

Your guide to the Nebraska Library Commission

Spring 1998

Vol. 5 No. 1

N_E Compass

N E W S L E T T E R

Library Commission Receives Development Network Award

Two hundred thirty-five people, including twenty-three state senators, from across the state gathered at "Building the

Future Together," the Nebraska Development Network's 1998 annual meeting. The Recognition Banquet featured Governor E. Benjamin Nelson, who received the Network President's Award, recognizing his leadership in development efforts for rural Nebraska during his two terms. Lt. Governor Kim Robak gave the opening remarks about coordination of technology between government, communities, and education.

Network members spent the two days setting priorities for the future and learning about leadership and economic development tools.

The Nebraska Development Network works to connect business and community leaders throughout the state with people within organizations, agencies, and the private sector that have stepped forward as partners in community and economic growth. Library Commission Director Rod Wagner serves as the Governor's representative on the Development Network Board of Directors. An award was presented in recognition of the Commission's contribution to the



▲ Lance Hedquist, South Sioux City Administrator (left) and Lt. Gov. Kim Robak (right) present the Development Network award to Commission Director Rod Wagner.

Network including the work of Library Commission Network Services Librarian Allana Novotny in the development of the Network home page. The award reads: "Nebraska Development Network, Inc., in recognition of the Nebraska Library Commission for their contributions to the Nebraska Development Network, Inc., to "Assist Communities through Education to Succeed in the Global Economy." The Nebraska Development Network, Inc., hereby expresses its appreciation for your efforts to: Support communities to initiate and plan their own economic futures; Provide communities with

more accessible, coherent, efficient and effective services; Increase the resources directed toward economic development; Expand the leadership base in communities and to train leaders; Strive for sustainability; and Support the work of the Regional Network Groups." Nebraska librarians interested in exploring the library role in community economic development are encouraged to join the Nebraska Development Network. For more information, see <<http://nol.org/home/NDN/>> or contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us> for print information. ▲

▲ In this Issue:

From the Director: E-rate, It's Worth the Effort page 2

Legislature Funds Statewide Database Access page 3

A Fresh Look at the Library Bill of Rights, part eight page 9

News of Nebraska Libraries and People page 11

From the Director...

E-Rate, It's Worth the Effort

The E-Rate (Universal Service Fund telecommunications services discounts for schools and libraries) reached a critical point in January, when the newly created Schools and Libraries Corporation (SLC) received over 30,000 applications for service discounts from schools and libraries. Those working with applicants (in Nebraska: the Library Commission, Department of Education, Educational Service Units, Library Systems, and others) fielded thousands of calls, issued mailings, conducted Q & A sessions, responded to e-mail and listserv messages, created Web sites, etc. It is hard to appreciate the enormity of the E-Rate and its potential impact.

The E-Rate is under severe scrutiny. There are powerful critics in the Congress and the telecommunications industry. The Federal Communications Commission created a fund of \$2.25 billion dollars to support the E-Rate. In general, those funds are collected from the telecommunications industry. This generated considerable criticism for the E-Rate, and the bureaucracy created to administer the fund, as well as legal questions concerning the program. From the Library Commission's experience, the E-Rate has resulted in hundreds of hours of staff work and no small expense to help Nebraska libraries participate. But the E-Rate has a very positive public benefit which should be carefully weighed before the Congress or the Federal Communications Commission changes the policies that created it.

Connecting the nation's schools and libraries to advanced telecommunications services is a laudable goal that can be achieved far more rapidly with E-Rate funding. These discounts allow libraries to leverage their budgets and afford telecommunications services, including Internet connections. The E-Rate will help ensure affordable access to telecommunications services through schools and libraries, multiplying the success stories of citizens using library computers to find information.

With any new venture there are skeptics, libraries reluctant to participate. The board members of these libraries might want to figure the savings off the monthly phone bill (not to mention off additional telecommunications services) at approximately a 50% discount and determine whether a few hours of paperwork are worth the effort. As this becomes routine, libraries may find filing the annual application no worse than filing the dreaded library statistical report.

Your views are important as Congress and the Federal Communications Commission continue to evaluate the merits of the E-Rate. Members of the Nebraska Congressional delegation would appreciate hearing from you, as I would. Let us know your thoughts on the E-Rate and whether it is helpful in furthering your efforts to serve the people of your community. ▲

Rod Wagner

Memory of TBBS Volunteer Honored

In a small ceremony marked by words of gratitude, hugs of comfort, and tears of sorrow, the Frank H. Wood Chapter of the Independent Telephone Pioneers presented the Talking Book and Braille Service with a donation in memory of their longtime member and our longtime volunteer Lowell Tuxhorn. Mitzie Tuxhorn, Lowell's widow, Chapter President Suzanne Frasier, and Community Service Chairperson Mary Keef joined

TBBS staff in remembering Lowell and his years of dedication to talking book service.

Lowell first joined the Talking Book and Braille Service as an outreach volunteer while still working at Lincoln Telephone Co. Following his retirement, Lowell increased his volunteer commitment and joined fellow Pioneer Fred McCormick in our Lincoln shop repairing talking book players.

In recognition of Lowell's dedication to our machine repair program, much of the donation was used to purchase repair equipment. ▲

▼ TBBS Director Dave Oertli looks on following the Independent Telephone Pioneers presentation as Chapter President Suzanne Frasier hugs Mitzie Tuxhorn.



NCompass NEWSLETTER

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

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.

Storytelling Festival Planned

One attribute that distinguishes humans from other

animals is the power to organize experience by telling stories. An upcoming storytelling event offers you the chance to discover this art form.

Children benefit from stories, not only through reading, but also by hearing a message transmitted directly from the mind of the storyteller. Storytelling ignites children's imaginations and motivates them to read. It offers a purer and more intense story experience

and teaches listening skills.

The absence of illustrations in told stories helps to develop visualization skills. Stories are passed from listener to listener and drawn from a common memory pool, linking the listener to the past, to humanity.

Polish up your storytelling skills and add to your repertoire of stories at this storytelling festival.

June 19-21, **The Nebraska Storytelling Festival** will be held at College of Saint Mary in Omaha. The event includes workshops and storytelling for adults and children and features "Ghosting" on Friday night at 9:30 P.M. Headliners include Donald Davis, Ocracoke

NC; Charlotte Blake Alston, Philadelphia PA; Derek Burrows, Jamaica Plain MA; Angela Lloyd, Victorville CA; Jack Gladstone, a member of the Blackfeet Nation from Kalispell MT; Peninnah Schram, New York City; Judith Simundson, Dubuque IA; Karen Libman and Senator David Landis of Lincoln; and Omaha's Five Bright Chicks. Tickets are available at the Story Monkey Bookstore, or by calling 402-551-4532.

For more information about the power of storytelling, contact Mary Jackson at 402-471-4006 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjackson@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Legislature Funds Statewide Database Access

Four hundred thousand dollars in new state funding approved by the Legislature and Governor will be added to the Library Commission's budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1998. This funding is the result of efforts by the Nebraska Library Association, State Advisory Council on Libraries, Nebraska Library Commission, and many other Nebraska library supporters. While this amount is far less than the amount sought through the "Libraries for the 21st Century" initiative, it is significant support for library technology resources. This approach received support of the Legislature's Appropriations Committee and Governor Nelson. In the Governor's veto statement of March 31, he says, "I have also vetoed \$100,000 General Funds from the Nebraska Library Commission in FY 1998-99. Notwithstanding this line-item reduction, the Library Commission appropriation will be increased by \$400,000 General Funds in FY 1998-99 to allow the Commission to contract for statewide access by local libraries to online databases, including full-text downloads of articles from hundreds of journals and periodicals." Up to \$250,000 of the new state funds will be used to provide unlimited public access for all Nebraska libraries to the OCLC FirstSearch reference service. There will be no charge to Nebraska libraries or users for this service. These databases include:

WorldCat (online catalog of 38 million bibliographic records of books and other materials in libraries worldwide)

NetFirst (bibliographic citations describing high-quality, Internet-accessible resources for a range of interests and age groups, includes hot links to resources)

FastDoc (index of journal articles, includes full text)
MEDLINE (abstracted articles from medical journals)
GPO Monthly Catalog (index to U.S. Government documents)

ERIC (guide to educational journal articles and reports)

World Almanac (database of *The World Almanac*)
ArticleFirst (index of journal articles)
ContentsFirst (index of journal tables of contents)
PapersFirst (index of papers presented at conferences)
ProceedingsFirst (index of proceedings published from conferences)

OCLC Union List (listings of periodicals in the local library and other libraries)

OCLC Electronic Collections Online (index and abstracts for journals on a variety of subjects)

H.W. Wilson Select (full text of over 470 journals from Readers' Guide, Social Sciences, Humanities, General Science and Wilson Business)

New York Times (all articles published within 90 days for delivery as full-text documents; abstract and index of NY Times from January 1994 to the present)

The Commission is scheduling a number of opportunities for Nebraska librarians to explore ideas about how to best disseminate these resources. Plans for training, technical assistance, consultation, planning support and outreach tools are being developed.

Watch the Library Commission homepage, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>> (search on **FirstSearch**), for more information. For print information, contact Jeannette Powell, 402-471-7740 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <jpowell@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Dave Directs the Talking Book and Braille Service

Dave Oertli is the Director of the Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS). He says his job involves near-term and long-term planning while overseeing

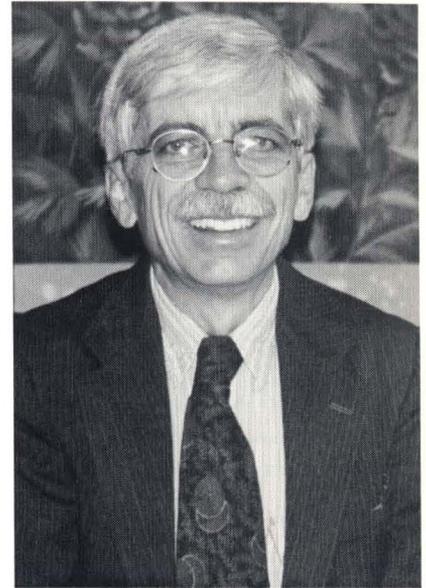
Being a librarian is intellectually satisfying, contemplative, challenging and also rich in relationships, according to Dave.

daily operations. He relates TBBS services to local libraries, to other programs in the Library Commission, to the Library of Congress, and to other organizations. Dave is a native of Washington State and became a Nebraskan by marriage. He received his BA in English from UN-L, his MLS from the University of Missouri-Columbia and his MPA (Master in Public Administration) from UN-O. He became a librarian because he couldn't decide upon a career and librarianship would let him do it all. Being a librarian is intellectually satisfying, contemplative, challenging, and also rich in relationships, according to Dave.

In his reading habits, he enjoys reading book review publications

with gourmet coffee over his noon hours. He is interested in reading about science, about the Beat Generation, and about Eastern and Western religions. Given the opportunity to change anything in the library world, Dave would try to advance two ideas: that individuals with disabilities don't belong to Talking Book and Braille Service in an exclusive sense, and that all of us, and all of our loved ones, will at some time experience a disability. When that happens, our interests and our basic desire for information will almost certainly be the same as before.

Dave has a long-distance running wife named Valerie, a daughter Sarah and two dogs. ▲



Kimberly is New Commission Cataloger

Kimberly Shelley is a new employee at the Nebraska Library Commission. She describes her duties as cataloging the collection, maintaining the

Kimberly enjoys living in Lincoln because it feels like a small town but affords many cultural opportunities.

Commission's online catalog, and providing cataloging assistance to library employees throughout the state. Kimberly was born in Missouri, but after living in Grinnell IA for 16 years, she considers herself from Iowa. She worked as a page at the public library in Grinnell while in high school and while earning a BA in English at Grinnell College. Kimberly tried several careers, including radio announcer, assistant manager at a local bookstore, waitress, and English as a Second Language teacher in Nanjing, China. She found her way back to the library profession, obtaining an MLS from the University of Illinois

at Champaign-Urbana.

Kimberly enjoys living in Lincoln because it feels like a small town but affords many cultural opportunities. In her previous job at the Omaha Public Library, Kimberly served as a Young Adult Librarian.

Some of her favorite authors include Margaret Atwood, Alice Walker, and Amy Tan. Aside from librarianship, Kimberly enjoys home decorating, quilting, and renting movies. She shares her home with two cats named Squirt and R.C. (for Reclusive Cat). She adds that neither cat is decaffeinated. Welcome Kimberly! ▲



Mary Jo Helps Libraries Tell Their Story



Mary Jo Ryan is a 25-year veteran of Nebraska State Government and is the Library Commission's Communications Coordinator. She describes her

job as helping the Library Commission describe our activities to libraries and their customers and helping Nebraska librarians tell the story of how they serve their communities. This may mean marketing or public relations activities and may include newsletters, exhibits, brochures or home page content. Mary Jo is a native of North Platte and is 100% Italian. Her parents met in Denver CO at a funeral, but their parents lived in the same town in Italy before they emigrated to the United States. Mary Jo earned a BA in English and Journalism and an MA in Adult Education and Public Administration from UN-L. Before coming to the Library Commission, she

worked in other state agencies.

Mary Jo is a lifelong user of libraries and says it's the place where she learned to read. The books on her nightstand currently include *Paradise* by Toni Morrison, *Here on Earth* by Alice Hoffman, and several books on Italy, Tuscany, and Gardening. If you want to know what Mary Jo is currently reading, Lincolnites can listen to Booktalk, Radio KZUM, 89.3, Wednesdays at 6:30 P.M. Mary Jo is a collector of artifacts from the '30s through the '70s. She and her husband Steve enjoy golfing, walking, gardening, and travel. They share their home and many walks with their dog Blondie. ▲

Mary Jo is a lifelong user of libraries and says it's the place where she learned to read.

Kathy Would Encourage More Readers



Met Kathy Dukes, a circulation clerk for the Talking Book and Braille Service who recently celebrated her 15-year anniversary with State

Government. Kathy is a native of Buffalo WY and attended Wesleyan University for a year studying Library Science. Kathy has always been a reader and a lover of books. She worked as a volunteer in her high school library and knew her local public librarian very well. It was this librarian who encouraged her to balance leisure reading with serious literature and requested a book review when she finished a title. Kathy enjoys reading Harlequin romances because she says they help her to relax. She also reads non-fiction about the Old West and

inspirational topics.

If Kathy could change one thing about library service, it would be to make more people readers, especially children. As a childcare provider, she helped introduce many kids to the love of reading. Kathy is the mother of three grown daughters and has two grandsons with whom she spends many hours. She lives with her 20-year-old cat named Pebbles. In her free time, Kathy is involved with several church activities and enjoys crafts, including plastic canvas projects and counted cross stitch. ▲

As a childcare provider, she helped introduce many kids to the love of reading.

Special Report...

Hruska Memorial Library Technology Center

This article continues a series of stories of Nebraska libraries, interesting library service challenges or examples of interesting solutions to community information needs. Further details are provided on the Library Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>. For more information, contact the local contact person, in this case, Kay Schmid, 402-367-3100, <Hruskalibrary@navix.net>. To respond to this story or to submit one for future publication, contact Mary Jo Ryan, 402-471-3434, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

The new Hruska Memorial Library in David City has a Technology Center equipped with six computers. During one month last summer, 151 people registered to use the Technology Center, a good turnout given the library's shorter summer hours. The library enjoys free unlimited Internet service through Aliant Communications. Kay Schmid, library director, estimates that computer sessions average 30 minutes. Adults primarily use word-processing programs and the CD-ROM titles are especially popular with the kids. The library has a large collection of educational CD-ROM programs, some purchased through funds made available by the Library Commission through the Northeast Library System and others given as gifts. One boy donated a CD-ROM that he received as a gift, telling library staff that their computers are better than his at home and more kids can enjoy the program at the library.

Some Technology Center customers, especially Internet novices, want lots of individual attention. Since providing one-on-one training to all customers isn't practical, basic Internet classes several times per month may be the solution. Several high school students and other community members are interested in teaching these classes for the public. Introductory Windows 95 classes were held earlier this year and were well attended. Technology awareness is growing in the community. A Technology Open House was attended by 40 people who were excited and amazed by the electronic resources available at the library.

The initial \$20,000 funding for Hruska Memorial Library's Technology Center came from a variety of sources including technology grants from the Nebraska Library Commission, a local business and local foundation, as well as \$5,000 from city KENO funds. The Technology Center currently receives no city tax revenues. The library has requested additional KENO funds to purchase two new computers and one additional telephone line, allowing two patrons to use the Internet simultaneously. A future goal is to achieve city support for a staff person to manage the operations of the Technology Center. ▲

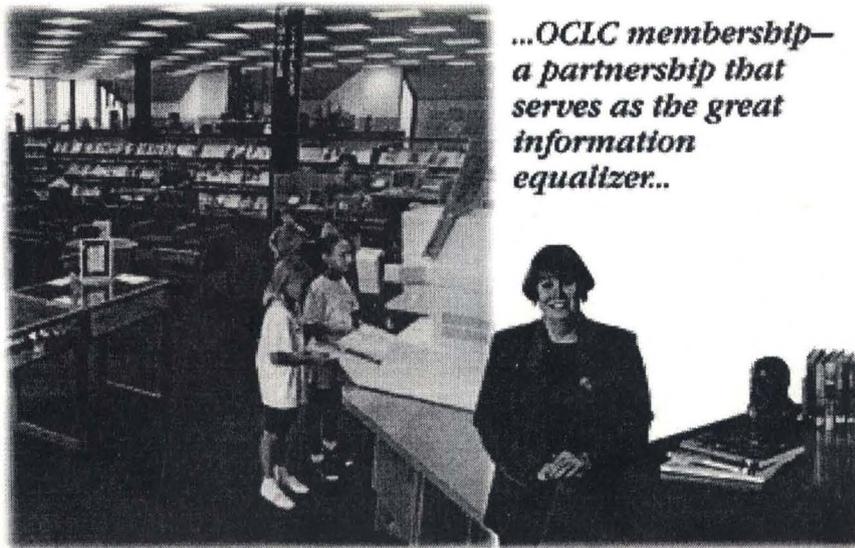
Amy Garwood

Nebraska Libraries Accredited

Last fall, 76 Nebraska libraries qualified as accredited libraries for a three-year period. This accreditation, awarded by the Nebraska Library Commission, indicates that the library meets the basic (and in some cases the advanced) accreditation guidelines as adopted by the Library Commission and approved by the Nebraska Library Association. This accreditation status entitles libraries to apply for state and federal funds for library improvement projects. Accreditation of public libraries is a cyclical process, with approximately one-third of all libraries scheduled to apply for reaccreditation each year. For a list of libraries accredited for fall 1997 through 2000, see the Library Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on 2000 Accreditation. Commission Director Rod Wagner recently commended these libraries,

stating, "We are dedicated to helping Nebraska libraries meet Nebraskans' information needs, opening up the world of information for citizens of all ages. The Library Commission continues to work in partnership with Nebraska libraries using the Public Library Accreditation program as one tool to help public libraries grow and develop."

A news release template about public library accreditation can be customized to announce your library's accreditation status in your local news media. An electronic version can be downloaded from the Library Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, (search on Announces Accreditation), to be copied into a word processing program, replacing the blanks with local information and printing the release on library letterhead. For additional information, contact Kit Keller at 402-471-3216 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <kkeller@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲



**...OCLC membership—
a partnership that
serves as the great
information
equalizer..**

"We view our OCLC membership as a partnership that serves as the great information equalizer. OCLC membership, along with the support of NEBASE, our OCLC-affiliated regional network, assists us in providing our customers with some of the best library services available, regardless of the size of our community and its rural setting. The multitype library membership makes participating in OCLC particularly effective."

*—Jeanne Saathoff, Director, Kearney Public Library and Information Center
(Reprinted with permission from the OCLC 1996/1997 Annual Report)*

Task Force to Review Certification

The Nebraska Library Commission and the six Regional Library Systems have convened a task force to review the Nebraska

Public Librarian and Board Certification program, including the Basic Skills courses. This is the first comprehensive evaluation in the ten years that the Certification Program has been in existence. The goals of the Public Librarian Certification Program are to improve library service throughout the state; motivate public librarians to acquire, maintain, and develop skills; recognize public librarians who update their knowledge and skills; update the image of librarians

and libraries; and provide guidelines for public library boards to select and retain personnel. The goals of the Board Certification Program are to improve the library, increase Board involvement, fulfill Library Accreditation requirements, and organize continuing education activities for Board members. The task force, in conjunction with an outside evaluator, will design and administer an evaluation to see if the programs have succeeded in achieving these purposes and goals. The group will also develop recommendations, to be forwarded to the Director of the Library Commission for consideration. Participants in the Certification program may be contacted in the next few months for opinions on

the program's effect on your library skills and the library services you provide to your community. The members of the Task Force are Nancy Busch, Richard Miller, Ellen Van Waart, Library Commission; Sharon Osenga, Meridian Library System Administrator; Kathy Tooker, Eastern Library System Administrator; Pam Scott, Panhandle Library System Administrator; Brenda Ealey, Southeast Library System Administrator; and Carol Speicher, Northeast Library System Administrator. For questions, contact Richard Miller, 402-471-3175 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <rmiller@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>, or Ellen Van Waart, 402-471-4004 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Special Report...

Commission Plans for 1998 Grants Program

Nebbraska's Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants support the vision and goals expressed in *Libraries for the 21st Century: Nebraska Library Commission Library Services and Technology Act Five Year Plan (October 1, 1997 - September 30, 2002)*. The vision of affordable, reliable, progressive, and equitable library service for all Nebraskans regardless of their economic status and geographic location provides the context for granting and using these funds. The focus is improving information technology services and improving access to information to underserved populations, as defined by LSTA. 1998 is a transition year and evaluation by the State Advisory Council on Libraries will produce recommendations to the Commission for future development of this program.

General Principles and Assumptions

- LSTA funds will be used to assist libraries in providing technology-based information services to Nebraskans and promoting equal access to basic library services across the state.
- LSTA funds are not to replace local financial efforts or support ongoing operations, but to provide incentives for increased local support for library services.

- LSTA funds will be used to achieve specific goals and activities determined and prioritized by the State Advisory Council on Libraries and the Nebraska Library Commission.
- LSTA funds will be available to all qualified types of libraries. Multiple library and multitype partnerships will be encouraged.
- Some LSTA funds will be reserved for statewide services deemed essential by the State Advisory Council on Libraries and the Nebraska Library Commission.
- Although LSTA has been authorized for five years, this first year will serve as a transition period. Only some of the grant categories will be reopened in future years.

Categories and Purposes of Grants (and Match Requirements)

Mini-Grants: from \$1,000 through \$4,999.

Major Grants: from \$5,000 through \$50,000.

Approximately \$100,000 set aside for Mini-Grants, and \$150,000 for Major Grants.

For more information, search on LSTA at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>> or contact Richard Miller, 402-471-3175 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <rmiller@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Special Report...

State Government Information on the Internet

The Internet is fast becoming a great place to find information and publications about Nebraska state government. Below are some examples of questions that can be answered using state government Internet resources.

Do you have any information that will help me relocate to Nebraska?

<<http://www.ded.state.ne.us/tourism/resource.html>>

I'm trying to find a job in Nebraska. Where can I look?

<<http://www.dol.state.ne.us/jobserv.htm>>, Job Service of Nebraska

<<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/nebraska/personnel/per.html>>, Nebraska State Department of Personnel Job Listings

<<http://www.uneb.edu/employ.htm>>, University of Nebraska Employment Opportunities job listings for UN-K, UN-L, UN-O, and UNMC

Where can I search your state laws?

<<http://www.unicam.state.ne.us/document.htm>>

Where's the best place for Genealogical help in Nebraska?

<<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/docs/pilot/pubs/hs2.pdf>>

<<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/nsf/genealogy.html>>

Where's your tourism information?

<<http://www.ded.state.ne.us/tourism/>>

How do I contact Nebraska's elected officials?

<<http://www.state.ne.us/elected.html>>

Where do I write to get copies of Birth, Death, Divorce or Marriage certificates?

<<http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ced/cedindex.htm>>

I need help writing my report on Nebraska. Where can I look?

<http://www.ded.state.ne.us/tourism/report_i.html>

Where are the Nebraska State Tax Forms?

<<http://www.nol.org/home/NDR/>>

Where do I find current Nebraska weather and road conditions?

<<http://twister.sbs.ohio-state.edu/text/wxascii/sfcobs/SXUS90.KOMA>>

<<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/arx/fcst/nenow.html>>

<<http://www.wunderground.com/forecasts/NE.html>>

What Nebraska towns have Internet sites?

<<http://www.ded.state.ne.us/neweb/neweb.html>>

How do I find addresses and phone numbers for Nebraska state agencies?

<<http://vmhost.cdp.state.ne.us:97/phsearch.html>>

<http://www.das.state.ne.us/das_doc/doc/directory.htm>.

For answers to these and other questions when it's not convenient to search the Internet, contact the Commission's Information Services, 402-471-4016 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <ready@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲
Beth Goble

NLA Legislative Day 1998

The Nebraska Library Association (NLA) hosted another successful Legislative Day.

Approximately 90 people attended the luncheon, including Lt. Governor Robak, 22 senators, and two legislative aids. Many NLA members attended the briefing in the morning and then called upon their senators to inform them of the importance of supporting the request for more state aid for libraries, "Libraries for the 21st

Century."

The NLA Legislative Committee continues to urge library staff and supporters across Nebraska to become informed about the resources needed to bring Nebraska libraries in the 21st Century. Contact Kathy Tooker, NLA Legislative Community Chair, Eastern Library System, 11929 Elm St., Suite 12, Omaha NE 68144, 402-330-7884, 800-627-7884, FAX 402-330-1859, <ktooker@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. Watch the NLA home page at <<http://www.nol.org/home/NLA/>> for updates. ▲

▼ Nebraska librarians share lunch and library issues with senators and Lt. Governor Kim Robak (center) during the Nebraska Library Legislative Day luncheon.



VIPS Learn About Talking Book Program

Talking Book and Braille Service director Dave Oertli recently presented information to a Lincoln chapter of VIPS (Visually Impaired Peer Support) to help established talking book borrowers make fuller use of

Commission services. He explained changes in the recorded and braille magazines offered by Library of Congress and the Nebraska Library Commission.

Approximately thirty VIPS members attended and nearly all of the VIPS members were already enrolled for talking book service. ▲

The Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries adopted a resolution regarding state support for library services on March 20, in Kearney. The resolution can be found on the

Library Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/news/content/390.html>>. For a print copy contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

A Fresh Look at the Library Bill of Rights, part eight

In this latest installment of the NCompass series examining applications of intellectual freedom and the Library Bill of Rights, we explore the issues of selection and censorship.

Recently the estate of Lester Asheim was settled, resulting in a sizable gift to a library school. Asheim was the nearly legendary library educator (at one point Dean of the University of Chicago Graduate Library School), a prolific writer, and leader in the field in every good sense. His passing was less noted than it should have been, perhaps the result of a long life and extended retirement, the fast-changing world of librarianship, and maybe some forgetfulness on our part.

In his life Asheim wrote a number of seminal articles, one of which comes to mind as Congress considers yet another attempt to “filter” information coming across the Internet. He wrote, “Not Censorship But Selection” in the September 1953 *Wilson Library Bulletin*. (Think about what else was going on in Washington, D.C. that year.) While the examples he uses to bolster his positions are now dated (e.g., James Joyce’s *Ulysses*), the arguments are as fresh as ever, perhaps because attempts at censorship never end. The article contains very dense writing, reflecting Asheim’s style, as well as the time in which it was written. The article is rich with ideas and a brief review of it can only touch on a few of the author’s major points.

The primary idea of the article is that selection can be identified (as apart from censorship) by virtue of the fact that it is a “positive” rather than a “negative.” Some of the quotes are priceless:

“When librarians discuss the matter [censorship] among themselves, they are quite satisfied with the distinction between censorship and selection, and are in smug agreement that the librarian practices the latter, not the former.”

“The real question of censorship versus selection arises when the librarian, exercising his own judgment, decides against a book which has every legal right to representation on his shelves.”

“When a book attacks a basic belief or a way of life to which we are emotionally attached, its purpose will seem to us to be vicious rather than constructive; dangerous rather than valuable; deserving of suppression rather than of wide-spread dissemination.”

“The major characteristic which makes for the all-important difference seems to me to be this: that the selector’s approach is positive, while that of the censor is negative. . . . For to the selector, the important thing is to find reasons to keep the book. . . . For the censor, on the other hand, the important thing is to find reasons to reject the book. . . . The positive selector asks what the reaction of a rational intelligent adult would be to the content of the work; the censor fears for the results on

the weak, the warped, and the irrational.”

“The inevitable consequence of the negative approach is that it leads to the use of isolated parts rather than the complete whole upon which to base a judgment. . . . In other words, four letters have outweighed five hundred pages.”

“But many librarians have been known to defer to anticipated pressures, and to avoid facing issues by suppressing possible issue-making causes.”

“Finally, the selector begins, ideally, with a presumption in favor of liberty of thought; the censor does not. The aim of the selector is to promote reading, not to inhibit it; to multiply the points of view which will find expression, not limit them.”

“Selection, then, begins with a presumption in favor of liberty of thought; censorship, with a presumption in favor of thought control. . . . Selection seeks to protect the right of the reader to read; censorship seeks to protect — not the right — but the reader himself from the fancied effects of his reading. The selector has faith in the intelligence of the reader; the censor has faith only in his own.”

“In other words, selection is democratic while censorship is authoritarian.”

Richard Miller

This series will continue to explore intellectual freedom issues in upcoming issues of *NCompass*. We invite you to submit guest editorials to Mary Jo Ryan, 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

For more information see the Library Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on freedom. For the full text of the *Nebraska Intellectual Freedom Handbook*, search on the title or contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. Send comments to Mary Jackson, 402-471-4006 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjackson@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

Planning is underway for a program for the October NLA Conference in Grand Island. Richard Miller, Library Commission Library Development Director and Ted Smith, Norfolk Public Library Director share the following preliminary plans:

Program Title: “Censorship v.s. Selection: Stand by Your Stand!”

Brief Program Description: “The speakers will explain their stances on the issues of censorship and selection, and will explore the concept of responsibility as it relates to these library processes. The goal of the session is to build a bridge, rather than to stake out divergent camps.” ▲

“The selector has faith in the intelligence of the reader; the censor has faith only in his own.”

Special Report...

Reaching Common Ground

This winter, the six System Administrators and six Commission staff met at St. Benedict Retreat Center in Schuyler to improve communication between Commission staff and System directors. Given the importance of the Systems to the accomplishment of statewide Commission goals, this gathering carried importance beyond the limits of the meeting time and place. Sandra Nelson, formerly of the Tennessee State Library and now an independent consultant, facilitated the two-day conclave, moving the participants through an examination of the roles and responsibilities of the Systems and the Commission, discussing several of the statewide goals in *Libraries for the 21st Century*, addressing issues identified as most important to accomplishing common goals, developing a communication plan, and assessing the value of the process. Prior to the retreat Nelson gathered responses from all participants in order to spend the time in Schuyler most productively and to focus on the issues identified as most vital.

Outcomes of the retreat included establishment of a task force to review the Basic Skills program; future production of a handbook including all policies related to Systems (updating 1990 publication); agreement to form task forces as needed when either the Commission or Systems consider starting, stopping or changing statewide programs that affect the Systems and the Commission; and commitment to the following meetings:

- Budget discussion with System board members
- Informational discussion about System and Commission programs, services, and responsibilities with board members
- Discussion with the Public Resource Library Group (PRLG) regarding common issues

Participants in the Retreat included: Brenda Ealey, Southeast Library System Administrator; Sharon Osenga, Meridian Library System Administrator; Pam Scott, Panhandle Library System Administrator; Carol Speicher, Northeast Library System Administrator; Kathy Tooker, Eastern Library System Administrator; Dee Yost, Republican Valley Library System Administrator; Jo Budler, Library Commission Network Services Director; Nancy Busch, Library Commission Deputy Director; Mary Jackson, Library Commission Children and Young Adult Services Coordinator; Richard Miller, Library Commission Library Development Director; Ellen Van Waart, Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator; and Rod Wagner, Library Commission Director. ▲

Richard Miller

Commission Staff Attend Conference

The *Internet Librarian '97 Conference* program was held last

fall in Monterey, CA. Julie

Pinnell and Allana Novotny

from the Nebraska Library Commission attended, along with Kathy Tooker, Eastern Library System Administrator and Dee Yost, Republican Valley Library System Administrator. The conference included Digitizing Resources, Tools and Techniques, Managing Organizational Knowledge, Virtualizing Services, Net and Web Management, Searching and The Web, New Technologies, New Roles, Captured by the Web: Library Systems, Training and The Net, and Net Strategies and Trends. The conference web site <<http://www.infotoday.com/internet/internet.htm>> includes the conference program and links to the slides and outline notes for many of the presentations. Highlights included Cecil Andrews from the Seaside CA

Library on "A Successful Volunteer-Run Internet Program." The Seaside Library trains volunteers to help patrons use the Internet, providing training in return for commitment to a number of hours. The Seaside Libraries Web page is located at <<http://www.ci.seaside.ca.us/sealib/index.htm>>.

"Making Your Web Site Accessible" presented information about creating a Web site that is accessible for all people, see <<http://weber.u.washington.edu/~doit/UA/>>.

Information was presented on *Northern Light*, a search engine that searches the Web and *Northern Light's* Special Collection of 1,800 journals and magazines, see <<http://www.northernlight.com/>>. *Northern Light* provides the full text of an article at a cost of \$1 to \$4 per article.

The Internet Librarian '97 Conference was very interesting and Monterey is a great location for a conference. We hope to see more Nebraska librarians at Internet Librarian '98 in Monterey on November 3-5, 1998. ▲

Youth Improvement Plan Available

In 1990 the first Nebraska Library Commission Children's Improvement Plan (CHIP) was finalized, approved, and implementation

was begun. The plan was developed by a team of children's librarians working with the Library Commission to address issues facing children's library services in Nebraska, to be implemented by the Nebraska Library Commission. In 1996, the Youth Advisory Board began work on a second plan, the Youth Improvement Plan, to address problems that face today's children

and youth librarians. The Nebraska Library Commission is currently incorporating the plan into the Commission's five year plan, *Libraries for the 21st Century*. This version of the plan is available for comment. See <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/yip.html>> or contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us> for a print copy. For questions or comments, contact the Youth Advisory Board member from your system or Mary Jackson, 402-471-4006, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjackson@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

News of Nebraska Libraries and People...

Governor Ben Nelson appointed Katherine Fletcher, Omaha, to the Nebraska Library Commission, term expiring in 1999. Katherine replaces Tom Harvey whose term expired last June. ▲

Jane Elizabeth Crouch, Lincoln, was recently appointed to the Advisory Committee of the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service. Ana Kalin, Lincoln, and Joyce Cohen, Omaha, were reappointed. The committee, appointed by the chair of the Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries, represents the needs of borrowers and makes recommendations concerning library policies, services and programs. ▲

Kate Fitz was recently hired as the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce administrative assistant. Formerly from Alma, she was library director of the Hoesch Memorial Library. ▲

Marie Marshall recently retired as director of Superior Public Library after nearly 28 years. The Library Board honored her at an open house at the library. She will continue as a member of the Republican Valley Library System board. ▲

Karen Ingish, former Library Commission Library Development Coordinator, was appointed Information Science and Technology Librarian in the Public Services Department at the University Library, University of Nebraska at Omaha. ▲

The Technology Center in David City's Hruska Memorial Library is now open for business, with computers available for use by children and adults. ▲

The Ponca Public Library Friends donated 55 rolls of newspapers on microfilm and hope to purchase all Dixon County newspapers available on microfilm. The Friends previously donated a microfilm reader/printer to the library. ▲

Hastings Public Library Friends have purchased baskets for gathering books at the library that can be checked out for three weeks with library materials. When they leave the library, they are walking billboards, displaying "Hastings Public Library" wherever they go. ▲

The Fairmont Public Library used federal grant money provided through the Library Commission to purchase a voice synthesizer so that customers with visual disabilities can use the library computer. Matching funds came from donors like the Fairmont Lions Club and the Nebraska Lions Foundation. ▲

The Library Commission was awarded the Francis Keppel Award, made each year to the qualifying chief officers of state library agencies and state and territory data coordinators for submitting the most prompt, complete, and high quality public library data. Commission Director Rod Wagner and Kit Keller, State Data Coordinator, were recognized for data collection efforts. ▲

The Nebraska Library Association recently appointed Mary Stultz, Baird Holm Law Firm Library in Omaha as editor of the Association Quarterly, *NLAQ*. ▲

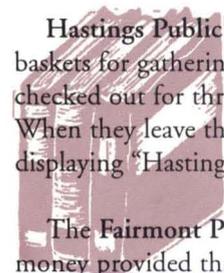
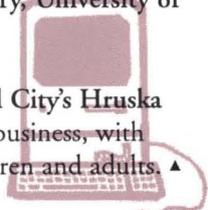
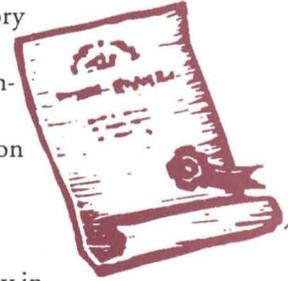
Mary Elizabeth Lomax (Betsy), Media Specialist from Omaha South High School received a 1997 Nebraska Teacher Achievement Award, made possible through the Peter Kiewit Foundation to recognize excellence in the classroom. ▲

Judy Winkler, former Library Commission Cataloger, accepted a position as slide curator in the Architecture Library at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, beginning in December. ▲

Burns Davis, CM, Library Commission Information Resources Coordinator, received the Manager of the Year award from the Nebraska State Government Chapter of the National Management Association. ▲

Pamela Scott was recently hired as Administrator for the Panhandle Library System. A recent graduate of the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library and Information Science, she has a B.A. in History from the University of Nebraska and worked with Lincoln City Libraries from 1988-1994. ▲

New Library Directors include: Alma, Hoesch Memorial Library, LaDonna Schluterbusch; Bloomfield Public Library, Renae Johnson; Ceresco Public Library, Carol Mintzmyer; Dodge, John Rogers Memorial Library, Mary Mandel; Elmwood Public Library, Virginia Hoyt; Harvard Public Library, Mae Morgan; Lewellen Public Library, Peggy Rohlfing; Lexington Public Library, Ruth Seward; Lincoln, American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, Maria Ford; Lyman Public Library, Stephanie Zamora-Steiner; Osceola Public Library, Niki M. Sharmon; Saint Edward Public Library, Sandy Zurovski; Springfield Public Library, Charlene Harding; Strang Public Library, Lynn Gibson; Superior Public Library, Vicki Perrie; Wymore Public Library, Jackie Nicholson; and York College, Levitt Library Learning Center, Todd Mountjoy. ▲



New on our Home Page:

(see "Announcements" on
<<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>)

- ▲ LB250 Passes to Permit
County Libraries
- ▲ Legislature Proclaims National
Library Week
- ▲ Library Commission Home
Page Reorganized
- ▲ Talking Book and Braille
Service Label System Improved

*For a print copy contact Mary Geibel,
402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665,
e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.*

Nebraska Library Commission



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