



Library Commission Hosts Librarians from Tajikistan



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The Nebraska Library Commission hosted library managers from Tajikistan in November for a day of presentations about Commission activities and programs. The visit was part of a three-week Community Connections Institute sponsored by the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) Department of Educational Administration with funding from the United States Agency for International Development.

The Tajikistanis participated in leadership training conducted at Lincoln-area public and academic libraries. The group included six men and four women from the National Library of Tajikistan, State Children's Library, State Medical Institute, State National University, Ministry of Culture, State Institute of Arts, Department of Culture in Local Government, and two regional libraries. They were accompanied by program coordinator Gail Latta from UNL Love Library and two intrepid English-Russian translators.

The morning began with a welcome, tour, and overview of a state library's role and mission by Library Commission Director Rod Wagner. Library Development Director Richard Miller described the public library accreditation process,

grants, and the Basic Skills program. The visitors asked many questions about funding sources, how much governing authority the Library Commission has over Nebraska public libraries, and how grants are awarded. They were very interested in Children and Young Adult Library Services Coordinator Sally Snyder's "show and tell" about the cooperative summer reading program. Communications Coordinator Mary Jo Ryan talked about Library Commission involvement with the Nebraska Center for the Book in activities supporting literacy.

The afternoon began with an Internet tour of Commission-coordinated electronic projects by Network Services Director Devra Dragos. The benefits of statewide purchasing, shared cataloging, interlibrary loan, digitization projects such as Nebraska Memories, statewide access to databases via NebraskaAccess, and use of innovative Web 2.0 technology were emphasized.

Tajikistani librarians meet with Nebraska librarians in Lincoln.



Scott Scholz (seated), Talking Books Circulation Manager, demonstrates recording functions.

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From the Director...

The Nebraska Library Commission is seeking a new 21st Century Librarian Program grant to continue support for library science education in Nebraska. The Commission's recently completed grant, funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, was a great success with many expected and unexpected benefits. Financial support from the grant and matching funds helped finance professional education for many Nebraskans pursuing library service career work. The talent, knowledge, and skills that these people contribute to Nebraska library services is extraordinary.

The emphasis of the Commission's recently completed grant was financial aid supporting master's degree-level library science education. The project's focus on recruitment using new media to reach a younger audience was imaginative. The project also led to a new library jobs website, NowHiring @ your library®, with useful companion information about careers, scholarships, internships, and mentoring. Another focus was a component to support undergraduate coursework and to aid students taking library courses offered by Nebraska community colleges. The grant project also aided an impressive number of students completing coursework for library media certification in Nebraska schools. In addition, program funds were made available for internships for student workers (high school and college) in public libraries.

The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program has succeeded in supporting library science education throughout the United States. The future of this program is uncertain with major changes expected in Washington. This is one program that works. I hope it will continue as a needed and highly beneficial source for aiding people pursuing library science education.

Rod Wagner

One Book One Nebraska 2009 Title Selected

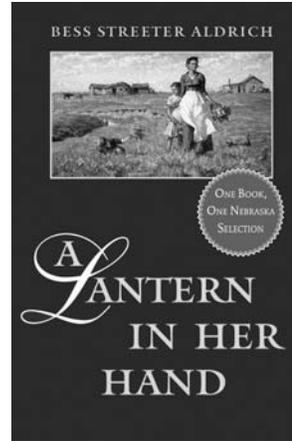
One Book One Nebraska 2009 invites citizens across the state to read *A Lantern in Her Hand* by Nebraska author Bess Streeter Aldrich. Through a broad-based nomination process, the Nebraska Center for the Book board narrowed the choices, read all the finalists, and voted to select this classic story of a pioneer woman who withstands the adversity of existence on the prairie to triumph in the joy of everyday life.

Libraries across Nebraska are encouraged to join other literary and cultural organizations in planning for 2009 activities and events that will encourage Nebraskans to read and discuss this story. Support materials will be distributed in early 2009.

One Book One Nebraska 2009 is sponsored by the Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Library Association, Nebraska Library Commission, and the University of Nebraska Press. This year the reading celebration is hosted by the Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation, www.bessstreeteraldrich.org.

The Foundation will sponsor activities throughout the year, including:

- Short Story Contest (www.bessstreeteraldrich.org/contest.html) for Nebraska authors (adult, high school, and middle school).



Prizes will be awarded to winners in each age category. Deadline for submissions: February 17, 2009, Bess Streeter Aldrich's birthday.

- February 15, 2009: Bess Streeter Aldrich Birthday Celebration and Open House at the Bess Streeter Aldrich House in Elmwood, to kick off the yearlong celebration.
- April 18, 2009: Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation Spring Banquet will feature Carol Miles Petersen, Bess Streeter Aldrich's biographer, telling the story behind *A Lantern in Her Hand*. The winners of the Aldrich short story contest will be honored at the banquet.
- A summer event in Elmwood will highlight the literary heritage of the area.
- "Bess Streeter Aldrich Remembrance Day" will be held in the fall.
- The "Journey into Christmas" holiday event closes the year's activities, with the Aldrich House decorated for the holidays and open every Saturday and Sunday in December.

For more information contact Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Library Commission Communications Coordinator, 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: mjryan@nlc.state.ne.us.

NCompass

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This publication was supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provision of the Library Services and Technology Act.

Library Use by Latinos Increases

by Kathryn Brockmeier, Nebraska Library Commission Research Analyst/Special Projects Associate

Fifty-four percent of the Latino/Hispanic population in the U.S. visited libraries in the past year, Latinos hold positive perceptions of libraries, and the more fluent a person is in English, the more likely they are to have visited the library and accessed its services, according to a report detailing the results of a recent study.

Perhaps most importantly, especially for libraries whose staff members are not fluent in Spanish, friendly service was found to be a stronger predictor of library visits than access to Spanish language materials, and staff who cannot speak Spanish does not seem to deter visits to the library.

The results were published in *Latinos and Public Library Perceptions*, which described a study by WebJunction, in partnership with the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute. The six-state telephone survey polled over 2,860 adult Latinos about their library use and perceptions of libraries.

While the study indicates higher library usage by Latinos than previously documented, outreach efforts still are needed. The report suggests four ways to be more effective in bringing Latinos to the library:

- **Get to know your local Latino community.** Library staff who are aware of the diversity and composition of the Hispanic community in their area will have an easier time targeting their audience. Age, sex, education, and income are factors in library usage, but birthplace, generation in this country, and language preference should also be taken into account.
- **Advertise the library as a place to learn English.** Satisfaction with

English-language materials is more important to Latinos than satisfaction with Spanish-language materials. Learning English is one of the biggest reasons Latinos use libraries. The report recommends acquiring English-learning programs; creating or improving children's programs geared

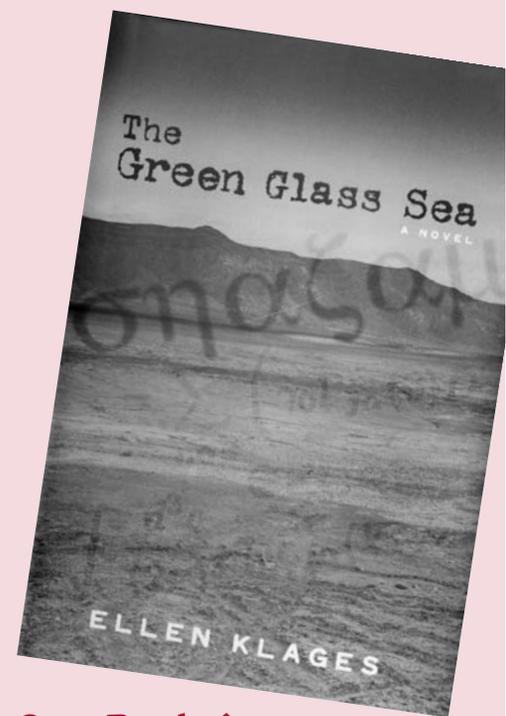
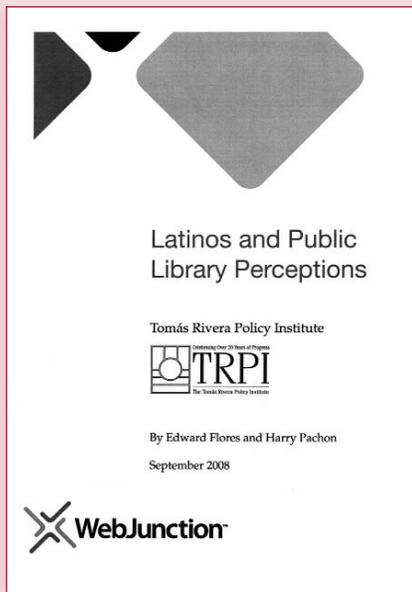
toward fluency in English, including summer reading programs; and advertising the array of resources and programs in Spanish or via Spanish media.

- **Advertise access to computers and availability of general information.** Latino library-goers who use available computers visit the library more often. Only 47% of Latinos who use the library for

Internet access have access at home or work.

- **Inform the community that the library does not share library user information.** Many Latinos in this country are not U.S. citizens. The research found that foreign-born Latinos are much less likely to use the library than those born in the states. One reason may be fear of signing up for a library card because they are unaware that libraries must keep personal information confidential. Libraries can post signs in Spanish stating that the library does not share confidential information and mention confidentiality in other library materials.

For more information or to access the report, see www.webjunction.org/latino-perceptions. The survey script and questions can be downloaded. Libraries are encouraged to conduct the survey in their own communities and use the results to plan services and advocate with local funding agents. 



One Book for Nebraska Kids Book Bags Available

The One Book for Nebraska Kids 2009 selection is *The Green Glass Sea*, by Ellen Klages, and is aimed at readers in grades 4-6. This book is about Dewey Kerrigan, 11, who travels to New Mexico in 1943 and meets up with her father, who lives on a secret base and is working on a top secret project with a number of other scientists, including J. Robert Oppenheimer.

The Nebraska Library Commission is distributing book bags containing paperback books, along with discussion questions and background information. To borrow the book bags, contact Nebraska Library Commission Information and Reference Services, 402-471-4016 or 800-307-2665, e-mail ready@nlc.state.ne.us, or the Regional Library System offices, www.nlc.state.ne.us/system.

For more information contact Sally Snyder, Nebraska Library Commission Children and Young Adult Library Services Coordinator, 402-471-4003 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: ssnyder@nlc.state.ne.us. 

Gates Connectivity Grants Awarded

The Nebraska Library Commission recently awarded **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Connectivity Upgrade Grants** to nine Nebraska public libraries that have chosen to participate in the Connectivity Upgrade Grant program to provide increased connectivity speed for library public access to the Internet. These libraries had either no current Internet access or dial-up access only. The grants provided each library a computer and monitor, wiring (if needed), payment for labor involved in making the library Internet-ready, and funding to cover the costs of two years of connectivity. This two-year connectivity funding is provided by the Nebraska Library Commission as part of the matching funds for the Gates Foundation grant. The remaining funding is provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Communities receiving Connectivity Upgrade Grants are Bartley, Ewing Township, Farnam, Gresham, Lewellen, Oshkosh, Stuart Township, Taylor, and Wilsonville.

For more information contact Richard Miller, Nebraska Library Commission Development Director, 402-471-3175 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: rmiller@nlc.state.ne.us.

NCompass Live Begins in January

Starting, January 7, 2009, the Nebraska Library Commission will host *NCompass Live*, a weekly online event. *NCompass Live* will cover Nebraska Library Commission activities and library topics presented by Nebraska Library Commission staff and guests. The Wednesday one-hour sessions will start at 10:00 a.m. (CT) and will include a mixture of presentations, interviews, book reviews, Web tours, mini training sessions, and Q & A sessions. Watch the *NCompass Live* page on the Library Commission Website at www.nlc.state.ne.us/NCompass/NCompassLive.asp for more information and program schedules.

Conference Follow-Up Activities Are Ongoing

Brainstorming sessions during the Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference held in June produced a variety of ideas and suggestions for action (suggestions do not necessarily reflect consensus or "common ground" agreement of participants as a whole). Local community libraries and library groups are exploring these ideas and, in some cases, initiating action to address library service needs for specific target populations.

Following are efforts under way at the Nebraska Library Commission relating to a number of these initiatives. As library groups across the state undertake planning activities and action projects, they are encouraged to record their progress by adding to the conference wiki at www.nlc.state.ne.us/Wikis/FS/; click on What's Next in the left column.



Action: Nebraska Library Commission offered the first Library Camp Nebraska in November; see <http://librarycampnebraska.pbwiki.com>.

• Plinkit

Idea from Brainstorming: Every library in the state have a Web page and host local Websites.
Action: Nebraska Library Commission will offer Web hosting services for public libraries through Plinkit; see www.plinkit.org.

• Nebraska Memories

Idea from Brainstorming: Digitization of works.
Action: Nebraska Library Commission facilitates partnership efforts to digitize Nebraska-related historical and cultural heritage materials and make them available to researchers of all ages via the Internet; see www.memories.ne.gov.

• Nebraska Library Training Portal

Idea from Brainstorming: Conduct training through the Nebraska Library Commission and Regional Library Systems.
Action: Nebraska Library Commission (in partnership with the Nebraska Educational Media Association, Nebraska Library Association, and Regional Library Systems) provides information about training and continuing education opportunities for Nebraska library staff and supporters; see www.nlc.state.ne.us/training/train.asp.

• NebraskAccess Database Public Access

Idea from Brainstorming: Single sign-on to multiple electronic databases
Action: Nebraska Library Commission provides access to NebraskAccess databases via Nebraska driver's license authentication; see www.nlc.state.ne.us/nebraskaccess/logon.asp.

• Return on Investment (ROI) for Public Libraries

Idea from Brainstorming: ROI (Return On Investment) – show value of library to community's economy.
Action: Nebraska Library Commission offers ROI training and technical assistance on how Nebraska libraries can use Return on Investment (ROI) information to communicate the value of library services to their target audiences; see www.nlc.state.ne.us/wikis/roi4libraries.

• Nebraska Learns 2.0

Idea from Brainstorming: Use and promote the "23-things program" from Nebraska Library Commission; see www.nlc.state.ne.us/netserv/learning2.0.
Action: Nebraska Library Commission offers Nebraska Learns 2.0 for library staff across the state; see <http://l2ne.blogspot.com/2008/09/thing-1-discovery.html>.

• Library Camp Nebraska

Idea from Brainstorming: Technology camp – like Library Leadership Institute but with a technology focus.

Library Research Focuses on Technology Needs

A good deal of research is currently being conducted on the status and impact of technology in libraries. Public library studies are examining funding for technology, the impact of offering computer access in libraries, and the adequacy of library connectivity to the Internet.

The *2008 National Survey of Public Library Funding and Technology Access* is conducted annually and is, therefore, valuable in demonstrating trends in the subject area. The American Library Association and the Information Use Management and Policy Institute at Florida State University are the survey partners for this project, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The methodology included Web-based surveys, which continues the research on this topic that has been conducted since 1994. Data collection for this study concluded in November. More information on this project can be found at www.ala.org/plinternetfunding.

The Information School at the University of Washington, with assistance from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is researching the impact of free access to computers and the Internet on library users and their communities. There are three activities in the methodology—a national telephone survey, a Web-based survey, and case studies of

selected libraries. The case studies will include meeting with focus groups and interviewing individual library users. For additional information visit <http://depts.washington.edu/implspac/index.htm>.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, as part of its U.S. Libraries Initiative, started the *Broadband Assessment Project* in November. The project goal is to collect information from all public libraries in the U.S. regarding their current state of connectivity. This study is designed to complement the *Survey of Public Library Funding and Technology Access*. The initiative began with a pilot project involving two states to test data collection procedures and protocols. Initial data collection efforts focused on seven additional states. Then, with the assistance of state library agencies like the Nebraska Library Commission, Web surveys supplemented by direct telephone interviews were used to gather data from the remaining states. The goal is to make the resulting data available in 2009 for libraries to use in their efforts to improve connectivity. The data will also provide an understanding of the level of library connectivity for future grant programs.

For more information contact John Felton, Nebraska Library Commission Planning and Data Services Coordinator, 402-471-3216 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: jfelton@nlc.state.ne.us. ❖

Free Teleconferences Available for CE Credit

Nebraska librarians, again in 2009, can participate free of charge in the College of DuPage series of library teleconferences. The teleconferences focus on the changing environment faced by librarians with regard to technology, development, and planning. The Library Commission purchased a statewide license for Nebraska library staff to participate in the teleconferences.

The 2009 programs in the series are:

Soaring to Excellence: Targeting the Ages-Programming that Hits the Mark - Friday, February 13, 2009.

Library Challenges & Opportunities: Diversity Beyond the Obvious - Friday, April 3, 2009.

Soaring to Excellence: An Ounce of Prevention-Health Reference Basics - Thursday, April 16, 2009.

All programs are offered from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (CT). To register and for more information see the Nebraska Library Commission Website at www.nlc.state.ne.us and search the Library Training Portal, keyword DuPage.

For more information contact Laura Johnson, Nebraska Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator; 402-471-2694 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: ljohnson@nlc.state.ne.us. ❖

Youth Grants Awarded

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded nearly \$40,000 in Youth Grants for Excellence to public libraries and Regional Library Systems in December.

The grants offer an opportunity to expand youth service capabilities in new and different directions. It is expected that the funding will provide a foundation for ongoing (rather than one-time) services that can be continued with community support or through a reallocation of library funds.

Libraries receiving grants are:

Atkinson Public Library
 Battle Creek Public Library
 Beatrice Public Library
 Bennington Public Library
 Blair Public Library
 Central City Public Library
 Fairfield Public Library
 Hastings Public Library
 Hooper Public Library
 Kearney Public Library
 Neligh Public Library
 Norfolk Public Library
 Osmond Public Library
 Pierce, Lied Pierce Public Library
 Pender, House Memorial Library
 Ponca Carnegie Library
 Randolph, Lied Randolph Public Library
 Scottsbluff Public Library
 South Sioux City Public Library
 Springfield Memorial Library
 Stromsburg Public Library
 Tekamah Carnegie Public Library
 Wahoo Public Library
 West Point, John A. Stahl Library
 York, Kilgore Memorial Library
 Eastern and Southeast Library Systems

For more information contact Sally Snyder, see contact information on page 3. ❖

Continuing Education Grants Awarded

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded Continuing Education and Training grants totaling \$25,016 in September. The grants were awarded to public libraries, institutional libraries, and Regional Library Systems to assist in providing continuing education and training for Nebraska library personnel and trustees.

In keeping with the goals of the Library Services and Technology Act, these awards represent an important part of the Library Commission's commitment, as established in the Nebraska Library Commission's 2008-2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan:

Goal 1: All Nebraskans will have improved access to enhanced library and information services, provided and facilitated by qualified library personnel, boards, and supporters with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary to provide excellent library and information services.

This year's grants will be used to fund attendance at national and regional library meetings; sponsor a library colloquium; provide "Every Child Ready to Read" training; and bring in speakers to address such topics as library governance, ethical dilemmas, the future of prison libraries, and managerial and leadership issues.

Libraries receiving grants were:

Columbus Public Library
Eastern and Southeast Library Systems
La Vista Public Library
Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Libraries
Nebraska Regional Library Systems
Neligh Public Library
Omaha Public Library and Lincoln City Libraries
Panhandle Library System

For more information contact Laura Johnson, see contact information on page 5. 

Council Serves as Advisory Group

The State Advisory Council on Libraries held its final meeting of 2008 in November at the Benson Branch of Omaha Public Library. The eighteen-member council serves as an advisory group to the Nebraska Library Commission.

Marty Magee was Council Chair during 2008 and contributed leadership in initiating a wiki for council information and adopting customer service, marketing, and advocacy as priority topics. The November council meeting included a report and discussion concerning a recently completed Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) "Librarians for the 21st Century" grant to the Library Commission. Mary Jo Ryan, project director, reported on the grant's successes and described plans for a new recruitment grant application due in mid-December. The council approved a resolution supporting the Library Commission's application for a second "Librarians for the 21st Century" IMLS grant and agreeing to serve in an advisory capacity for the project.

Theresa Jehlik, council member and meeting host, presented a report on an

Omaha Public Library customer service training program funded by the Library Commission. The training program resulted in new and more effective customer service. Council members expressed interest in the Omaha Public Library project as a model training project for presentation in other Nebraska locations.

Steve Fosselman, council member and chair of the Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference task force, reported on the conference task force's plans and activities. He expressed the task force's intent to create resources and tools to aid libraries, organizations, and individuals involved in projects and ideas from the Future Search conference.

Jan Boyer, Theresa Jehlik, Diana Johnson, and Becky Pasco were recognized with appreciation for completion of their second terms on the council. Marty Magee was thanked for her leadership as Council Chair during 2008. Patricia Gross will become Council Chair in 2009.

For more information contact Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commission Director, 402-471-4001 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: rwagner@nlc.state.ne.us. 

Library Commission Hosts Librarians from Tajikistan *(continued from page 1)*

Next, the visitors toured the Talking Book and Braille Service area with Director Dave Oertli and Studio Manager Bill Ainsley. A Tajikistani volunteer read a short passage from a Russian-language book and recorded it in the studio, with the visitors listening to the recording.

Beth Goble, Government Information Services Director, followed up with a description of the federal and state government documents depository programs, including the electronic Nebraska documents program.

The Hartley Burr Alexander motto inscribed on the state Capitol, "The salvation of the state is watchfulness in the citizen," was used to make the point that access to information about government activities is necessary to help voters make informed decisions. The day concluded with a presentation by Mary Jo Ryan on

library education scholarships and the recruitment video funded by the IMLS Librarians for the 21st Century grant. She also shared samples of library marketing materials.

At a farewell banquet visitors and hosts agreed that the Institute was a wonderful opportunity to meet colleagues from a country so different from one's own and that we share a common purpose: great love and enthusiasm for our chosen profession and passion for offering library services to our customers.

Video of a presentation by the Tajikistani visitors can be viewed at <http://blip.tv/file/1438229>. For more information contact Beth Goble, Nebraska Library Commission Government Information Services Director, 402-471-4017 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: bgoble@nlc.state.ne.us. 



Friends of Libraries U.S.A.
Libraries ★ Trustees ★ Friends ★ Foundations

Making Library 'Friends' Focus of Talk

FOLUSA: *How to Make and Keep 'Friends' for Your Library* was the topic of a session presented by Library Commission Library Development Director Richard Miller at the NLA/NEMA Conference in October.

Just 41% of Nebraska public libraries have a Friends group. The Nebraska Library Commission recently purchased a membership in Friends of Libraries USA (FOLUSA) for all of the state's public libraries. Headed by a former Nebraskan, Sally Gardner Reed, FOLUSA publishes useful resources and offers guidance on starting and maintaining successful Friends groups. A few of the benefits of membership include access to FOLUSA's database with electronic versions of the organization's publications, discounts on products, awards information, and many other resources; four paper copies of each newsletter issue; and access to a nationwide listserv to correspond with others interested in Friends groups.

The newsletter is loaded with ideas. Here are a few from a recent newsletter:

- Teen Book Festival with a Read-a-Thon.
- Book sale in a park to get rid of library discards at 25 cents each (avoiding overuse of a landfill).
- A Sled-di-Spaghetti celebration at a park lodge with a spaghetti dinner, indoor games, art projects, music, a raffle, silent auction, and sled races and games outdoors.
- A murder mystery put on by a theater group in the library.
- Outstanding citizen awards for 6th, 7th and 8th graders at a banquet.
- A parade float and ice cream social
- An information booth at a local arts festival.
- A notebook containing patron-recommended reading.
- Online connections for making donations, volunteering, and membership application.
- Selling books online (FOLUSA has a new "toolkit" with instructions).

- A Friends' bookstore.
- A correspondence committee to write regular newspaper columns.
- A speakers' list.
- Putting local elected officials on the Friends' mailing list.
- Sponsorship of municipal celebrations.

FOLUSA has produced a number of "Fact Sheets" with tips on organizing a library friends group:

- Tap some of your most energetic and faithful volunteers and set up a Friends' steering committee. Have access to an attorney, people with public relations talent, and some high-profile leaders for this steering committee.
- Determine the Friends' purpose and mission; establish its standing committees.
- Establish the group's not-for-profit status (501(c)(3) and write a constitution and by-laws.
- Determine a dues structure.
- Launch a membership drive.
- Hold your first "all-member" meeting; include a program component to help attract a large audience; elect officers and committee chairs at that meeting.
- Develop a long-range plan for the group consistent with the library's vision and goals.
- Join FOLUSA – all Nebraska public libraries receive the benefits of membership through Nebraska Library Commission funding.

FOLUSA and ALTA (Association for Library Trustees and Advocates) have merged into a new, expanded division of the American Library Association known as ALTAFF—the Association for Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations. This likely will result in increased visibility of Friends, in particular, within ALA.

For more information contact Richard Miller, see contact information on page 4. ➡

Conference Follow-Up Activities Are Ongoing

(continued from page 4)

- **Ask a Design Professional**
Idea from Brainstorming: Have experts visit to make suggestions on making physical space more hospitable.
Action: Nebraska Library Commission is working with Clark Enersen Partners on the Ask the Design Pro Wiki. This resource will help address the needs of library staff and supporters for answers (or directions to answers) to questions regarding library buildings or sites; see www.nlc.state.ne.us/wikis/AskDesignPro.
- **Library Managers from Tajikistan Visit Nebraska Library Commission**
Idea from Brainstorming: Embrace the richness of a global community.
Action: Nebraska Library Commission hosted visitors from libraries in Tajikistan in November; see www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/NLC/2008/10/library_managers_from_tajikist.html.
- **Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program Grant**
Idea from Brainstorming: The staff is key to the success of the library; cultivate our staff.
Action: Nebraska Library Commission is writing a grant to the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services to support the program: *Cultivating Nebraska Librarians 2.0: Building 21st Century Skills*; see www.ims.gov/applicants/grants/21centuryLibrarian.shtm.

For more information see the Nebraska Libraries Future Search Report at www.nlc.state.ne.us/wikis/fs/Future%20Search%20Conference.ashx or contact Mary Jo Ryan, see contact information on page 2 or Rod Wagner, see contact information on page 6. ➡

Gates Foundation Grants Available

Nebraska public libraries are encouraged to apply for the Opportunity Online Hardware grants offered by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This last round of hardware grants by the Foundation is for public libraries only, and focuses on sustaining library technology services.

To emphasize the need for ongoing local funding to update computer hardware, the two-phase grant requires matching funds for the hardware component, while providing free advocacy training to help public libraries raise those funds.

Eligibility for these grants is based on data on poverty concentrations, free school lunches, and unemployment (which was compiled by the Foundation), and data provided by each library on its public access computers in the TechAtlas Computer Inventory through WebJunction. Only those public libraries that meet the initial criteria are invited to complete the Computer Inventory.

Nebraska public libraries that met the initial criteria set by the Foundation were sent letters via postal mail (not e-mail) inviting them to complete the TechAtlas Computer Inventory. Details about the grant and instructions on how to complete the Computer Inventory were included in the mailing.

The Nebraska Library Commission strongly urges eligible public libraries to apply for these grants. Eligible public libraries are those that received invitation letters. While the hardware component requires matching funds, the free advocacy training provided is excellent and will help with funding for this project and others in the future. The Library Commission is acting as the intermediary on behalf of the Foundation for this grant and will verify completion of requirements and disperse the funds.

For more information contact Christa Burns, 402-471-3107 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: cburns@nlc.state.ne.us or Devra Dragos, 402-471-4335 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: ddragos@nlc.state.ne.us. 

Nebraska Learns 2.0 Under Way

At the halfway point in the statewide Nebraska Learns 2.0 project which began in October, more than 1,000 blog posts had been written in more than 140 blogs, and more than 900 comments had been left on the Nebraska Learns 2.0 blog.

The program is designed to encourage staff to learn more about emerging technologies on the Web that are changing the way people, society, and libraries access information and communicate with each other. Through 23 short online lessons called Things, participants work through discovery exercises to become familiar with blogging, RSS, wikis, instant messaging, Flickr, podcasting, and more.

In addition to learning new Things, everyone who completes all 23 Things



PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

"What a fun way to learn. We are hoping to get our whole board 'on board.' "

"I'm off and running! Hope that I can handle this new adventure in tech land. Looking forward to learning and using this new technology."

"WOW!! I needed this motivation to get started. I'm looking forward to making this journey."

Christa Burns, see contact information at left. 

by January 30, 2009 and blogs their progress will have a chance to win one of nine MP3 players made available through generous donations from ITART, NEMA, and NLA. Everyone who finishes the program before the deadline also will receive 15 CE credits.

It's not too late to get started with this free, self-directed learning program. All Nebraska librarians, school media specialists, library staff, and library Friends and board members are invited to participate.

For more information or to start learning, see the Nebraska Learns 2.0 Website at <http://l2ne.blogspot.com/2008/09/thing-1-discovery.html>, or contact

Calling All Series Readers!

by Lisa Kelly, Nebraska Library Commission Information Services Director

The Nebraska Library Commission's Books in Series Website provides booklists to assist librarians and their customers. Located at www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/booksinseries/index.html, searchers can locate lists by author, series name, or book title.

This is a terrific resource for those who read voluminous series such as Star Wars and Star Trek or who are beginning a new series. Since this Website began in 2003, the Library Commission has received notes and e-mails from customers around the country thanking us for these lists. Many have submitted

additional series lists to be included in this database.

If you can't find the series you're looking for, let us know by clicking on the Contact Us link and we will be happy to add it. Books in Series is consistently one of our most popular sites and its strength relies upon users searching and recommending books. Let us know what you think and find a new series to read this winter!

For more information contact Lisa Kelly, Nebraska Library Commission Information Services Director, 402-471-4015 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: lkelly@nlc.state.ne.us. 

NEBASE Activities Conclude in June

NEBASE was established as an OCLC regional network in May 1976, with nine academic libraries partnering with the Nebraska Library Commission. Today NEBASE members number 141 libraries of all types. NEBASE staff handle customer service, training, technical support, and billing for OCLC products and services related to cataloging, reference, and resource sharing. To keep costs to members low, the Nebraska Library Commission subsidizes this service.

Over the past thirty-five years, fifteen other independent OCLC networks, as well as two OCLC regional networks, were established to provide the same services to their members as NEBASE. Two years ago, OCLC began reviewing this network structure and, after study and discussion, decided to make major changes in its relationships with its members and the existing networks. Under the new structure, OCLC will work with "Partners" at several levels.

A basic change in the new structure involves the way members are billed for membership, products, and services. Because NEBASE is a small network and the Nebraska Library Commission does not charge membership fees for anything other than NEBASE/OCLC services, it will not be financially sustainable for NEBASE to become an OCLC Partner.

OCLC's new structure will be in place on July 1, 2009. As of that date, the following changes will be in effect:

- all telephone and e-mail support of OCLC's products and services will go to an OCLC Support Center,
- billing and renewals for NEBASE members will come directly from OCLC (at a later date, there may be an opportunity for Nebraska libraries to work with other existing Partners),
- training will be offered online and in face-to-face workshops at prices set by OCLC or the OCLC Partner offering the training.

NEBASE staff will continue to handle OCLC renewals, ordering, billing, support, and training through June 30, 2009. At that time, Christa Burns, OCLC Member Services Coordinator, will be assigned to other duties at the Library Commission. After July 1, 2009, if Nebraska libraries wish to participate in group discount purchases of OCLC products such as CatExpress or WebDewey, the Nebraska Library Commission will handle the coordination of such purchases, as it would with any other vendor.

If you would like more details about OCLC's Partner Program, contact Devra Dragos or Christa Burns, see contact information on page 8. ➡

Basic Skills Course Held in the Fall

Seventy-four participants were enrolled in the Public Library Administration course in the fall Basic Skills series. The class covered management, budgeting, marketing, library law, leadership, planning, community relations, and intellectual freedom issues.

The class was held in each of the six Regional Library Systems and online, with fifty-four students attending onsite classes, and twenty taking the course online.

Library staff who do not have formal training in library science are required to take the Basic Skills series which is comprised of four classes: Public Library

Administration, Collection Development, Organization of Materials, and Public Service. The courses are offered in rotation, one approximately every six months, with all four courses offered within a two-year period. Spring 2009 Basic Skills classes on Public Service will be scheduled online and throughout the state.

For more information on the Public Library Certification program and Basic Skills, see the Nebraska Library Commission Website at: www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/ce/libcert.html, or contact Laura Johnson, see contact information on page 5. ➡

Nebraska OverDrive Libraries

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my library, anytime

nebraska.lib.overdrive.com
powered by OverDrive

Nebraska OverDrive Libraries Going Strong

Six new libraries went live with the Nebraska OverDrive Libraries service in November, bringing the number of participating libraries to thirty-one. New participants include Blair Public Library, Broken Bow Public Library, Lexington Public Library, Lied Imperial Public Library, Lied Pierce Public Library, and Wayne Public Library.

Through the customized Nebraska OverDrive Libraries Website at <http://nebraska.lib.overdrive.com>, customers of participating Nebraska libraries can checkout and download popular digital audiobooks. These audiobooks can be played on customers' computers, transferred to compatible devices, or burned to CD (when allowed by the publisher).

As statistics from the first eight months show, the Nebraska OverDrive Libraries service has been well received and well used:

- Current number of purchased titles in the collection: 1,103 (up from 330 on opening day)
- Checkouts : 10,417
- Holds: 4,460
- Unique library patrons checking out titles: 1,560

For more details about this project, see the Nebraska OverDrive Libraries wiki at www.nlc.state.ne.us/wikis/overdrive or contact Susan Knisely, Nebraska Library Commission Online Services Librarian, 402-471-3849 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: sknisely@nlc.state.ne.us. ➡

What's Up Doc? Blog Debuts

What's up Doc?, the bimonthly newsletter listing state and federal publications newly received at the Library Commission, transformed into a blog in September. *What's Up Doc?* will continue to provide the information librarians and researchers need about new documents available in print or electronically via our Publications Clearinghouse service. The blog format will allow us to post lists of newly received publications, announcements about downloaded state e-pubs, and "documents in the news" comments more frequently than was possible with the traditional format. It also encourages comments and dialogue by blog readers.

Doc is broadening in scope to feature updates about Publications Clearinghouse activities such as scanning for Nebraska Memories and participation in collaborative digitization projects like the Nebraska Public Documents database.

Bimonthly and annual compilations of newly received publications will continue to be produced at least through the end of 2008.

To subscribe to *What's Up Doc?*, go to www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/whatsupdoc and click on the RSS link. For more information about the Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse Service, contact Beth Goble, see contact information on page 6. 

Technology Training Set for March

The following workshops have been scheduled at the Harms Technology Center, 2620 Sykes Blvd, in Scottsbluff in March. The instructor will be Michael Sauers, Nebraska Library Commission Technology Innovation Librarian.

I Blog, You Blog, Weblog

Blogs are an easy way to not only receive information, but also to publish the information you have. More than just an online journal, blog-based publishing might be the best way for you to present your library's information to the public.

Date and Time: March 17, 9:00 a.m. – noon (MT)

For more information and to register: www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/training/eventshow.asp?ProgID=8804

RSS: A New Way of Communicating

The new technology of RSS, also known as "feeds," allows users to subscribe to content they wish to receive in a regular and timely manner. Feeds also allow information providers to send information in the format necessary for users to subscribe. This three-hour hands-on workshop will introduce attendees to both providing and consuming content via RSS.

Date and Time: March 17, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. (MT)

For more information and to register: www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/training/eventshow.asp?ProgID=8805

Welcome to the Social Web

Social software is one of the hottest concepts on the Internet today. This full-day workshop will introduce you to its components and show you examples of many of the most popular Websites in this area. Attendees will get a chance to play with several social services most useful to libraries in a hands-on environment. The services used in the hands-on portion will vary, but may include Flickr, del.icio.us, Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube.

Date and Time: March 18, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (MT)

For more information and to register: www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/training/eventshow.asp?ProgID=8806

Introduction to Web Page Creation with XHTML

Even if you use FrontPage, Dreamweaver, Drupal, or Blogger to create your Website, there's XHTML under the hood. This six-hour workshop will give you a basic understanding of how the eXtensible HyperText Markup language works and how to create Web pages using it through a hands-on approach. By the end of the day, attendees will be able to create new pages from scratch and have a solid foundation on which to build their future Web page creation skills.

Date and Time: March 19, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (MT)

For more information and to register: www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/training/eventshow.asp?ProgID=8807

Style Your Website with CSS

After you have written the content of your Web page and your markup is added, it's time to add some style. Cascading Style Sheets is the language that gives you the power to make pages look the way you want them to. CSS also allows you to give your site a consistent look across all of your pages in less code than you'd imagine. Ultimately, designing your Website using CSS lets you accomplish more work in less time, and make your site easier to manage over the long term. This full-day, hands-on workshop will give you the basic skills to begin designing professional-looking, future-compatible Websites.

Date and Time: March 20, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (MT)

For more information and to register: www.nlc.state.ne.us/scripts/training/eventshow.asp?ProgID=8808

PLEASE NOTE: A minimum of five people per workshop is needed to justify the travel costs for the instructor. Please do not wait to register because a decision on whether to proceed with or cancel the workshop will be made approximately two weeks prior to the event.

For more information contact Michael Sauers, Nebraska Library Commission Technology Innovation Librarian, 402-471-3106 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: msauers@nlc.state.ne.us. 



Participants discuss "Cheap and Free Technology" at Library Camp.

First Library Camp Nebraska Held

by Michael Sauers, Nebraska Library Commission Technology Innovation Librarian

Fifty-one librarians attended the first daylong Library Camp Nebraska in Lincoln in November. So, what happened at Library Camp? In a word: conversation. After registration and refreshments in the morning, fifty-one librarians gathered to decide the day's topics. These topics ranged from Using Web 2.0 for Marketing, Distance Education, Youth Services, Going Green, Social Bookmarking, OCLC, Privacy, Recruitment, Advocacy, Web Design, High Tech vs. High Touch, Cheap and Free Tools, to my personal favorite, Wildly Impractical Expensive Ideas for your Library.

We ended up with three one-hour sessions, with the impractical topic as the lunchtime focus. In each session the person who suggested the topic was the conversation facilitator and asked one person to put their notes directly into the wiki at <http://librarycampnebraska.pbwiki.com>. All of those notes can be read, and contributed to, on the "Notes from the day" page.

As the event organizer, I wandered from room to room taking photos (check out the Flickr pool at www.flickr.com/groups/libcampnebraska2008) and listening. I did contribute to a few topics, but it's important that the event organizer

not lead the discussion. The point was to let the conversations go wherever they ended up. As one person commented at the end of the day, that's exactly what happened.

The largest groups were the two sessions on using Web 2.0 tools for marketing. The range of attendees was wonderful. From directors to front-line staff, academic to public to school librarians, a student a month away from earning an M.L.S. to those who have been in the profession for decades. We even had a tech consultant from the Iowa State Library, who commented that he is going to recommend doing this in his state.

During the wrap-up session we discussed what happened during the day, should we do it again (a resounding "yes!"), and what should be done differently. I'm officially declaring Library Camp Nebraska 2008 a success. The plan now is to do one in the western end of the state, involving folks from Wyoming and South Dakota. Watch the Library Commission blog for details in early 2009.

For more information see the Library Commission blog at www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/NLC/2008/11/reflections_on_library_camp_ne.html or contact Michael Sauers, see contact information on page 10. ➡

2008 WiFi Connectivity Grants Awarded

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded WiFi Connectivity grants funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to the following public libraries:

Beaver Crossing Community Library
 Beemer, Karlen Memorial Library
 Cambridge, Butler Memorial Library
 Curtis, Klyte Burt Memorial Library
 Ceresco Community Library
 Clay Center Public Library
 Crofton, Eastern Township Library
 Deshler Public Library
 Dodge, John Rogers Memorial Library
 Elmwood Public Library
 Fairmont Public Library
 Friend, Gilbert Public Library
 Genoa Public Library
 Gibbon Public Library
 Greeley Public Library
 Greenwood Public Library
 Gresham Public Library
 Harvard Public Library
 Imperial, Lied Imperial Public Library
 Johnson Public Library
 Leigh Public Library
 Milford, Webermeier Memorial Library
 Morrill Public Library
 Nelson Public Library
 North Bend Public Library
 North Platte Public Library
 Orleans, C.B. Preston Memorial Library
 Osmond Public Library
 Palmyra Memorial Library
 Pender, House Memorial Library
 Ravenna Public Library
 Red Cloud, Auld Public Library
 Schuyler Public Library
 Shelby Public Library
 Snyder Public Library
 Stanton Public Library
 Stromsburg Public Library
 Talmage Public Library
 Thedford, Thomas County Library
 Trenton Public Library
 Valley Public Library
 Valparaiso Public Library
 Verdigre Public library
 Wallace, Faith Memorial Library
 Western, Struckman-Baatz Public Library
 Wilber, Dvoracek Memorial Library
 Winside, Lied Winside Public Library
 Wisner Public Library

For more information contact Michael Sauers, see contact information on page 10. ➡

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Digital Talking Books Now Available

Talking book readers are now able to download their favorite talking books instead of waiting for green boxes with books on tape to arrive through the mail. The Library of Congress is offering an expanded test site with over 12,000 recorded books and 39 magazines. Current Talking Book and Braille Service borrowers can sign up for this free service if they have access to a computer with e-mail; a high-speed connection (sorry, dial-up is too slow); and a digital player that is equipped for the talking book special format. During this expanded test phase, individuals may sign up, but not facilities (including schools). Facilities will be able to sign up later, probably by spring 2009.

Eventually, talking book readers will be loaned free digital players in the same way they are loaned free cassette players from the Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service. The first digital players are expected to arrive from the Library of Congress in late 2009. By law, military veterans have priority for these players. Right now and perhaps for the next few years, talking book readers need to purchase a digital

player to access the online books and magazines from the Library of Congress. Three models of digital players currently can be purchased:

- 1) The VictorReader Stream, www.humanware.com/en-usa/home.
- 2) The LevelStar Icon, www.levelstar.com.
- 3) Braille Plus Mobile Manager, www.aph.org/tech/pda_info.htm.

Readers who decide to purchase their own digital player should contact the Talking Book and Braille Service to learn how to sign up for Library of Congress direct downloads.

Until Library of Congress digital players are available, talking book readers can continue to access new books and magazines on audiocassette from the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service.

For more information contact Dave Oertli, Talking Book and Braille Service Director, 402-471-4005 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: doertli@nlc.state.ne.us or talkingbook@nlc.state.ne.us or join *NCompass Live* at 10:00 a.m. (CT) on January 28, 2009 (see page 4 for details).

Grant Will Enhance Public Documents Website

The State Records Board awarded a \$25,000 grant to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) Center for Digital Research in the Humanities at Love

Library to add more digitized historical reports to the Nebraska Public Documents Website. The site is a searchable database of digitized versions of the print collection known as Nebraska Public Documents. It consists of reports of Nebraska constitutional and state agencies spanning 1890-1956. To date, the database includes 118,000 images for the years 1891-1929. The new grant will fund digitization of an additional 40,000 images of the estimated 114,000 that are needed to add the years 1930-1956.

In 2005 a partnership between the Library Commission, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Nebraska State Historical

Society began a project to digitize microfilm copies of the documents, giving students, scholars, and the public access to materials previously not widely available. The Historical Society purchased the microfilm from New York Public Library with a \$10,000 grant from the Library Commission. Grants of \$38,000 from the Library Commission, \$23,000 from the State Records Board, and \$12,000 from the University of Nebraska at Omaha were made to the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities at UNL. The Center, which hosts the site, contracted with OCLC for digitization and used open source software to create and host the database.

For more information about the Nebraska Public Documents Website visit <http://cdrh.unl.edu/nebpubdocs/index.html> or contact Katherine Walter, Chair of Digital Initiatives & Special Collections, Love Library, at kwalter1@unl.edu.



The new Nebraska Public Documents Website offers information not widely available until now.

Learning 2008 Conference Held

by Laura Johnson, Nebraska Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator

The annual Learning 2008 conference, organized and sponsored by learning industry expert Elliott Masie, was held in Florida in October. The conference was three days of programs, discussions, activities, demonstrations, and conversation.

The conference was organized around morning kickoff, and afternoon wrap-up sessions. In between were break-out sessions with as many as thirty different programs to choose from during each session. Have you ever wanted to be five places at once? It was difficult to choose which sessions to attend when so many of them were presenting such great information.

Some of the highlights of the event were programs from Second City Communications (in improvisational comedy, participants must trust their colleagues and work with them, building on one another's ideas and choices); Amy Sutherland, author of *What Shamu Taught Me About Life, Love, and Marriage: Lessons for People from Animals and Their Trainers*; Stephen M.R. Covey, author of *The SPEED of Trust*; and Arch Lustberg, communications coach. There also were interesting breakout sessions

on using open source tools with Richard Culatta of CIA University; podcasting, with Wanda Coble, head of training for Wal-Mart; choosing a Learning Management System with Coley O'Brien of Wendy's International; and more. I passed on learning teamwork and NASCAR tire changing from PIT University, but several of the corporate teams were looking pretty slick by the end of their training.

There were many networking opportunities. Masie encourages interaction among participants—one of his devices is to offer people buttons with comments on them. I wore "First-Timer," "Non-Techie," and "Overwhelmed," and met several other non-techie first-timers who were overwhelmed. Another device is an Internet business/social networking site, which we all joined before the event started.

One of the most interesting things about this conference, for me, was observing the way that it was run. Masie has an operation and a staff to be proud of—things went very smoothly, and there were many little niceties that made this a very positive learning experience.

For more information see the Learning 2008 wiki at www.learningwiki.com or contact Laura Johnson, see contact information on page 5. ❖

Fall Conference and Book Festival Held

Thirty-one Nebraska Library Commission staff and commissioners attended the Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association (NLA/NEMA) annual conference this fall. The conference, *Nebraska Libraries: Vision for the Information Age*, was held in Lincoln and featured three preconferences, a reception at the International Quilt Museum, two keynote addresses, a Casino Night scholarship fundraiser, sixty-nine exhibitors, an exploratorium, poster sessions, and more than seventy-two programs.

Commissioners reflected on the conference at a recent Nebraska Library Commission meeting. Mary Nelson commented, "I was very pleased with the conference and the people who came, and I was just amazed that all of you at the Commission have such a strong part in the programming...It was very much to your credit that you supported it so well...I think everyone that was there would thank you." John Dale said, "Likewise I really, really enjoyed the conference and thought it was an outstanding one. The Libraries Future Search Conference review was worthwhile...John Seyfarth's presentation on Skype was quite interesting...I believe it is one of the best conferences in several years."

More than \$9,000 in Commission financial support funded programs and exhibits including the keynote address by Kent Haruf, who stayed on for the weekend and spoke at the Nebraska Book Festival. Haruf stressed the value of the landscape of the Great Plains as a canvas for people who practice the craft of writing. He pointed out that we come from places that may not be considered pretty, but if you look hard enough it is beautiful. He gave examples of how what we see and hear in these places paints a picture—not just of life in small towns on the Plains, but one that can be generalized to the universal.

Some conference participants remained in Lincoln for the Saturday Nebraska Book Festival, which featured programs and writing workshops for children and adults.

For more information see the Conference Website at www.nebraskalibraries.org/conference/archives/2008/index.html and the Nebraska Book Festival Website at www.nebraskabookfestival.org. ❖

Public Library Survey Is Open

The annual Public Library Statistical Survey for Nebraska, which is submitted online via Bibliostat™ Collect, was released for data input in December this year (instead of October) to accommodate the conversion to an updated edition of the program. Libraries will have the same amount of time to complete the survey as in the past. The new submission deadline will be March 31, 2009.

The URL to access the survey is <http://collect.btol.com>. Please note that this is a new Web address and a new version of the program. The new version of Bibliostat™ Collect has many improvements, especially in the interface, which should make it much easier for libraries to input data.

Some of the improvements in the new version are:

- More user-friendly interface
- Browser-independent, allowing for use with non-Internet Explorer browsers
- Pop-up blocker hassle eliminated
- Survey can be made read-only to allow printing after submission
- Customizable notes
- Improved use of narratives and easier to save them
- E-mail confirmation provided after submission
- Improved .PDF format
- Automatic total calculation (no need to click "update" after every totaled field)
- Easier field and edit check navigation

For more information contact John Felton, see contact information on page 5. ❖

Commission Profiles

Marjorie (Margie) Harrison became the Panhandle Library System Coordinator in July 2007. As the System Coordinator, she provides the leadership, training, and support to the 130 member libraries to enable them to be essential and valued resources in their communities.



Headquartered in Scottsbluff, Margie says much of her work involves consulting with member libraries on the phone or in person, planning and coordinating continuing education

sessions for librarians and library trustees, and managing the System office. "The most rewarding part of my job is working with librarians on special projects and helping them find information." She also enjoys teaching Basic Skills classes, and has taught three to date.

Margie enjoys the diversity of being System coordinator, getting to meet and work with people in various positions and from all types of libraries. Says Margie: "Every day is different; I am frequently challenged; I learn something new almost every day. These things I like!"

Raised in Dearborn, Mich., a Detroit suburb, she attended Doane College in Crete for two years then transferred to the University of Detroit where she received a BA in 1990. She received her MLS from Wayne State University in Detroit. Margie's professional work in Michigan included working at a small urban public library where she assisted with children's programming, in technical services at the Wayne County Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, in adult reference and adult services, and as a youth services librarian where she worked with teens and children.

More recently she was director of the Elbert County Library District in Elizabeth, Colo., and director of the Romeo District Library in Washington Township, Mich. Serving a population of over 30,000, her position as director of the Romeo District Library was mostly administrative, dealing primarily with facility, planning, and policy issues. She managed a staff of forty employees, including eleven MLS librarians.

Margie left Nebraska during college because her mom was very ill and decided to return twenty years later, she says, because "Nebraska is a beautiful state and Nebraskans are very friendly people." The weather, terrain, and landscape are different from one place to the next and she enjoys traveling around the state and seeing the subtle changes of scenery.

Margie lives in the country with her husband, 4-year-old son, and a Rat Terrier, and loves being surrounded by nature and wildlife. Among her favorite things to do are walking, bicycling, travelling, watching foreign films, and trying different types of ethnic foods.

Of her role as Panhandle System Coordinator, Margie says, "I hope to establish great working relationships with the library community to foster library support and a great appreciation of libraries."

Emily Dust Nimsakont is the Cataloging Librarian at the Nebraska Library Commission. She previously worked as a Reference Assistant at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Love Library. She received her MA in Library Science from the University of Missouri in 2008, and also holds a masters' degree in museum studies and a bachelor's degree in history and psychology.



At the Library Commission Emily catalogs items in the Commission's collection—government documents as well as items in the general collection—to make them available to customers through the online catalog. She also helps create and edit metadata for the digitized items in the Nebraska Memories collection. Eventually, she also will help coordinate the Library Commission's Cataloging Certificate program and other cataloging-related training opportunities. Emily says she has worked in both public services and technical services in libraries, and enjoys both of them. "What I like best about cataloging is figuring out how best to make information accessible to the people who are looking for it."

Emily grew up in a Chicago suburb and received an undergraduate degree from Knox College in Illinois. She moved to Lincoln in 2001 to begin work on the museum studies degree at UNL, which she finished in 2003. She worked previously as assistant curator at the National Museum of Roller Skating and member services coordinator at the American Quilt Study Group. She also spent a year as a volunteer, cataloging the library collection of Omaha's Durham Museum.

Emily's interests include running (she's completed two half-marathons and plans to run a full marathon someday) and knitting. "My time spent on both of those hobbies lapsed while I was in school, but now that I have more free time, I'm slowly picking them up again," she said.

Her reading habits tend to alternate between fiction and non-fiction. Currently in a non-fiction phase, right now she's in the middle of *The Worst Hard Time*, by Timothy Egan. And the book she has read the most times? *Catcher in the Rye*.

Kathryn Brockmeier joined the Library Commission in October as Research Analyst/Special Projects Associate. She currently works with the Institute for Museum and Library Sciences *Librarians for the 21st Century* grant, which includes producing reports on grant outcomes, doing research for future grant applications, and grant writing. She also assists with the dissemination of various surveys to libraries in Nebraska.



Prior to joining the Library Commission staff, Kathryn worked as library assistant for Hastings Public Library, where she assisted patrons at the circulation desk, fielded reference questions, helped with Website updates, contributed newspaper columns, translated and interpreted Spanish, and organized the library's first celebration of Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros (Children's Day/Book Day). About her work with Latinos, Kathryn says: "The response to our outreach effort was overwhelming.

(continued on page 16)

News of Nebraska Libraries and People

- **New Library Directors** include: Columbus Public Library, **Jill Owens**; Elmwood Public Library, **Cindy Mumford**; Harvard Public Library, **Lisa Wilford**; Hastings Public Library, **Amy Greenland**; Lewellen Public Library, **Ruth Radke**; Lincoln City Libraries, **Pat Leach**; Lincoln Correctional Center Library, **Janice Rihn**; Madison Public Library, **Nichole Lawless**; Milford, Webermeier Memorial Library, **George Matzen**; Minatare Public Library, **Willadean Maurer**; Palmer Public Library, **Jenny Welsch**; Papillion, Sump Memorial Library, **Robin Clark**; Shelton Township Library, **Lynn Weston**; Sidney, Western Nebraska Community College Learning Resource Center, **Merrillene Wood**; South Sioux City Public Library, **Joan Albenesius**; Tecumseh State Correctional Institution Library, **Patty Hughes**; and Wilcox Public Library, **Erna Heckens**.
- A number of long-time library directors retired or left the state this fall, including **Carol Connor**, Lincoln City Libraries; **Sally Payne**, Sump Memorial Library in Papillion; **Linda Rae**, Hastings Public Library; **Ted Smith**, Norfolk Public Library; and **Bob Trautwein**, Columbus Public Library. We thank them for their years of service and leadership.
- Beginning January 2009, the **Nebraska State Historical Society** (NSHS) headquarters at 1500 R Street in Lincoln will undergo a two-year renovation. The Reference Room will be closed and research materials will be unavailable for extended time periods during 2009-2011. For updates see the NSHS Website or contact 402-471-4771, e-mail: lanshs@nebraskahistory.org.
- **Sherry Houston** has returned to serve as the System Director for Republican Valley Library System. For more information see www.nlc.state.ne.us/system/republican/about.html.
- The **Friends of the Atkinson Public Library** hosted their first annual birthday bash for children under five. Face painting, refreshments, and clowns entertained the thirty children who attended. Children received the free Golden Sower book, *My Lucky Day*, by Keiko Kasza.
- **John Felton** was appointed to the **Library Commission Planning and Data Services Coordinator** position. John's responsibilities include coordination of statewide library data collection, analysis, and submission; annual survey revisions; communicating, training, and consulting with libraries; and preparation of reports based on library data and trends. John replaces **Kit Keller**, who resigned in June.
- **Jean Hellman, Lincoln Public Schools**, is the new Executive Secretary for the **Nebraska Educational Media Association**.
- **The Nebraska Department of Economic Development** recently awarded a \$100,000 grant to the **Tekamah Public Library** from the Local Civic, Cultural, or Convention Center Financing Fund for facility construction or expansion.
- **Kathryn Brockmeier** has been appointed to fill the **Library Commission Research Analyst/Special Projects Associate** position. Kathryn worked for three years at the Hastings Public Library as a library assistant and coordinated multicultural events. Kathryn has a BA from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and master's-level coursework in survey research and methodology and has conducted research projects in nonprofit and academic settings.
- The **Potter Public Library** has undertaken a major renovation as one of the community's Nebraska Community Improvement Projects. The renovation included interior remodeling, new computer resources, and exterior upgrades.
- **Emily Dust Nimsakont** was recently hired as **Nebraska Library Commission Cataloger**. Emily received her MLS from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She worked in reference at the University of Nebraska Lincoln's Love Library and has either worked or volunteered at Durham Museum, American Quilt Study Group, and the National Museum of Roller Skating. Emily also serves as Internet Site Coordinator for the Nebraska Library Association.
- **Lincoln City Libraries'** Summer Reading Program was honored this summer at a Lincoln Salt-dogs baseball game. One of the library student interns (funded through the Nebraska Library Commission federal Institute of Museum and Library Services 21st Century Librarian Project) threw out the first pitch. For photos see www.flickr.com/photos/librarycommission/sets/72157606726339469.
- **Bridgeport Public Library** recently hosted author and storyteller Patricia Bremmer, reading her new holiday book, *The Christmas Westie*.
- **Omaha Public Library** recently held an art contest and exhibit focusing on sci-fi, fantasy, comic books, manga, and anime. Prizes were awarded in three age categories.
- The **Holdrege Area Public Library** is conducting community focus groups to help determine the future of the library in Holdrege and Phelps County. For more information see www.holdregelibrary.org.
- **Creighton University Health Sciences Library** is hosting the National Library of Medicine's exhibit "Opening Doors: Contemporary African American Academic Surgeons" www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/aframsurgeons/ through January 28, 2009. This exhibit honors four African American surgeons, including Creighton University School of Medicine graduate and Head of Surgery **Dr. Claude Organ**. ➡



Commission Profiles *(continued from page 14)*

There were nearly 900 people in attendance, many of whom were Hispanic. Community agencies and businesses came together to celebrate children and support bilingual literacy in a very successful way. Library use by Spanish-speaking individuals has grown in large part, I believe, because of the library's outreach efforts and the friendliness of the staff." She presented the results of Hastings Public Library's outreach efforts to Spanish speakers at the recent NLA/NEMA conference.

Kathryn holds undergraduate degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in psychology, Spanish, and music. She has completed graduate work through the Survey Research and Methodology program at UNL, served as a graduate

assistant at UNL's Gallup Research Center, and held a Social Science Analyst internship at the U.S. Government Accountability Office in Washington, D.C. She currently is enrolled in a graduate library and information science course through the University of Missouri.

She enjoys travel stateside and abroad, and is an avid professional tennis fan who has been known to watch live matches on TV at 5:00 a.m. "We all have much to learn from Roger Federer's approach to life and the sport," she says. As a classically trained flutist, Kathryn performed for three years with the Hastings Symphony Orchestra and specializes in sacred music for flute and organ.

Amazingly, her reading habits have stalled in recent years. "While I was

working at the library, I would start a book and then think of a patron who would love to read it, so I passed it on." The two books she most recently finished were John Grisham's *Playing for Pizza* and Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*—on audio. "My commute to work in Hastings was under ten minutes and it wasn't worth the time to start and stop so often. Now in Lincoln, I find myself in the parking garage waiting until the end of a track before I turn off the car."

Says Kathryn of her new post, "I look forward to working with the staff at the Library Commission to help libraries in Nebraska become even better equipped to provide outstanding library and information services." 



Nebraska Library Commission

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