library system?

Cities, villages, and townships that have a public library may choose to merge with a county library.

Merger can be initiated by joint agreement of the city council, village or township board and the library board. A merger may also be initiated by registered voters of the community through a petition process to place the issue on the election ballot.

Are all county residents taxed for library services?

This depends on whether the entire county is included within the library service area. If yes, then the county levies a county-wide tax for library services. If no, the county levies taxes only for those portions of the county that approved participation in county library services.

If a county library or county library system is created, who has administrative responsibility?

A county library is governed by a library board of at least five members. Members of the county board may not serve on the library board. The number of members, the length of terms and whether library board members are elected or appointed is determined by the county board. If appointed, the appointments are made by the county board. If elected, the election is held at the time of the statewide primary.

What happens to the employees and assets of a public library that merges with a county library?

Employees and assets of the library are transferred to the county by merger agreement. Statutes prescribe requirements for employee compensation and benefits in the event of a transfer, with employees receiving at least the same or comparable salaries and benefits as provided by the city, village, or township.

What happens if a city, village, or township wishes to leave the county library system?

Statutes permit disassociation from the county by reversing the process for joining a county library system.

What other options exist to organize and provide library services among multiple local government entities?

The Nebraska Interlocal Cooperation Act provides a commonly used tool for local governments to jointly provide services. Interlocal agreements can be developed among municipalities, library boards, school districts, community colleges, etc.

Could a multi-county library system or district be created?

Yes. This could be approached through an interlocal agreement among local government entities that wish to create a library district.

Where can information be found about the specific requirements for public library services?

These requirements are based in Nebraska laws, *Revised Statutes of Nebraska*, Chapter 51, which are available in published form or accessible through the Legislature's Web site at: <<http://www.unicam.state.ne.us/index.htm>>. Nebraska library laws are also on the Commission's Web site, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Nebraska Library Laws, or request in print. ▲

Rod Wagner and Richard Miller

Beth Named Commission Manager of the Year

Beth Goble, Government Information Services Coordinator at the Library Commission, was recently named Manager of the Year. She describes her responsibilities as

Beth has worked in a variety of libraries in Canada, South Australia, and Lincoln.

working with a team of people to provide state and federal government information. By Nebraska statute, the Library Commission is a clearinghouse for state government publications and distributes this information to other libraries. Beth was born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta where she received her B.A. in English and a Bachelor of Library Science from the University of Alberta in Edmonton. She earned her M.L.S. from the University of Toronto.

Beth has worked in a variety of libraries in Canada, South Australia, and Lincoln. If Beth could change anything about work in the library world, it would be to change the way communities feel about

libraries and the value libraries can provide. She believes that libraries and librarians must provide the highest level of customer service and outreach. Beth is an avid reader, enjoying fantasy, science-fiction, and historical fiction. Some of her favorite authors include C. S. Cherryh, P.D. James and Jean Auel. Beth and her husband Ron, an Associate Professor of Geology at UN-L, have two sons, Cameron, 20, and Brendan, 17, both UN-L students. Also in the Goble home are Vixon and Megan, the family cat and dog respectively. Beth's hobbies include reading, jogging, cycling, hiking, gardening and spending parts of the summer in Canada. Congratulations Beth! ▲



Renee Is New Commission Federal Documents Assistant

Renee Ryan is one of the newest staff members at the Library Commission and works as the Federal Documents Staff Assistant. Her duties include checking in

Renee comes to the Commission from the Nebraska Army National Guard where she worked as a Personnel Administrative Specialist.

and shelving federal documents, providing administrative support (answering phones and filing) and when time allows, checking in and shelving state documents. Renee was born and raised in Nebraska and is a graduate of Ashland-Greenwood High School. She attended Southeast Community College in Lincoln and received her Associate of Applied Science Degree with an Accounting Specialization in 1995. One of her goals is to return to school and get her Bachelors Degree. Renee comes to the Commission from the Nebraska Army National Guard where she worked full-time as a Personnel

Administrative Specialist. She has been a member of the National Guard for 13 years. One of her duties while working at the training site in Ashland was maintaining the reference library, with many Department of Defense publications.

Renee enjoys reading romances, especially those of Julie Garwood. Sue Grafton recently joined the list of her favorite authors. Renee is the mother of three: Nick, eight, Brittany, seven, and Lauren, one. In addition, Renee has two dogs, Angel and Rocky, and several cats. In her spare time, Renee enjoys camping, boating, and tubing in Fremont. ▲



Sally Works with Federal Aid Program



Sally Snyder is the Federal Aid Administrator at the Library Commission. Her responsibilities include working with federal funds allocated to Nebraska to help

provide services for local libraries in the state. Formerly, Sally served as the Volunteer and Outreach Librarian for Talking Book and Braille Services. She received her B.S. in Education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and her M.P.A. from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Her intention when beginning college was to pursue an M.L.S. Although her plans changed, her love for libraries remained constant. Sally taught for two years at J.P. Lord School in Omaha, working with physically handicapped first graders. She spent eight years in Estes Park, CO, working at the Estes Park Public Library, the last three years as Children's Librarian.

Sally is a native Nebraskan, born and raised in Lincoln with a 3rd-year stint in Beatrice during her elementary years. According to Sally, the best things about Nebraska living are the four seasons and the interesting and beautiful country. Sally uses the Internet regularly and enjoys amazon.com for both personal and professional use. Sally reads mysteries, non-fiction and many children's books. Some of her favorite authors are M.C. Beaton, Peter Hathaway Capstick and Patricia Wrede. She and her husband Dennis share their home with two cats who are brothers named Spats and Ollie. Sally describes her hobbies in one word, water-skiing! ▲

Sally spent eight years in Estes Park, CO, working at the Estes Park Public Library, the last three years as Children's Librarian.

Robert King Serves as Commissioner



Robert King of Holdrege serves as one of the six Library Commissioners. He describes his duties as determining and setting policies, deciding statewide

issues involving libraries and giving direction to the director of the Commission. King graduated from Holdrege High School and earned a B.A. in journalism from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He currently publishes the *Holdrege Citizen* and in this capacity, he has used the local library many times to access the microfilm collection.

Not surprisingly, King is an avid reader of newspapers, magazines

and biographies. Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage* is a novel that he particularly enjoyed. King was born in New Kensington, PN and attended his first year of school in Central City. Holdrege has been his home since 1957 and he says that the best things about Nebraska life include clean air, good water and friendly people. King enjoys golf, travel, reading and playing the piano. ▲

He says that the best things about Nebraska life include clean air, good water and friendly people.

Special Report...

Kearney Public Library and Information Center

This article continues a series of stories of Nebraska libraries, library service challenges or examples of solutions to community information needs. For more information, contact the local contact person, in this case, Jeanne Saathoff, Library Director, 308-233-3282, <jsaathoff@kpl.kearney.net>. To respond to this story or to submit one for future publication, contact Mary Jo Ryan, 402-471-3434, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

The Technology Learning Center (TLC) at the Kearney Public Library and Information Center began with a community vision to provide the public with computers and computer technology. Start-up funds came from a grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development. The Library Foundation and the city of Kearney matched the project, providing the initial wiring. Local businesses partnered or donated software, hardware, and furniture. As the grant ended, the city of Kearney assumed the cost of operation. The TLC is a great success, enabling citizens to keep up with technology and software, learn new skills, improve marketability, try resources prior to purchase, communicate globally, and pursue educational goals.

The TLC is a hands-on technology lab with 11 personal computers. Customers can use a laser printer, color bubble jet printer, and flatbed scanner. Terminals connect to the Internet and customers use a wide variety of software programs. A video conferencing center is used for business, government and educational meetings.

The Technology Learning Center is managed by a full-time coordinator, providing assistance to customers and keeping the hardware and software working. The University of Nebraska at Kearney provides interns and work-study student staff.

Business people, job seekers, students, and those who have no other access to a computer use the Center regularly. Individuals receive help with Web research, writing resumes, job searches, and specific software programs. Computer training is offered in several ways on a wide variety of topics. Training includes structured two-hour classes, instructional CDs and videos, and one-on-one assistance.

Jeanne stresses an important lesson, "Involve your community, especially local businesses." Partners from the business world can help with promotion, visibility and soliciting donations.

Jeanne emphasizes that personnel needs are just as important as hardware needs in making the transition from a traditional public library to a public information center. Jeanne believes that a full-time staff person should be in the Learning Center at all times to maintain the equipment and provide needed guidance. ▲

Amy Garwood

NEBASE Annual Meeting Held

Seventy-seven librarians representing 16 public libraries, 19 academic libraries, seven schools (K-12), four Library Systems, and one institutional library attended the 1998 NEBASE Annual Meeting in Hastings in June. Rod Wagner, Director of the Nebraska Library Commission, provided the welcoming address, reminding us of the long-standing connection between Nebraska and the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC). Rod pointed out how OCLC has changed in recent years, no longer providing only Cataloging products and Interlibrary Loan processing, but recently moving to the top provider of Reference Service through FirstSearch. In addition, OCLC has been working with a Small Library Initiative Task Force in an attempt to respond to concerns that small libraries do not have a cost-effective and efficient way to acquire "good" copy cataloging. This led to a pilot product tested in Ohio and which, Rod announced, is to be field-tested in Nebraska for a two month period

this fall.

Eric Childress, Senior Product Support Specialist, gave an overview of this new integrated service, intended for small libraries that require mainly copy cataloging and do little, if any, original cataloging. Other components are Interlibrary Loan, Reference, and Selection.

Several librarians that are not officially NEBASE members attended this year's meeting to learn more about the FirstSearch group subscription (the Nebraska Package of FirstSearch Databases). The history of database trials in Nebraska and Questions and Answers about FirstSearch and other database subscriptions were also discussed.

Keynote speaker, Dr. Gene Harding, emphasized that people are a very important component in the formula to improve library service. Dr. Harding gave a number of examples of how attitude affects outcome. He led an exploration of behavioral styles, including describing the characteristics of behavioral styles, their strengths and weaknesses, how each style complements the others, and tips on how best to communicate with each. ▲



▲ Jo Budler (right), Library Commission Network Services Director, and Becky Baker, Seward Public Library Director, at the NEBASE Annual Meeting.

Nebraska Documents Librarians Meeting

Twenty-nine staff from 13 of Nebraska's 21 federal and state

documents depository libraries gathered at the University of

Nebraska-Lincoln (UN-L) Love Library in June to discuss government information access issues.

James Shaw and Kathleen Fountain, documents librarians at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and Creighton University, showed highlights from the annual federal depository librarians' meeting. The overall mood was of renewed optimism about the survival of the depository program. This contrasts with the pessimism of two years ago when the Government Printing Office (GPO) had just been directed by Congress to convert the program into an electronic distribution program and many feared that vital government information would

no longer be accessible to the public. Depositories are still serving an estimated 188,000 customers a week and the GPO Access Internet service is a huge success, with 13.5 million downloads (just in the month of March). An estimated 900 federal government publications are now available in cyberspace, and GPO has developed several services to help people find and use them. Pathway Services is a suite of finding aids linked from the superintendent of Documents Web page at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/locate.html>. They include title and subject lists of online publications, a list of federal agency Web pages maintained by Louisiana State University, the GPO monthly and sales catalogs, and the 40+ searchable databases in GPO access.

Jerry Frobom, regional depository librarian from UN-L, led a discussion on updating Nebraska's state plan for the federal depository

program.

The afternoon session focused on indexing and archiving issues for Nebraska state government information. The Nebrask@ Online and State Government Publications Online home pages, both of which are designed to locate government information for users, were demonstrated by Sam Sommerhalder, Nebrask@ Online general manager and Bonnie Henzel, Library Commission State Documents Assistant. Beth Goble, Library Commission Government Information Coordinator, distributed drafts of a core list of essential state government publications and guidelines for preserving publications in microfiche format through the Commission's Publications Clearinghouse program.

A discussion of indexing and archiving electronic state government information followed, led by Kay Walter, Head of Serials at UN-L. ▲

Special Report...

1998 Children's Services Grants Awarded

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded 1998 Grants for Excellence in Children's Services this summer. The awards, totaling \$13, 810, were made to the following libraries:

Republican Valley

Arapahoe Public Library, Book Buddies program between high school seniors and Grades 1-4, \$500.

Bartley Public Library, Oral History Project pairing older adults with teens, \$400.

Meridian

Broken Bow Public Library, Little House Club, \$1,775.

Eastern

John Rogers Memorial Library in Dodge, Spanish language collection for new residents, \$550.

Wisner Public Library, Spider's Website—a place for stories and activities, \$500.

Panhandle

Scottsbluff Public Library, Partnership project for preschoolers, \$665.

Southeast

Kilgore Memorial Library in York, Parent/Reading Awareness Project, \$1,000.

Auburn/Crete Public Libraries, Kits for Kids; Daycare Outreach, \$1,500.

Northeast

Stanton Public Library, Bilingual Collection, \$250.
Columbus Public Library, Latchkey Safety Program, \$540.

Neligh Public Library, Television Withdrawal Program, \$1,450.

Norfolk Public Library, LapSit Program for Infants, \$1,600.

Wayne Public Library, Teen READ Club (Read, Enjoy, Advise, Discuss), \$780.

Urban

Omaha Public Library, Outreach materials for daycare centers and homeless shelters, \$800.

Lincoln City Libraries, Literacy Outreach Project, \$1,500. ▲

Special Report...

Libraries Promote Rights of the Child

The single inevitable mandate for all organizations is change—and nowhere is this more evident than in libraries. Libraries are changing their focus, their service delivery mechanisms, and their roles within the community to better meet community needs. Children's library services are also changing, in response to societal conditions of the children in the community—lack of learning readiness, reading difficulties, inadequate health care, unsafe neighborhoods, and insufficient adult supervision. Librarians are in a unique position to improve the lives of children, especially the lives of children at risk.

The Nebraska Library Commission's Task Force on Library Services for Children and Young Adults has recently focused its efforts on children at risk. These are the children in our communities who benefit the most from a revised and expanded concept of children's library services. Following are some suggested ways libraries can make a profound and positive difference in the lives of the at-risk children in Nebraska communities.

Survival

- Offer a library program on healthy eating for children and/or parents.
- Post information about community social services, e.g., Women Infant Children Nutrition Services, housing programs, etc.

Personal Development

- Establish a program for kindergartners to visit the library and obtain a library card.
- Promote the use of non-book resources in the collection (such as puzzles, puppets, games, the Internet, etc.) to encourage intellectual and creative development.

Protection

- Offer programs to children and parents that emphasize children's safety, e.g., invite a local police officer or firefighter to give the program.
- Create a book display and/or bulletin board portraying different types of families. Help children understand that families should provide safety and love.

Participation

- Lead discussions of right and wrong, based on the example given in the article "Where do you Stand?" from *Green Teacher*, pp. 19-21, (1997-98, winter).
- Create a special "Parent Shelf" in or near the children's department.

The categories above are taken from the United Nations' **Convention on the Rights of the Child**, in the 1998 June/July issue of *American Libraries*.

For more ideas about how your library can help children at risk, see the Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Children at Risk. ▲
Kimberly Shelley, Mary Jackson, Sally Snyder, Richard Miller, Dave Oertli

New Advisory Committee Meets

Four individuals were appointed to the Advisory Committee of the Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service and two others were re-appointed.

New to the committee are Donna R. Friedman and Tony R. Jaynes, both of Omaha; Robert Howard, Greenwood; and Gladys A. Maxwell, Norfolk. Bill Carter,

Omaha; and Robert E. Schnuelle, Grand Island were re-appointed to their second two-year terms.

The Advisory Committee represents the needs of talking book and Braille borrowers and makes recommendations concerning policies, services and programs. Membership consists primarily of borrowers but may include librarians, educators, health care providers and other individuals who understand the needs of individuals with disabilities. ▲

▼ *Members and guests of the Talking Book and Braille Service Advisory Committee.*



Governor's Mansion Library Honored

A reception honoring the Mansion Library Project was held at the Governor's Residence on November 19, attended by First Lady Diane Nelson and celebrating the collaborative effort of the Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Library Commission, and the Heritage Room of Nebraska Authors at Lincoln City Libraries. This project will provide the Residence with a library that showcases books by Nebraska authors, books about Nebraska, and the book arts made in Nebraska.

As part of the 1998 Governor's Residence Restoration Project, First

Lady Diane Nelson initiated a rejuvenation of the mansion library. To help complete this project, Nebraska libraries contributed books to update the mansion library.

Books to be added to the collection include *Notable Nebraskans*, by Jean Sanders (Nebraska Library Commissioner), donated by the Nebraska Library Commission.

Nominations of works by representative Nebraska authors are welcome. Nebraskans interested in nominating a book for acceptance in the mansion library, or for further information concerning this project, contact Burns Davis at the Library Commission, 402-471-2694 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <bdavis@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

A Fresh Look at the Library Bill of Rights, part nine

In this latest installment of the NCompass series examining applications of intellectual freedom and the Library Bill of Rights, we explore the issues of liberty and intellectual freedom.

“Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press,...” This statement from the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution indicates the importance of freedom of inquiry and liberty of expression to the framers of the Constitution. George Orwell, in the introduction to *Animal Farm*, writes, “If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear.” This, of course, is the sticking point with intellectual freedom. To hear personal beliefs affirmed, or to protect beliefs we hold personally, are not difficult challenges. The difficulty arises when ideas expressed conflict with one’s personal beliefs. Yet as Michael Gorman states in his book, *Our Singular Strengths*, “It is the expression of the minority, the despised, the different, that (librarians) should protect at all costs.”

For librarians, the principles of freedom of expression, freedom to read, and intellectual freedom, are the mainstay of the profession. In practice, these principles should infuse every service, every program, and every selection made on behalf of the library. These are rights that should be fostered, preserved and protected within

the scope of the public library services to the community.

Intellect is defined by *Webster’s Online Dictionary* <<http://www.m-w.com/>> as the “power of knowing...the capacity for knowledge.” The idea of a free intellect is a liberating one. What if we could follow our thoughts and ideas wherever they might lead? And shouldn’t we also be able to say what we think about where our ideas lead us? We *can* pursue ideas to wherever our thoughts might lead. That is what is meant by intellectual freedom. And we *can* say what we think about where those ideas lead us. That is what is meant by freedom of expression.

Ideally, libraries do more than just react to challenges to these personal freedoms. As public institutions and protectors of inalienable rights, libraries should encourage critical thinking and reading by including information on diverse and possibly controversial topics. Libraries should be places where ideas can be pursued. A library should provide access to information about different cultures, ideas, and beliefs. The role of the library is not just to protect intellectual freedoms, but to advocate for them. It is not enough to simply not deny access, but librarians should encourage and enable the pursuit of new and different ideas, and seek to broaden the horizons of people in their community. ▲
Kit Keller

“The selector has faith in the intelligence of the reader; the censor has faith only in his own.”

Nebrask@ Online Designated Official State Home Page

Nebraska’s official state home page got a new look early this year with the designation of Nebrask@ Online as the official address.

Services from the Nebraska State Government home page were added to the original Nebrask@ Online home page.

Providing access to state government information in a variety of formats has been part of the Library Commission’s mission since 1972, when the Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse service was established by statute. Over the years the Commission has collected more than 80,000 state government publications, listed them in the Commission online catalog, loaned them out, and distributed many of them on microfiche to depository libraries. As agencies began providing government information electronically, the Library Commission helped provide access through the original Nebraska Online electronic bulletin board (started in 1992). The Nebraska State Government home page was created in 1995 using the “official” Internet address of <<http://www.state.ne.us/>>. The Commission was a lead agency in establishing a public-private partnership

for the current Nebrask@ Online service, contracting with state agencies to post government information on the Internet. It is now overseen by the State Records Board and managed by Nebrask@ Interactive.

In March, Governor Nelson designated the Nebrask@ Online home page as Nebraska’s official home page. The Nebraska State Government home page maintained by the Commission was discontinued. Users can now reach state government information at <<http://www.nol.org/>> or <<http://www.state.ne.us/>>. The Library Commission continues to provide government information services and maintains several finding aids linked from the “Search State Government” button on Nebrask@ Online. These include an e-mail link to the Commission’s reference desk, a subject guide to state government, State Government Publications Online (a title listing of online publications arranged by agency), Nebraska Frequently Asked Questions, links to the government section of the Commission’s Electronic Library, and a link to the Commission’s online catalog. ▲

Special Report...

Spanish Language Web Sites

As Nebraska communities become more diverse, libraries recognize the need to serve individuals for whom English is a second language and look to the Internet for resources.

The Spring 1998 issue of *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries* contains an article titled: "Hispanic_Kids@Library.net: Internet Resources for Latino Youth," by Jeanette Larson and Carolina G. Martinez. The authors list a number of Web sites for librarians working with Latino youth and their families.

For someone new to the Internet, <<http://www.civila.com/desenredada/index.htm>> contains a Spanish language explanation of the Internet, along with definitions of terms and samples of common acronyms.

The article recommends several Spanish language search engines, including <<http://escapeartist.com/search4/buscalo.html>>, containing over 50 search engines to choose from, most of them in Spanish.

Lared Latina, <<http://www.inconnect.com/~rvazquez/sowest.html>> is a comprehensive Internet resource for Latinos, offering information on Hispanic holidays and significant achievements and accomplishments of Hispanics/Latinos in the U.S.

Librarians will want to bookmark <http://www.csusm.edu/cwis/campus_centers/csb/>, the Web site for the Center for the Study of Books in Spanish for Children and Adolescents. This site contains a list of new recommended books in Spanish, and a search engine that allows the user to search (in English or in Spanish) for a title and learn if it is recommended for purchase. The user is often referred to the title *Recommended Books in Spanish for Children and Young Adults* by Isabel Schon. The 1997 edition of this title can be borrowed from Library Commission Information Services, 402-471-4016 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <ready@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

Hispanic Online <<http://www.hisp.com/>> is the Web site for *Hispanic Magazine*. This English language site includes selected articles from back issues of *Hispanic Magazine*, links to other Web sites of interest to Latinos, a chat room to talk with others from around the world, and a link to Moderna Online, the Web site for *Moderna* magazine.

Internet Familia <<http://www.familia.cl/>>, is a Spanish language site that offers something for all the family, from news articles to a virtual toy shop.

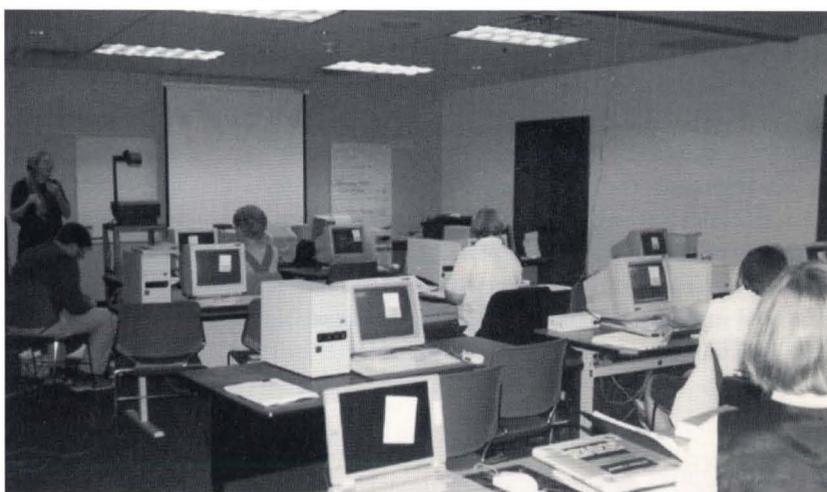
For those interested in Web sites for Latino youth and their families, borrow the *Journal of Youth Services in Libraries* through interlibrary loan (see above) and visit the recommended sites. If you're familiar with what's available, it will be easier to help your library users explore the Internet for sites of interest to them. ▲
Sally Snyder

Commission Hosts Cataloging Class

This Spring, Emporia State University School of Library and Information Management held several classes at the Nebraska Library Commission. One class was "Organizing Information," a deceptively simple title for a very complex topic. The course included AACR2 Rev., LCRI, OCLC/PRISM, and other intimidating

acronyms. The Library Commission provided a good setting for the class. Computers were moved, hubs were installed, network lines were checked, and after many hours of work, this specialized learning environment was ready. The computer classroom, with two students per terminal connected to the commission's network, allowed for fairly flawless OCLC access throughout the weekend session. ▲

▼ Students utilize the computer network in the Library Commission's Crane Room.



Trends in Nebraska Public Libraries

Electronic Information Resources Expand

- 25% of reporting libraries have access to electronic databases
- 11.6% of reporting libraries have a Web site
- 58% of reporting libraries have Internet access, a 14% increase over last year
- 61% increase in materials owned in electronic format

—based on 1996-1997 Public Library Profile

News of Nebraska Libraries and People...

Governor Nelson appointed **Wally Seiler** (Alliance) and **Richard Jussel** (Kearney) to the **Nebraska Library Commission**. Wally is a bank officer in Alliance and a member of the Alliance Public Library Board of Trustees. Richard is an English Professor and Director of the Honors Program at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Wally and Richard replace Frankie Lovell and Ron Norman who completed their second terms on the Commission in June. ▲

Sally Payne from the **Sump Memorial Library, Papillion**, was named the MCI Cyberian of the Year for Nebraska. The award includes \$1000 towards education materials and one year of dial-up access to the Internet. ▲

The **Library Commission** introduced the first of a series of **Web-based Mini-courses** as an opportunity to educate librarians for the 21st Century. "The Internet and Intellectual Freedom," provides two Continuing Education hours toward Public Librarian Certification. Librarians are invited to look at the course and send feedback to Ellen Van Waart, Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator, 402-471-4004 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. See the Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Internet Intellectual Freedom. ▲

The **Wymore Public Library** received a grant through the Family Unifying Network to provide a high-school-age mentor for elementary school children during after school hours. The mentor helps with homework and computers and leads activities. The library's friends group also received a grant to purchase nonfiction books for youth, as well as supplies for children to use while at the library. ▲

New library directors include: Grant, Hastings Memorial Library, **Sally Borowski**; Gretna Public Library, **Sylvia Allen**; Hastings, Central Community College Nuckolls Library, **Dr Sandra Block**; Holdrege Public Library, **Jeff Gilderson-Duwe**; Lincoln, VA Medical Center Library Service, **Sharon Fusco**; Norfolk, Nebraska Christian College, **Linda Lloyd**; Omaha Public Library, **Dr. Ronald R. Heezen**; Pilger Public Library, **Charlene Clemens**; Shelton Township Library, **Claire McKibben**; Stromsburg Public Library, **Diana Johnson**; Valparaiso Public Library, **Iris Schlotman**. ▲

Janet Greser was selected as the **Library Commission's 1998 Employee of the Year**. Among the comments supporting Janet's nomination is, "Janet always gives 100% to help staff and customers and does so with a smile." **Beth Goble** was selected as the

Commission's 1998 Manager of the Year. The support Beth gives to her staff in both professional and personal matters, her encouragement to participate in continuing education events, and her openness to new ideas and concepts were noted in her nomination. ▲

Daniel Hogan is a new staff member in the Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service Book Circulation area. ▲

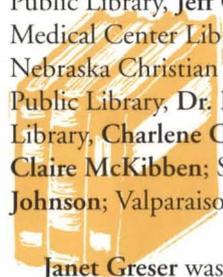
The 1998-99 Nebraska Library Association's **Golden Sower** program began this fall, with voting in spring 1999. The 1998-99 Nebraska **Golden Sower Award** titles and the 1997-98 winners of this Children's Choice Book Award for Nebraska are posted at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/golden/sower.html>>. ▲

Katherine Walter and **Rebecca Bernthal**, **University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries**, are working with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to identify for preservation the highest priority literature of agriculture and rural life, as part of the "National Preservation Program for Agricultural Literature". ▲

Librarians across Nebraska are working with the "**Nebraska Parent Teacher's Association I'm Ready** Public Awareness Campaign" to help ensure that Nebraska children enter school every day ready to learn. For information about library practices that prepare children for learning, see the Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on I'm Ready. ▲

The **See-to-Learn** program is sponsored by the **National Optometrist's Association**, recognizing the importance of early identification of vision problems for successful learning. Public libraries are asked to help with this campaign by distributing literature and book marks. For more information, contact Mary Jackson, 402-471-4006 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjackson@neon.nlc.state.ne.us> or see Announcements on the Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>. ▲

The **Federal Institute of Museum and Library Services** recently announced the award of \$128,842 to the Winnebago Tribe in Winnebago, NE, as part of **The Native American Library Service program**, providing new opportunities for improved library services for an important, but often undeserved, part of the nation's community of library users. The two-year project will automate card catalog records, create a Web site highlighting the tribe's collection of Native American materials, and increase access to that collection through conversion of some materials to electronic formats. ▲



New on our Home Page:
see <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>

▲ Remember to check our Year 2000 Web page frequently for updated information and links, search on Year 2000 Update.

▲ The latest edition of *Crime in Nebraska* on our Nebraska State Government Publications Online page, search on Crime.

▲ The *Nebraska Library Commission Copyright Handbook, A Guide for Nebraska Libraries*, search on Copyright Handbook.

For a print copy contact Mary Geibel,
402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665,
e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

Nebraska Library Commission



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