



Your guide
to the
Nebraska
Library
Commission

N Compass

N E W S L E T T E R

FY 1997
Year In Review

Vol. 4 No. 4

Libraries Online! Funding Awarded

The Nebraska Library Commission received fifty applications for the Microsoft Corporation funded Libraries Online!

grants to place public access computer equipment and software in 15 libraries. Three grants went to the community college libraries at the three Nebraska Indian reservations. The remaining 12 went to public libraries in rural areas (under 5,000 population), including Ainsworth, Ashland, Bassett, Clay Center, Ceresco, Curtis, Gordon, Milford, Morrill, Orchard, Tilden, and Wilber.

The number of applications clearly demonstrates a need for public access to computer technology. Many of Nebraska's rural public libraries are anxious to utilize the Internet and advanced electronic resources. More than 90% of the applications came from libraries in towns of less than 2,500 population. Nearly all libraries made a very good case for their community. Several Commission staff members, the Regional Library System



▲ (Left to right) Ashland Mayor Barbara J. Schwarten, Governor Ben Nelson, and Microsoft Vice President Jeff Raikes announce the partnership.

Administrators and representatives of partner agencies helped review the applications and select libraries. Criteria to determine the grant awards included need, community partnerships, and letters of support. The library's plan for outreach, fundraising, and promotion was also considered.

The need for public access computers and Internet connections in Nebraska's rural libraries was clearly demonstrated. Many of the unfunded applications show great promise.

Governor Ben Nelson launched the project at the Ashland Public

Library with Ashland native Jeff Raikes, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Microsoft.

"Our goal is to have access to the Internet in every public library in Nebraska by the 21st Century," Nelson said. "We are excited that the state is partnering with local communities and the Microsoft Corporation to improve access to information for all Nebraskans, regardless of location, age, background or financial situation. That access is not a luxury—it's a necessity and a real key to citizen involvement in government." ▲

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From the Director...

Year In Review

This Year in Review issue of *NCompass* highlights many events and activities during the July 1, 1996 through June 30, 1997 fiscal year.

Commission staff helped develop and support the use of technology in Nebraska libraries, and carried out the Commission statutory role of promotion, development, and coordination of library services.

The "Libraries for the 21st Century" initiative was among the major undertakings of 1997. The goals for this initiative were shaped over the past few years through the State Advisory Council on Libraries, Nebraska Library Association, and meetings with library and public representatives. This multi-year venture was introduced in the 1997 Nebraska Legislature through LB 95, sponsored by Senator LaVon Crosby. While state funds were not secured in 1997, this initiative continues with renewed effort to seek state and other funding.

The Library Commission was among only a few state library agencies to receive funding through the Microsoft Corporation *Libraries Online!* program.

Governor Nelson helped celebrate and promote this program announcing that "Our goal is to have access to the Internet in every public library in Nebraska by the 21st Century." That goal became more achievable as efforts continued to put in place the telecommunications services discounts for schools and libraries made possible by the Federal Telecommunications Act of 1996. The policies and processes to implement the discount program were largely shaped during the first half of 1997, with implementation targeted for January 1998. The discounts to be funded under the Universal Service Fund will allow significant cost savings for libraries in the use of basic telephone and Internet services.

On the state legislative front, LB 250 was enacted with the approval of the Legislature and signature of Governor Nelson. This bill was the result of several years of effort by the Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska Library Association. Originally conceived as a rewrite of Nebraska's public library laws, the bill enacted in the form of LB 250 amended some existing public library laws and added new provisions for establishment of county-wide library services.

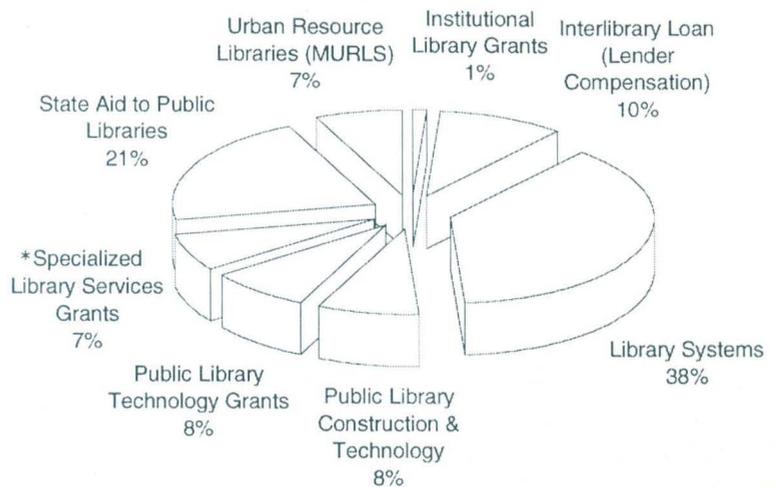
The real value of library services is found in the hundreds of Nebraska libraries (public, school, academic, and special) where Nebraskans of all ages come to seek resources and services. Commission staff enjoy working with our colleagues throughout Nebraska to provide library services. We hope that our efforts this past year have helped to improve the level and quality of library services throughout Nebraska. ▲

Rod Wagner

Funding/Grants FY97, July 1, '96-June 30 '97

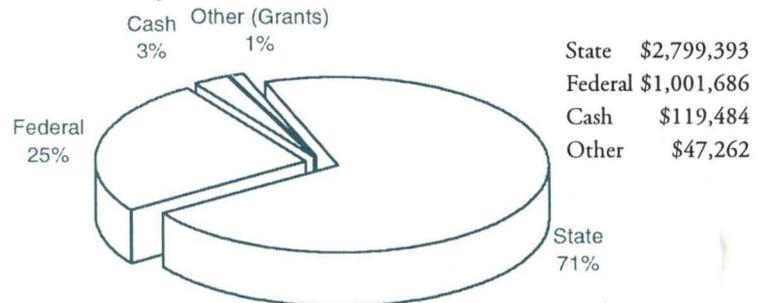
Grants FY97

*Nebraska Center for the Book	\$1,000
*Children's Services Grants	\$16,584
*CLIP (Continuous Library Improvement Program)	\$29,400
*Nebraska Library Association	\$18,000
*Microsoft Libraries Online	\$47,929
Institutional Library Grants	\$21,400
Public Library Technology Grants (Title I)	\$120,817
Interlibrary Loan (Lender Compensation)	\$150,484
Library Systems	\$596,347
Public Library Construction & Technology	\$128,120
State Aid to Public Libraries	\$331,706
Urban Resource Libraries (MURLS)	\$107,826



Total Budget Expended FY 1997: \$3,967,825

Where The Money Came From



NCompass
NEWSLETTER

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Commissioners: Karen Warner, Norfolk, term expires 2000; Frances Lovell, Gering, term expires 1998; Ron Norman, Kearney, term expires 1998; Jean Sanders, Lincoln, term expires 1999; Katherine Fletcher, Omaha, term expires 1999; Robert King, Holdrege, term expires 2000. Commission meetings are held the second Friday of every other month, or as scheduled by public action of the board.

Federal Funds to Nebraska Libraries

Federal grants were awarded to 67 Nebraska libraries during FY 1996/97.

Twenty-eight libraries received a total of \$190,054 in Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) Title II funds for construction and technology.

Fifty-five libraries received a total of \$120,817 in Title I funds for technology projects.

Children's Grants for Excellence

The Commission awarded seven Grants for Excellence in Children's Library Service:

Superior Public Library—Outreach to daycare, \$1,749.

Clay Center Public Library—Collaboration on collection development, \$1,620.

Ceresco Public Library—Collection development and outreach, \$3,000.

Ord Public Library—Collaborative on collection development, \$2,000.

La Vista Public Library—Book buddies (transportation for at-risk children to library for special programs), \$2,000.

Niobrara Public Library—New parents connection and follow-up, \$650.

Chadron Public Library—Developing allusionary base for readers, \$575. ▲

Commissioners/Staff FY97

Katherine Fletcher of Omaha was appointed to the Library Commission for her first term, effective February 1997 to June 1999. Robert King of Holdrege was appointed to the Library Commission for his first term, effective August 1997 to June 2000. Karen Warner of Norfolk was reappointed to the Commission for a three year term until June 2000.

Karen Warner was elected Commission Chair for 1997-98 and Jean Sanders of Lincoln was elected Vice-Chair.

Other Commissioners include Ron Norman of Kearney and Frances Lovell of Gering.

Arrivals

Angela Ames, Office Clerk II

Departures

Karen Inghis, Public Library Development Coordinator

Theresa Thomssen, Library Technician

Vickie Beaver, Library Technician

Judy Winkler, Librarian II

Andrew DeLancey, Office Clerk II

Reclassifications

Lisa Brawner, Senior Librarian

Burns Davis, Senior Librarian

Beth Goble, Senior Librarian

Mary Jackson, Senior Librarian

Ellen Van Waart, Senior Librarian

Allana Novotny, Librarian

Julie Pinnell, Librarian

Annie Sternburg, Librarian

Kay Goehring, Reader's Advisor, Senior

Clarice Schmidt, Reader's Advisor, Senior

Jan Anderson, Reader's Advisor

Judy Spencer, Reader's Advisor

Catherine Hatterman, Staff Assistant II

Renee Klebe, Staff Assistant II

Lori Sailors, Staff Assistant II

William Ainsley, Staff Assistant II

Janet Greser, Information Systems Specialist Associate

Dennis Klebe, Information Systems Specialist

Kathleen Keller, Administrative Assistant I

Joanne Corson, Public Information Officer I

Mary Jo Ryan, Public Information Officer II

Staff of the Year, FY97

Brad Hauptman, Audio Tape Duplication Coordinator, was selected as the Commission's Employee of the Year. In the nominations it was noted that "Brad always gives 100% to the Commission no matter what work is assigned. He is always willing to help when needed for special duties outside his usual job responsibilities."

Burns Davis, CM, Information Resources Coordinator, was selected as the Commission's Manager of the Year. In nomination remarks it was noted that "Burns sets high standards for herself and for the members of the Library Resource Center (LRC). She fosters a real sense of team within the LRC, believing strongly in the mission and goals of the Library Commission." ▲



▲ *Manager of the year, Burns Davis.*

50 Ways the Nebraska Library Commission

- 1.** Administers annual grants program to distribute approximately \$325,000 in state aid funds to accredited public libraries.
- 2.** Serves more than 4,000 individuals who can't see to read or hold a book through the Talking Book and Braille Service, including recording, duplication, and distribution of special interest items.
- 3.** Serves as the state agency responsible for systematically collecting, cataloging, and providing access to state government-issued publications, operating the Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse Service.
- 4.** Administers federal grants program through the *Library Services and Construction Act*, and now the *Library Services and Technology Act*.
- 5.** Operates a World Wide Web site providing information useful for libraries and citizens, including a nationally recognized "Electronic Library."
- 6.** Provides a variety of training sessions to hundreds of library personnel and others annually.
- 7.** Responds to numerous citizen and library staff inquiries.
- 8.** Provides administrative, technical, and training support for staff of more than 100 Nebraska libraries using OCLC products and services.
- 9.** Negotiates and administers statewide contracts (including setting up free trial periods) for online commercial databases, saving thousands of dollars for all types of libraries across Nebraska.
- 10.** Provides training in the use of online database services.
- 11.** Provides \$650,000 in funding annually for regional library system programs.
- 12.** Provides \$160,000 in annual funding in the form of "lender compensation" payments to support interlibrary loan services among Nebraska libraries.
- 13.** Collects, compiles, and publishes public library statistics.
- 14.** Supports special publications, including: Library Trustee Manual (in cooperation with Nebraska Library Association (NLA) Trustees, Users, and Friends Section), Intellectual Freedom Handbook (in cooperation with NLA Intellectual Freedom Committee), Compilation of Nebraska Library Laws.
- 15.** Represents Nebraska libraries on the Nebraska Universal Service Fund Task Force, which recommended legislation to provide for an Advisory Board to the Public Service Commission, including a library representative as one of its seven members.
- 16.** Distributes information and assists libraries in applying for Universal Service Fund telecommunication services discounts.
- 17.** Developed and maintains a Universal Service Fund Web site for information regarding telecommunications services discounts for schools and libraries.
- 18.** Developed and administers Public Library Board Certification Program to encourage library board members to participate in continuing education.
- 19.** Received, as one of only a few state library agencies, a Microsoft Corporation grant under the Libraries Online! program, purchasing, installing, and providing training for 15 rural communities.
- 20.** Developed and administers Public Library Accreditation Program to encourage development of library services.
- 21.** Coordinates the delivery of training through the Basic Skills program for library personnel.
- 22.** Provides reference and information services to state employees, library system staff, and library staff.
- 23.** Participates in the Federal Documents Depository Program, providing access to information disseminated by the U.S. Government.
- 24.** Developed the *Libraries for the 21st Century* initiative in collaboration with the Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries and NLA to enhance funding support for library service improvements.
- 25.** Awards special grants for library services to children and youth to encourage innovative programs and partnerships.
- 26.** Organized and provides staff support for the Youth Advisory Board, helping identify needs and services for children and youth.
- 27.** Created **Nebrask@ Online**, the State of Nebraska's computerized gateway to state government information.
- 28.** Appoints and provides staff support for the State Advisory Council on Libraries.

Helps Nebraska Libraries and Citizens

29. Maintains a collection of library and information science and other resources for use by Nebraska library personnel.

30. Organized and provides staff support for the NEBASE Advisory Board.

31. Publishes *NCompass* and *NLCommunicator* to provide news and information articles concerning Library Commission and library-related information.

32. Tracks legislation of interest to library staff and supporters, providing ongoing updates on legislation via the Web page during the legislation session.

33. Developed and administers Public Library Staff Certification Program to encourage library staff to participate in continuing education.

34. Developed, hosts and maintains the Nebraska State Government World Wide Web site, the official directory home page for Nebraska state government.

35. Assists libraries in planning/collection development by conducting on-site collection assessments.

36. Assists libraries in developing policies for Internet public access by hosting a roundtable teleconference discussion and presenting a series of statewide policy development workshops, as well as by promulgating a model policy, "Access to Electronic Information Services, and Networks: A Nebraska Library Commission Interpretation March 1997."

37. Assisted more than 100 public libraries in community planning for library improvement by developing an implementation planning process (in collaboration with the Heartland Center for leadership) and providing training and supplemental funding for libraries that completed a planning process.

38. Conducted Internet orientation sessions for more than 100 state government employees in cooperation with the Nebraska State Government Chapter of the National Management Association.

39. Provides leadership and support for programming and services for children and young adults including conferences, workshops, share fairs, book reviews and cooperating with several states on the annual Summer Reading Program.

40. Supports the local library role in Community Economic Development by serving as the Governor's

representative on the Nebraska Development Network Board of Directors and developing and maintaining Web sites for the Governor's Global Community Initiative and the Nebraska Development Network, as well as training local library staff involved in local community development.

41. Sponsored a variety of satellite teleconference training sessions by purchasing multi-site licenses enabling viewing in a host of sites across Nebraska.

42. Tracks information about copyright and provides home page access to the latest developments with ongoing updates.

43. Provides collection development funding to the Consumer Health Information Resource Service of the University of Nebraska Medical Center McGoogan Library of Medicine.

44. Supports the Nebraska Humanities Council by housing the video collection of the Humanities Resource Center, as well as managing and circulating that collection for them.

45. Supports the Nebraska Center for the Book by serving on the Board of Directors and helping promote Nebraska's book culture and literary heritage.

46. Supports graduate level education in library science in Nebraska by partnering with Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Management to bring an off campus, weekend program to Nebraska.

47. Supports cooperative library development efforts by encouraging communities to examine new and innovative service arrangements and providing staff assistance for planning efforts that examine different approaches to library service.

48. Supports the National Issues Forum by providing a trained facilitator and encouraging libraries to serve as local sites for bringing together a cross section of citizens for discussion and deliberation on major public policy issues.

49. Supports Nebraska libraries in adding their holdings to the OCLC Online Union Catalog, *WorldCat*, the global database of library holdings.

50. Provides access to a mobile computer network, used by library and citizen groups for training and demonstrations across Nebraska. ▲

Rod Wagner

Book Talk Tapes Available to Libraries

One year ago, Commission staff were asked to develop a radio program featuring books for KZUM, Lincoln's community radio station. The potential for using the broadcast medium to promote libraries in general and doing outreach to readers and non-readers, as well as enlarging the "community of readers," prompted Commission staff to join forces with three librarians from Lincoln City Libraries to write up a proposal and brainstorm several weeks of program topics. Nebraska Book Store agreed to underwrite the show, creating a collaboration between business, media and the libraries.

The debut program of **Book Talk** introduced the show for "people who like to read and like to talk about what they read." Based on the premise that you can tell a lot about people by the books they love, "book talkers" described favorite books. The conversational/interview format set the pattern for subse-

quent shows. Programs feature an interview with a single author, a discussion of one title, or examples of a genre or topic (such as mysteries or the American West). A unique feature is the periodic book discussion on the air. Listeners read the book in

advance and contribute to the discussion via telephone, making this program a positive example of talk radio. On-air book discussions featured *A Lesson before Dying* by Ernest Gaines, *Angela's Ashes*, by Frank McCourt (this year's Pulitzer prize winner), and *The Heart of a Woman*, by Maya Angelou.

Selected tapes are available to libraries for inservice training, or to encourage local radio stations to



▲ Dr. Jean Kilbourne being interviewed by Mary Jo Ryan, Commission Communications Coordinator, for Book Talk.

develop a local program like it or air **Book Talk** tapes. We look forward to an increase in local radio promoting libraries and reading across Nebraska. For a list of tapes available and to discuss other possibilities, contact Mary Jo Ryan, 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Master of Library Science Program Returns

Through a partnership agreement with the Library Commission and College of St. Mary in Omaha, Emporia State University's School of Library and Information Management began to offer its Master of Library Science degree program in Nebraska again in the spring of 1997.

Because of the limited number of MLS programs in the Great Plains region, Emporia State University is committed to providing quality programs in several regional sites. It is the only library school in the country with classroom learning leading to graduation in multiple locations outside its home state, and offers one of only 20 Ph.D. programs in the country. Geared for the adult learner, the program is offered in a format that enables students to keep their jobs and stay in their home states. The regional programs run in cycles, with

an entire group completing the program together and classes offered sequentially. The focus of the curriculum is people. Students are challenged to consider such questions as: How do people turn information into knowledge? How can the information professional assess the needs of a particular group of people? What determines how a particular person tries to solve his/her information needs?

Classes are held in "weekend intensive" format from Friday evenings to Sunday afternoons. Students are in class approximately 16 weekends per year and finish the 42-credit-hour program in less than three years. The degree is fully accredited by the American Library Association. For more information call 800-552-4770 or see <<http://www.emporia.edu/S/www/slim/slim.htm>>, and click on "Regional Home Pages." ▲

Statistics Help Libraries Tell the Story

Each year, the Library Commission collects Public Library Statistical reports from libraries throughout Nebraska. The data from these forms is compiled and reported in the *Public Library Profile*. In addition, certain statistics are submitted to the National Center for Education Statistics. This process of data collection, compilation and national reporting is repeated in every state and territory each year. Nebraska's *Profile* is also sent to the other 49 states, who in turn share their annual statistics.

On the national level, public library statistics are collected and disseminated annually through the Federal-State Cooperative System for public library data (FSCS). Statistics are collected from nearly 9,000 public libraries in the 50

states, the U. S. Territories, and the District of Columbia. At the state level, FSCS is administered by State Data Coordinators, appointed by the chief officer of each state library agency. The State Data Coordinator collects the requested data from local public libraries and submits the data. An annual training conference is provided for the State Data Coordinators. A steering committee representing State Data Coordinators and other public library constituents is active in the development of FSCS data elements and software.

Components of the FSCS Public Library Statistics include staffing; service outlets; operating income and expenditures; size of collection; and service measures, such as reference transactions, interlibrary loans, circulation, and public service hours.

These statistics are valuable tools

for evaluating and comparing library services and development, regionally and over time. Libraries provide essential learning resources that strengthen and perpetuate formal and informal education. Valid, reliable, and timely statistics are used by policymakers in analyzing the investment of public resources in library development and operations. Library and information science covers a diverse and rapidly changing field. Data collection activity which seeks to inform decision making must be sensitive to the changes taking place within the library community. This spring (1998) the Commission will publish the 1996-97 *Public Library Profile*. For more information, contact Kit Keller, 402-471-3216 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <kkeller@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Valid, reliable, and timely statistics are used by policymakers in analyzing the investment of public resources in library development and operations.



State Home Page Remodeled

The Nebraska State Government Internet home page, the official directory home page for Nebraska state government, was remodeled in August 1996, see at <<http://www.state.ne.us/>>. The page organizes and points to electronic sources of state government information, including state agency Web pages. It is hosted on the Nebraska Library Commission server and maintained by a team of Library Commission staff, with input, assistance and support from staff of Nebraska Educational Telecommu-

nications and a variety of other state agencies. The Nebraska State Government Interagency Internet Group (staff from a variety of state agencies providing government information through Web page development) provides ongoing input and maintenance assistance. The Nebraska Independent State Agency Directors also provide formative evaluation and feedback.

The State Government home page points to Web pages created by state agencies. The page includes a welcome from Governor Nelson and links to his page as well as the Lieutenant Governor's page. The signature graphic on the State

Government home page is the Champville marble column cap from the main vestibule of the Nebraska State Capitol. Carved by the Edward Ardolino Co., Lee Lawrie, sculptor, it signifies the blending of Nebraska's proud agricultural tradition with Nebraska's rich, classic cultural heritage. The signature quote, "The Salvation of the State is Watchfulness in the Citizen" is taken from an inscription on the front of the Nebraska State Capitol. This statement by Hartley Burr Alexander, anthropologist, poet, philosopher, and educator, articulates the mission of the home page.▲

Festival Celebrates New Talking Book and Braille Service Offering

On August 21, 1996,
the Library
Commission's

Talking Book and Braille

Service celebrated our new collection of home videos with audio description for people with blindness or visual impairment. The Video Film Festival featured ten-minute excerpts from the Descriptive Video Service (DVS®) editions of ten big-screen blockbusters. Talking book customers and volunteers joined the public to view the new audio descriptive videos.

Nebraskans with blindness or visual impairment can "check-out" these home videos, available for loan to registered users of the Talking

Book and Braille Service. On these videos, an additional track recounts the visual elements of the program without interfering with the program's narration, dialogue, or sound effects. These videos are played on a standard VHS video cassette player (VCR) and television. (The Talking Book and Braille Service does not provide or loan VCRs or TVs.) There is no cost for this service unless a video is lost or damaged. The videos are mailed to and from the library as "Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped."

For more information, contact the Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service: 402-471-4038 or 800-742-7691, e-mail: <talkingbook@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.



▲ Talking Book and Braille customers enjoy cake and audio descriptive videos at the Commission Video Film Festival.

Nebrask@ Online Again Transformed

FY 1996-97 marked the transition of **Nebrask@ Online** to a service operated by the Nebraska State Records Board. **Nebraska Online**, introduced to the public by the Nebraska Library Commission in October 1992 as Nebraska's electronic communication and information service, succeeded in providing easy-to-use, statewide access to a variety of unique information resources and e-mail services. Requests for additional applications and the need for continued network growth led the Library Commission to seek competitive proposals for a network manager to assist in the evolution of **Nebraska Online** into a user-supported, Internet-based information service. The Commission entered into a contract with the network manager, Nebrask@ Interactive, for the next level of service and **Nebrask@ Online** began offering this new level of service through the network manager, including some information resources available under a subscriber/fee structure.

In the 1997 legislative session, concerns were raised about the fact that the Commission pursued this avenue for providing citizen access to state government infor-

mation via the Appropriations Committee rather than special authorizing legislation. A bill to transfer authority to operate the network from the Commission to the State Records Board passed and although the Library Commission holds the tradename, **Nebrask@ Online**, the service is now operated through the State Records Board. In addition, Farmer's Mutual Insurance Company filed a lawsuit against the Commission and the NE Department of Motor Vehicles to stop the network from providing access to driver's license records for the \$3 fee. In Summer 1997, District Court Judge Earl Witthoff ruled against the Farmer's Mutual challenge.

Nebrask@ Online continues to grow in users and information providers, providing state government agencies with a platform to give citizens access to their agency information (either for a user fee or tax subsidized). They also host Internet sites and listservs for organizations like the Nebraska Library Association. For more information, see <<http://www.nol.org/>> or contact Sam Somerhalder, 402-471-7810 or 800-747-8177, e-mail: <sam@nol.nol.org>. ▲

Visioning Sessions Generate Ideas

Two Visioning Retreats were sponsored by the Nebraska Library Commission during the summer of 1996, in Lincoln and Alliance. These retreats asked members of the library community to express their thoughts and ideas about the future of libraries and the potential routes to achieve those possibilities.

A few of the many thoughts, ideas and suggestions expressed at the retreats are listed below:

Threats

- (loss of) autonomy
- lack of trust
- slow starvation
- becoming irrelevant
- inertia, passivity, fatalism: "we can't do anything about it"
- lack of visibility
- rapid technology change
- integrity of information
- demands for staff training
- obsolescence

Opportunities

- to work together (libraries working together)
- to provide service to all Nebraskans
- to use new technology to be "guardians of democracy"
- for private/public projects—as in community technology center

- for developing and creating our own future
- to support economic development for community growth—be a leader, increase public relations
- for partnerships, cooperation, resource sharing

Visions

- 24-hour access
- unified planning/collaboration
- libraries get respect
- branch out—library without walls
- adequate funding, buildings, staff, full access to resources via electronic and direct access
- flexible bureaucracy
- no walls/no institutional barriers
- library is a social information center—coffee bar, snack bar—community gathering places
- knowledgeable, friendly, well-paid, versatile, highly trained staff
- no fines
- responsive to community needs, including: multi-lingual staff and collection, in various formats
- blend of high-touch—hi-tech
- libraries will provide for the preservation and storage of knowledge and ideas for future generations

The notes from each session are available on the Library Commission home page at: <http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/public/vision.html>, or contact the Commission at 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us, and ask Mary Geibel to send you a complete print copy.

Commission Recognized at Development Network Conference

The Nebraska Library Commission was recognized as a "Gold" level contributor to the Nebraska Development Network at the Network's 1997 Annual Membership Meeting. The Commission was recognized for development of **Nebrask@ Online** and for the Nebraska Development Network's home page, see <http://www.nol.org/home/NDN/>. Commission staff Mary Jo Ryan and Allana Novotny were members of a panel presentation on "Using the Internet to Boost Local Development." The

Nebraska Development Network is a nonprofit organization connecting business and community leaders throughout the state with people in organizations, agencies and the private sector that have identified themselves as partners in community and economic growth. More than 400 public and private organizations (including libraries) are network members. Library Commission Director Rod Wagner serves as the Governor's representative on the Nebraska Development Network Board of Directors. ▲

Resource Sharing Dialogue Successful

Thirty-four librarians from around the state gathered in August 1996 for a Resource Sharing Dialogue Retreat, sponsored by the Nebraska Library Commission, to talk about resource sharing projects. They identified current resource sharing projects, discussed expansion and additions, identified limitations, and brainstormed ways to overcome barriers.

Participants, representing public, academic, school and special



▲ Librarians discuss solutions to resource sharing problems in Nebraska.

libraries, spoke of "One Nebraska: the Resources of All Are Resources for All." To review the notes from the meeting, see the Library Commission home page at <[http://](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/public/resource.html)

www.nlc.state.ne.us/public/resource.html> or contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us> for a print version. ▲

Advisory Council Supports Coalition for Nebraska Libraries

The State Advisory Council on Libraries voted at their September 1996 meeting to contact the Nebraska Congressional

delegation to support enactment of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). The Council also reviewed a draft information piece for the "Libraries for the 21st Century" partnership of librarians, media specialists, and library advocates dedicated to supporting Nebraska libraries of all types. The draft statement is excerpted below:

"Libraries for the 21st Century" Vision: Affordable, predictable, progressive, economical and

equitable library service for all citizens of Nebraska regardless of their economic status and geographic location.

This initiative stresses the library role in the delivery of information for economic development, lifelong learning, professional, and recreational needs of Nebraskans. To meet these needs, libraries increasingly rely on electronic information services and the technology needed to access and deliver these services, as well as new partnerships and collaborative strategies. The Library Commission conducted focus groups and public forums across the state as part of a statewide planning effort. The major themes emerging from this effort were the need for

equitable access to information, public access to information technology, cooperative efforts, training and technical support and more books and other library materials for Nebraska children and adults. Nebraska citizens will be the real beneficiaries of new funding and statutory changes to encourage cooperation among libraries. Nebraskans will have better access to information and greater opportunity for informed participation in a democratic and global society.

For more information, see the NLA home page Legislative Committee section at <<http://www.nol.org/home/NLA/legcomm.html>>. ▲

Annual Meeting Celebrates 20 Years

One hundred and thirty NEBASE members attended the 1996 annual meetings, celebrating NEBASE's 20th Anniversary at three different locations. Different speakers provided the keynote address at each site. At the University of Nebraska-Kearney, Marshall Keys, Director of NELINET, likened the computer age to the advent of

the automobile. At Bellevue University, Bill DeJohn, Director of MINITEX, presented an overview of services provided to members by that network. At Chadron State College, Dave Brunell, Director of the Bibliographical Center for Research, talked about changes in technology and in "management philosophy." ▲

Statewide Public Forums Held

April 1997 Public Forums were held in Scottsbluff, North Platte, Kearney, Columbus, Papillion and Lincoln to

gather broad public input on the library and information needs of Nebraskans for the 21st Century. As a part of the Commission's long-range planning efforts, these Public Forums built on the earlier Visioning Retreats and Resource Sharing Dialogue. The Library Commission used the ideas and recommendations from the Public Forums to revise the Long Range Plan for Library and Information Services 1997-2001 and to establish guidelines and criteria for awarding state

and federal funding to Nebraska libraries.

The following themes emerged from the retreats and Public Forums:

- The mission of libraries is evolving. Librarians must stay active and focused on their customers.
- Libraries can be valued community learning centers.
- Libraries can provide access to books as well as technology.
- Libraries can be technology leaders, providing access to worldwide information resources.
- Cooperation between libraries is vital, particularly in the areas of resource sharing, bulk purchasing, and consolidating services.
- The concept of "One Nebraska" should guide the develop-

ment of the State's virtual or electronic library. Information should be available anywhere, any time, to anyone. There should be equitable and seamless access to all information and services.

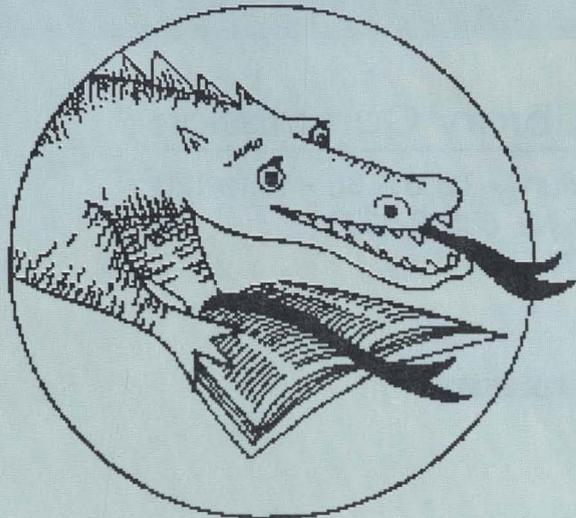
The *Libraries for the 21st Century Nebraska Library Commission Library Services and Technology Act Five Year Plan* is on the Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/about.html>>. For those without Internet access, contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us> for a print copy of the plan. If you have additional comments, contact Nancy Busch at 402-471-4002 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <nbusch@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

The mission of libraries is evolving. Librarians must stay active and focused on their customers.

28,000 Children Read 350,000 Books in Summer Reading Programs

Twenty-eight thousand Nebraska children enjoyed games, excursions, special events and reading last summer through participation in the statewide summer reading program. The 1997 summer theme, *Thrills and Chills at the Library*, encouraged children to read nearly 350,000 books. Summer reading experience encourages children to maintain their reading skills during the months without formal reading instruction and to return to the classroom more ready to learn.

Virtually every Nebraska community with a public library offers a summer reading program, lasting from one week to two months. Many schools are now offering summer reading programs as well. Children may earn a certificate of recognition for their participation in the summer program, however many of the libraries involved do not give certificates, preferring instead to emphasize reading as a satisfying pastime, rather than another source of pressure to achieve. ▲



The 1997 summer theme, *Thrills and Chills at the Library*, encouraged children to read nearly 350,000 books.

Thrills & Chills at the Library

Library Commission Highlights FY 1996/97, July 1, '96-June 30, '97

- ★ 3,891 librarians attended 157 Continuing Education Sessions sponsored by the Library Commission, including 156 participants in Basic Skills Sessions
- ★ An average of 192,385 people per month used **Nebrask@ Online**
- ★ 168 libraries were accredited
- ★ 163 libraries received state aid
- ★ 16,279 talking books, magazines, and braille materials circulated each month (average)
- ★ The Talking Book and Braille Service recorded 213 issues of magazines
- ★ The Talking Book and Braille Service duplicated 49,511 audio cassettes
- ★ 2.8 million records with 5.8 million holdings in the Nebraska State Database
- ★ 216,649 total items cataloged by NEBASE members
- ★ 1,322 items originally cataloged by NEBASE members
- ★ Commission borrowed 578 items from other libraries
- ★ Commission loaned 123 items to other libraries
- ★ NEBASE libraries borrowed 85,297 items from other libraries
- ★ NEBASE libraries loaned 60,532 items to other libraries
- ★ At the end of the fiscal year, NEBASE membership included 60 full-cataloging members, 74 NEON members, and 20 NEULIST-only members (libraries with periodical holdings in the Nebraska Union List of Serials)
- ★ 4,161 state documents added to the Commission's collection, bringing the total to 88,791
- ★ 14,720 federal documents were added to the Commission's collection, and 6,655 federal documents were weeded, bringing the total to 255,297
- ★ 448 state documents circulated in FY 96/97
- ★ 4,085 information requests were filled by Commission's Library and Information Services staff
- ★ 28,000 children in Nebraska registered for the 1997 Summer Reading Program, *Thrills and Chills at the Library*

Nebraska Library Commission



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