

Your guide
to the
Nebraska
Library
Commission

N_E Compass

N E W S L E T T E R

FY 1996
Year In Review

Vol. 3 No. 4



NEBASE FirstSearch Trial Applauded

One hundred and fifty-five Nebraska librarians participated in the FirstSearch trial during February, March and April 1996.

More than 306 librarians attended orientation and hands-on training. Jo Budler, Library Commission Network Services Director, announced, "Other states have had FirstSearch trials, but none have been as enthusiastically embraced as ours! The mobile network of computers once again proved that it is worth its weight in gold, putting more than 4,000 miles on its frequent mileage card (and all of that in the trunk of a state-owned vehicle! No glamour for this mobile network!)"

During February 1996, participating librarians had unlimited access to WorldCat, OCLC's Online Union Catalog. Comments included:

"We're high on it here; hope the others are having as good a time with it elsewhere."

"We are offering FirstSearch to the public and have had good media coverage to let them know about it. Everyone who has tried FirstSearch has liked it and say it's easy to use."



▲ FirstSearch orientation participants in Hastings enjoying themselves.

"UN-K (University of Nebraska at Kearney) is giving users access to FirstSearch and it is being received very well."

"...only a few have been using it. Naturally we like it and my biggest fear is that by the end of the trial I'll be strung up post-haste should I even think of removing access."

And finally: "Looking forward to March 1 when we can access ALL databases." ▲

NEBASE Advisory Council Initiated

In December 1995, the NEBASE Advisory Council was established to serve as a channel for two-way communication between NEBASE, Nebraska's OCLC Network, and its

members. The Council is comprised of seven delegates, elected for three year terms by the member libraries. In addition, the NEBASE member who currently serves on the OCLC Users Council is an ex-officio member of the Council.

Full member representatives:

Academic Library: Ella Jane Bailey, University of Nebraska-Omaha; Brian Striman, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Schmid Law Library; Lauralee Grabe, Creighton Univ. Reinert/Alumni Library; **Public Library:** Dan Owens, Bellevue Public Library; Jeanne Saathoff, Kearney Public Library and Info. Center; **Special/School Library:** Devra Dragos, Beatrice State Developmental Center; **NEON/ Selective Users:** Boni Hathaway, Auburn Memorial Library; **Ex-Officio:** Tom Boyle, Midland Lutheran College, Luther Library.

To share ideas and suggestions, contact the Advisory Council delegates, any of the NEBASE team members listed on the Library Commission Home Page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>> (under "Library Commission Staff" click on "Network Services"), or Jo Budler, 402-471-4031, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <jbudler@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

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From the Director...

Year In Review

The countdown has started. A new century is drawing closer. While that in itself may not be of any significance, the thought of a new century is convenient to considering the kinds of library and information services desired in the years ahead. We've come a long way in the past decades, and the pace of change seems relentless. What will assure that the people of the State of Nebraska have the kind and quality of services they desire and deserve?

Efforts of many individuals and organizations during 1996 to give direction toward the future of Nebraska library and information services improve the prospect that we will find answers to this question. "Affordable, reliable, progressive, and equitable library service for all Nebraskans regardless of their economic status and geographic location," is the vision statement, written as an introduction to the Libraries for the 21st Century initiative. This activity emerged during 1996 and planted seeds for Nebraska library development into the future. It stems from deliberations of the State Advisory Council on Libraries over the past few years, underscoring the growing importance of information technology to Nebraska's libraries and the need to secure added state financial assistance to support library services to meet the diverse needs of all Nebraska citizens.

Actions of the United States Congress during 1996 also brought new challenges. A new federal library program, the Library Services and Technology Act, streamlined and replaced several previous federal programs including the Library Services and Construction Act. The new LSTA received transitional funding and will allow greater flexibility to meet state library service needs.

Actions of the 1996 Nebraska legislature imposed limits on property tax assessments and local government budgets, set for implementation in 1998. The legislature also enacted legislation to review electronic access to state government information. This focused on the Nebraska Library Commission's **Nebrask@ Online** service, but has implications for all of Nebraska state government. A bill to clarify methods for establishing and governing county-wide library systems and permit citizen initiatives to place library service issues on county election ballots failed to advance, but legislative intent to address public library service issues led to an interim study with the prospect of new legislation in 1997.

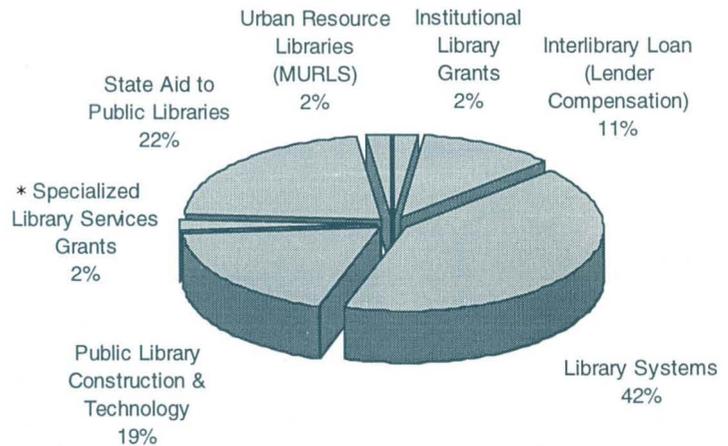
Let the countdown continue. With the Libraries for the 21st Century initiative underway, and with the involvement of many Nebraskans, efforts will move forward to raise the level of library and information services throughout Nebraska. ▲

Rod Wagner

Funding/Grants FY96, July 1, '95-June 30 '96

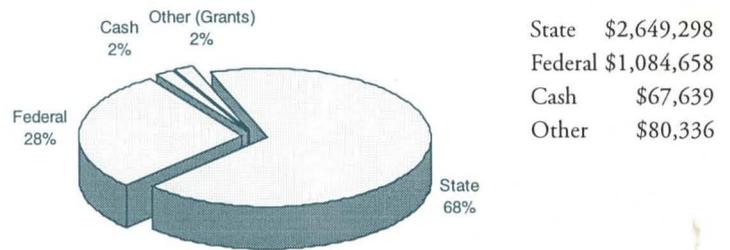
Grants FY96

*Challenge Grants	\$9,920
*Children's Services Grants	\$5,850
*CLIP (Continuous Library Improvement Program)	\$600
Institutional Library Grants	\$27,900
Interlibrary Loan (Lender Compensation)	\$162,999
Library Systems	\$632,059
Public Library Construction & Technology	\$282,483
State Aid to Public Libraries	\$320,006
Urban Resource Libraries (MURLS)	\$28,534



Total Budget Expended FY 1996: \$3,881,931

Where The Money Came From



NCompass

NEWSLETTER

FY 1996 Year In Review

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Commissioners: Dr. Robert McPherson, Hastings, term expires 1997; Karen Warner, Norfolk, term expires 1997; Frances Lovell, Gering, term expires 1998; Ron Norman, Kearney, term expires 1998; Jean Sanders, Lincoln, term expires 1999; Katherine Fletcher, Omaha, term expires 1999. 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

Grants were awarded to 79 Nebraska libraries during FY 1995/96.

Two-hundred and eighty-two thousand, four-hundred and eighty-three dollars of Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) Title II funds for construction and technology were given to 54 libraries.

Nineteen thousand, six-hundred and fifty dollars of Title I funds provided 37 libraries access to OCLC's FirstSearch reference service, consisting of ten databases.

Children's Grants for Excellence

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

Alma Public Library—Internet training for kids, \$700.

Beatrice Public Library—Collaboration: Multicultural materials and programming for middle school students, \$2,500.

Columbus Public Library—Family literacy collaboration, \$1,000.

Lincoln City Libraries—Collaborative project for at-risk kindergartners, \$600.

Sump Memorial Library, Papillion—Collaborative project using Internet for daycare provider training, \$1,000.

Plattsmouth Public Library—Programming for children under three years of age, \$1,190.

Wahoo Public Library—Collaboration with junior high/teen newsletter written by teens, \$1,000. ▲

Commissioners/Staff FY96

Karen Warner of Norfolk was appointed to the Nebraska Library Commission, replacing Myrna Vollbrecht for the last year of her term.

Ron Norman of Kearney was elected Commission Chair for 1995-96 and Jean Sanders of Lincoln was elected Vice-Chair.

Other Commissioners include Dr. Robert McPherson of Hastings, Frances Lovell of Gering.

Arrivals

Diana Boone, OCLC Member Services Coordinator
Allana Novotny, Network Services Librarian
Karen Ingish, Public Library Development Coordinator

Departures

Paul Hoffman, OCLC Member Services Coordinator
Barbara Johnson, Public Librarian Services Coordinator
Cindi Hickey, **Nebrask@ Online** Librarian
Steve Jonas, Information Systems Specialist
Jim Minges, Library Development Director

Reclassifications

Janet Greser, Information Systems Technician
Vickie Beaver, Library Technician
Julie Pinnell, Librarian III
Theresa Thomssen, Library Technician

Staff of the Year, FY96

Annie Sternburg, Internet Librarian, was selected as the Nebraska Library Commission's Employee of the Year. In the nominations it was noted that "Annie has demonstrated in countless ways her commitment to providing Internet services both to Commission staff and library personnel throughout Nebraska. Through her work, Annie has consistently demonstrated a strong customer service ethic, an exceptional ability to produce quality instructional documentation, and excellent teaching skills."

Clarice Schmidt, Talking Book & Braille Service Circulation Coordinator, was selected as the Library Commission's Manager of the Year. In nomination remarks it was noted that Clarice "began her work at the Commission in the midst of changing systems and she experienced success immediately." Further comments note Clarice's dedication and hard work, her loyalty and trustworthiness, and the smooth operation of her area of supervision. ▲



▲ *Employee of the year, Annie Sternburg.*



▲ *Manager of the year, Clarice Schmidt.*

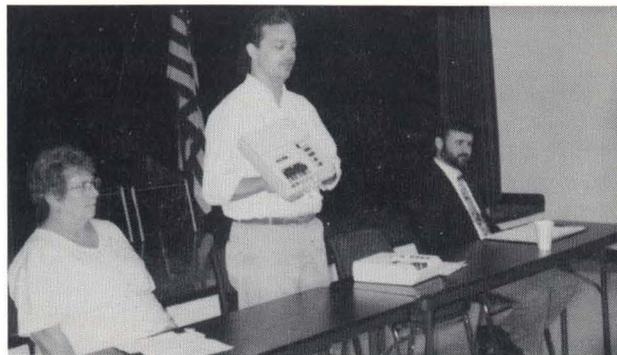
Talking Book and Braille Service Statewide Meetings Held

The Advisory Committee to the Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service hosted a series of spring meetings across the state. These "information get-togethers" provided an opportunity for borrowers and other interested individuals to discuss service issues with members of the Advisory Committee, Commission staff, and other talking book users. The meetings gave borrowers across the state an opportunity to meet the staff and find out more about how they can

personally customize the Talking Book and Braille Service and the best ways to work with the Reader's Advisors. Many borrowers attended to meet their first point of contact, the Reader's Advisors.

Meetings were held at Omaha's Peter Kiewit Conference Center, Nebraska School for the Visually Handicapped in Nebraska City, Gering Public Library, the Department of Social Services in Norfolk, and the Edith Abbott Memorial Library in Grand Island.

Advisory Committee members involved in the meetings included: Russell Bloemker (chair) and Ana Kalin (secretary), both from Lincoln;



▲ Paul "Jake" Jacobsen demonstrating the cassette machine.

Bill Carter, Joyce Cohen, Tracy Grothe, and Mary Ann Jobanek from Omaha; Anita Regler, Nebraska City; Robert Schnuelle, Grand Island; and Fred Wheeler, Chadron. ▲

Internet Public Access Teleconferences Held

In September 1995 the Nebraska Library Commission hosted teleconferences for librarians from across the state to share their thoughts, plans and concerns about public access to the Internet in libraries. The teleconferences stimulated conversation about this topic and identified needs and librarians' concerns and questions.

Topics included:

- Defining public access to the Internet
- Fee-based service versus free public access
- Staff training
- How the Library Commission can support libraries that offer public access by providing training and information about useful Internet sites.

Librarians from across the state

participated in the teleconferences. Most agreed that providing access to the information resources available on the Internet is an important goal. They struggle with whether library staff should do the searching or the public should have access to a workstation and do their own searches. It was agreed that resolving these issues will be one of the major challenges for libraries in the coming years. ▲

Continuous Library Improvement Program Enters Third Year

Nebraska public libraries continued their progress in the Continuous Library Improvement Program (CLIP) during 1996.

The CLIP process emphasized library improvement through community involvement, a shared

vision of the library's purpose, tangible short term action steps to realize that vision, and continuing evaluation of the plan's implementation.

By June 1996, thirty-seven libraries submitted a written plan to the Library Commission. These plans along with feedback information will be returned to the library, providing the opportunity for librarians and

CLIP teams to continue to work toward their visions and goals with the help of their regional system administrators and staff from the Library Commission.

In 1997, participating CLIP libraries completing the first cycle of the Continuous Library Improvement Program or a comparable planning and evaluation process will receive a supplementary grant. ▲

Commission Makes Government Information Accessible

The Nebraska State Government Home page, <<http://www.state.ne.us/>>, is the official Internet Home Page for Nebraska state government. Hosted at the Library Commission, it organizes and points to electronic sources of state government information, including state agency web pages. During the 1995/96 fiscal year, the Home Page evolved into a dynamic resource, accessed by thousands of users every month. In the seven-week period between April 25 and June 16, 1996, users made more than 8700 "hits," in 3500 sessions.

In January 1996, responsibility for redesign and maintenance of the Home Page was given to a team of Library Commission staff. Input, assistance and support was provided by staff of Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, the Nebraska State Government Interagency Internet Group, the Nebraska Independent State Agency Directors, and a variety of state agencies. The Home Page content was expanded and reorganized in April 1996. New features included a keyword search feature, subject guide, contact information for

federal and state elected officials, a guest book, links to state government home pages in other states, and links to other Nebraska-related Home Pages.

In FY 1995/96 the State Government Home Page received many visits from around the United States and other countries including Canada, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Australia and Spain, as well as Nebraska. The most popular features were the alphabetical list of state agencies with Internet sites, the subject guide, and the state personnel job listings.

FY 1995/96 marked the continuing evolution of **Nebrask@ Online** as an Internet-based access point for Nebraska state government information. The Library Commission continued to contract with **Nebrask@ Interactive** as our network manager. They developed Home Pages for state agencies and associations, including the Nebraska Library Association, free of charge. **Nebrask@ Online** organized and pointed to more than 300 sites for government information. Although twenty-three were fee-based, most were free of charge. More than fifty Nebraska libraries received full Internet access at a reduced fee. This innovative service was not without

challenges. Farmers Mutual Insurance Company brought a lawsuit against the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles and the Library Commission. They charged that authority did not exist to charge an additional fee for electronic access.

The Nebraska legislature struggled to understand the electronic government information environment and the services provided through **Nebrask@ Online**.

Legislative Bill 1375 established provisions for creating a Task Force to develop recommendations regarding electronic access to public records. The bill also set a termination date for any existing contracts providing electronic access to state records through contract with a private entity. The Library Commission's contract for management of **Nebrask@ Online** through a private network manager was a focus of this legislation. The Task Force will present its recommendations by December 1996. A related interim study resolution called for study of the network manager contract bid process initiated by the Library Commission and several other state agencies. This study will be conducted by the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, chaired by Senator Bud Robinson. ▲

Nebrask@ Online organized and pointed to more than 300 sites for government information.

Internet Orientations Successful

Four sessions entitled "Orientation to the Internet for Nebraska State Agency Employees," sponsored by the Nebraska State Government Chapter of the National Management Association and the Nebraska Library Commission were held in Spring 1996. Nebraska state government employ-

ees had an overwhelmingly positive response to this overview and discussion of customer use of the Internet to access government information, evaluation of customer needs and ways to meet them, analysis of policy and management impacts, and the experiences of other state employees involved in Internet-based information provision. ▲



▲ State employees surfing the Internet during the orientation in February 1996.

Windows '95 Arrived at the Commission

In October 1995 the Commission held an Open House to celebrate launching Windows '95. The Commission staff computers have been moved to this new environment. At the open house, the computer team gave the staff a "taste of things to come," with

computers loaded with Win95 for staff to sample, a cake decorated in Win95 style, lots of Win95 books, videos, and "Start Me Up" by the Rolling Stones playing in the background. All Commission staff attended basic training in the fall. ▲

► Commission staff Dennis Klebe and Doreen Kuhlmann at the open house.



Patrick Jones Motivates Young Adult Librarians

Patrick Jones, nationally-known advocate for young adult library services, gave the keynote speech at the annual Library Commission 1996 Spring Conference for Children's and Young Adult Library Services. Jones, director of the Tecumseh Branch Library in Fort Wayne, IN challenged the group to make the public library a place where young adults are welcome "to come, to know, and to grow" in their community. Jones

highlighted the importance of practicing superior customer service and developing reference skills that show respect for young adult differences and accommodate their lack of experiential background. He stressed that a young adult librarian must have a sense of humor, understand young adult psychology and pop culture, as well as be energetic and articulate, a rule breaker, risk taker and an intellectual freedom fighter.

Nebraska Librarians Sharon Wiegert (The Child Care Connec-

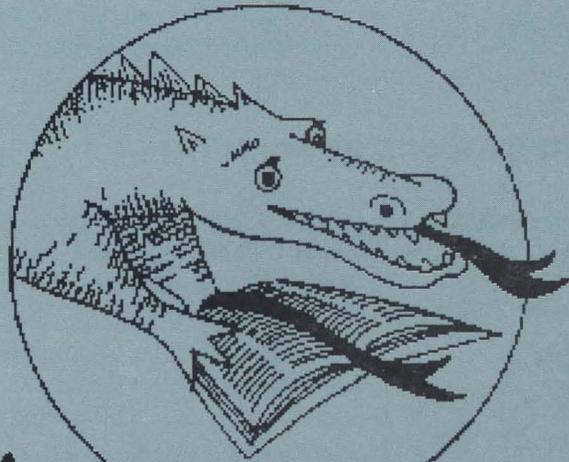
tion), Karen Drevo (Revised Guidelines for Youth Library Service in Nebraska) and Jean Lukesh and Julie Hehnke (Library Light-ups for Young Adults) also presented mini-sessions at this conference attended by forty youth librarians.

A video of Jones' presentation is available from the Library Commission. Contact the Reference/Information Desk 402-471-4016, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <ready@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Nebraska Joins Cooperative Summer Library Program

In Spring 1996, Nebraska joined the Cooperative Summer Library Program. This multi-state consortium jointly selects a theme and develops materials and manuals for summer reading programs in public libraries in Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa. The Consortium offers high quality materials at low prices, including a variety of incentives and prizes.

The theme for 1997, will be *Thrills and Chills at the Library*, featuring a wide range of reading adventures. The theme for 1998 is *Rock N' Read at the Library*. ▲



The Consortium offers high quality materials at low prices.

Thrills & Chills at the Library

Clearinghouse Year-End Review

The 1995/96 Fiscal Year was a very eventful one for the

Commission's Publications

Clearinghouse Service. The

Clearinghouse Service provides state and federal government information to Nebraskans. In January 1996, recommendations of a seven-month, comprehensive service evaluation were released. Key recommendations included focusing the Clearinghouse Service role on access rather than preservation, restructuring the collection to provide improved access to key publications, and increasing state agency and public awareness of the existence and value of government information. Several projects have been undertaken to implement these recommendations.

Collection Review

Selection policies for state and federal documents have been reviewed. The review of federal documents selection begun in May 1996, will ultimately result in a smaller collection targeted to user needs. A core collection of state

publications is being developed with assistance from state depository libraries, to be used in making selection and distribution format decisions.

Improved Electronic Access

As more government information becomes available in electronic format, the Clearinghouse uses current technology to make this information accessible to Nebraskans. Public access workstations at the Commission have been upgraded and now provide full World Wide Web access for customers.

Home Pages

Early in 1996, a team of Library Commission staff began working with input from other state agencies to redesign the Nebraska State Government Home Page. Reorganized in April 1996, with a new design in early August, it has proved to be enormously popular, receiving several thousand "hits" per day. The government information section of the Library Commission Home Page has also been reorganized and provides Nebraska depository guidelines, with links to Nebraska Depository Libraries, Clearinghouse

publications, and other government information sites.

Education and Outreach

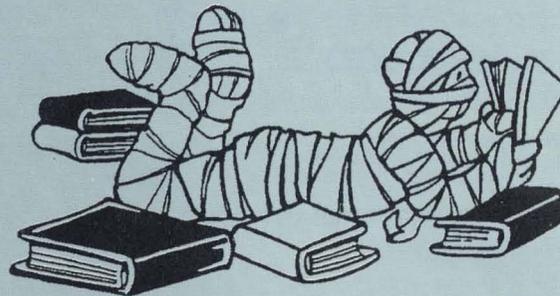
To increase awareness of government information, Clearinghouse staff participated in a variety of training events on finding government information in print and on the Internet for librarians, media specialists and state employees. The Clearinghouse continued to produce publications to assist users in finding government information: Six issues of *What's Up Doc*, a 1995 compilation of state publications received at the Clearinghouse, and a revised *Guide to State Agencies*. The Clearinghouse staff continued its support of the state and federal documents depository programs in Nebraska. NEDOCS-L, an Internet listserv for Nebraska documents librarians, is hosted at the Commission. The Commission cosponsored the annual Nebraska depository meeting in June. The Commission also assumed responsibility for moderating meetings of the Inter-agency Internet Working Group and assists the Education Department in hosting the STATEGRP listserv. ▲

The Nebraska State Government Home Page has proved to be enormously popular, receiving several thousand "hits" per day.

25,000 Children Read 350,000 Books

Twenty-five thousand Nebraska children enjoyed games, excursions, special events and reading last summer through participation in the statewide summer reading program. The 1996 summer theme, *Peer-Amid Books*, 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. 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 1996 summer theme, *Peer-Amid Books*, encouraged children to read nearly 350,000 books.

PEER AMID BOOKS
READ



Library Commission Highlights FY 1995/96, July 1, '95-June 30, '96

- ★ 1,493 librarians attended 89 Continuing Education Sessions sponsored by the Library Commission, including 154 participants in Basic Skills Sessions
- ★ An average of 63,213 people per month used **Nebrask@ Online**
- ★ 166 libraries were accredited
- ★ 162 libraries received state aid
- ★ 16,476 talking books, magazines, and braille materials circulated each month (average)
- ★ The Talking Book and Braille Service recorded 207 issues of magazines
- ★ The Talking Book and Braille Service duplicated 47,803 audio cassettes
- ★ 2.2 million records with 5 million holdings in the Nebraska State Database
- ★ 216,649 total items cataloged by NEBASE members
- ★ 1,414 items originally cataloged by NEBASE members
- ★ Commission borrowed 2,001 items from other libraries
- ★ Commission loaned 453 items to other libraries
- ★ NEBASE libraries borrowed 60,532 items from other libraries
- ★ NEBASE libraries loaned 85,297 items to other libraries
- ★ At the end of the fiscal year, NEBASE membership included 60 full-cataloging members, 69 NEON members, and 20 NEULIST-only members (libraries with periodical holdings in the Nebraska Union List of Serials)
- ★ 4,850 state documents added to the Commission's collection, bringing the total to 84,630
- ★ 11,970 federal documents were added to the Commission's collection, and 14,205 federal documents were weeded, bringing the total to 247,232
- ★ 697 state documents circulated in FY 95/96
- ★ 4,088 information requests were filled by Commission's Library and Information Services staff
- ★ 25,000 children in Nebraska registered for the 1996 Summer Reading Program, *Peer-Amid Books*

Nebraska Library Commission



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