



Southeast Signal

News, Events, and Information from Around the System

From the Director



This past month I had a lot of discussions about AI with various groups of people. One of the things that came from those discussions is that there is a lot of jargon in the field that most of us have no idea what it means. I hope to

introduce some of the basic terms and concepts with AI that might be important for you to know.

Bias -

The presence of undesired preferences or imbalances in the output generated by an AI. Bias can emerge in various forms, such as in the content, language, or perspectives generated by the AI.

Guardrails –

Systems set up to prevent output being created or delivered outside certain parameters. These can be on the initial prompt, final output, and sometimes on inclusion of material in the training data.

Hallucinations -

Made-up information based on a pattern that the AI model has learned as part of its training. For example, the model could create references that do not actually exist.

Large Language Models -

Components of artificial intelligence developed based on the training of vast datasets of documents from various sources. The computer program analyzes data input and maps out words in the dataset. It next tries to predict which words are positioned before or after other words using predictive patterns of most likely combinations.

Prompt –

What the user gives to the AI describing what they want to receive. It could be a description of an image they want the AI to create, the text they want it to generate, or the question they want answered.

Training Data -

Training data refers to the set of examples used to train an AI model. It consists of a collection of representative samples the model learns from to generate new content or make predictions.

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Calendar



February 17, President's Day (SELS Office Closed)

February 20, [CASTL, Syracuse Public Library, "Writing Policies"](#)

February 26, National Tell A Fairy Tale Day

February 27, National Retro Day

February 28, [Big Talk from Small Libraries](#)

March, National Women's History Month

National Brain Injury Awareness Month

March 1, Global Day of Unplugging

March 6, National Slam the Scam Day

March 8, National Peanut Cluster Day

March 9, Daylight Savings Time Starts

March 10, National Napping Day

March 14, [Reimagining Your Library's WordPress Website](#)

Photo of the Month



The race is on! The Falls City Library & Arts Center Puzzle Tournament as seen from above. More on p. 4.

CASTL Wrap-up

Upcoming CASTL Meetings

February 20
Syracuse Public Library
“Writing Useful and Enforceable Policy”

March 20
Fairmont Public Library
“Food and Libraries”

April 25
Osceola Public Library
“Volunteers in the Library”

May 23
Falls City Library
& Arts Center

June 27
Via Zoom

July 25
Clay Center Public Library

August 21
Pawnee City Public Library

The title for our January 17 CASTL, “Traveling Books and Traveling Librarians,” fit our Mead and Yutan CASTL in more than one way. Not only were we talking about outreach with books and programming, and the travel which may accompany that, but we also literally travelled between libraries. Laurie Van Ackeren was our host, and both the Mead and Yutan library boards prepared refreshments for us.

We found that nursing homes, assisted living, the homes and apartments of the homebound, preschools, and classrooms are all destinations to which CASTL librarians bring books, depending on their community and circumstances. One librarian even helps supply a high school classroom with adult biographies and certain non-fiction books that are popular with the students.

Libraries will often check these books out on an “institution” or “teacher” card.

Sometimes the activities director from an assisted living complex will pick up books, and there is also a history of librarians hosting book clubs in nursing homes.

Quite a number of libraries give away weeded books, especially large print, to nursing homes and assisted living, and then nobody must worry about whether those items get lost or misplaced.

Most libraries are still offering some form of pick-up service after COVID, whether it be curbside, drive through, or bags in a lobby.

Circulation policies for the homebound are generally the same as for any other patron, and some advertise homebound delivery as a service.

We also talked about how librarians travel to locations outside of the library for a wide variety of programs, whether it be at a school, church, their own parking lot, or other venue. [Click here](#) to view the recording.

Upcoming Basic Skills Classes

To see the list of basic skills classes, [click here](#). Here’s what’s coming up next:

Dates of Class	Topic	Registration
March 17 - March 28	Library Technology	February 3 - March 7
April 1 - April 30	Introduction to Cataloging (Organization of Materials)	February 17 - March 21
April 14 - April 25	Library Finance	March 3 - March 4

News Around the System

Speed Puzzling Fun!

Provided by Jame Coonce

Falls City Library & Arts Center hosted its first speed puzzle competition on Thursday, January 30th. Seven teams of up to four people participated with puzzlers ranging in age from 7—70. Each team was given the same 500-piece puzzle to complete. The winning team completed the puzzle in 50 minutes with the second-

place team finishing 10 minutes later. Puzzles and prizes for the winning team were provided by the Friends of the Falls City Library & Arts Center. Another competition will be scheduled soon!



Technology Graveyard at SCC, Beatrice

Provided by Dianne Cooper, Library Resource Specialist, SCC, Beatrice

We used the inspiration from the technology graveyard featured in the December *Southeast Signal* to make our own for the second semester.

Items were found on campus and personal items, including a complete 1978 Odyssey2 video game system with several games found at my parent's house. (Having a dad that doesn't throw things away is helpful.)

I compared and contrasted things on the signage (iPhone 7 vs 16) and storage capacity of floppy disks vs flash drives.



News Around the System

Events at Seward Memorial Library

Provided by Sherri Payne

On February 9, Jeff Barnes from Humanities Nebraska gave a presentation on “Buffalo Bill’s Wild West”. We had a great turnout, and the patrons learned a lot about this well-known figure of the American Old West!

Seward Memorial Library also has an exciting February/March line up!

We’re looking forward to a puzzle tournament on February 25 at 6:30. Come test your puzzle skills against your friends and colleagues as you try to solve a 500-piece jigsaw puzzle in less than an hour! Teams can be comprised of up to four people. The first three teams to finish will receive a prize.

March 3 at 6:00 PM will be “Raise It Up: Vegetable Gardening, Cultivar Selection and Creating Raised Beds.” Vegetable gardening is a popular hobby with many benefits. Gardeners get plenty

of fresh air and exercise. They can choose their favorite vegetable species, cultivars and varieties to grow, and are able to harvest the freshest produce available. Finally, gardeners may be able to save some money by growing their own produce. Starting a vegetable garden doesn’t need to be expensive or complex. Understanding the basics of vegetable gardening and following a few simple steps will get you off to a great start with your own garden.

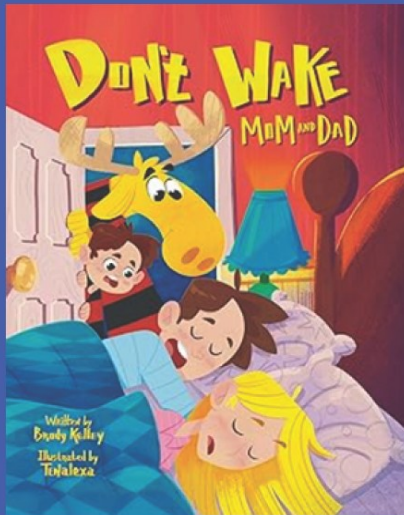
Lastly, the library is pleased to announce that we have been awarded a Creative Aging Arts Program grant through the Nebraska Arts Council to bring artist Gretchen Olberding to Seward to teach “Beginning Sketching and Painting Our Natural World.”



News Around the System

Update from a Presenter at the 2024 Youth Services Retreat

NEW BOOK RELEASE!!!



Interested in a summer author visit from Brody? Contact him at bkelly_14@hotmail.com

THERE'S A MOOSE ON THE LOOSE! In this rollicking bedtime adventure, Kenny's imagination runs wild, and he's determined to stay awake and dream of swimming with sharks and hunting for treasure.

But when his noisy playtime leads to a surprise encounter with a mischievous, party-loving moose, Kenny's night takes a chaotic turn. As the moose turns the house into a dance floor, Kenny must find a way to outwit the rambunctious moose and restore peace and quiet before his parents wake up.

With a mix of humor and heart, "Don't Wake Mom and Dad" is a charming tale of imagination and problem-solving that proves bedtime can be anything but boring.

MEET BRODY KELLEY!



Brody Kelley is an Elementary teacher from Nebraska. With a Master's Degree in literacy, Brody enjoys using books to teach his students about life. While a kid, Brody would use his active imagination to entertain his friends. Now, when he isn't writing, Brody tries his best to brainwash his students into loving reading.

AUTHOR OF *THE BEST*

[Available on Amazon](#)

[Follow Brody on BK BOOKS](#)



News Around the System

Why Join the Nebraska School Librarians Association?

Provided by Joy Harvey, President of NSLA and Lincoln Public Schools Coordinator of Library Services

There are plenty of reasons to join the Nebraska School Librarians Association, including these:

1. Free for first-year librarians!
2. Build your network with fellow Nebraska school librarians.
3. Stay informed on the latest trends and best practices.
4. Advocate for strong school libraries.

Learn more here: <https://buff.ly/4au1D1R>



JOIN NSLA!

Want to join other school librarians across Nebraska in advocacy? Be a part of NSLA!



Nebraska School Librarians Association

News Around the System

NLC Book Club Spotlight: *Code Orange*

Provided by Mackenzie Marrow; edited version of the [blog post](#)

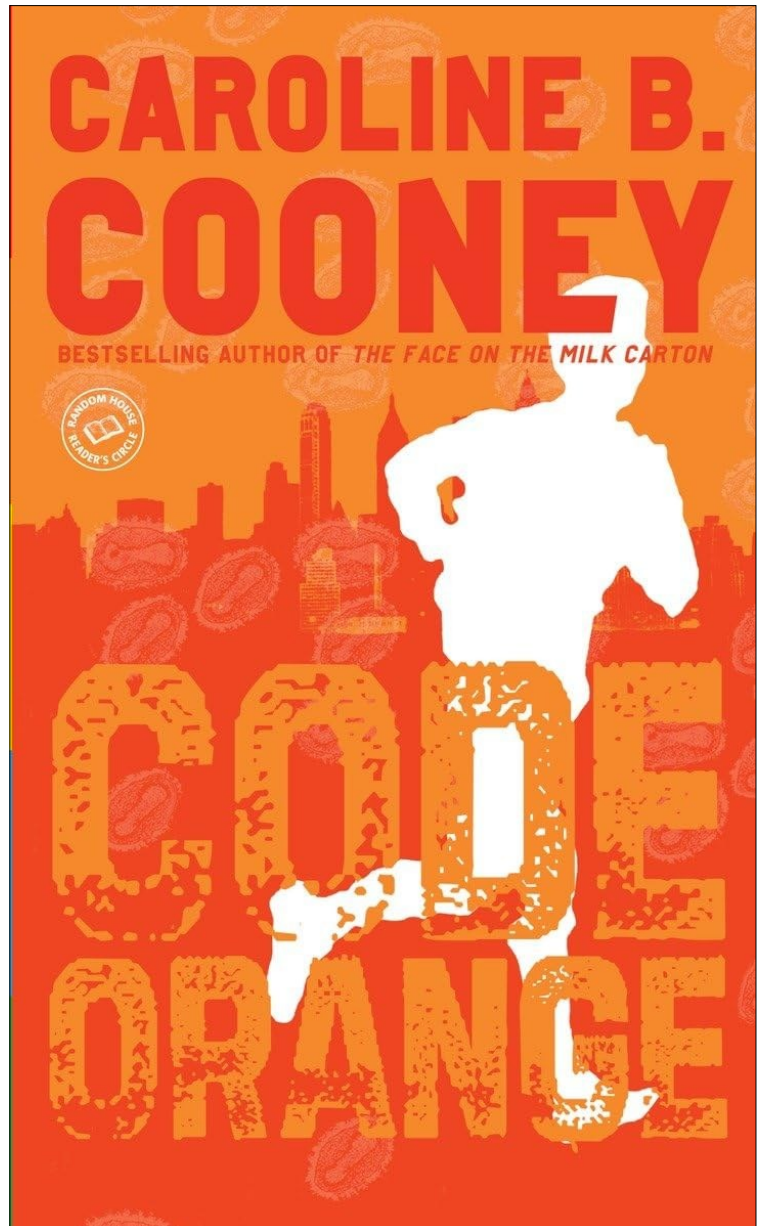
A biology assignment. An old book. An envelope. Scabs turning to dust. Before Mitty Blake can realize what's happening, he's possibly infected with one of the world's oldest and most deadly diseases. Smallpox! Just days ago, Mitty was a laid-back teenager, who didn't care about schoolwork or history. And now he's fighting for his life, afraid that he is about to subject New York City and the world to an outbreak that could leave millions dead in its wake, especially if the wrong people were to find out his secret.

Cooney writes in a young teen voice that's not only realistic but fun! Despite the weight of the world on his shoulders, Mitty is funny, charming, and a little self-deprecating. What makes *Code Orange* stand out from other YA thrillers, is that commitment to well-researched science. Not only does Cooney include a bibliography at the end, but her work was commended by the [National Science Teachers Association](#) as an "Outstanding Science Trade Book for Students K-12".

The reader learns all about smallpox and effective ways to research alongside Mitty as he goes on his adventure. As in the novel, the CDC is still on guard for threats of [smallpox bioterrorism](#).

[Check out the story that inspired *Code Orange*](#)

If you're interested in requesting *Code Orange* for your book club, you can find the Request Form [here](#). **There are 23 copies.** (A librarian must request items)



Fleshing Out Your Summer Reading Plans

April 4

10-11:30

Via Zoom



A time to share with and get ideas from
colleagues.

SAVE THE DATE!



TRAINING EXTRAVAGANZA



PUBLIC LIBRARY AND
TRUSTEE SECTION EASTERN
SPRING MEETING

MAY 9

9:30 - 3:00

Save the date for this
joint event! For all
library staff and board
members!

SEWARD MEMORIAL LIBRARY

System Spotlight

CASTL

CASTL is a monthly meeting where public library directors can get together and learn from



one another. Officially known as “Conversations Among Small Town Librarians,” each meeting has a themed discussion or presentation. There is also a round-robin discussion where everyone can share what’s going on at their library, ask questions, and talk about solutions to issues in a confidential setting. CASTL offers you a monthly break from your library and wonderful support from your fellow directors. We eat lunch together, too, if you are able to attend in person (we offer a Zoom option!). For more information contact Todd at todd.schlechte.sels@gmail.com.

Southeast Library System

Butler • Clay • Fillmore • Gage • Hamilton • Jefferson • Johnson • Lancaster • Merrick • Nemaha • Nuckolls •
Otoe • Pawnee • Polk • Richardson • Saline • Saunders • Seward • Thayer • York

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