



NCompass

NEWSLETTER

Your guide to
the Nebraska
Library
Commission
FY 2000 Year In
Review

Vol. 7 No. 3

State Advisory Council Meets

The State Advisory Council on Libraries held its June meeting at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis. Council member Mo Khamouna hosted the meeting and gave a tour of the newly renovated library facility.

Dee Yost, then Republican Valley Library System Administrator, summarized the system's membership and services. Commission staff updated Council members on issues, including the Community Library Advocacy Project grant from the Viburnum Foundation, the Gates Library Foundation Technology Project, the reauthorization of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), and grants awarded by the Commission. The Council followed up on their March planning session with a discussion of the NebrasKard and unanimously reaffirmed their support for the project. A presentation on the 2001-2003 biennial budget and long-range plan generated a detailed discussion of the state budget request process. The group discussed the two major budget areas, agency operations, and state aid. State aid includes grants and distribution of aid



Mary Nash reports on Council priorities set during March planning effort.

funds to local subdivisions. Continuing education grants, aid to public libraries, online database licensing, Interlibrary Loan compensation, and funding for regional library systems are included in this category.

The Library Commission Technology Plan and Project Proposals to the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (NITC) are key components of the budget process. The NITC Project Proposals, including Project e-Library: Content, Project e-Library: Infrastructure, and Project e-Library: Training are

available on the Library Commission home page, see <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, search on Nebraska's E-Library.

For more information see the Library Commission home page at <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, search on Council Minutes. ▲

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From the Director

Well over a year ago, Maggie Harding joined the Library Commission staff to find, sort, organize, and make usable a century's worth of cumulated information about the Nebraska Library Commission and Nebraska libraries. Maggie's work was initiated as part of the Library Commission's plans for its centennial year in 2001. Maggie has proven masterful in finding useful historical materials, both inside and outside of the Library Commission's offices. The product of Maggie's efforts is an assemblage of the historical knowledge of the Commission's origins and its work over the past century. This past year's Library Commission activities are a piece of that history, and it is interesting to contrast this past year with the major events and milestones of Nebraska library activity over the past century.

Annual reports published over the years document a purpose and pattern of effort to create and support library services. Nebraska library practices are deeply rooted and slow to change. It was interesting to find a description of the lack of state funding for aid to Nebraska's local libraries and the fragmented nature of services throughout the state in a Nebraska Public Library Commission report of many years ago. That description has been rewritten and restated many times over the years. A substantial increase in state support continues to be a need and a goal. The long view is that Nebraska library services are valued in many communities and in state policy, even though the effort to financially support library services is borne disproportionately at the local level.

This year's Nebraska Library Commission annual report illustrates the continuation of long established and expected library services, along with the introduction of new services. The traditional services that are the foundation of Nebraska libraries have been enhanced to supply services made possible through technology. Library Commission activities during the past year included support for Nebraska libraries in the acquisition and use of electronic databases and electronic books. An increase in state aid funds allowed a modest increase in direct aid to public libraries and new funding to support needed training for Nebraska library personnel.

The Nebraska Library Commission's centennial year will be an opportune time to review and renew the state's long range plan for library services, and to build upon past efforts to support the work of Nebraska libraries.

—Rod Wagner ▲

Funding/Grants FY 2000

GRANTS FY 2000

Center for the Book	\$ 7,500
Children's Grants for Excellence	15,000
CHIRS (Consumer Health Information Resource Service)	3,437
First Search Success Stories	200
Institutional Library Grant.	1,000
Interlibrary Loan (Lender Compensation)	145,385
Library Systems.	658,947
Public Library Construction & Technology (Title II)	33,000
State Aid to Public Libraries	397,054
Nebraska Library Association.	3,600
Motion Picture Licensing for Public Libraries	31,660
LSTA Grants	365,096

Libraries for the 21st Century

Online Databases	307,608
Training and Continuing Education Grants	35,907
OCLC CatExpress Libraries	9,750
NetLibrary	20,000

Total Grants \$2,035,144

Funding

State Funds	\$3,499,249
Federal Funds	\$1,182,998
Cash Funds.	\$ 67,536

Total Funding FY 2000 \$ 4,749,783

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 Nebraska Library Commissioners:
Karen Warner, Norfolk, term expires 2003; **Robert King**, Holdrege, term expires 2003; **Wally Seiler**, Alliance, term expires 2001; **Richard Jussel**, Kearney, term expires 2001; **Velma Sims**, Fremont, term expires 2001; **Kristen Rogge**, Johnson, term expires 2002. Commission meetings are held the second Friday of every other month, or as scheduled by public action of the board.

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

Grants for Children's Services

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded the following grants for Excellence in Children's Library Services in FY 2000:

- ▲ Central City Public Library—\$500 written by Denise Pullen. A mentoring program with young adult-age students serving as mentors for younger at-risk children.
- ▲ Columbus Public Library—\$1,400 written by Glee Nelson. Collaboration with the school migrant family coordinator to bring summer reading to Spanish-speaking children with programs in English and Spanish.
- ▲ Hruska Memorial Public Library (David City)—\$1,000 written by Kay Schmid. Expand collection to make materials available to country school children not served by a public library.
- ▲ Bess Johnson Elkhorn Public Library—\$1,000 written by Pat Headley. Special programming and outreach visits for Spanish-speaking families in the area.
- ▲ Grand Island Public Library—\$2,000 written by Merry Van Seggern. Family Place training to promote and extend child advocacy.
- ▲ Hastings Public Library—\$1,700 written by Kathy Schultz. Outreach, including transportation, to enrich literacy skills of young children and their Spanish-speaking families.
- ▲ Lexington Public Library—\$1,000 Written by Ruth Seward. Spanish-language story hour for school-age children.
- ▲ Lyons Public Library and West Point Public Library—\$1,675 grants written by Mary Fritts and Mary Jo Mack. A cooperative project to provide materials and outreach activities to Spanish-speaking children and their families.
- ▲ Madison County Library Association (Battle Creek, Madison, Meadow Grove, Newman Grove, and Tilden)—\$2,000 written by Kathleen Ageton. Creation of resource packets for at-risk rural children, grades 4-6.
- ▲ Morton-James Public Library (Nebraska City)—\$625 written by Suzanne Bennett. Story time at the community Headstart Center.
- ▲ Scottsbluff Public Library—\$600 written by Trudy Frank. A book tape collection for reluctant young adult readers.
- ▲ Wymore Public Library—\$1,500 written by Jackie Nicholson. Summer school program for primary school-age children who struggle with reading; features adult volunteer mentors and computer activities. ▲

Commissioners/Staff FY 2000

Library Commissioners for FY 2000 were: Robert King, Holdrege, June 2000 to June 2003; Wally Seiler, Alliance, June 1998 to June 2001; Richard Jussel, Kearney, June 1998 to June 2001; Velma Sims, Fremont, March 1999 to October 2001; Kristen Rogge, Johnson, June 1999 to June 2002. Karen Warner, Norfolk, chaired the Commission, serving her first full term until June 2000 and reappointed in June 2000 to another three-year term.

Arrivals:

- ▲ Evelyn Kubert, hired 4/3/00, ILL/Back-up Reference
- ▲ Pam Scott, hired 11/8/99, Senior Librarian

Departures:

- ▲ Joanne Crawford, left 12/3/99, Public Information Officer I
- ▲ Judy Spencer, left 12/22/99, Library Reader's Advisor
- ▲ Renee Klebe, left 3/3/00, Staff Assistant II (ILL/Back-up Reference)
- ▲ Sue Biltoft, left 6/12/00, Administrative Assistant I

Reclassifications:

- ▲ Bruce Oorlog, Mail Clerk
- ▲ Sarah LaBrie, Library Reader's Advisor ▲

Staff of the Year FY 2000



Bruce Oorlog was selected as the Library Commission's 1999 Employee of the Year, and **Jo Budler** as the Library Commission's 1999 Manager of the Year.



LSTA Grants Awarded for FY 2000

Nebraska libraries were awarded \$287,892 in Library Technology Grants to improve public access to electronic information. The federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds (made available through the Institute of Museum and Library Services, IMLS, allocated by Congress, and distributed by the Library Commission annually) address LSTA goals according to the Commission long-range plan, *Libraries for the 21st Century*. Libraries in twenty-five Nebraska communities, three consortia, and one institution received funding to improve information technology services and/or improve information access for underserved populations. Grant recipients were:

- ▲ Auburn Memorial Library
- ▲ Blair Public Library
- ▲ Creighton Public Library
- ▲ Bess Johnson Elkhorn Public Library
- ▲ Emerson Public Library
- ▲ Fairfield Public Library
- ▲ Lydia Bruun Woods Public Library (Falls City)
- ▲ Grand Island Public Library
- ▲ Hastings Public Library
- ▲ Kearney Public Library and Information Center
- ▲ Lexington Public Library
- ▲ Meadow Grove Public Library
- ▲ Morton-James Public Library (Nebraska City)
- ▲ Goodall City Library (Ogallala)
- ▲ Osceola Public Library
- ▲ Pierce Public Library
- ▲ Shelby Public Library
- ▲ Shelton Township Library
- ▲ Springfield Public Library
- ▲ Stanton Public Library
- ▲ Stromsburg Public Library
- ▲ Tilden Public Library
- ▲ Valley Public Library
- ▲ Verdigre Public Library
- ▲ Wauneta Public Library
- ▲ ONE Library-Columbus Public Library, Norfolk Public Library, Northeast Community College
- ▲ Hastings College-Imperial Public Library-Republican Valley Library System
- ▲ Health and Human Services System
- ▲ Lincoln Correctional Center

For more information about recipients and their projects, see the Commission home page at <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, search on LSTA Grant Recipients 2000. ▲

Year in Review

Youth Advisory Board Meets

The Nebraska Library Commission Youth Advisory Board convened via videoconference for the final 1999-2000 meeting in May. Summer Reading news and deadlines, the Children's Resource Page, multi-cultural needs of youth librarians, and dates for videoconferences were discussed. Members who served this year were Joan Chesley, Fremont Keene Memorial Library; Evonne Edgington, Offutt Air Force Base; Pat Headley, Elkhorn Public Library; Maxine Erpelding, Wood River Schools; Shawna Lindner, Kearney Public Library; Merry Von Seggern, Grand Island Public Library; Karen Zaruba, Ord Schools; Janet Gill, Bloomfield Schools; Paula Mares, Schuyler Public Library; Sharon McCreath, Ogallala Goodall City Library; Ruby Tiensvold, Rushville Schools; Beth Trupp, Gering Public Library; Tom Kelly, Oxford; Vicki Perrie, Superior Public Library; LaVila VanBoening, Hasting Schools; Sue Antes, Syracuse Public Library; Karla Wendelin, Norris Schools; Roberta Schuller, Bennett Schools; Sandy Wallick, Lincoln City Libraries; and Sarah Watson, Omaha Public Library. .

For more information contact Mary Jackson, 402-471-4006, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjackson@nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Scanner Enhances Access

A grant from the State Records Board to the Library Commission provided a scanner to enhance access to microform publications. This digital access to the Commission's state and federal government publications in microfiche or microfilm format provides high quality prints and images that can be faxed or e-mailed as file attachments. Publications scanned from microforms can also be posted on the Commission's Web page at <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, search on State Government Publications Online. For more information contact Beth Goble, 402-471-4017, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <bgoble@nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Forums Held Across Nebraska

Librarians, library boards, and the general public attended a series of statewide public forums in Summer 2000. The Nebraska Library Commission used this opportunity to generate input and discussion on the *Libraries for the 21st Century 2001-2003* Campaign for Improved Library and Information Service. The Library Commission will use the ideas and recommendations from the Public Forums to revise the state long-range plan, and to construct the 2001-2003 biennium budget request. The forums were held in Scottsbluff, Cozad, and Lincoln. For more information contact Nancy Busch, 402-471-4002, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <nbusch@nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Volunteers Celebrated

Celebrate Volunteers! was the theme of a spring reception at the Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service. The event was an opportunity for borrowers to meet the volunteers who help make the service possible.

Carolyn Sung, Chief of the Networks Division within the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, described the work of the National Library Service and presented awards to volunteers who reached milestones of service. Library Commission Director Rod Wagner and Talking Book and Braille Service Director Dave Oertli also thanked volunteers for their contribution to this service. ▲

Commission Director Rod Wagner thanks volunteers for their commitment.



National Institutes Held

Two Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA) Institutes were held in Nebraska in Spring 2000.

In North Platte, thirty-two people participated in an institute entitled, "A Leadership Survival Kit," presented by Abigail Hubbard, University of Houston. In Lincoln, one hundred and twenty-five people participated in an institute entitled, "Libraries in the Digital Age: Visions for the Future and Road Maps for Change," presented by Deb Anderson, Mesa (AZ) Community College. The Nebraska Library Commission, Nebraska's Regional Library Systems, the Public Resource



Small group discussions liven up the LAMA Institutes.

Library Group (PRLG), and the University of Nebraska Council of Libraries (UNCL) sponsored both institutes. The LAMA Institutes provide an opportunity for library personnel from all types and sizes of libraries to gather and share information and

ideas, and to discuss issues relevant to their particular environments.

For more information about LAMA and the LAMA Regional Institutes, see <www.ala.org/lama/events/institutes>. ▲

Commission Announces Increased State Aid

The Nebraska Library Commission approved allocation of \$75,000 in additional state aid to public libraries and \$52,500 for support of continuing education for library personnel in FY 2000. Library Commission Director Rod Wagner stated, "This additional \$75,000 is an initial contribution to our ongoing campaign to increase state support for public

library services. The money augments local support for library services and can be used by local public libraries to boost their print and non-print materials, increase access to electronic information resources, develop programming for young people, or finance other library functions."

A portion of the additional state aid to public libraries was used to

increase the base grant amount and the remainder was distributed through a per capita formula. These funds are part of \$150,000 in additional state funds appropriated by the Legislature and approved by the Governor for FY 1999. \$22,500 of the new funding was allocated earlier as additional aid for Nebraska's six Regional Library Systems. ▲

Commission Sponsors Campfire Chats

In January, more than sixty-five people at fourteen sites across the state attended Library Commission-sponsored videoconferences to present basic information about the Commission's database project. Since its beginning four years ago, the

database project has grown from seventy-eight participating libraries to more than 650 this year. The database project initially included one information provider and ten databases. Now the project includes more than a dozen information providers and approxi-

mately thirty-five databases, and it continues to grow. The Campfire Chat videoconferences helped build a foundation of understanding and knowledge for all participating librarians. ▲

Public Librarian Certification Evolves

Since 1998, the Nebraska Library Commission has worked with a task force to review the Public Librarian Certification program. In Fall 1998, the task force began work with Debra Wilcox Johnson of Johnson & Johnson Consulting on an evaluation of the certification program and basic skills courses. Key data sources for the study included Library Commission staff, Regional Library System directors, certified librarians, board presidents, and print documentation from the program. The primary focus of the study was the public library community. The task force developed eight questions to guide the evaluation process and defined desired outcomes for certification, along with measurable or observable indicators of evidence of these outcomes.

The independent consultant designed questionnaires for certified library directors, certified library staff, and board presidents. The return rate was 74% for certified library directors, 71.6% for certified staff, and 75.9% for library board presidents. Library directors reported reasons for being certified as: public library accreditation requirement, job skill development, and professional commitment. **One out of two librarians felt that customer service had improved as a result of certification and nine out of ten directors are planning to be recertified.**

Certified library staff reported that the certification program helped them improve their library skills and two out of three reported a change in their own attitudes since certification. Nearly three-quarters of the board presidents expected some changes because of the certification of the director. The primary change was a more knowledgeable and up-to-date director. Three out of four boards require the library director to be certified.

The questionnaires were designed to compare findings across all groups. When comparing the reasons for certification, the influence of the Library Commission is very clear, especially among directors and trustees. Increased knowledge and improved skills were the primary expectations from certification in all three groups. Benefits were seen in job performance, duties, opportunities, and attitudes toward library work. The biggest changes were in their own attitudes about work and in job performance.

Six focus groups were held across the state to gather information to supplement the findings from the questionnaires. Personal accomplishment was a perceived effect from certification. There were no reports of being unable to meet the 45 hour requirement for recertification, although participants reported barriers to attending workshops including time away from work, travel, and topics not related to their work. Focus group participants wanted an **advanced level of basic skills, better sequencing of courses, Web-based instruction** as a supplement or lead-in to a basic skills course, and a **"quick-start" class** just for new directors. The value of attending workshops was "learning from each other" or the "informal learning." Technology needs were expressed although participants had difficulty defining specifics.

Nearly fifty percent of library directors had no suggestions for changing the certification program or Basic Skills courses. Ideas for improvements to the program included: always use an "onsite" instructor, offer a refresher course, and schedule the courses more frequently. **The primary information desired was "more technology."** Comments made about the use of videotapes as a course medium tended to be negative. Across all groups, the networking with other library workers is an important outcome of the basic skills courses.

The study concluded with a series of recommendations. The complete report along with the recommendations can be found on the Nebraska Library Commission home page at <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, search on Continuing Education Evaluation. ▲

Meeting Features Resource Sharing

Eighty-five librarians attended the **NEBASE Annual Meeting** in Lincoln in Fall 1999. OCLC staff member Barbara Fowler and NEBASE team member Devra Dragos presented updates. Kate Nevins, Executive Director of SOLINET, revisited the resource sharing territory she addressed three years ago at a Nebraska Resource Sharing Dialogue Retreat. At that time, the vision of resource sharing included:

- ▲ Access from home, school, business office, or library
- ▲ Information available anywhere, anytime, to anyone
- ▲ Seamless access to the electronic holdings of the state's library system

At the 1999 NEBASE meeting, Nevins celebrated our success and spoke of the future. A brainstorming session was held to identify issues, projects, and dreams. ▲

Newsline Expands To Statewide Access

As of December 20, 1999, visually and physically impaired individuals who live anywhere in Nebraska can read *The Omaha World Herald* through Newsline, a service that uses phone lines to access newspapers through synthetic speech. Qualifying individuals with touch-tone telephones can call a toll-free number to select various sections of the paper. Other choices include *The Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *USA Today*. Newsline also offers a listing of phone numbers for other Newsline service centers across the United States to benefit subscribers while they are traveling. Three hundred Nebraskans subscribe to this free service. To subscribe, contact the Talking Book and Braille Service at 402-471-4038, 800-742-7691, e-mail: <readadv@nlc.state.ne.us> or Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 402-471-2891, 877-809-2419. Individuals who qualify for the Library Commission's talking book service also qualify for Newsline. ▲

E-Rate Support Reported

Seventy-one Nebraska public libraries and the Nebraska Library Commission received e-rate discounts for the second year of the program. The total discounts of \$144,883 helped public libraries provide more effective services to customers by improving technology access available in libraries. Most libraries received discounts for Internet access or telecommunications access. Libraries used the support for improving internal connections and telephone service.

Discount levels for e-rate are based on the percentage of students in each local school district eligible for subsidized lunch programs. In Nebraska, the public library discounts range from twenty-five to eighty percent. Libraries across Nebraska received discounts that ranged from \$122 to \$20,550. The following representative examples illustrate the range:

- ▲ **Ceresco Public Library:** \$614 for Internet and telecommunications access, based on a 40% discount rate.
- ▲ **Ponca Public Library:** \$659 for telecommunications access, based on a 50% discount rate.
- ▲ **Gibbon Township Library:** \$3,600 to improve internal connections, based on a 60% discount rate.
- ▲ **Omaha Public Library:** \$20,549 for telecommunications access, based on a 63% discount rate.
- ▲ **Gordon Public Library:** \$1,412 for Internet and telecommunications access, based on a 70% discount rate.
- ▲ **Beatrice Public Library:** \$5,018 for telecommunications access, based on a 58% discount rate.

- ▲ **Nebraska Library Commission:** \$4,871, based on a 51% discount rate.
- ▲ **Grand Island Public Library:** \$8,649 for telecommunications access, based on a 68% discount rate.
- ▲ **Axtell Public Library:** \$554, based on a 60% discount rate.

See the Library Commission home page at www.nlc.state.ne.us, search on E-Rate, for a complete list of all Nebraska Public Libraries receiving 1999 discounts. For information about the application process for the next round of funding contact Pam Scott, Library Development Consultant, 402-471-2694, 800-307-2665, Fax: 402-471-2083, e-mail: psscott@nlc.state.ne.us or see the Library Commission home page, search on E-Rate Universal Service. ▲

Libraries for the 21st Century Initiative: What difference does it make?

The 1999 Libraries for the 21st Century initiative resulted in an increase in state funds for library services in Nebraska. An additional \$150,000 in state aid funding was appropriated by the legislature for this fiscal year. Of this amount, the six Regional Library Systems received an additional \$22,500 (\$3,750 for each system). Of the remaining \$127,500, the Commissioners directed that \$75,000 be added to existing aid funds for direct state aid to public libraries.

As a result of this additional funding, the distribution formula for direct state aid was adjusted. The new formula provides for an increase in the base grant amount from \$600 to \$750 for libraries serving populations of less than

5,000 and a per capita payment of eighteen cents (\$.18). For libraries serving populations of 5,000 and above, the state aid payment was increased to twenty-four cents (\$.24) per capita. Nearly every eligible public library received a funding increase. Also, all public libraries that received funding from a public entity other than their main funding source received an incentive payment of 1% of that additional funding. The average state aid per capita rose from \$.25 to \$.34 per capita.

One hundred sixty-four eligible public libraries received state aid applications in November 1999 and state aid payments were made to those applicants. For many of these libraries, the increased aid amount had a significant impact on

Libraries for the 21st Century

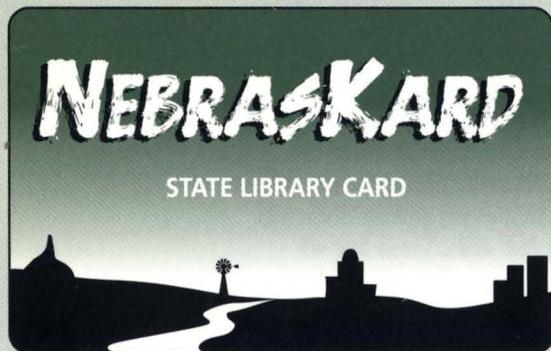
the programs and services they were able to offer. Library directors will be surveyed about the impact of the increased state aid.

This year the additional state aid funding was also used to support Training and Continuing Education Grants to increase the skills of Nebraska library personnel, ensuring that every public library in Nebraska has skilled and knowledgeable information specialists to serve the citizens' information needs. ▲

NebrasKard Planning Underway

The State Advisory Council on Libraries recommended action on the NebrasKard reciprocal library borrowing agreement at its March 2000 meeting in Kearney. The Council urged efforts toward implementation of the NebrasKard, which has been under discussion for the past few years. As previously proposed, the NebrasKard would be a voluntary reciprocal borrowing agreement that would permit registered borrowers of participating libraries to borrow materials from other libraries. Nebraska's postsecondary libraries introduced a reciprocal borrowing agreement several years ago.

In response to the State Advisory Council on Libraries action, a meeting was convened in April 2000 at the Library Commission to discuss the NebrasKard proposal. The discussion weighed the advantages and disadvantages of a reciprocal borrowing program. An ad hoc committee was formed to address NebrasKard policy and procedural details. The committee included Becky Baker, Seward Public Library Director; Cecelia Lawrence, North Platte Public Library Director; Mary Nash, then Nebraska Library Association President; Ted Smith, Norfolk Public Library Director; and Dee Yost, then Republican Valley Library System Administrator. The committee met in June in Hastings. Working from materials from other states, the committee agreed to adapt provisions of the Colorado program for use in Nebraska. The committee's proposed NebrasKard policies and procedures are available for public review and comment, along with a report presented at the Nebraska Library Commission's July meeting. Additional materials are posted on the Library Commission home page at <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, search on NebrasKard. For more information contact Rod Wagner, 402-471-4001, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <rwagner@nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲



New FirstSearch Released

OCLC's FirstSearch has a new look. FirstSearch 5.0 was released in FY 2000, with many new features. New features in the administrative module include:

- ▲ Access via Web browser rather than telnet
- ▲ Turn on/off full-text by database
- ▲ Limit access to full-text by choosing databases that require a password
- ▲ Turn on/off ILL by database
- ▲ Customize ILL form
- ▲ Set default operators and/or search interface
- ▲ Control number of cross-database searching to 1, 2, or 3 databases
- ▲ Customize topic areas
- ▲ Add library logo to FirstSearch screens

New features in the search interface include:

- ▲ Expert searching (of interest to former EPIC users)
- ▲ Full right truncation and wildcard options
- ▲ Subject thesauri for the WorldCat, ERIC, PsycINFO/PsycFirst, and MEDLINE databases
- ▲ Limiting searches to an individual library
- ▲ Limiting searches to a group of libraries
- ▲ Sorting search results
- ▲ Ranking relevance
- ▲ Viewing, marking, and e-mailing up to 100 records at a time
- ▲ Searching one-to-three databases at a time
- ▲ Linking to detailed serial holdings
- ▲ Searching history for entire session

FirstSearch provides access to eighty-six databases representing a variety of subjects and including

some full-text databases. More than 680 Nebraska libraries subscribe at no charge to the Nebraska package of twelve databases, financed by the Library Commission with state tax funds. For more information about these databases or to access FirstSearch 5.0 see the Commission home page at <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, click on Electronic Databases. ▲

Resource Sharing Facilitated

There are a variety of reasons for creating a shared library catalog. The first to come to mind is facilitating resource sharing. Resource sharing is cost-effective, allowing for greater use of material across the state; and efficient, allowing for librarians and library customers to search across the collections of libraries across the state.

The Library Commission facilitates this through our statewide union catalog within FirstSearch's WorldCat. Through our statewide FirstSearch contract, this catalog is available (at no charge to the library) to all libraries regardless of type and to all Nebraskans through remote patron access outside the library. When a librarian or library user searches WorldCat for material, if a Nebraska library owns that material, that library's or those libraries' symbols are first to appear.

Now, more than one hundred Nebraska libraries are adding their holdings to the statewide union catalog. Forty-three of these are using CatExpress, a Web-based product allowing small libraries to add their holdings and to download MARC records for their local catalogs. For more information about CatExpress, contact Christa Burns at 402-471-3107, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <cburns@nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Special Report...Ninety-nine Attend Spring 2000 Classes

The Spring 2000 Basic Skills course, **Organization of Library Materials**, was held in six sites across the state during April and May. Ninety-nine people registered for the course including forty-five library directors, thirty-three public library staff, and eleven others from institutional libraries, schools, hospitals, and a monastery. Participants registered via online, fax, telephone, and direct mail. Information announcing the classes was placed in the *NLCommunicator*, Nebraska Library Commission Web announcements and calendar, and regional system newsletters. The online registration included a pre-course questionnaire designed to explore current library practices involving technology, cataloging, merchandising, and public relations experience. Applicants completed pre-course activities including a community and library assessment, library photography project, and subscribing to the BSKILLS electronic mailing list.

The class was developed and delivered by Kit Keller, Marilyn Liedorff, Mary Jo Ryan, Kimberly Shelley, and Ellen Van Waart. Content included discussion of the tools that catalogers use in preparing records, the importance of standard procedures and policies, library automation, review of actual records created by catalogers, the overall organization of libraries, and organization of electronic information (including databases and Internet Web sites). By analyzing photographs of how bookstores make information and materials readily accessible to customers, participants explored merchandising principles that librarians can use to enhance access to information. The course featured an information technology lab, using the Commission's mobile computer

network and onsite computer labs. The lab assignment provided an opportunity for participants to join the BSKILLS mailing list, find cataloging records online, and explore ways that electronic information can be organized.

Participants registered by March 1 were sent a camera with an explanation of the goals of the Library Photography project and how to take photographs from the point of view of what the customer sees in the library. The photographs were placed in albums and used in the merchandising section of the course. Several people requested a loan of the albums to share with boards and others in the library to explore what other libraries are doing in remodeling or renovation projects. The evaluation results showed that participants perceived the organization of their libraries differently as a result of taking photographs and discussing their observations.

The BSKILLS list had ninety-nine participants. Discussions addressed many issues surrounding the organization of library materials, as well as other pertinent topics. The list proved to be an effective communication tool for a number of topics related to the course. The course evaluation was primarily handled via the list. A section of the class can be found on the Library Commission home page at www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/liborg.html. The Basic Skills course, Organization of Library Materials, fulfills one of the four course requirements of the Public Librarian Certification program. For more information contact Richard Miller, 402-471-3175, 800-307-2665, e-mail: rmiller@nlc.state.ne.us. ▲

2000 Legislative Report

The Nebraska Legislature's 2000 session concluded without any changes of special consequence for Nebraska libraries. Library representatives sought increased state aid funding and legislation permitting changes in debt financing provisions for library technology purchases.

Senator LaVon Crosby's legislative bill 1224 sought additional state aid funding for libraries as outlined in the *Libraries for the 21st Century* initiative. The Appropriations Committee added \$150,000 to the Nebraska Library Commission's budget for state aid purposes, and that amount was approved by the Legislature. However, Governor Johanns vetoed the additional aid appropriation.

Senator Gene Tyson, with several cosponsors, introduced legislative bill 1134. Senator Tyson's bill proposed provisions allowing municipalities to arrange debt financing for library technology purchases and allowing purchase payments over several years. The Government committee did not advance the bill to the floor. This legislative proposal is expected to be re-introduced in the 2001 legislative session. ▲

Commission Compiles Children's Resources

The Library Commission recently created a special section of the Commission Web site with electronic resources for children, children's librarians, and parents. Caregivers and others who work with children can find advice on discipline and self-esteem, along with information on hobbies and other activities to challenge and engage children. Librarians serving children and young adults can find ideas to improve professional skills, information about special events, summer reading help, and the best in children's literature. Children have direct access to discover games, puzzles, homework help, and science projects. Local and Nebraska-specific materials and sites will be added as they are developed. See the Nebraska Library Commission home page at www.nlc.state.ne.us, search on Children's Resource Page. ▲

Jane Pope Geske Honored



The Heritage Room of Nebraska Authors at Lincoln's Bennett Martin Public Library has been renamed to honor Jane Pope Geske, Library Commission Director from 1969-1971 and 1973-1976. Geske was an early president of the Nebraska Literary Heritage Association, as well as a founding member of the Nebraska Center for the Book and of Friends of the University of Nebraska Libraries. She served as president of the Nebraska Library Association and Nebraska Arts Council.

The room was renamed the **Jane Pope Geske Heritage Room of Nebraska Authors** at the Nebraska Literary Heritage Association Annual Meeting this summer. Norman Geske presented a portrait of his wife to hang in the room on the third floor of the library. The room has more than 10,000 volumes and information on more than 3,000 Nebraska authors. ▲

Emporia Graduation Held

Emporia State University School of Library and Information Management (ESU SLIM) held a graduation ceremony in August 1999 at the Peter Kiewit Lodge at Mahoney State Park for the SLIM-Nebraska II students. Becky Pasco, SLIM-Nebraska I graduate and SLIM doctoral student, provided the commencement address. Dr. John Schwenn, ESU Vice-President for Academic Affairs, conferred the Master of Library Science degree on the graduates. Dean Robert Grover led the ceremony, with other faculty members attending.

The students started the graduate program in January 1997 and completed forty-two semester hours of coursework. Twenty-two members of the graduating class were from Nebraska, five were from South Dakota, two from Iowa, and one recently moved to Minnesota. The students represented a variety of backgrounds and work experiences including academic, public, medical, corporate, and school (primary and secondary) library settings. ▲

Library Finance Task Force Prepares Findings

Nine Nebraska library representatives worked to address public library finance issues and develop recommendations related to goals, needs, and strategies. Participants included Ann Stephens, Joan Birney, Ted Smith, Kathy Tooker, Ron Heezen, Judy Grandstaff, Richard Miller, Brenda Ealey, and Shirley Flack. Rod Wagner and Richard Miller convened the group in early 1999.

The Task Force met on several occasions to talk with experts about tax, foundations, political issues, and technology. The Task Force minutes and findings are available on the Library Commission home page at <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, search on finance task force.

Recommendations from the task force included:

- ▲ Build on strengths.
- ▲ Fine tune and expand library efforts at local and state levels.

- ▲ Develop a promotional effort to raise awareness of the value of library services.
- ▲ Although public libraries are a function of local government and primary funding must come from local governments, work for a significant increase in state support as well.
- ▲ Develop knowledge and skills for conducting effective fund raising efforts for special projects and needs that are beyond the scope of primary funding sources.
- ▲ Re-work the Libraries for the 21st Century funding initiative to provide specific details about how funding would be used and the expected results.
- ▲ The NebrasKard reciprocal borrowing card has potential as part of a package of interlibrary cooperative efforts, although no consensus has been reached. ▲

Library Commission Funds Systems

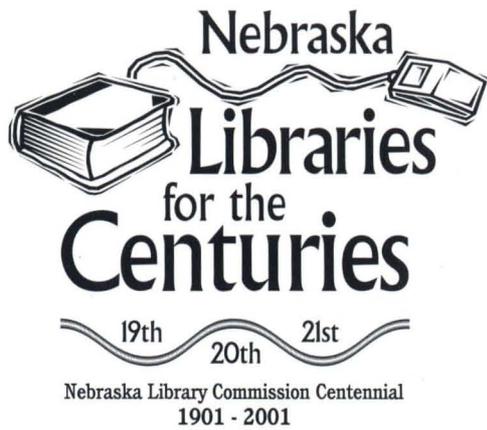
The Nebraska Library Commission awarded \$1,313,722 in Biennium 1999-2001 to fund training and development assistance for Nebraska libraries through Nebraska's six Regional Library Systems, representing a 4.1% increase over funding for the last biennium. **The Library Systems partner with the Library Commission** to provide a mechanism to develop cooperative programs among libraries, seek ways to extend library services

to areas without service, work to foster long term library service development, provide general consulting to local libraries, and promote and enhance libraries and library services. The funding is used for staffing, office space, Interlibrary Loan, and Continuing Education. This continuing partnership between the Regional Library Systems and the Nebraska Library Commission has been in existence since 1985. ▲

Centennial Web Page Unveiled

The Nebraska Library Commission will celebrate our 100th anniversary in 2001. In honor of the Library Commission Centennial, the Commission launched the **Centennial Web Site, *Libraries for the Centuries***, beginning with Pre-1900 and 1900-1909. Each month a new decade is unveiled. Information includes historical photos, documents, and a timeline of key Nebraska library-related events. Maggie Harding worked with the Nebraska Library Commission for more than a year to organize the

Commission archives, record oral histories from current and former Commission staff, and write the Web text. See the Library Commission home page at www.nlc.state.ne.us and click on the Centennial button for history by the decades. Upcoming activities include a speaker series, a historical display, and a project to involve local libraries celebrating their own local history. For more information contact Mary Jo Ryan, 402-471-3434, 800-307-2665, e-mail: mjryan@nlc.state.ne.us. ▲



Motion Picture Video License Renewed

The Library Commission renewed a statewide Motion Picture Video License for all 275 public libraries in Nebraska for July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2000, at no charge to public libraries. With this license, libraries showed motion pictures in the library facility and took advantage of numerous programming opportunities. All

terms and conditions of the previous license remained in effect for the renewed license.

Nebraska libraries used motion pictures in activities like Summer Reading Programs, Children's Story Hour, Book Discussion Groups, Senior Citizen Programs, Educational or Cultural Programs, and Film Festivals. ▲

"Thank you so much for the statewide motion picture license...we are especially appreciative of it here in Beatrice because it allows us to show the movies of our hometown star, Robert Taylor."

—Laureen Riedesel,
Beatrice Public Library

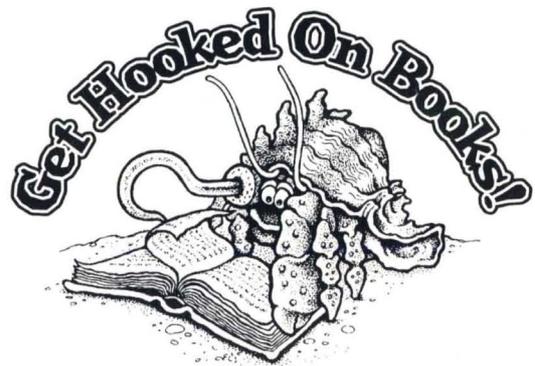
Summer Reading Program

Treasure Your Library

Nebraska children enjoyed games, excursions, special events, and reading last summer through participation in the statewide summer reading program. The 1999 summer theme, **Treasure Your Library**, encouraged children to read, 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. ▲



Nebraska Library Commission Highlights July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2000

- ▲ 1,547 librarians attended 126 Continuing Education Sessions sponsored by the Library Commission, including 180 participants in Basic Skills Sessions.
- ▲ 165 public libraries were accredited.
- ▲ 160 libraries received state aid.
- ▲ The Talking Book and Braille Service circulated an average of 15,745 talking books, magazines, and Braille materials each month.
- ▲ The Talking Book and Braille Service recorded 152 issues of magazines and twenty-seven books.
- ▲ The Talking Book and Braille Service duplicated 47,581 audiocassettes.
- ▲ The Nebraska State Database was increased to 6.5 million records with 6.6 million holdings, as of June 30, 2000.
- ▲ NEBASE members cataloged 195,568 total items.
- ▲ NEBASE members originally cataloged 798 items.
- ▲ The Library Commission circulated 3,300 items.
- ▲ The Library Commission borrowed 1,167 items from other libraries.
- ▲ The Library Commission loaned 333 items to other libraries.
- ▲ The Library Commission served 9,048 customers onsite.
- ▲ NEBASE libraries borrowed 66,596 items from other libraries.
- ▲ NEBASE libraries loaned 64,677 items to other libraries.
- ▲ At the end of the fiscal year, NEBASE membership included sixty-one full-cataloging members, forty-three CatExpress members, and forty-two NEON members.
- ▲ The Library Commission completed 4,788 reference transactions.
- ▲ The Library Commission served 9,048 customers onsite.
- ▲ 3,600 state documents were added to the Commission's collection, bringing the total to 118,068.
- ▲ 5,761 federal documents were added to the Commission's collection, and 28,999 federal documents were withdrawn, bringing the total to 188,016.
- ▲ 611 state documents were circulated in FY 2000.

Nebraska Library Commission



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