

# PANHANDLE SUN

February / March 2006

## *PLS Coordinator's Message*

Risk taker. Change maker. Enthusiastic about people. Passionate about librarianship.

These are some of the words used to describe Rivkah Sass, director of the Omaha Public Library, who was named Librarian of the Year 2006 by Library Journal. As Nebraska librarians, we can feel proud that one of our own was singled out as a leader in our field.

We can also be inspired by the qualities attributed to Rivkah. The article reflects her energy, as she creates partnerships with community groups, such as the authors who organize the Downtown Omaha Lit Fest, and the artists who provide programs from the Center for Contemporary Arts. She was the driving force behind the “Omaha Reads” one book/one community project. She is planning future library facilities, such as one combined with a community college, and another with an elementary school. She has addressed 50 community groups in the last 2 years, spreading the word about the “new” Omaha Public Library.

And it **is** new. She has directed a “cleaning” project that resulted in the closing of one entire floor of the library, and aggressive weeding of the collection, plus many staffing changes. Collection priorities have shifted to reflect what Omaha residents want. And all this with no increase in budget.

She also credits her mentors for where she is today. Those visionary leaders with whom she worked in a variety of positions over the years helped shape her philosophy of service and gave her the courage to do whatever it takes to provide it.

We can learn from Rivkah, even if we don't know her. We can become re-energized in our passion about libraries – so much that we even take some risks to make our libraries the best that they can be – and then get out and tell people about it! And along the way, we can become mentors to those who will come after us, so that they will be inspired to create the great library of the future.

Cherie Longmuir



## Panhandle Library System Upcoming Events



### **February 3, 2006 College of DuPage:**

#### **Soaring to Excellence**

"Always a River, Sometimes a Library"

Locations: Chadron State College, ESU 13-  
Scottsbluff, WNCC-Sidney

Time: 10:00 a.m. to Noon

PLS Will have video tape to loan

Register with PLS

### **February 3, 2006 Youth Video Conference**

"Terrific After-School Programs for K-5"

Panhandle locations: Chadron State  
College, University of Nebraska Panhandle  
Learning Center, 4502 Avenue I, Scottsbluff

Time: 1 to 3 p.m. (MT)

**Register by January 20 at:**

[http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/ce/libdevtra  
iningreg.html](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/ce/libdevtra<br/>iningreg.html)

### **February 14, 2006 NLA's Library**

#### **Legislative Day in Lincoln**

### **February 21, 2006 PLS Summer Reading Program Workshop**

Presenters: Patti Sinclair and Sally Snyder  
Location: Scottsbluff Public Library, 1809 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Avenue, Scottsbluff

Time: 9:00 a.m. to Noon & 1:00 to 3:00

Lunch is on your own

Register with the PLS office

### **February 27, 2006 Duane Munson Book Exhibit**

Location: Leyton High School

Time: 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Contact Sue Arndt for information

### **March 1, 2006 Creating a Web Page / Follett Automation Workshop**

Location: WNCC Sidney, 371 College Drive

Time: 9 to Noon – Web Page Design

1 to 3 – Follett Users Workshop

Lunch is on your own

**Register by February 20, 2006** with PLS

### **March 2, 2006 Creating a Web Page / Follett Automation Workshop**

Location: WNCC-Alliance, 1750 Sweetwater

Time: 9 to Noon – Web page Design

1 to 3 Follett Users Workshop

Lunch is on your own

**Register by February 20, 2006** with the  
PLS office

### **March 14, 2006 PLS Board Meeting**

Location: Bluffs Business Center, 1517

Broadway, Scottsbluff: Main Floor

Conference Room

Time: 10:00 a.m.

### **March 21 through 25, 2006 Public Library Assn. National Conference**

Location: Boston, MA

### **March 28, 2006 Job Alike**

Location: Scottsbluff Public Library, 1809 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Avenue, Scottsbluff

Time: 5:30

### **April 4, 2006 Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop**

Location: Harms Advanced Technology  
Center (South of WNCC)

Time: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Lunch is included at no charge

**Register at:**

[www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/gates/rural.ht  
ml](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/gates/rural.ht<br/>ml)

### **April 6, 2006 Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshop**

Location: Holiday Inn Express, North Platte

Time: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Lunch is included at no charge

**Register:**

[www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/gates/rural.ht  
ml](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/gates/rural.ht<br/>ml)

### **April 11, 18, 25, 2006 Basic Skills Organization of Materials**

Time: 10 to Noon and 1 to 3

Cost: \$35 for all 3 classes

Register with Jacque Crocker, 800-307-  
2665, Email: [jcrocker@nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:jcrocker@nlc.state.ne.us)

### **May 4 and 5, 2006 Disaster Preparedness Workshop**

Location: Harms Advanced Technology  
Center, Scottsbluff (South of WNCC)

Time: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Cost \$20 for both days, includes lunch

**Register by April 20, 2006** with Shannon

Behrhorst, 800-307-2665, Email:

[Shannon@nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:Shannon@nlc.state.ne.us)



## **INSIDE OUR LIBRARIES**

**Bayard High School Library** has a new look. There is now a computer lab with 16 new computers and new tables on the north end. To create enough space for this, a full set of bookshelves was moved to one side of the library, making a separated easy reading area for students between the shelves and the west wall. Laurie Bauer carefully planned the move and the result is very attractive and useable.

**Chadron Public Library** is developing a new collection called “Indigenous Peoples.” Rosselle Tesch recognized a need in the region for materials about the Native Americans who currently and in the past have populated that area. They will be soliciting donations and seeking grant funds to expand the collection with special books and artifacts.

**Chappell Memorial Library** staff is very happy with their wireless internet service. In addition, as part of their planning process last year they aspired to have more programs – and their calendar has been full. At Christmas, there was a storytime at the library before Santa came to town. 24 anxious kids attended. For another program, high school exchange students from Jordan and France spoke about their countries and cultures. A repeat of the book-themed table decoration contest attracted 18 entries; even the Boy Scouts prepared a table! This summer is the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the library, and they are planning a special event to celebrate.

**Goodall City Library** in Ogallala is raising funds to replace their shelving. They have made it easy for donors to see the impact of their dollars by breaking the costs into concrete terms: full row = \$1000; one shelf = \$100; bracket = \$10. As of January they were 25% toward their goal. Local author Billie Lee Snyder Thornburg recently did a reading from her new book **City and Prairie Bones**. A special computer class was offered called “Finding Tax Forms on the Web.”

**Garden County Elementary School Library** in Oshkosh is a warm and welcoming place due in part to the sunny yellow walls and the buckets of stuffed animals that spill out next to wooden bins of picture books that make it easy for students to browse and read. Because of good weeding and displays, the collection appears fresh and accessible.

**Sidney Public Library** is the recipient of a collection of law books. They are in a special room which patrons may reserve for study. They have also purchased an Image Mouse Plus microfilm reader. It is a digital retrieval system that connects to a computer so that the images can be manipulated and emailed. What once was a storage/utility area has been cleaned and remodeled and will become a staff room. Library expansion plans are being modified to lower costs while still meeting community priorities.



## PEOPLE



Change seems to be in the air in the Panhandle libraries. Here are some of the latest updates to the member directory. **Donna Pearce** is the new library assistant at Alliance High School. **Carol Gerk** has returned to Alliance PL, and children's librarian **Dixie Bloom** has retired. **Julie Kunzman** is now in charge of the library at St. Agnes Academy in Alliance. **Connie Arellano** is interim director at Bridgeport PL, after the retirement of **Donna Nelson**. **Irma Nunn** has also left Bridgeport PL. **Imogene Horse** will be retiring from Chadron PL by June. **Cleone Hoyda** is the new assistant at Crawford PL. **Diane Downer** is now director at Gering PL. **Chris Plantz** will be leaving Rushville PL in April. **Donna Payne** has left Lyman PL.

***Keep encouraging young people and mid-career people to consider library work. As you can see – we need them!***

A note about **Dixie** ---

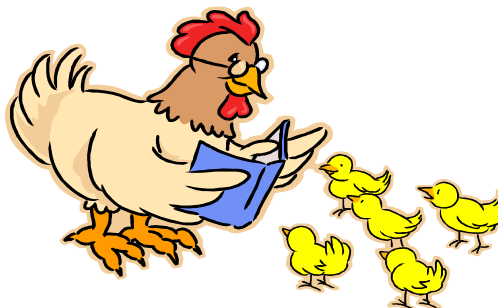
Dixie Bloom has worked at Alliance PL for 14 years. Her most memorable time was moving from the old library to the new one. She describes it as organized chaos, because there is nothing like trying to move a whole library. This is not Dixie's first retirement. She left her job in the school superintendent's office after more than 20 years there. But after staying home for awhile, her daughter suggested Dixie consider a library job – based on her own good experience working in the library while in high school. As children's librarian, Dixie does all the decorating and programming. She loves the hugs from the littlest library users. She found it disappointing that over the years, with more mothers working and children in day care, it's harder to get them into the library. Dixie is looking forward to doing some furniture refinishing and just pursuing personal interests.

A note about **Donna** ---

Donna Nelson has worked at Bridgeport PL for 26 years, and is looking forward to doing some things she just hasn't had time for – like quilting, tole painting, spending time with grandkids, and getting her basement cleaned! She may even do some substitute teaching, since she has had lots of kid experience as a former teacher, and through library story times and summer reading programs. She's also a church organist, and gets many calls to play for weddings and funerals. Donna is anxious for the library to be remodeled and expanded, but is happy to let someone else lead the way!

***Tidbits from the Census Bureau for Women's History Month in March:***

- There are 149.1 million women in the U.S. – vs. 144.5 million men.
- In the 85 and over group, there are twice as many women as men.
- 31% of women ages 25-29 have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- There are 6.5 million women-owned businesses, up 20% in the last 10 years.



## BOOKS

Looking for some new books for summer reading program tie-ins? Check out these from **Picture Window Books**: A Bird for You; A Cat for You; A Dog for You; Fish for You; A Guinea Pig for You; A Rabbit for You. All are for ages 4-9, and have library bindings.

Try the website [kidsreads.com](http://kidsreads.com) to find a list of books in series, with the books in each series listed in publication order – plus lots of fun information about authors, new books, and anything that can make reading even more fun. Kids will really like this, too.

A series recommended by local librarians is the **Sammy Keyes Mysteries** by Wendelin Van Draanen. The main character is a feisty girl, and appeals to readers in grades 4-5.

Have you ordered any copies of Alex Kava's **One False Move**? It is the book for "One Book One Nebraska" this year, so will have lots of publicity. See the article and the flyer in this newsletter for more information.

Still haven't stuck your toe into the pool of **graphic novels**? Here's a recommended "**starter kit**" – good quality and kid safe, without a big

investment. For *upper elementary* age: Amelia Rules: The Whole World's Crazy; First King Adventure, vol. 1; Spirited Away, vol.1. For *middle school* age: Barefoot Serpent; Bone, No.1, Out From Boneville; Shades of Blue, vol.1. For *high school* age: Fruits Basket, vol.1; Smallville; The Tale of One Bad Rat.

Reading Rainbow, the PBS program that has helped millions of kids discover the joy of reading for 24 years, is in danger of being pulled off the air. You can sign a petition appealing for sponsorship that will keep it going: [savereadingrainbow.org/petition](http://savereadingrainbow.org/petition).

The **Quill Awards**, established to honor excellence in writing and publishing and to recognize creators of important books, were given in a variety of categories, including *Book of the Year*: Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince; *Audiobook*: TheDaily Show with Jon Stewart Presents America (the Book); *Children's Illustrated Book*: Runny Babbit; *Teen*: Girls in Pants: the Third Summer of the Sisterhood; *Fiction*: Mermaid Chair; *Graphic*: Marvel 1602; *Mystery*: Eleven on Top; *Sports*: Faithful; *History*: 1776; *Romance*: 44 Cranberry Point; *Poetry*: Let America Be America Again.

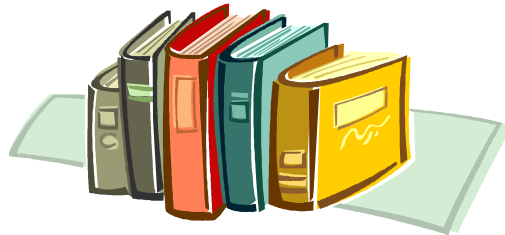
## **ONE BOOK ONE NEBRASKA: ONE FALSE MOVE**

Nebraska residents are invited to read the contemporary novel **One False Move** by Omaha native **Alex Kava** as a part of the 2006 “One Book One Nebraska” statewide book read, launched with Governor Heineman’s state proclamation on January 19<sup>th</sup>.

Southeast Library System, The Nebraska Regional Library Systems, the Nebraska Library Association, the Nebraska Library Commission and the Nebraska Center for the Book, along with other statewide organizations, are urging all residents of Nebraska to participate by reading the book, joining community book discussion groups and participating in community events. Visit [www.onebookonenebraska.org](http://www.onebookonenebraska.org) for more information.

**Alex Kava** grew up in the country outside Silver Creek, Nebraska, and graduated magna cum laude from College of Saint Mary in Omaha with a B.A. in art and English. Before writing novels full-time, she was in advertising, marketing and public relations. Her other novels include A Perfect Evil, Split Second, The Soul Catcher, and At the Stroke of Madness. They have been published in 18 countries and have appeared on bestseller lists in the U.S., U.K, Germany, Poland and Italy. Her new novel, A Necessary Evil, is a sequel to A Perfect Evil and will be available in February, 2006. Find more information about Alex Kava at [www.alexkava.com](http://www.alexkava.com)

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The Library System offices will each have two **book bags**, containing ten copies of **One False Move**, plus discussion questions and activity ideas that may be borrowed by libraries. Libraries may also want to pool their copies to create book sets that could be shared in several communities. This mystery book, set in Nebraska, will appeal to a wide audience, and provoke discussion about the nature of crime and contemporary society.



Other library events to put on your calendar:

**Read Across America Day** – March 2 – [www.nea.gov/readacross](http://www.nea.gov/readacross)

**National Library Week** – April 2-8 “Change Your World @ your library”

**Teen Read Week** – October 15-21

**Children’s Book Week** – November 13-20 “More Books Please”

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

Remember to check for **discounts** before you order books or library supplies. The Nebraska Library Commission's Network Services team negotiates special prices for you from many major companies. For example, Highsmith company offers a discount of 15%, plus free shipping on some items. Look for the discount numbers and company contact persons at the NLC website: [www.nlc.state.ne.us/netserv/discount/html](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/netserv/discount/html).

Jim Soester, Crawford Library Board president, passed along this treasure that he discovered. Ebsco is providing **free access to LISTA** – the Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts database. It indexes 600 periodicals, books, and research reports in the library field, dating from the 1960's. The trick is getting the url typed correctly the first time: <http://www.epnet.com/thisTopic.php?topicID=205&marketID=20> When you get there, click on “free LISTA database”.

The 99<sup>th</sup> **Legislature** is halfway into its 60-day session. You and your patrons can follow the action at <http://www.unicam.state.ne.us> Be ready to contact your senator about matters that affect libraries. If you don't – who will? For example, the Library Commission has requested additional funds for NebraskaAccess database subscriptions. Senators need to know that this money benefits all Nebraskans in a big way.

***I SEARCH, YOU SEARCH, WE ALL  
LOVE TO RESEARCH!***

The PLS office has a **new book** for you to borrow: Grants for Libraries; A How-To-Do-It Manual (2006). It includes forms, questions to guide you, descriptions of grants that were funded, and a CD to help you get your proposal information organized.

A new product that you may want to try is “Playaway” – a **self-playing digital audio book**. The book and the player are one item, weighing 6 ounces and small enough to fit in your pocket. It is powered by a AAA battery. Connect to ear buds or speakers, then push “play” and listen – anywhere. Each book costs about \$35 and can be purchased at some bookstores or directly from [www.playawaydigital.com](http://www.playawaydigital.com)

**Author Alison Hart** is scheduled to speak at the Nebraska State Reading Assn. annual conference in Kearney, Feb. 16-18. She is interested in doing school visits in Nebraska. Her latest book, Anna's Blizzard, is set in Nebraska during the blizzard of 1888. She has also written mysteries. She does presentations to intermediate grade children on writing. You can contact her at [bbba@cfw.com](mailto:bbba@cfw.com), or her publicist, Shaina Yahr, at 800-241-0113.

Panhandle Library System has created a **blog** for its members to use to share ideas, ask questions, and communicate with each other. We hope you'll add it to your “favorites” list and check it often to see what our Panhandle librarians have to say: <http://plssunblog.blogspot.com>

## BITS AND PIECES

Panhandle Library System was awarded a **youth grant** from the Nebraska Library Commission. It will support the presentations across the Panhandle in June of storyteller and naturalist, Cherri Clarke. PLS libraries receiving grants were Alliance Public Library, to help them develop a teen space; and Goodall Library in Ogallala, to develop an “every child ready to read” pre-school program.

**Deb Carlson** and **Nancy Escamilla**, librarians at Scottsbluff PL, were honored with the Dr. Martin Luther King Award for helping children “keep the dream alive.” They were chosen by staff and students at Roosevelt school because “they have made a tremendous impact upon Scottsbluff for their efforts in promoting literacy and life-long learning for adults and children in our community.”

Need help selecting **quality books for your children’s collection**? Of the 4700 books reviewed by School Library Journal, the 62 “best” are listed in their December issue. Call the PLS office if you’d like to borrow it.

In the news recently we’ve heard about the **controversy** in some states over concepts about the origin of life. It reminds us of the importance of selection policies and balanced collections. Here some **recommended books** on this topic that you may want to consider. *For adults*: Evolution vs. Creationism (Scott); Intelligent Design (Pennock); Tower of Babel (Pennock); Triumph of Evolution (Eldredge).

*For children*: Darwin and Evolution for Kids (Lawson); In the Beginning (Ackroyd); Life on Earth (Jenkins); Our Family Tree (Peters); Tree of Life (Sis).

Random House publisher and Amazon.com have announced an online “**pay-per-page-view**” program. A free sample of up to 5% of a book’s length would be available, after which the user would pay for each page accessed. Google has also discussed with publishers the possibility of “renting” copyrighted books to users.

**Sue Murphy**, Alliance PL, has been elected to the **NEBASE Advisory Council**, representing CatExpress libraries. Contact her with suggestions or concerns you have regarding our OCLC network.

Kearney voters increased the city’s sales tax rate to fund capital improvements. This followed the use of a web survey, suggestion cards, a community needs assessment, and listening sessions to determine priorities for city improvements. One of the top five recommendations was a **library expansion**. The tax increase was approved by a 76.6 % margin.

*Unattended children will be given an espresso and a free puppy.*



## **!\$ MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN !\$**

If the cost of gas or registration fees or hotel rooms is keeping you from attending an event that you feel would benefit you professionally, consider applying for a scholarship.

- Panhandle Library System will award up to \$300 for a CE event. See the application in this newsletter or call the office for details.
- NEMA offers \$800 education grants and \$150 CE grants.
- Nebraska Library Assn. has a \$250 and a \$1000 scholarship.
- The Nebraska Library Commission provides scholarships for Library Technology Assistant classes, and masters classes for both MLS and school library degrees.

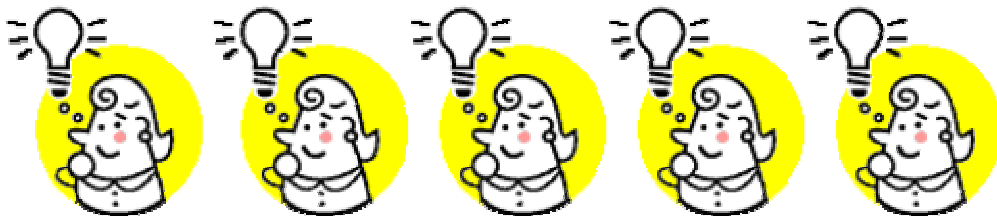
Here are some events that you might want to consider requesting funds for:

- NETA conference (technology) – Omaha – April 27-28
- NLA/NEMA conference – Omaha – Oct. 26-27
  
- Public Library Assn. conference – Boston, MA – March 21-24
- American Library Assn. – New Orleans, Louisiana – June 22-28
- AASL (school library) – Reno, Nevada – Oct.25-28
  
- Basic Skills – Scottsbluff – April 11, 18, 25
- Disaster Planning Workshop – Scottsbluff – May 4-5
- Introduction to Digitization – North Platte – July 17-18

And here are some other non-fee **upcoming events** that you could attend:

- Summer Reading Workshop – Scottsbluff – February 21
- Web Page Creation / Follett Sharing – Sidney – March 1
- Web Page Creation / Follett Sharing – Alliance – March 2
- Gates Rural Sustainability – Scottsbluff – April 4
- Gates Rural Sustainability – North Platte – April 6
- Medical Resources Online – TBA

Look for details on these and other events in this newsletter -  
on the PLS Website: <http://teacher.esu13.org/pls> -  
and on the NLC Website: [www.nlc.state.ne.us](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us)



especially for schools----



- Duane Munson will be doing a show ‘n sell of the latest and greatest books for K-12 on Monday, **February 27** at Leyton High School in **Dalton** from 1-4pm.
- Included in the list of “101 Best Web Sites for Teachers” by the International Society for Technology in Education is <http://www.awesomestories.com/> It is free to schools and libraries if you click on “academic membership.” It weaves links to primary sources into information about hundreds of topics. For example, info about the space shuttle Challenger links to NASA photos used by investigators to determine the cause of the disaster, and the transcript of the crew’s conversation before the explosion. It really is “awesome.”
- It’s estimated that the average computer keyboard has 400 times more bacteria than a toilet seat. A new product called **SpillSeal®** allows the keyboard to be cleaned and disinfected while protecting it against liquid or dust penetration. Find out more at [www.unotron.com](http://www.unotron.com)
- Have you tried **Answers.com**? It provides instant information from dictionaries and encyclopedias. You hold the Alt key while clicking on any word from the text you’re reading, and the definition and explanation of the term pops up. It’s free, but there are ads. Find it at [www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com)
- Spice up your 400’s shelf with a bright new alphabet book in three languages: **ABC x 3: English Espanol Francais**. Published by Tundra Books.
- Amy Widener recommends the **CultureGrams** database from ProQuest. Lots of info on states and countries, and used heavily by social studies classes.
- If you ever need a good idea for a **bulletin board** or **display**, call Robin Schadwinkel at Gering High School Library. Over the December holidays she created “Cuddle Up With A Good Book” – a scene that included a fireplace, Santa, old photos, ornaments, gifts- definitely something to stop and look at.
- Come to our **March workshop**: the morning will help you create a web page; the afternoon will be a time to share ideas about automation systems.
- Kathy Terrell uses **A Fribble Mouse Library Mystery** by Phyllis Perry to share a good story that cleverly incorporates library skills as a way to solve the mystery.
- The Library Commission is requesting \$325,000 from the Legislature to provide **subscriptions to an online encyclopedia** and other resources appropriate for children. This is in response to the proposed change in Rule 10 which would require all schools to have a print or networked online encyclopedia with a copyright within the last 5 years.
- [www.informationliteracy.org](http://www.informationliteracy.org) is where you can go to find lessons to help students find, evaluate and use information. They emphasize collaborative planning with classroom teachers. It’s free, sponsored by the American Assn. of School Librarians.
- New books that you can **borrow from the Library Commission**: Talk About Books! A Guide for Book Clubs and Discussion Groups, grades 4-8;  
Tantalizing Tidbits for Middle Schoolers: Quick Booktalks.



## THE TEEN SCENE

Patrick Jones, considered an expert in the development of teen library programs, and recently turned author of young adult fiction, gave an eye-opening presentation in North Platte in December. He pointed out many stereotypes that we use when working with teens in the library, and helped us realize our potential for making a positive impact.

Here are a few highlights:

- ❖ You aren't likely to change the behavior of teens, but you can change the way you react to them.
- ❖ Remember that you were once a teen; visualize your home, room, music, interests – and reasons you drove adults crazy.
- ❖ Use their names and build an honest and caring relationship with them.
- ❖ Girls usually like to read something, while guys like to read ABOUT something.
- ❖ Accept that teens love technology, and put cool books by the computers.
- ❖ Asking kids to tell you about a movie they liked may give you an idea about what they might be interested in reading.
- ❖ Teens are looking for solutions to problems and good feelings. Libraries can do that.
- ❖ Here are some service guidelines: have realistic goals; keep rules simple (and enforce them fairly and consistently); build relationships; be responsive; show respect and expect respect.
- ❖ If you aren't familiar with teen materials, use resources like VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates) and YALSA (Young Adult Library Services Assn.) for recommended books, magazines, media, and programming.
- ❖ Collaborate with other groups who work with teens.
- ❖ Don't generalize about this group by the behavior of a few.
- ❖ Be flexible with the teen collection: consider magazines consumables; provide comics; invest in "star" biographies; don't bother to buy information in print that is available on the internet; stock college guides and health information that will help them deal with life; provide opportunities for them to choose materials.
- ❖ Use your list of "lost" books for reordering – those are probably the good ones.
- ❖ Say "yes" – with signs and answers; try to find a way to give them what they need.
- ❖ Remember – you CAN make a difference in a kid's life.

\*You can borrow Patrick's book from the PLS office: **Connecting Young Adults and Libraries**

## TECH TIPS



The next generation of **flash drives** have U3 technology which allows them to store software applications as well as data, so you can carry your workspace with you wherever you go. Prices start at \$30 for 256 MB.

Need help enforcing time limits on your computers? Consider **Time Limit Manager** from Fortres Grand Corp: [www.FortresGrand.com/LJ](http://www.FortresGrand.com/LJ). It's an inexpensive way to let you take off your police person hat.

**Podcasting** is getting lots of press and being adapted for many different uses. Podcasts are audio files that can be downloaded from the Internet and played either through a computer or an MP3 player. You can even subscribe to a podcast source (such as OPAL for library topics) and programs will be automatically provided to your computer. They might be conference presentations, book discussions, or anything that has been digitally recorded. Students are even creating podcasts to share reports with classmates. iPods aren't just for music anymore.

The NITC Community Council awarded **Technology Innovation Grants for Economic Revitalization** (TIGER) to the public libraries in Hartington, Atkinson, and Wayne.

Pam Scott led 22 PLS **wanna-be techies** through the trenches at her workshop on Jan.11. Here are a few highlights from the huge amount of information that she covered:

- a security system such as Centurian Guard is essential for library computers so that any changes made to the system by patrons disappear when the computer is turned off;
- be sure your equipment is marked in some distinctive way and that you have a detailed inventory in case of theft or damage;
- set your antivirus software to be doing live updates, plus do scheduled virus scans; scan flash drives before downloading them;
- go to [smartcomputing.com](http://smartcomputing.com) first to try to find an answer to a tech problem;
- before you purchase a new computer, check the specs at the NLC web page;
- keep the power supply fan clean and cool;
- keep a log of problems to help you describe them to a support person;
- go to the manufacturer's web site to download upgrades and get tech help.

*"One reads books to gain the privilege of living more than one life. People who don't read are trapped in a mine shaft, even if they think the sun is shining. Life is lonely; it is less so if one reads." Garrison Keillor*

## **Online Tools & Techniques**

**Written by Kit Keller, Nebraska Library Commission**

The online world changes so rapidly, it's nearly impossible to stay informed about tools and techniques that might make one's working life easier. Included here are some online tools that I use for two main purposes: saving and accessing files; and, finding and evaluating resources.

1. Need to access files when away from your "home" computer? Use eSnips.com (<http://www.esnips.com/signin/index.jsp>) to store files so that you can access them from any Internet terminal. This is a free Web storage site that allows you to store and share resources online.
2. Learn about search tools and read reviews about the various search options. Be aware that this technology changes rapidly, and it's a good idea to check in occasionally with a search review site to see what's new and what's changed. Online searching is a skill that you have to use and update frequently!
  - Greg Notes' *Search Engine Showdown* (<http://www.searchengineshowdown.com/>). *Search Engine Showdown*, the users' guide to Web searching, compares and evaluates Internet search engines from the searcher's perspective.
  - For a quick review of current search tools, read this page on *Internet Search Engines* provided by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln: <http://www.unl.edu/libr/inet/srcheng.html>
  - Both Yahoo! and Google maintain blogs about enhancements, tips, and tricks for searching:  
Yahoo! Blog: <http://www.ysearchblog.com>  
Google Blog: <http://googleblog.blogspot.com>
3. Specialized searching is possible in many ways. Google's Uncle Sam (<http://www.google.com/unclesam>) searches just .mil (military) and .gov (government) Web sites. SearchEdu.com specializes in education topics. (<http://www.searchedu.com/>) And many basic search engines [Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)), Teoma ([www.teoma.com](http://www.teoma.com)), Yahoo ([www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com))] allow domain-specific searching via their Advanced Search pages. This means that it is possible to limit a search to a certain type of domain -- .edu (education), .gov (government), .mil (military), .com (commercial).
4. Sign up for "Tip of the Month" email service from Bates Information Services (<http://www.batesinfo.com/tip.html>). Mary Ellen Bates is internationally recognized as a super-searcher. Her "Tip of the Month" service will keep you apprised of unique searching and Web-related news.
5. Sign up for the Google Alerts Service (<http://www.google.com/alerts>) to be notified of news about a topic of interest.
6. Register to receive a weekly newsletter from ResearchBuzz! (<http://www.researchbuzz.com>) "ResearchBuzz is designed to cover the world of Internet research. To that end this site provides almost daily updates on search engines, new data managing software, browser technology, large compendiums of information, Web directories -- whatever." (<http://www.researchbuzz.com/about.shtml>)

**Attention: Public library board members and public library staff !!**

**Mark April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006 or April 6, 2006 on your calendar**

### **Gates Foundation/Webjunction Rural Library Sustainability Workshops**

**What's coming?** Gates Rural Library Sustainability Workshops will be offered **in Scottsbluff on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006** and **in North Platte April 6, 2006** for public library staff and library board members in communities of 25,000 population and under. These workshops are being sponsored by the Gates Foundation, WebJunction, and the Nebraska Library Commission.

**What is it?** This program to empower small and rural libraries with information and resources to meet their unique challenges and better manage and sustain their public access computing programs.

**Who can participate?** Representatives from any Nebraska public libraries in communities of 25,000 population and under can join us. You can be a library volunteer, a library staff member or a library trustee. Your library does not have to have a Gates computer to participate.

**What is going to be covered?** Information will be presented in the following areas:

\* How to make library community connections \* How to prepare for equipment upgrade and maintenance \* How to provide staff and patron training \* Funding , outreach, and advocacy \* How to use WebJunction as a resource for your community and library.

There will be opportunities to **share** successes and challenges and to learn from one another.

**We will also have a session after lunch to get feedback from trustees and library staff about the draft of revised chapters of the Nebraska Trustee Manual. This revision is based on the feedback we received from the Library Board Members in last year's survey.**

**Who will be the presenter?** Pam Scott, NLC Continuing Education Coordinator

**What is the timeframe of the workshop?** The workshop will be from 9:00 am-4:30 pm. Lunch is included at no cost. Staff should attend all day. Trustees are welcome to attend all day or attend 1/2 the day starting with our Trustee Manual feedback session after lunch, at approximately 1:00 pm.

**Travel Expenses:** Due to the financial support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, mileage reimbursement will be provided to participants who drive 50 miles or more one way.

**What about CE credits?** Library staff and library board members participating in the NLC certification programs will receive 8 hours of CE for attendance all day, or 5 hours for 1/2 day with lunch (trustees).

**Where do I register???** Register at the following website:  
<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/Gates/rural.html>

**If you have any questions about this upcoming Gates Foundation workshop please contact Pam Scott, Nebraska Library Commission via phone: 800-307-2665 or via email: [pscott@nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:pscott@nlc.state.ne.us).**

**Panhandle Library System Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday, November 8, 2005**  
**Alliance Public Library Meeting Room, Alliance, NE.**

President Diane Downer called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. Present were board members Sue Gosnell, Jill Ellis, Vickie Retzlaff, Kathy Terrell, Lillian Diedrichsen, Diane Downer, Dena Crews, and Ruth Walker. Also in attendance was Pam Scott from the Nebraska Library Commission and Debbie McCall from the Panhandle Library System Office. Board members Allison McBride and Maryruth Reed were absent. Cherie Longmuir, the director of the Panhandle Library System was absent.

The agenda was changed to add the Author Tour after the Budget report. Sue Gosnell moved that the minutes of the previous meeting be approved. Vickie Retzlaff seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Jill Ellis reported that WNCC now has wireless internet. She also reported that the college had received the Robert Harris Collection that was worth about \$7,000.00. The books that were not able to be used for the college, were given to the Frontier School of the Bible and the Morrill Public Library.

Sue Gosnell reported that WNCC at Sidney will now have a paperback fiction collection. There are study groups in the library. More students use the library than use the student lounge. Tutor sessions, math labs, and the Career Center are all in the library.

Due to Cherie being absent, Rod Wagner from the Library Commission was not at the meeting. The scheduled evaluation will take place in January at the next regular meeting in Scottsbluff.

Jill Ellis reported on the ALA Conference in Chicago. She attended a session on cataloging. AACR2 is being changed to RDA which is Research Description Access. It will be in three parts: description, relationships and access point control.

Sue Gosnell reported on the Mountain Plains Library Assn. conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The theme was "Beyond Borders." The idea is that there are no borders for libraries. Libraries need to go to a "Google" type of service that is easy for patrons. The MPLA sessions will be on-line until Nov. 15.

Kathy Terrell reported on NLA. One of the sessions was on admiring the problem rather than solving the problem. Another session was on poetry; a DVD is coming out that has poetry that is performed by Nebraska authors.

Pam Scott from the Nebraska Library Commission reported on E-rate deadlines. A Community Consumer Health Information Symposium is coming up. It is to help to share medical resources through libraries. The College of DuPage series is continuing. If you miss them, the tape can be obtained through the PLS office. Statistical reports need to be submitted by January 31, 2006. Basic Skills classes are continuing. It was suggested to change classes from Wednesday to another day of the week. Rural Library Sustainability workshops will be in April. Webjunction online courses are available at no cost. Deadline is Dec. 1 for the Letters for Literature Contest. 2005 PLA Scholarships and the 2005 Continuing Education and Training grants were awarded. Scottsbluff Public Library received one of these grants. The 2005 NetLibrary Shared Collection purchase deadline is early 2006.

Pam Scott also gave Cherie Longmuir's report. Cherie's report will have a different format at the next meeting. Cherie made several visits to libraries, attended trainings and meetings and assisted several libraries with different needs. Cherie revised the PLS Youth Grant Application, introduced Sandy White to the northern Panhandle schools as well as other activities. She provided a list of the upcoming events.

The budget report was presented. All the money for the current year has been received. The audit report was received by the board. Kathy moved that the report be accepted. Jill seconded the motion. The motion carried with eight yes and two members were absent. The motion carried.

The Author tour will take place October 17, 18, and 19, 2006. The cost of the tour will be about \$3,000.00. There was discussion about how the author tour would be funded. Kathy moved to support the author tour in 2006. It was seconded. It passed with a roll call vote of eight yes and two members were absent.

The Annual Meeting Committee reported that the meeting will be in Bridgeport July 21, 2006. It will be a Greek theme. Jill moved that the bylaws be changed to have the Annual meeting date be July. Vickie seconded the motion. The motion carried with eight yes votes and two board members absent. The Bylaws item on Board member selection was tabled until the annual meeting in July.

The Technology plan was reviewed. The office is currently using an external hard-drive to back-up the files.

There was correspondence from Pat Gross, Gering High School and Nadine DiBacco, Gering Public Library, thanking PLS for the grants they received. The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m. Submitted by Ruth Walker, secretary.

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## Your System Board Members:

Diane Downer, President  
Vickie Retzlaff, Vice President  
Ruth Walker, Secretary  
Jill Ellis, Treasurer  
Dena Crews  
Lillian Diedrichsen  
Sue Gosnell  
Allison McBride  
Maryruth Reed  
Kathy Terrell

## Serving libraries in these counties:

Arthur, Banner, Box Butte,  
Cheyenne, Dawes, Deuel,  
Garden, Grant, Keith,  
Kimball, Morrill, Scotts  
Bluff, Sheridan and Sioux  
Counties

Cherie Longmuir, PLS Coordinator, E-mail: [clongmuir@nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:clongmuir@nlc.state.ne.us)  
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PLS Web Site: <http://teacher.esu13.org/pls>

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**February / March 2006**