

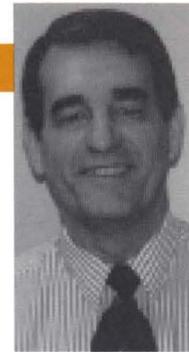
Your guide  
to the  
Nebraska  
Library  
Commission

Fall 1999

Vol. 6 No. 3

# N<sub>C</sub>Compass

N E W S L E T T E R



## Nebraska Library Commission Basic Skills 1999

**T**wo Basic Skills courses, *Public Services and Collection Development*, were held in 1999 as part of the Nebraska Public Librarian Certification Program. The two courses were held in six locations throughout the state. The courses reflected the changing nature of libraries and library service, the scope of library services, methods of service delivery, and the policies necessary to support these services in a world impacted by technological and societal change. Each course offered the opportunity to build technological skills in the content area through use of computer labs and web-based instruction.

The Spring 1999 Public Services course focused on developing appropriate staff attitudes toward public services, identifying skills for working with the public, developing



▲ Kit Keller from the Nebraska Library Commission helps students work on Fall Basic Skills assignments in the computer lab in Norfolk.

public service policies, using the Internet for reference, and marketing, public relations, and outreach. One section of the curriculum, "Using the Internet and Internet for Reference," is a mini-course at <[www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/bsinternetref.html](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/bsinternetref.html)>. Ninety-two library directors, staff, and others participated in the Public Services course and used e-mail to correspond with one another and the instructors.

The Fall 1999 Collection

Development course focused on current collection development practices in Nebraska libraries, collection development responsibilities, assessing the community and the library collection, collection development policies, the selection and acquisition processes, and marketing the library's collections. Eighty-one participants shared information about resources available in print and on the Internet. The Fall Basic Skills course also included a Listserv (BSKILLS) so participants could communicate about a range of 103 topics including weeding, censorship (especially the Harry Potter books), policies, collection evaluation, vendors, donated books, and "dun-colored classics." Ninety-two people signed on to the Listserv and sent a total of 213 messages. One month after the completion of the Fall Basic Skills, participants continue to use the BSKILLS Listserv to discuss library issues. ▲

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### Centennial Snapshot: Charlotte Templeton



Charlotte Templeton was hired as the second Executive Secretary for the Nebraska Library Commission and began her duties July 1, 1906. She immediately dove into her duties by assessing what had gone on before and traveling the state to visit normal schools, talking to students, visiting libraries, meeting with the federated women's clubs, and handing out book lists.  
(Continued on p. 2)

## From the Director...

### "Libraries Build Community"

Sarah Long, President of the American Library Association (ALA), chose "Libraries Build Community" as her presidential year theme. In light of this theme, ALA will recognize outstanding library advocates who have led or helped in library development efforts at local, state, and national levels. Outstanding library advocates will be recognized and honored at a special event on July 7, 2000 during ALA's annual conference in Chicago. Each state has the opportunity to name up to five people for recognition for an Advocacy National Honor Roll.

I like Sarah Long's theme. It suits Nebraska very well. Local pride and autonomy are characteristic of Nebraska's history. Towns and cities recognized in community award competitions usually have good libraries. These same towns and cities have people working to make their community better. We can't have better libraries without people working for better libraries and library services. Who are these difference makers? Their efforts deserve recognition.

The success of library advocacy efforts depends on the enthusiasm and work of community leaders that view libraries as vital to the present and future of their communities. These leaders can be anyone of any age and are not limited to library board members, members of library friends groups, or foundations. They can be the people who show up on Election Day and vote to pass a ballot issue to help finance a new library facility—as did the citizens of Lincoln in May and the citizens of South Sioux City in November. They can be the people of a neighborhood who attend public meetings to discuss the location and design of a planned branch library in south Omaha. They can be children and young adults who use libraries for personal and school interests.

The Nebraska Regional Library Systems and the Nebraska Library Commission recently worked together to plan and arrange excellent workshops on library friends groups and on library fundraising. The few hundred who participated in these regional workshops took away information and ideas that will lead to local projects to improve library services. Those who attended the workshops are a core library advocacy group. They chose to spend their discretionary time to learn how they can better support local library development needs.

Nebraska's Libraries for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century initiative recognized early on that success requires broad based support and participation. Let's adopt Sarah Long's "Libraries Build Community" theme to engage and involve a wide variety of Nebraskans in developing the library services that are wanted and needed in Nebraska's communities. Who are the people to be recognized on Nebraska's Advocacy Honor Roll? ▲  
*Rod Wagner*

## Centennial Snapshot, continued

### Continued from page 1

Promoting the growth and establishment of libraries throughout the state, a booth at the State Fair in 1909 featured photos of libraries, a traveling library, a school library, a collection of books on special topics, and circulars for distribution to interested by-passers.

Traveling libraries were used by the Commission to get books into the hands of readers who had little or no access to libraries. With large populations of Danes, Swedes, Bohemians, and Germans, traveling libraries composed of books in foreign languages became available through donations from ethnic organizations around the state.

Templeton saw a need for librarians to have some formal training. She was responsible for developing a correspondence course on the basic skills needed to run a successful library. Nine librarians signed up when the course became available.

Providing reading material for persons in state institutions was a concern that surfaced in 1909. Templeton stated, "...it may well be in the province of the Library Commission to undertake this work. In dealing successfully with moral, physical, and even mental defectives, the book may be a powerful agent and in state institutions the library should occupy an important place," in her *Report to the Commissioners*, November 30, 1909. She worked successfully to get funding from the Legislature to implement a library program in state institutions.

The work of the Commission grew rapidly under Templeton's guidance. The budget increased from \$6000 in 1907 to a request in 1919 for \$23,000 for the coming biennium.

Templeton resigned in 1919 to accept a position with the Georgia State Library Commission. ▲



◀ *Traveling library in a Harlan County farmhouse, Nov. 30, 1904.*

## Compass

NEWSLETTER

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**Nebraska Library Commissioners:** Karen Warner, Norfolk, term expires 2000; Robert King, Holdrege, term expires 2000; Wally Seiler, Alliance, term expires 2001; Richard Jussel, Kearney, term expires 2001; Velma Sims, Fremont, term expires 2001; Kristen Rogge, Johnson, term expires 2002. Commission meetings are held the second Friday of every other month, or as scheduled by public action of the board.

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

## Special Report: Copyright, Multimedia, and the Internet, part two

In this second installment of the NCompass series examining the principles of copyright law, we discuss the issues of new copyright legislation.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) and the Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act became law in October 1999 after three intensive years of negotiation among the library community and their partners in the Digital Future Coalition working to balance the rights of copyright holders and access for users to copyrighted works. Both laws evolved as a result of previously published papers from the National Information Infrastructure which recommended expanding the exclusive rights of copyright owners to include the right of transmission and disallowing devices to circumvent mechanisms protecting the rights of copyright holders. Other issues addressed in these new laws are maintenance of the public domain, library preservation, online service provider limitation on liability, and distance learning.

The DMCA allows libraries to make three copies of a work for preservation, one strictly for archival purposes, one as a master, and a third as a copy from which other allowable copies may be made. Copying for preservation may also take place if the copy's format has become obsolete. A library may make a digital copy of a work if the digital copy is not distributed and does not leave the library. The new law grants an exclusion from monetary liability for copyright infringement to online service providers (OSP), including libraries and educational institutions (if they comply with OSP procedures, have no actual knowledge of copyright infringements and cooperate with processes to disable access and limit harm to the copyright holder). The DMCA also addresses the need to overhaul the rules for Distance Education by requiring a study on distance education and digital technologies. Congress will

receive recommendations about the use of digital interactive networks and how to adjust copyright law to two-way, open circuitry.

The Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act extends the term of copyright from "life of the author + 50 years" to "life + 70 years" for individual authors and to 95 years for corporate authors. The act, passed after the death of Bono in 1998 and named for him because of his active involvement in copyright issues as a Congressman, is retroactive. No more works will move into the public domain until 2019. Libraries have an exemption permitting them to treat a copyrighted work in its last 20 years of protection as if it were in the public domain for noncommercial purposes under certain circumstances. For more information about this exemption, see <[www.ala.org/washoff/primer.html](http://www.ala.org/washoff/primer.html)>.

Libraries and educational institutions should be prepared to respond as Congress begins work on reform of the copyright law in the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress. As advocates of reform, libraries and educational institutions need to document their current and anticipated practices. They must know the extent to which licensed and unlicensed works are needed for educational purposes on digital networks.

Database legislation that may inhibit the ability of users to access and view electronic information will be a high priority in the next Congress. Current information about proposed legislation may be found at <[www.ala.org/washoff](http://www.ala.org/washoff)>.

Ellen Van Waart

For more information see the Nebraska Library Commission home page, <[www.nlc.state.ne.us](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us)>, search on Copyright. For the full text of the *Copyright Handbook: a Guide for Nebraska Libraries*, search on Copyright Handbook or contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <[mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us)>. Send comments or suggestions for this series to Ellen Van Waart, 402-471-4004 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <[evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us)>. ▲

### Commission Announces Increased State Aid to Libraries

The Nebraska Library Commission recently approved allocation of \$75,000 in additional state aid to public libraries and \$52,500 to be allocated for support of continuing education for library personnel and for planning grants to support interlocal library service development. Library Commission Director Rod Wagner stated, "This additional \$75,000 is an initial contribution to our ongoing campaign to increase state support for public library services. The money augments local support for library services and can be used by local public libraries to boost their print

and non-print materials, increase access to electronic information resources, develop programming for young people, or fund other library purposes."

A portion of the additional state aid to public libraries will be used to increase the base grant amount, currently \$600, and the remainder will be distributed through a per capita formula. These funds are part of \$150,000 in additional state funds appropriated by the Legislature and approved by the Governor for FY 2000. Of the new funding, \$22,500 was allocated earlier as additional aid for Nebraska's six Regional Library Systems. ▲

## Kristen Helping to Plot New Directions

**K**risten Rogge is a native of Johnson, Nebraska and a new Library Commissioner. She describes the role of a Commissioner as helping plot new directions for

**Kristen describes the role of a Commissioner as helping plot new directions for libraries.**

libraries and assisting them in becoming the focal points for information in their communities—not just a place to check out books. Kristen holds an Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts from Monticello College in Godfrey, IL and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, MA. Before returning to Nebraska, Kristen was a federal government Policy Analyst and Planner in Washington D.C. She maintains a Washington address and returns on a regular basis to visit friends. Returning to Nebraska caused Kristen to appreciate qualities about Midwest living such as the sound of thunderstorms and being able to renew your driver's

license in half-an-hour.

As a lifelong user of libraries, Kristen enjoys reading all kinds of fiction genres. Her latest discovery at her local public library is the author Terry C. Johnston who writes about life in the American West in the 19th century. In addition to her library work, Kristen represents Johnson on the Nemaha County Development Alliance whose mission is to foster and support the economic expansion of Nemaha County. She's an avid Internet user and uses the Web site Motley Fool <[www.fool.com](http://www.fool.com)> to keep apprised of investment opportunities. Kristen lives with her mother in Johnson and they enjoy travel. ▲



## Wally Advocates for Educational Role of Libraries

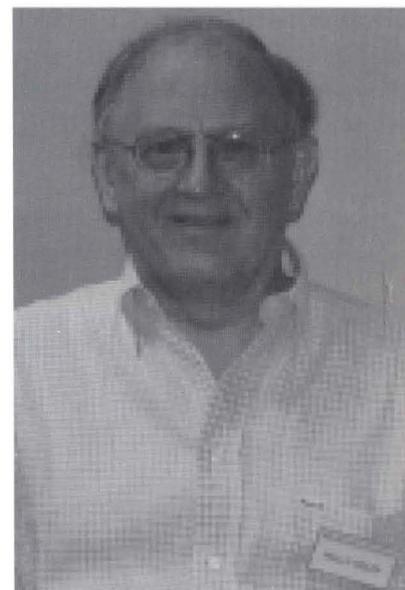
**W**ally Seiler is a long time resident of Alliance and a graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He holds dual degrees in English and Latin and a

**Wally is a strong advocate for the power of libraries to educate users of all ages.**

minor in anthropology. Wally says that some of the best things about living in a small Nebraska community are being able to walk down the street and know people by name and being able to get to work in three minutes. He is an avid reader and strong advocate for the power of libraries to educate users of all ages. As a Commissioner, he wants to make sure Nebraska library services are supported. Wally has been on the Alliance Public Library Board for over nine years and was recently re-appointed. His position on the board and his beliefs helped to build the new Alliance Public Library in the style of a cozy,

comfortable place where people want to be.

As a reader, he enjoys bestsellers and reads both fiction and non-fiction. His all-time favorite book is *Catcher in the Rye* and he most recently read the book *Ponca Chiefs*. One of his passions is Mark Twain. Wally portrays Mark Twain for the Nebraska Humanities Council and has done extensive research on the life of Twain in books and in travel. Wally also enjoys theater and strives for an annual trip to New York City. He is eagerly looking forward to the new Andrew Lloyd Webber production of *Whistle Down the Wind*. ▲



## Velma Represents the Public Interest



**V**elma Sims views the role of the Library Commissioner as a representative of the public especially in the promotion, development, and coordination of library

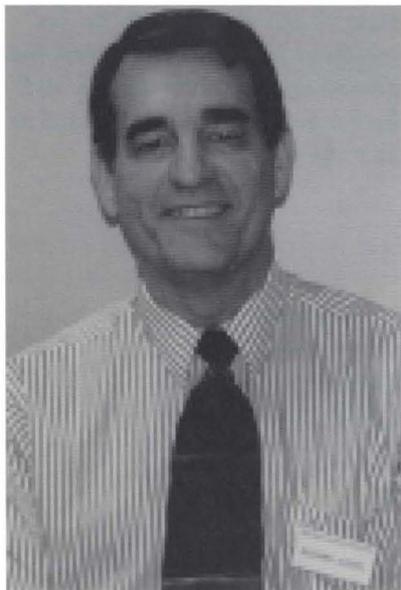
services within our state. She believes that the duties lie in areas such as policymaking, strategic planning and finances, and most importantly as advocating for library programs and enhancing the public image of libraries in Nebraska. As an educator, Velma has always believed in the importance of libraries. She would like for all young people to have opportunities to use libraries as a part of their development. Velma is an Internet user and her favorite Web sites are newspapers including the *Columbus Telegram* <[www.columbustelegram.com](http://www.columbustelegram.com)> and the *Loveland Colorado Reporter-Herald* <[www.lovelandfyi.com](http://www.lovelandfyi.com)>. Velma reads all kinds of literature but she most enjoys

historical fiction and mysteries.

Velma is a native Nebraskan and enjoys the friendliness, the change of seasons, and the relative safety. She graduated from Midland Lutheran College with a degree in behavioral science and received advanced degrees in education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She is active in Fremont Rotary and Crime Stoppers. She serves as a board member of the Dodge County Historical Society and as the president of Keep Fremont Beautiful. Velma recently lost her husband Dr. Gail Sims, a long-time educator in Nebraska. Velma has two sons, four grandchildren, and enjoys travel. ▲

**Velma would like for all young people to have opportunities to use libraries as a part of their development.**

## Richard Serves as Liaison and Ambassador



**R**ichard Jussel is currently a professor at the University of Nebraska-Kearney (UN-K). He received his bachelor's degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University

and his MA and PhD from the University of Northern Colorado. Richard believes a Library Commissioner should observe the actions of the Library Commission and serve as a liaison between state government and libraries throughout the state. Serving as a goodwill ambassador and finding ways to ensure that libraries receive the materials they need are also important responsibilities.

Richard's wife holds a PhD and teaches Computer Science at UN-K. His son Jeff is an electrical engineer and son Jay is a computer analyst. Because of his family, Richard came to the Internet by way of self-

defense. His favorite Web sites correspond to his reading habits and include Barnes and Noble <[www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com)> and Amazon <[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)>. He also visits music box Web sites as gift purchasing venues for his three granddaughters. Richard is a native Nebraskan and says that the resilient and confident people are some of the best things about Nebraska life. Outside of libraries, Richard enjoys golf, walking, photography, writing poetry, and travel. He enjoys visiting Nebraska communities he's never been to before and visiting with the people there. ▲

**As a Library Commissioner, Richard is serving as a goodwill ambassador to various library functions in the state.**

## Special Report...

### Library Finance Task Force Prepares Findings

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

The Task Force met on several occasions to talk with experts about tax, foundations, political issues, and technology. Although the Task Force has not completed its report, they have developed a set of Guiding Principles. These principles and task force minutes are available on the Library Commission home page at <[www.nlc.state.ne.us](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us)>, search on finance task force.

Recommendations from task force meetings include:

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

## Jane Geske - In Memoriam

**J**ane Geske died on September 8. She was a former Library Commission director, a founding member of the Nebraska

Center for the Book, and a forever champion of books, readers, and libraries. She was one of a kind, a wonderful person of remarkable generosity and spirit. Jane was a great friend to those who care about books, reading, libraries, literature, and the arts. Her indomitable spirit touched many who had the pleasure of knowing her.

Jane was born in Sutton, Nebraska. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Omaha and her professional library science degree from the University of Denver. She held positions at the University of Omaha, Louisiana State University, University of Denver, and the University of Chicago. In 1960, Jane left her academic library career and returned to Nebraska to serve as a library consultant for the Nebraska Public Library Commission. Her affection for the plains of Nebraska and its rural libraries was a part of her wonderful character. Following Louise Nixon's retirement in 1969, Jane served as the Commission's

interim executive secretary until 1971 (the executive secretary title changed to director in 1972). She returned to the Commission in 1973 and served as Commission director until 1976 when she retired. Her passion for books and reading didn't end when she left the Commission. Jane and her husband, Norman, started Niobrara Books, and later the Estuary Bookstore. Jane also stayed close to her lifelong interest in libraries and helped found the Nebraska Literary Heritage Association.

When a Nebraska affiliate to the Library of Congress Center for the Book was considered, Jane was among a small group who led efforts to create the Nebraska Center for the Book. In recognition of Jane's lifelong commitment to books and libraries, the Nebraska Center for the Book created the Jane Geske Award to honor her as a founding member and to give annual recognition to an organization that has made an exceptional contribution to literacy, books, reading, libraries, or Nebraska literature.

Jane will be remembered for many things, but certainly for her infectious and remarkable spirit, her passion for books and the arts, and for her devotion to Nebraska and its libraries. ▲



◀ In Memoriam  
*Jane Pope Geske*  
*Sutton, Nebraska-1918*  
*Lincoln, Nebraska-1999*

## Electronic Books Gain Popularity

**N**o sooner does a new format appear on the horizon than it's followed up with a flurry of changes, improvements,

modifications, add-ons, options, etc. How can one possibly know all there is to know about anything technological? Quite simply, one can't! Recently, I noticed articles on e-books occurring with increasing frequency. I've discovered fan clubs for various e-books, chat rooms, listservs, and related activities tied to this new format of reading material.

Electronic books are hand-held portable storage and display devices used for reading text and viewing images in electronic format. Just as e-mail has replaced much of our paper mail, e-books have the potential to replace some of the printed books, magazines, newspapers, and catalogs we currently read. "While it is possible that the e-book is just a passing fad like the CD-ROM, I would like to think that it is *potentially as big as the invention of the printing press*," stated Jean Naggar, current President, Association of Authors Representatives.

The only e-book that I've actually held in my hand is the RocketBook, produced by

NuvoMedia, Inc <www.nuvomedia.com>. The RocketBook weighs 1.25 pounds and this paperless book is about the size of a small paperback book. It sells for around \$330, has a storage capacity of 4,000 pages, and the battery life is 20 hours.

SoftBook, produced by SoftBook Press, Inc. <www.softbook.com> is more elegant and expensive. The SoftBook looks more like an open book, displaying two pages at once. It is leather-covered and smells and feels more like a traditional book, or an antique book to be more accurate. Currently, the SoftBook sells for a one-time payment of \$599.95, or a one-time payment of \$299.95 plus the purchase of a \$19.95 per month content package for 24 months. The SoftBook has a storage capacity of 1,500 pages, or up to 6,000 pages with the 8MB memory upgrade. It weighs 2.9 pounds and the battery life is six hours.

Everybook Dedicated Reader (EBDR), produced by Everybook Inc., is a relative newcomer to this field. This company plans to offer three models of e-books, each with two full-color screens that resemble the style of traditional books. Because this book will use Adobe Acrobat Reader to display files, it can successfully "display heavily illustrated textbooks, reference titles,

catalogues and maps exactly as they were published in print." (*PW*, April 26, 1999, p. 12) Of course, this enhanced e-book comes with an enhanced price tag—expected to range from a \$500 personal model to a \$2000 portfolio model.

Peanut Press <www.peanutpress.com> offers e-books exclusively for use on Palm Pilots. The latest Palm Pilot III organizer can store over 10 average-length books.

There are some obvious advantages to having some books on a small, portable device. It's possible to search the text, there's a built-in dictionary, and it's possible to annotate the text, to say nothing of the trees that could be spared. Adoption of this format for libraries is a bigger question. There might be certain kinds of books that libraries regularly update that would make sense to have available electronically, like Civil Service manuals and other test books, and perhaps travel books. The size of the print can be changed to instantly create a large-print book, and there is also the option to listen to the book on headphones. It would also be great to load several novels, travel books, magazines, onto an e-book and go on vacation without lugging 25 pounds of reading material. ▲

Kit Keller

## The American FactFinder: Gateway to Census Information

**T**his spring the Census Bureau introduced a new public access database, the American FactFinder, available from the Bureau Web site, <www.census.gov>. It will be the primary site for users to access data from Census 2000, the American Community Survey, and the 1997 Economic Census. This summer the site was demonstrated at the Census Data Center annual conference in Omaha. Features include:

- *Facts about My Community* profiles selected social, economic, or housing characteristics for states, cities, counties and congressional districts. It currently makes data available from the 1990 census, including the popular *Community Profiles*, formerly available only on the census STF1A and STF3A CD-ROMs.

- *Population and Housing Facts* offers detailed data from the 1990 census. Users have the option of viewing quick predefined tables, browsing detailed tables from the Summary Data Files (new name for Summary Tape Files), or using Advanced Query to create customized tables from the full Public Use Microdata files.

- *Maps* allows users to combine maps of a geographic area with statistical data.
- *Industry and Business Facts* will provide data from the 1997 Economic Census (as it is released).
- *Search FactFinder* locates keywords within census data tables.
- *Help Me* provides a step-by-step tutorial on using the American Fact Finder. ▲

## Special Report...

### State Advisory Council on Libraries Meets

**T**he State Advisory Council on Libraries met at the new Alliance Learning Center this fall. Wally Seiler, Chair of the Nebraska Library Commission and Alliance Public Library board member, welcomed Council members to the new Alliance library and educational facility. Pam Scott, Panhandle Library System Administrator, described current library activities and events in the Panhandle region. The Council received and discussed reports regarding library advocacy activities, community technology planning, continuing education, federal legislation, and the proposed NebrasKard reciprocal library borrowing card.

The Council also discussed and developed the following recommendations concerning the Libraries for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century initiative:

- Asked that letters be sent to Governor Johanns and members of the Legislature's Appropriations Committee regarding the additional state aid funds appropriated for the 2000 – 2001 biennium.
- Requested information concerning the policies and procedures for implementation of the NebrasKard (reciprocal library borrowing card).

The Council also asked that letters be sent to Nebraska's Congressional delegation regarding pending federal legislation on E-rate funding and Internet filtering software, and that information packets be disseminated to libraries regarding Internet access policies and software filtering. (See related article on page 9.) ▲

Rod Wagner

## Centennial Announcement

### Call For Materials

**T**he Library Commission will celebrate our Centennial in 2001. It's not too soon to start sending in photos, examples of old materials we sent to you, information on activities you were involved in with the Commission, and other memorabilia. If you are celebrating an anniversary in the near future, let's celebrate together. If you have a history of your library, please share it with us. Send information to Nancy Busch, 402-471-4002, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <nbusch@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

## Meeting Features Resource Sharing

**E**ighty-five librarians attended the NEBASE Annual Meeting in Lincoln this fall.

Updates were presented by OCLC staff member Barbara Fowler and NEBASE team member Devra Dragos. Kate Nevins, Executive Director of SOLINET, revisited the resource sharing territory she addressed three years ago at a Resource Sharing Dialogue Retreat here in Nebraska. At that time, Nevins described resource sharing projects of the SOLINET network and participants spoke of "One Nebraska," a vision of the resources of all being one resource for all, to include:

- access from home, school, business office, or library;

- information available anywhere, anytime, to anyone;
- seamless access to the electronic holdings of the state's library system.

At this year's NEBASE meeting, Nevins celebrated our success and spoke of the future. We have indeed come far since our meeting three years ago, but we have just begun.

A brainstorming session was held to identify issues, projects, and dreams that lie before us. This list can be found on the Library Commission home page at <www.nlc.state.ne.us>, search on New Face of Resource Sharing. If you have not already done so, please take a moment to look this list over and let us know which five issues are of greatest importance to you in providing excellent library service to your community. ▲



▲ Jo Budler and Keynote Speaker Kate Nevins at the NEBASE Annual Meeting.



▲ Allana Novotny and Susan Knisley at the NEBASE Annual Meeting.

## A Fresh Look at the Library Bill of Rights, part eleven

In this latest installment of the continuing NCompass series examining applications of intellectual freedom and the Library Bill of Rights, we explore the issue of Internet filtering and public libraries.

The ungoverned nature of the Internet is both a blessing and a curse. The Internet provides virtually immediate access to a vast array of authoritative, current information, with an ease and speed that is unprecedented. However, it also provides the same immediate access to unwanted, inaccurate, and sometimes offensive, information in the form of text and images. There are no prerequisites, standards, or even ethical codes that control the content of information made available via the Internet. The purpose of Internet filtering software is to impose some level of control over access to Internet Web sites.

In 1998, a survey sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and the U. S. National Commission on Libraries (NCLIS) reported 73% of the nation's 15,718 public library outlets offer public access to the Internet (Bertot & McClure, 1998). With the integration of Internet access as a basic library service, library staff find they can no longer control the content of information that comes into the library. The primary purpose of filtering software is to prohibit access to sites that are deemed objectionable to a library's patrons. The dilemma for library directors and their boards is how to balance the professional tenets of intellectual freedom and freedom of access, with the desire to provide top quality information sources for their customers.

### Do filters work?

A wide variety of filtering options is available for use with the Internet. In order to make an informed decision, it is important to understand these options and how they impact on access to the Internet in general. One option is to install filtering software on terminals used to access the Internet. Filters work in several ways—blocking identified keywords, blocking specified sites, and by using a Web rating process. Keyword blocking can be both under-effective and over-effective due to the nature of language. Many words have multiple meanings and the software is not designed to consider context or interpret meaning. The result is that many sites are blocked unintentionally and this does a disservice to customer research needs, as well as to their First Amendment rights. Identifying and blocking offensive sites and rating Web sites is an endless job. Searching, researching, evaluating, and then blocking specific Web sites requires hours and hours of time. It is a task that never ends because of the ongoing proliferation of Web pages. "In 1993 there existed 130 Web sites. Six years later over 5 million sites are registered, hosting 320,000,000 pages." (*Colorado Libraries*, 25, no. 2, 37-40, Summer 1999)

Producers of filtering software are not yet able to offer guarantees for their products, in terms of confidence in preventing access to unwanted information and images. It is this ambiguity and spotty performance of filtering software that adds to the dilemma for those of us in public library settings.

Several of the prominent search engines offer users the option of activating a filter when searching.

### Is the use of Internet filtering software in a public library legal?

A recent Utah publication states, "Significant legal vulnerability goes with any filtering." (*Filtering Issues – A Guide for Board Discussion*, by Chip Ward, Utah State Library Division) The Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Mainstream Loudoun, et al, vs. Board of Trustees of the Loudoun County Library*, ruled that the public library in Loudoun County, VI, violated First Amendment rights by installing Internet filtering software on the public access Internet terminals. As stated in the Memorandum Opinion, "At issue in this civil action is whether a public library may enact a policy prohibiting the access of library patrons to certain content-based categories of Internet publications."

### What's a library to do?

Whether or not to install Internet filtering software on public access terminals is a local decision. Local library boards and library directors make this decision according to the needs of their community. Several states require that public libraries have an "Acceptable Use Policy" for Internet access. Many libraries do not want to give the impression that they are capable of providing "safe" access to the Internet, and installing a filter might imply just that.

Be informed, have a dialogue with your board members and with your community. Learn the issues involved and the ramifications of the decision made by you and your board. Be open to questions and be forthcoming with responses. Public libraries are funded with public funds, serve the public, and need to be responsive to the public.

*Kit Keller*

For more information, see ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom at <[www.ala.org/oif.html](http://www.ala.org/oif.html)> or the Library Commission home page, <[www.nlc.state.ne.us](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](mailto:mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us)>. Send comments to Kit Keller, 402-471-3216 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <[kkeller@neon.nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:kkeller@neon.nlc.state.ne.us)>. Guest editorials are invited. Submit to Mary Jo Ryan, 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <[mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us)>. ▲

**"It is this ambiguity and spotty performance of filtering software that adds to the dilemma for those of us in public library settings."**

## Special Report...

### *Library Advocacy Planning Session Held*

**A** Community Library Advocacy meeting was held in Lincoln this summer to share ideas about library advocacy and learn about new ways to promote advocacy for local public libraries. Participants viewed a video, *The People's University*, exploring the importance of the public library in rural communities.

Doris Bass, Mentor-Advocate representing Libraries for the Future, led a discussion of advocacy for public library service using the following questions as a focus:

- What advocacy projects are you involved in within your community?
- What was the goal of the project and why was it important to your community?
- How did you get the message out to the community about the project?
- What worked well and what did not work?
- Who are the new and old library advocates in your community?
- What advocacy projects would you begin if you had the necessary resources such as money, people, and time?

In answer to the last question, projects like new buildings, tax initiatives, board development, and public relations activities were identified.

A legislative information activity at the State Capitol included a discussion of library legislative issues and the annual Legislative Day plans, as well as a tour of the State Capitol. State Senators Nancy Thompson and LaVon Crosby presented guidelines for working with Senators, stressing the importance of being knowledgeable and active in supporting legislation that impacts libraries in Nebraska.

A goal of the Community Library Advocacy Project is to foster a broad based core of public library advocates throughout Nebraska. Librarians in each community are identifying individuals who are ready and willing to speak up for the needs of the local public library and provide them with information about the importance of the public library in a democratic society.

For more information, see the Community-Library Advocacy Project home page, <[www.nol.org/home/NLA/advocacy](http://www.nol.org/home/NLA/advocacy)> or contact Ellen Van Waart at the Library Commission, 402-471-4004 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <[evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us](mailto:evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us)>. ▲  
*Ellen Van Waart*

## New FirstSearch Released

**O**CLC's *FirstSearch* has a new look. *FirstSearch 5.0* was released this summer, with

*many new features and* additional features are being added monthly. OCLC plans to remove access to FirstSearch 4.0 on January 30, 2000. For up-to-date information on the progress of FirstSearch 5.0, see <[http://www.oclc.org/oclc/menu/fs\\_new.htm](http://www.oclc.org/oclc/menu/fs_new.htm)>.

New features in the administrative module include:

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

New features in the search

interface include:

- Expert searching (of interest to former EPIC users)
- Full right truncation and wildcard options
- Subject thesauri for the WorldCat, ERIC, PsycINFO/ PsycFirst, and MEDLINE databases
- Limit searches to an individual library
- Limit searches to a group of libraries (coming in 2000)
- Sorting search results
- Relevance ranking
- Viewing, marking, and e-mailing up to 100 records at a time
- Search 1-3 databases at a time
- Links to detailed serial holdings (coming in 2000)
- Search history for entire session

FirstSearch provides access to 86 databases representing a variety of subjects and including some full-text databases. More than 680 Nebraska libraries subscribe at no charge to the Nebraska package of 12 databases financed by the Library Commission with state tax funds. For more information about these databases, see the Commission home page at <[www.nlc.state.ne.us/netserv/fs.html](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/netserv/fs.html)>. Access FirstSearch 5.0 from this same address. ▲



▲ Devra Dragos from the Nebraska Library Commission demonstrating the New FirstSearch at the NEBASE Annual Meeting this fall.

## News of Nebraska Libraries and People...

The **Nebraska Center for the Book** held the 1999 Annual Meeting this fall at the Webster County Historical Museum in Red Cloud. This event featured **Terry Evans**, speaking on her book, *The Inhabited Prairie*. The designation of Willa Cather's Prairie as the first Friends of the Libraries USA (FOLUSA) **National Literary Landmark** in Nebraska highlighted the day's activities. ▲

The **Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries** reappointed the following members: **Stan Gardner**, Director of Library Services, Wayne State College; **Susan Baird**, Panhandle Community Services, Scottsbluff; **John Dale**, Assistant Director, Lincoln City Libraries; and **Ken Oyer**, Librarian, Alegent Health, Hartigan Medical Library, Omaha and appointed the following new members: **Jim Bothmer**, Director, Health Sciences Library, Creighton University; **Karen Drevo**, Children's Librarian, Norfolk Public Library; and **Jeff Gilderson-Duwe**, Director, Holdrege Public Library System. All were appointed for three year terms ending in 2003. ▲

**Pam Scott**, former Panhandle Library System Administrator, was recently hired by the **Library Commission** as Library Consultant. Pam will consult with Nebraska libraries on a variety of issues, including assisting libraries in applying for E-rate discounts for telecommunications expenses. Contact Pam at 402-471-2694 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <pscott@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

The **Regional Library Systems** recently sponsored a dollhouse raffle for the **NLA Scholarship Fund**. More than 1,300 tickets were sold. The winner was **Molly Fisher** of the **Nebraska Humanities Council in Lincoln**. She has offered the dollhouse to the Nebraska Center for the Book to be raffled as a fundraiser in 2000. ▲

**Dorothy Jones**, **Butler Memorial Library (Cambridge)** retired this fall. Dorothy began working at Butler Memorial in 1964, and became the director in 1975. Dorothy will continue to serve as a consultant for the building project currently underway. ▲

Lincoln City Libraries distributed copies of its "Get to Know your Lincoln City Libraries" brochure in Vietnamese, Arabic, Russian, and Serbo-Croatian languages. The brochure details services and materials available through Lincoln City Libraries as part of the library's Foreign Language Project, funded in part by a federal **Library Services and Technology Grant**, administered by the Nebraska Library Commission. ▲

The Nebraska Center for the Book recently awarded **The Jane Pope Geske Award** for exceptional contribution to literacy, books, reading, libraries, book-selling or writing in Nebraska to the **John G. Neihardt Foundation and the Neihardt Center**. They also awarded the **Mildred Bennett Award** for an individual who has made a significant contribution to fostering the literary tradition in Nebraska to **Ron Hull** of Nebraska Educational Telecommunications. ▲

The **Institute of Museum and Library Services** announced the award of a \$71,960 education and training grant to **Columbus Public Schools**. ▲

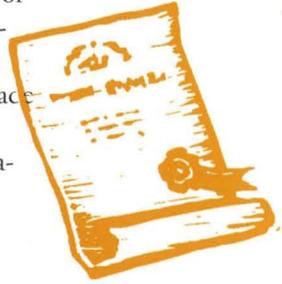


**Nebraska ranked 16<sup>th</sup>** in the nation for quality of its public libraries in the second year of **Hennen's American Public Library Rating (HAPLR)**. The HAPLR index uses 15 factors drawn from Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) statistics, collected from nearly 9,000 public libraries. For more information, see <www.haplr-index.com>. ▲

**Barbara G. Lehn**, director of library services, **Sinte Gleska University, Mission, SD**, is the \$1,000 grant prize winner of the "What the OCLC Interlibrary Loan Service Means to Me" essay contest. As director of library services at the University on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation, Lehn delivers library and information services to American Indians. In her essay, Lehn paid tribute to the role OCLC plays in building student pride in their Indian heritage. Lehn is a former staff member of the Omaha Public Library and a former member of the Nebraska Center for the Book board. The video dramatizing her essay is available on loan from the Library Commission Reference/Information Services, 402-471-4016, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <ready@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

The **River of Words** poetry and art contest encourages children to describe through poetry and art their own "place in space." Entry forms are available on the Web at <www.irn.org> or from River of Words, P.O. Box 4000-J, Berkeley, CA 94704, 510-433-7020, 510-848-1008 (fax), or <row@irn.org>. ▲

New library directors include: Adams Public Library, **Elaine Harms**; Bancroft Public Library, **Judy Meyer**; Bayard Public Library, **Sharon Ulbrich**; Eustis Public Library, **Eva Scaris**; Genoa Public Library, **Tammy Johnson**; Madison Public Library, **Evelyn Kurpogweit**; Newman Grove Public Library, **Ardis Von Seggern**; Oakland Public Library, **Rosa Schmidt**; Pilger Public Library, **Kevin Meyer**; and Valley Public Library, **Nina Little**. ▲



*New on our Home Page:*

see <[www.nlc.state.ne.us](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us)>

▲ The latest minutes from the Public Library Finance Task Force, search on Finance Task Force.

▲ OCLC's New FirstSearch is now available for public use. For information and links, search on New FirstSearch.

▲ Call for Papers for the International Willa Cather Seminar 2000, search on Cather Seminar.

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

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