

T R a i L S

Welcome, 2023!

by Tammi Thiem



And, just like that, it is a brand-new year.

I usually associate a new year with new goals, but sometimes it can be helpful to look back and review the positive changes that have occurred. Changes are scary, but they are a necessary part of life. As we all know in the library world, changes and flexibility are the requirements for keeping libraries relevant. Can you imagine if libraries had remained simply warehouses for books? If that had happened, would libraries even exist today? People who do not regularly use libraries often do not realize the transformations that have happened. These unsuspecting patrons are shocked that people actually speak while they are in the library. They are surprised by the activity and energy that accompany educational and entertaining programs. Some shake their heads in dismay at the changes that have taken place, as they hold desperately onto the nostalgia of libraries from the past.

When I was a public librarian, I attended a city council meeting to share the annual statistics and provide a review of the year's events. I started with the numbers, as statistics are an important part of shared information. I rattled off the number of items circulated in the year, the number of library visits, the number of reference questions, and lots of other stark black and white information. Then I launched into my favorite part of the presentation, the stories.

I shared stories about the different programs that were held throughout the year. I gave details about the learning opportunities that each of these provided. I offered the highlights, such as the teambuilding and kindness that developed during these events. I beamed as I recalled how excited children became when they learned new things due to the processes within certain programs. I used phrases like "logical thinking," and "critical thinking." I touted the library for being a source for social opportunities for all age groups. It felt fabulous to have all of these delightful stories to share with the city council. Then, like a bucket of ice water, the oldest council member spoke up. "Programs? Don't you check out books at your library? Isn't that your job?" I flipped to the very first page and paragraph of my presentation and restated the number of books checked out. He seemed satisfied, but my heart was broken.

In reflection, I believe I could have used this as an opportunity to explain how the programs complement the circulation counts. Some of those patrons may not have stepped foot into the library simply to check out books. However, once they attend a program, that may be an added benefit. I would have expounded on the return-on-investment information, letting the city leaders realize how worthy the library is of taxpayers' dollars. I would have not taken his uneducated response to the library's purpose so seriously.

Remember, it is NOT bragging to sing your own praises. People need to hear about the great things you do. Librarians are amazing!



At the TRails Office

Tech Kit Workshop with Amanda Sweet

The Tech Kit workshop was held at the Madison Public Library on Tuesday, December 6th. Amanda Sweet shared information about the Tech Kits that are available through the Nebraska Library Commission. It was exciting to learn about all of the professions that use various technology and how these advances are changing the work force and future capabilities.

If you would like to use some of these tech kits, please find more information here:

<http://nlc.nebraska.gov/Tech/kits/kits.aspx>



SKILLS BONUS Workshop

There was a SKILLS BONUS meeting from 9:30 to 11:30 at the Creighton Public Library on Monday, November 14th. This stands for Sharing Knowledge, Ideas, Learning, and Library Solutions / Boards Offer Necessary Unique Skills. This meeting was open to library directors and staff, and board members were encouraged to attend. The featured speaker was Erica Rose from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She offered a brilliant presentation about the importance of advocacy. To view this presentation, worth one continuing education credit, please visit this site: [YouTube Video](#). The slides are available here: [Presentation slides](#). Our next SKILLS BONUS will be held in February, and details will be coming soon.

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I	L	U	N	D	E	R	T	O	W	Y	I	T
T	H	I	T	O	S	S	E	L	W	A	L	V
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G	I	E	T	E	A	S	H	E	K	R	E	N
U	C	E	I	N	P	W	S	R	E	E	R	G
F	H	D	Y	R	M	I	L	A	L	T	H	E
I	O	I	O	E	C	N	E	L	I	S	W	A
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N	H	I	P	O	Q	U	A	R	R	Y	S	C
O	E	M	H	O	A	B	E	U	I	T	T	E
C	T	O	S	N	T	A	E	B	D	A	E	D
E	O	H	S	M	U	G	I	E	R	I	D	E
N	S	M	E	C	I	L	A	M	Y	S	T	E
T	R	E	S	P	A	S	S	R	I	E	S	X

Find all of the words listed below and mark them off carefully. The remaining letters will form a clue when read from top to bottom, left to right. Send the answer to this clue to Chelsea at trls.assistant@gmail.com by January 20, 2023 for a chance to win a prize!

ALIBI
BURGLER
CORPSE
DEADBEAT
EVIDENCE
FUGITIVE
GUMSHOE
HOMICIDE

INNOCENT
JUDGMENT
KILLER
LAWLESS
MALICE
NOOSE
OUTLAW
PERIL
QUARRY

RICOCHET
SILENCE
TRESPASS
UNDERTOW
VENGEANCE
WASTED
X
YESTERDAY

At the TRAILS Office

In-Person SKILLS Meeting

In September of 2022, the in-person SKILLS meetings (Sharing Knowledge, Ideas, Learning, and Library Solutions) changed from four quarterly events to monthly events. September's meeting was held at the Emerson Public Library; October's meeting was held at the Elgin Public Library; and November's meeting was held at the Pilger Public Library. These meetings featured Lynda Clause, who joined us from the Nebraska Library Commission. She shared an overview of the behind-the-scenes information about interlibrary loans, and it gave everyone a greater appreciation for this service.

December's in-person SKILLS meeting was held at the Louisville Public Library, and the topic was fundraising. Of course, the conversation encompassed far more than just that topic, and it was a rewarding experience to discuss all things library! January's meeting will be at the Walthill Public Library, and February's meeting will be at the Cedar Rapids Public Library. The main topic will continue to be fundraising, and it will be a great chance for everyone to learn from one another. Hope to see you all there!

Breakout Box Challenges

Three Rivers Library System's Director, Tammi Thiem, visited the Hartington Public Library on Monday, November 21st with two breakout box challenges. The after-school children successfully opened the Pandora's Box challenge by solving several riddles and puzzles. The library board successfully solved a challenge that contained lots of information from the United for Libraries Tools for Trustees.

The library board breakout box challenge is worth one continuing education credit for each library board member, library director, and library staff member that participates. If interested, please contact [Tammi Thiem](#).

There are several breakout challenges available for patrons, as well. You can view the options [here](#). These are available for anyone to use, and there are printed and laminated kits ready to go. If you would like assistance with the program, Tammi will be happy to schedule a time for this at your library.



Basic Skills

(* Required Class)

Communication*

Registration Dates: 1 December 2022 - 30 December 2022

Class Dates: 2 January 2023 - 31 January 2023

Customer Service* with Christa Porter

Registration Dates: 3 January 2023 - 28 January 2023

Class Dates: 7 February 2023 - 18 February 2023

Library Governance with Denise Harders

Registration Dates: 31 January 2023 - 28 February 2023

Class Dates: 7 March 2023 - 18 March 2023

Upcoming NCompass Live

Critical Hit! Tabletop Gaming in the Library

Date: 4 January 2023 at 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Best New Teen Reads of 2022

Date: 11 January 2023 at 10:00 am - 11:00 am

First Amendment Audits: What You Need to Know

Date: 18 January 2023 at 10:00 am - 11:00 am

Pretty Sweet Tech

Date: 25 January 2023 at 10:00 am - 11:00 am

NLC Book Club Spotlight

Book Club Spotlight:

[The Birchbark House](#)

Mackenzie Marrow is the librarian in charge of book clubs at the Nebraska Library Commission and wants to share with everyone the hidden gems in the [NLC's Book Club Collection](#). Below is an excerpt, but to read the full details go to [Mackenzie's blog post](#).

Excitable and brave spirited, Omakayas, or Little Frog, is a young Ojibwe girl who lives with her family near present-day Lake Superior. As white people begin to take over the land, Omakayas and her siblings continue their way of life while the adults fear that they must move soon. We follow the local community as they survive, learn important lessons and skills, and enjoy a peaceful life together. But when a sickly visitor crashes a powwow one night, he brings deadly smallpox to the area; and the course of the community and Omakayas' life are changed forever.

Calendar of Events

SKILLS Meeting

Online via Zoom

3 January 2023
10:00 am - 11:00 am

SKILLS Meeting

Online via Zoom

11 January 2023
11:00 am - 12:00 pm

SKILLS Meeting

Walthill Public Library

12 January 2023
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

SKILLS Meeting

Online via Zoom

19 January 2023
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

SKILLS Meeting

Online via Zoom

24 January 2023
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Summer Reading Workshop

Karlen Memorial Library (Beemer)

30 January 2023
9:30 am - 3:30 pm

SKILLS Meeting

Cedar Rapids Public Library

2 February 2023
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Big Talk From Small Libraries 2023

Online

24 February 2023
8:45 am - 5:00 pm

Library News

Stanton Public Library's Book Club

by Dorothy Fuller

Seven patrons attend a monthly in-person gathering upstairs in our library. We have been reading books ranging from *Bones of Paradise* by Jonis Agee to *The Art of Racing in the Rain* by Garth Stein to *The invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick. Quarterly, we pause to report on the "Book of the Reader's Choice." Our upcoming reads will include *Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah and *Touching Spirit Bear* by Ben Mikaelson. Questions keep the discussion lively. These programs are sustaining our readers until the library's ADA construction is complete.

Accreditation Recognition

The libraries below have been accredited. Congratulations for all your hard work! If you see someone from these libraries, be sure to congratulate them.

- Lois Johnson Memorial Library (Oakdale)
- Osmond Public Library

Tilden Public Library's Christmas Decor

by Cindy Simeon

Tilden Public Library recently put up their library themed Christmas tree!



Information Station

Brownstone Book Fund

One hundred fortunate libraries across Nebraska are to be the recipients of 100 books each thanks to the Brownstone Book Fund. The Brownstone Book Fund is a private foundation based in New York City, and it was founded by Diane and Clyde Brownstone in 1997. They select a different state each year for libraries to be gifted these brand-new books from Brodart. It will be exciting to see the community responses to these generous donations.

Onyx Deskset HD Video Magnifier

by Tammi Thiem

By now, all public libraries should have received their new Onyx Magnifier. [Here](#) is a video that explains how to use this device. This magnifier has been provided to each public library at no cost thanks to a partnership between the Nebraska Library Commission (NLC) and the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCBVI).

Please note that the magnifier will remain the property of the NCBVI. This will allow the agency to maintain the device as needed. They have found this to be a low-maintenance device that should last for quite some time. There is a two-year warranty attached to each unit along with lifetime tech support.

Be sure to promote this to your community so that your library patrons are aware of this wonderful service that is now available at your library.



Nebraska Homeowner Assistance Fund

by Maggie Adamson

My name is Maggie Adamson and I am working with [Nebraska Investment Finance Authority \(NIFA\)](#) to distribute information about the [Nebraska Homeowner Assistance Fund \(NHAf\)](#) throughout the state.

Knowing that individuals in need may be visiting libraries within your network, I wanted to share this information with libraries within your library system.

- The Nebraska Homeowner Assistance Fund (NHAf) provides relief to pandemic-impacted homeowners that have experienced a COVID-19 related financial hardship that began or continued after January 21, 2020
- The Nebraska Homeowner Assistance Fund (NHAf) has added assistance for past-due utilities and internet services, future payments for those with a deferred balance on their primary mortgage, and increased assistance for qualified homeowners from \$30,000 to \$40,000.
- The program continues to assist with past-due mortgage payments, past-due real estate taxes, past-due homeowner association dues, past-due homeowners or flood insurance, and clearing liens from a homeowner's property.
- [Income limits apply](#)
- Learn more at [NebraskaHAF.com](https://www.NebraskaHAF.com)

Information Station

Libraries Transform Communities: Engagement Grant

The Libraries Transform Communities Engagement Grant is an annual grant to recognize, promote, and support innovative and meaningful community engagement efforts in libraries. Community engagement is the process of working collaboratively with community members – be they library patrons, residents, faculty, students, or local organizations – to address issues for the betterment of the community.

Each year, the grant will focus on supporting a community engagement project with a specific theme. For the 2022-2023 cycle, libraries are invited to submit applications for a community engagement project that focuses on connection and reconnection with your community. Your project can be a collaboration with an audience that has not frequented your library in the past or an audience that has not used the library recently (for example, because of the pandemic). Libraries should work collaboratively with community members and at least one partner organization to develop a project that addresses a local issue and builds upon community assets. Please note that, while projects should be community-driven, they must be spearheaded by the library.

Applications for the 2022-2023 cycle are now open.

The Libraries Transform Communities Engagement Grant was made possible by former ALA president and longtime generous supporter Nancy Kranich, with additional contributions raised by solicitations and a matching opportunity in 2017.

- [Apply online](#)
- [Read the grant guidelines](#)
- [Review the frequently asked questions](#)

Read all about it at: <https://www.ala.org/tools/programming/LTCEG>

2023 One Book One Nebraska Winner

People across Nebraska are encouraged to read the work of a Nebraskan — and then talk about it with their friends and neighbors. [The Mystery of Hunting's End](#) (Bison Books, 1998) by Mignon Eberhart is the 2023 One Book One Nebraska selection.

The Mystery of Hunting's End is a 1930s chiller, inspired and set in the Sand Hills of Nebraska, where Mignon G. Eberhart lived as a newlywed. Smack in the middle of the rolling desolation is Hunting's End, a weekend lodge owned by the rich Kingery family. To that place socialite Matil Kingery invites a strange collection of guests — the same people who were at the lodge when her father died of "heart failure" exactly five years ago. She intends to find out which one of them murdered him. The selection committee for the 2023 One Book One Nebraska enjoyed the concept of a mystery.

The TRaiLS Office currently has 10 copies available to borrow for your book club. Get in touch with Chelsea to schedule borrowing for your library. Also, read more about this year's OBON choice at [the Nebraska Center for the Book website](#).

Scholarship Experiences

Association for Library Service to Children's National Institute

by Wendy Lukert

Thank you so much to the Three Rivers Library System for the Continuing Education Scholarship I received to attend the Association for Library Service To Children's National Institute in Kansas City, Missouri from September 29th to October 1st . It was so nice to be back at a conference in person to network and share ideas with. I met so many children's librarians from around the country and learned so much about their libraries and programs.

This Institute kept us very busy, and I gathered several new ideas. We also had the opportunity to hear several different authors speak about their books, the writing process that they used and on topics that are currently effecting libraries now such as censorship. Some of the authors that spoke were Christina Soontornvat, Adam Gidwitz, Hena Kan and Young Vo to name a few. One of the interesting takeaways that stuck with me was when Young Vo was talking about his upcoming book and that originally the characters were animals. One of his author friends asked why Asian children couldn't represent all kids and he stated, he had never seen himself growing up as a main character representing all kids. So, he did decide to change his characters from animals to children representing himself.

There were several smaller break out sessions throughout Friday and Saturday. One of the most interesting ones that I attended was Imagine That! Rethinking Play at the Library. The presentation was done by two librarians from Wisconsin. They discussed how originally a lot of the play activities were directed by adults and where with items that were mainly designed to be used in a specific way. They started researching AnjiPlay, which is an educational approach created in Anji County China by Cheng Xueqin. They have restructured play activities to be children led using items that can be used many ways. The one librarian has travelled to China several times to work with Cheng Xueqin to develop their program even more. I went to this presentation twice to catch anything I might have missed.

I also really enjoyed the Wake Up Your Musicianship for More Inclusive Storytimes. It helped to reinforce the fact that even though I may not be on key when singing that it doesn't matter. The children love to be included in the music and actions. We were also encouraged to step outside our comfort zone and learn songs in other languages and share them with the children and one of the best ways is to ask some of the parents and caregivers that speak other languages to help teach you and the children the words in the other language. I currently do not have a very diverse demographic at my story times, but in the future I hope to be able to use this information to learn some of the songs that we use in other languages so that all attendees feel comfortable.

Again, thank you so much for awarding me the scholarship so that I could attend this institute. I am looking forward to the next institute in 2024 in Denver.

Scholarship Experiences

2022 ARSL Conference

by Shay Snow

The 2022 ARSL Conference was an absolutely spectacular experience! I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to go. This was my first time attending an ARSL Conference, and I hope our library will attend many more ARSL events in the future. This incredible event was filled with insightful presentations, networking opportunities, and discussions.

Every conference presentation was impactful and practical for small and rural libraries. My coworker and I learned something new from each presentation, and we brought that knowledge back with us to our library. We brought back knowledge about grant writing, marketing, censorship, programming, and so much more!

We had many opportunities to chat with other small and rural librarians. We face so many similar challenges at our library every day! Regional roundtables and a crossroads lunch provided great networking opportunities. We learned so much from connecting with librarians from similar libraries. We even had the chance to talk with presenters about their presentations. The networking and problem-solving opportunities at ARSL were reason enough to want to come back next year.

The panelists during the lunch discussion "Up to the Challenge: Facing Censorship Head-On" were phenomenal! This energizing discussion from Aisha Saeed, Whitney Kimball Coe, and Connie Behe brought new and different perspectives to a discussion that we often have in libraries. Everyone attending this lunch could look freshly at facing censorship in their own libraries. We absolutely brought new perspectives back to our community.

Thank you so much to the Committee for providing me with a scholarship to attend this conference. I am very appreciative of the Committee's support and the way it has wonderfully impacted our small library. We are excited to continue implementing and learning! Thank you!

Humanities Program: Marking Nebraska with Jeff Barnes

by Donna Christiansen

The Plainview Public Library would like to thank the Three Rivers Library System for the grant for the Humanities Nebraska presentation: "Marking Nebraska" by Jeff Barnes on October 2nd, 2022.

Our community members and others from surrounding communities really enjoyed learning about Marking Nebraska: Our (Mostly) Hidden Historical Monuments by Jeff Barnes.

Author/photographer Jeff Barnes shared images and stories of Nebraska's lesser known historical monuments, some placed far off the beaten path. This is our state's "hidden history," with long-forgotten stories and rarely seen landscapes, such as the impact of glaciers on our community monuments, or how Nebraska's first marker nearly went to the bottom of the Missouri and – once placed at its permanent site – still disappeared for fifty years.



THREE RIVERS LIBRARY
SYSTEM PRESENTS:



Get together virtually with librarians to Share Knowledge, Ideas, Learning, and Library Solutions! You are welcome to join any or all of the meetings for networking and discussions. They will be worth 1 Continuing Education Credits each.

Research has shown that networking with fellow librarians is beneficial professional development that improves professional practice, promotes shared leadership, and helps people remain in the profession. To attend, please use [this Zoom Link](#).

3 January 2023 from 10:00 am - 11:00 am

11 January 2023 from 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

19 January 2023 from 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

24 January 2023 from 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm



This activity is supported in part with funding from the State of Nebraska and from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provision of the Library Services and Technology Act administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.

THREE RIVERS LIBRARY
SYSTEM PRESENTS:



This Quarter's Topic: Fundraisers

Get together with librarians near you to Share Knowledge, Ideas, Learning, and Library Solutions! You are welcome to join any or all of the meetings for networking and discussions. They will be worth 3 Continuing Education Credits each. If your plans allow, stick around for lunch afterwards.

Research has shown that networking with fellow librarians is beneficial professional development that improves professional practice, promotes shared leadership, and helps people remain in the profession. Do NOT feel guilty when you leave your library for these meetings because isolation is unproductive.

Register at: <http://bit.ly/SKILLSMeeting>

12 January 2023 from 9:00 am - Noon at Walthill Public Library

2 February 2023 from 9:00 am - Noon at Cedar Rapids Public Library



This activity is supported in part with funding from the State of Nebraska and from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provision of the Library Services and Technology Act administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.

THREE RIVERS LIBRARY SYSTEM PRESENTS:

SUMMER READING WORKSHOP

Unite with Sally Snyder, the Nebraska Extension Office, and Tammi Thiem for ideas for Summer Reading Programming. We'll have an open forum for librarians to share ideas. Be sure to bring ideas or crafts to share with your fellow librarians.

30 January 2023
from 9:30 am - 3:30 pm

at Karlen Memorial Library (Beemer)
4 CE available

Registration: \$5
Register Online: <http://bit.ly/trlsSRP>

This activity is supported in part with funding from the State of Nebraska and from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provision of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.