

Straight*talk*

News For And About The Libraries Of Northeast Nebraska

MAY, 2008 - Published by the Northeast Library System
Kathy Ellerton - System Administrator/Editor



Wiis, Miis, and the Olympics

Get ready to play baseball, dance your socks off or race for Olympic gold this summer at your library. The Nebraska Regional Library Systems have been awarded a 2008 Library Improvement Grant from the Nebraska Library Commission for purchasing a Wii gaming kit. Each kit contains a Wii console, two controllers, two nunchuks, directions for a quick setup, directions for making miis (avatars), a carrying case, and games for use by Nebraska libraries. The Northeast Library System has, in addition to Wii Sports, Dance Dance Revolution (DDR) and Sonic and Mario at the Olympics. The kit can be checked out for a week to 10 days depend-

ing on your library's event. Libraries borrowing the kit are expected to play the games on a television or use a projector.

In addition, each library system purchased a copy of 'Gamers ...in the Library' by Eli Neiburger. This book is full of practical advice on planning your event, promoting it and setting up a tournament. It is highly recommended that you check out the book from the system office before setting up your tournament.

Why Gaming? A large proportion of today's population enjoy gaming. Video game consoles in the home have increased steadily. According to the 2006 Nielsen Report, "The State of the Console", more than half of the total US population had access to at least one video game system. The percentage is even higher among key demographic segments. Two-thirds of all men aged 18-34 and 80% aged 12-17 have access to a console in their home. And video games are not limited to the male gender. Half of all teenage girls used a console at least one minute per day. And don't forget the retirees. 23.5% of women and 26.3% of men over the age of 50 own a gaming console.

Video games are social activities, test problem-solving skills, develop identity and more importantly provide a field for practice of leadership and team skills. According to Steven Johnson, author of "Everything Bad is Good For You: How Today's Popular Culture Is Actually Making Us Smarter", video games can teach critical thinking skills. "Far more than books or movies or music, games forces you to



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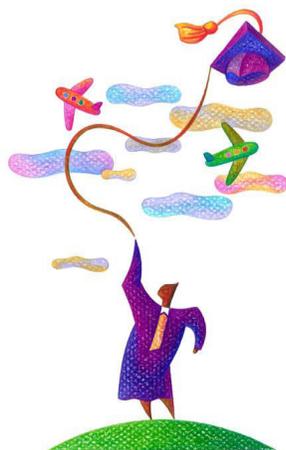
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make decisions. Novels may activate our imagination, and music may conjure up powerful emotions, but games force you to decide to choose, to prioritize."

Gaming and literacy have a strong connection. Gaming motivates younger children to read. When learning how to play a video game, children learn to read commands like SAVE. As they get older and learn about finding 'cheats' on the Internet, kids increase their reading and spelling skills. As children get older and games provide a more complex back-story, children read stories before actually playing the game. And gaming provides an incentive towards reading as children want to read more about their favorite characters, they may wish to read fan-fiction on the Internet. Even better yet, they may wish to write stories about their favorite characters and post it themselves.

Books are isolating while a video game is a social activity. Books sequester the user to a private, quiet space while gaming helps young people build social relationships with their peers. Even if one person is playing, there is always another person hanging over their shoulder telling him/her how to play the game. According to Richard Jenkins, author of "Reality Bytes: Eight Myths About Video Games Debunked", almost 60 percent of frequent gamers play with friends. Thirty-three percent play with siblings and twenty-five percent play with spouses or parents. Even games designed for single players are often played socially, with one person giving advice to another holding a joystick."

Video gaming is widely promoted for attracting young people to the library. However, more and more seniors are turning to video games to keep their minds nimble. The love of games and the thrill of competition does not get turned off when a person retires. Instead, they start Wii bowling leagues! Watch seniors enjoying video games in the video "Ericsson Nintendo Wii Bowling Championship" on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pzp8S_7yspM.

This is the perfect chance for you to try a gaming event at your library before purchasing your own equipment. Give the system office a call today at 1-800-578-1014 and reserve the gaming kit today.





File Compatibility Issues with Microsoft Office 2007

In the past few months, I've spoken with a number of users who are unable to open certain Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint files, usually received as email attachments. All of these problematic files had one thing in common: their normal three-letter file extensions were all appended with an "x" (e.g., .docx).

In case you didn't already know, the "x" indicated that these files were most likely created in Microsoft Office 2007 and saved in new default file formats based on the Extensible Markup Language (XML), an open standard. Microsoft calls this new open standard Office Open XML (OpenXML), which was designed to make it easier to move data and files between disparate applications and also to produce file sizes smaller than those saved in the older binary file formats (e.g., .doc, .dot, .xls, .ppt).

While I applaud Microsoft's decision to move away from proprietary binary file formats to open standard, XML-based file formats, the change has caused a bit of grief for those who are perfectly content using earlier versions of Office, which based on my observations includes most of our member libraries, and probably the majority of Office users everywhere.

Fortunately, Microsoft has provided the multitudes of pre-Office 2007 users with a relatively simple solution to file compatibility issues (other than biting the bullet and upgrading to Office 2007). Microsoft has released a Compatibility Pack that enables users of Office 2000, XP, and 2003 to open, edit, and save files using the file formats new to Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007. And for those who are using even earlier versions of Office or who don't have Office installed at all, the Compatibility Pack can also be used in conjunction with the Office Word Viewer 2003, Excel Viewer2003, and PowerPoint Viewer 2003 to view files saved in the new formats.

To download the "Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007 File Formats," visit <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/> (it's the most popular Microsoft download at this time). Please note that Microsoft recommends you install all high-priority updates from Microsoft Update before downloading the Compatibility Pack.

If you currently use Office 2007 and frequently share files with others who haven't upgraded or need to work on your files on another computer that doesn't have Office 2007 installed, there are several things you can do to ensure compatibility with previous versions of Office.

For one, you can easily save individual files in the old formats. For example, if you are working in Word 2007, just select "Word 97-2003 Document (*.doc)" from the Save as type drop-down list in the Save As dialog box.

You can even go a step further and save files in the old formats by default. For example, in Word 2007, click the Office button, then the Word Options button, and then select Save in the left pane. In the Save documents section, choose "Word 97-2003 Document (*.doc)" from the Save files in this format drop-down list. Please note that when you save a file in the old format that was originally created in the new one, a message may pop up advising that some of the formatting and features that are only supported by Office 2007 programs will be lost.

Office 2007 also introduced a new feature called Compatibility Mode, which ensures that the files you



create in Office 2007 don't contain any features that are not supported by earlier versions of Office. Compatibility Mode is automatically turned on when you open a file that was saved in the old file format, when you convert a file from the new format to the old one, or when you configure Office 2007 to save to the old file format by default. In Word 2007, Compatibility Mode also turns on if you create a new document from an old-format template (.dot). For more information about Compatibility Mode, including long lists of features that are impacted by using it, see <http://technet.microsoft.com/enus/library/cc178998.aspx>.

Finally, Office 2007 features a compatibility checker to detect any features that are not supported by earlier versions of Office. To manually run the compatibility checker on a Word, Excel, or PowerPoint 2007 document, just click on the Office button, select Prepare, and then click on Run Compatibility Checker. Compatibility Checker will then display a list of any incompatible content in the document. Compatibility Checker also runs automatically when you save a file in the old format.



Nebraska 211

The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center, in partnership with the Nebraska Library Commission, is pleased to let you know about 2-1-1, a service that makes it easier for Nebraskans to find information about human services in their communities and throughout the state. Through 2-1-1, information is available about a wide variety of health and human services, including homeless shelters, transitional

housing, health care, financial assistance, food banks, mental health care and counseling, crisis lines, utility assistance, substance abuse programs, recreation programs, mentoring programs, community services, volunteering, disaster relief, and much more. This information is free, 24/7, and may be accessed in two ways:

Web site – point your Internet browser to <http://www.ne211.org>

The ne211.org site works best with Firefox 2 (<http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox>) or Internet Explorer 7 (<http://www.google.com/toolbar/ie7>).

Telephone -- dial 2-1-1 to speak with a certified information and referral specialist at the 2-1-1 resource center (a list of the 38 Nebraska counties and 8 southwest Iowa counties where 2-1-1 is available can be found at http://www.ne211.org/dial_211.php)

Some businesses, cell/wireless companies and pay phones do not allow access to the 2-1-1 dialing code; in these cases, you may reach the 2-1-1 resource center by dialing (402) 444-6666

We encourage you to try out 2-1-1 – both the Web site and the call center!

Here are some other ideas about how to let your library customers know about 2-1-1:

- Print out a 2-1-1 information tent (http://www.ne211.org/download_info.php) and post by your public use Internet-connected computers
- Add a link to ne211.org from your public library Web site
- Include an article about 2-1-1 in your library newsletter or email distribution group news



2008 Nebraska Golden Sower Award winners

Primary

Winner: The Great Fuzz Frenzy by Janet Stevens & Susan Stevens Crummel, illus. Janet Stevens

Honor: Mrs. McBloom, Clean Up Your Classroom! by Kelly DiPucchio
Tooth Fairy's First Night by Anne Bowen, illus. Jon Berkeley

Intermediate

Winner: The World According to Humphrey by Betty G. Birney

Honor: The Stupendous Dodgeball Fiasco by Janice Repka, illus. Glin Dibley
The SOS File by Betsy Byars, Betsy Duffey, and Laurie Myers

Young Adult

Winner: The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan

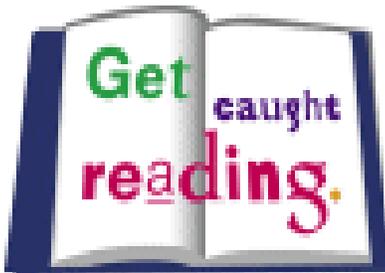
Honor: Ugliers by Scott Westerfeld
The Perfect Shot by Elaine Marie Alphin

Golden Sower web site: <http://www.goldensower.org/index.htm>

Straight-Talk is published ten times per year by the Northeast Library System. Contact Kathy Ellerton or Sheila Cermak at the Northeast Library System Office from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. C.S.T. at 1-800-578-1014 (402)- 564-1586 (Voice) (402)-276-0583 (Cell) (402)-564-7977 (FAX).

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May is the month to Get Caught Reading in Nebraska libraries. Get Caught Reading is a nationwide campaign to remind people of all ages how much fun it is to read. Check out the many ideas for promoting literacy in your community at www.getcaughtreading.org. Also, Google "get caught reading" for more great ideas from a other libraries.

Children's Book Week also takes place May 12-19. The Children's Book Council is nonprofit trade association of publishers of children and young adult books and materials. CBC has a webpage at www.bookweekonline.com/index1.html which offers a history of Children's Book Week, free posters and activities guide. Children's Book Week is sponsor the first ever Children's Choice Book Awards. This is a national children-selected book awards program, that gives children have a chance to vote online for their favorite books.





Check Your Calendar

May 21 - **Northeast Library System Board Meeting** at Royal Public Library at 10am.

May 22 - **Statewide Open Source ILS Symposium** at Hitchcock Humanities Center, Bellevue University.

May 26 - **Memorial Day.** Office closed.

June 4 - **"Conflict Management for Consenting Adults"** with Pat Wagner, Holiday Inn Express, Norfolk.

June 5 - **Northeast Library System Annual Meeting & Workshops**, Dusters, Columbus. Keynote speaker: Pat Wagner.

June 9-10 **Nebraska Library Futures Conference**, at St Benedict Center near Schuyler.

July 4 - **Independence Day** holiday. Office closed.

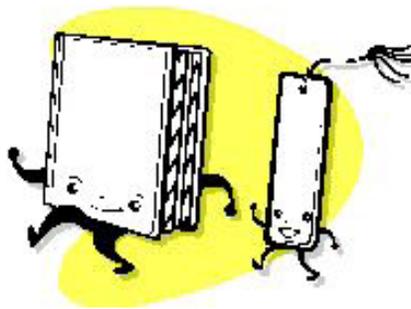
July 16 - **Northeast Library System Board Meeting** at 10am. Location TBA.

July 18 - **State Advisory Council on Libraries Meeting** in Chadron, at 9am. Location TBA.

July 26 - **Norfolk Public**

Library's 14th Annual Literature Festival at Lifelong Learning Center at 9am.

Aug. 12 - **NEBASE Annual Meeting - East** at Cornhusker Hotel, Lincoln. Topics TBA.



New @ NLS

Keep'em Reading Bulletin Boards by Ben De Soto, Alseyde Press, 2001.

A collection of 20 bulletin board patterns that feature friendly characters or children reading books. Each theme includes reading and book-related slogans, a suggested board design, pieces designed for easy copying, and display suggestions.

Mother Goose on the Loose by Betsy Diamant-Cohen, Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2006.

Diamant-Cohen uses books, songs, instruments, rhymes, and props to promote early literacy, school-readiness, and other skills in children up to age two. This binder-and-CD kit provides overviews of early development and MGOLs ben-

efits, program instructions and scripts in print and audio formats, evaluation tools, songs, rhymes, tips to share with parents, flannel-board patterns, templates, and promotional resources. Clear instructions for the structured program are given, making this an essential resource for MGOL implementation. CD is included.

Training Library Staff and Volunteers to Provide Extraordinary Customer Service by Julie Todaro and Mark L. Smith, Neal-Schuman, 2006.

Here is a training manual that gives you the "what to say" and "what to do" to make that goal a reality. Smith and Todaro offer guidance for training employees at all levels. They show you in detail how to integrate a customer service focus and training into a variety of staff and volunteer interactions—job interviews, orientations, employee reviews, and in-service training. The authors suggest standards for what employees should know on day one, after the first week, after the first month, etc. This book includes role-playing suggestions and scripts for specific and difficult scenarios, guidelines for establishing policies, and a glossary.





Mother Goose arrived at the **Hartington Public Library** to help celebrate National Library Week. She read nursery rhymes and stories to the children. Darel Draper, Nebraska Humanities Council speaker, presented a living history program on J. Sterling Morton, Found of Arbor Day, during the week.

Raymond A. Whitwer Tilden Public Library held an open house for the traveling exhibit, "Between Fences." The exhibit explores the meaning of the fence from colonial times through the settlement of the Great Plains to today's fencing of our southern border. Nebraska Humanities Council speaker Warren Rodgers presented the program, "Fencing, the Windmill, and the Steel Plow."

Elgin author Mary Avidano has been busy with book signings at the **Elgin Public Library** and the **Raymond A. Whitwer Tilden Public Library**. The author has recently published a new book, "The Zebra's Friend and Other Poems". Ms. Avidano shared selections from the book and other poetry she has written.



"You won't recognize it", said Barbee Sweet, **Clarks Public Library** Director. The basement of the library is being remodeled and the project is expected to be finished by the fall.

The **Lied Randolph Public Library** has lots of activities planned for Summer Breakout 2008. On Tuesday May 20th Tina Collison from the Yoga Pilates Studio in Norfolk held a workshop for girls preschool thru sixth grade. Participants will learn about yoga & pilates, make flip flops to take home and have a pedicure.



Wayne's 2nd grade class "MUSHED" their way to the **Wayne Public Library**, pulling an Iditarod dog sled. The 2nd grade instructor has been to the race several times and the library display case was full of memorabilia.



Library Card Applications in Many Languages Available

The Connecticut State Library has had sample library card applications translated into 15 languages in order to help their libraries enhance their services to immigrants. Connecticut has generously offered to share these translations with libraries in other states.

You can access them at:

<http://ct.webjunction.org/do/DisplayContent?id=19934>.

The card applications are in Word and pdf and each one includes English and the other language.

The languages are:

- Albanian
- Arabic
- Bosnian/Serbo Croatian
- Chinese - Simplified
- Chinese - Traditional
- French
- French Creole
- Hindi
- Korean
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Urdu
- Vietnamese



Author Ben Mikaelson, author of 'Rescuing Josh Maguire', entertained students and faculty at Plainview Elementary on April 18th. Ben's talk was very inspirational as he spoke about his unusual upbringing and living with Buffy, his black bear.



Election Books for Young People

AMERICANA ADVENTURE: A LOOK AGAIN BOOK

Michael Garland

Tommy, the star of the Look Again series, is on the hunt for clues leading him on a magical cross-country road trip through America's great places and iconic traditions. 2008.

CLASS PRESIDENT

Louis Sachar

The president of the United States is on his way to Marvin's classroom! 1999.

DOLLEY MADISON SAVES GEORGE WASHINGTON

Don Brown

Don Brown once again deftly tells a little known story about a woman who made a significant contribution to American history. 2007.

THE FLAG MAKER

Susan Campbell Bartoletti Illustrated by Claire A. Nivola

Here in lyrical prose is the story of the flag that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the words that became the national anthem of the United States. 2004.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S TEETH

Deborah Chandra and Madeleine Comora, Illustrated by Brock Cole.

George Washington suffered his whole life with tooth problems. This reverentially funny tale written in verse tells readers what really happened. 2008.

GRACE FOR PRESIDENT

Kelly DiPucchio Illustrated by LeUyen Pham

When Grace's teacher reveals that the United States has never had a female president, Grace decides to be the first. An inspiring example of how we choose our leaders. 2008.

THE GREAT WHITE HOUSE BREAKOUT

elen Thomas Illustrated by Chip Bok

Author Helen Thomas, the "Dean" of the White House Press Corps, takes readers on an adventure as Sam, the First Kid, escapes the White House and takes a grand tour of our nation's capital. 2008.

LARUE FOR MAYOR: LETTERS FROM THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Mark Teague

Canine everyman Ike LaRue returns to take on the political machine in this gleeful tale, the third picture book in Mark Teague's best selling, award winning Dear Mrs. Larue series. 2008.

MADAM PRESIDENT

Lane Smith

A little girl imagines what her day would be like if she were Madam President. There would be executive orders to give, babies to kiss, tuna casseroles to veto (or VETO!)...and so much more! 2008 .

MY SENATOR AND ME: A DOG'S-EYE VIEW OF WASHINGTON D.C.

Edward M. Kennedy, Illustrated by David Small.

Living legends Ted Kennedy and David Small team up to provide a smart, funny, and affectionate look at life in our nation's capital from the perspective of the senator and his very perceptive dog. 2006.



MY TEACHER FOR PRESIDENT

Kay Winters, Illustrated by Denise Brunkus.

Images of Oliver's teacher depicted during a typical school day are contrasted with scenes of his heroine carrying out presidential duties. 2008.

OTTO FOR PRESIDENT

Rosemary Wells

A hilarious and satisfying election story about a dog running for class president. It details all the steps he has to go through to get elected—and then stick to his promises once elected!. 2008.

SO YOU WANT TO BE PRESIDENT?

Judith St. George, Illustrated by David Small.

Deluxe paperback version of the Caldecott Medal-winning classic, fully updated with current facts on all our nation's presidents. 2008

STAND TALL ABE LINCOLN: A TURNING POINT BOOK

Judith St. George, Illustrated by Matt Faulkner.

The story of Abraham Lincoln, who grew up poor and without schooling in a Kentucky wilderness, and went on to become America's sixteenth and most popular and respected president. 2007.

VOTE!

Eileen Christelow

Using a town's mayoral election, this lively introduction to voting covers every step in the process, from the start of the campaign all the way to the voting booth. 2008.

A WOMAN FOR PRESIDENT: THE STORY OF VICTORIA WOODHULL

Kathleen Krull, Illustrated by Jane Dyer

Victoria Woodhull was the first woman to run for president (against Ulysses S. Grant in 1872), and the first woman to have a seat on the American stock exchange. 2008.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT ALICE

Barbara Kerley, Illustrated by Edwin Fotheringham

A witty and stylish picture-book biography of a maverick American heroine—the outspoken, irresistible daughter of Teddy Roosevelt. 2008.

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**Summer Tech Institute '08
June 9 & 10th**

8:30AM ~ 3:15PM
Lifelong Learning Center - Northeast Community College
801 East Benjamin Avenue - Norfolk NE

Registration: \$15 day, \$25 both days - Workshops: \$5 each ~ Lunch On You Own ~

There will NOT be any on-line registration . You MUST register by phone. Call Wendy, Sarah or Joleen at ESU #1 office at (402) 287-2061 You will be officially registered for the workshop once ESU #1 receives your check or purchase order.

Workshops	Date	Time
W1 (16) ANGEL-BEG	June 9, 2008	All Day
W2 (16) ANGEL-ADV	June 10, 2008	All Day
W3 (10) CREATIVE CURRICULUM	June 9, 2008	PM
W4 (15) QUICK PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS	June 9, 2008	PM
W5 (DL) STRATEGIES & DL EQUIPMENT	June 9, 2008	PM
W6 (30) VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS	June 10, 2008	AM-45
W7 (30) VIRTUAL FIELD TRIPS	June 10, 2008	PM-45
W8 (12) GARAGEBAND	June 9, 2008	AM
W9 (13) OPEN OFFICE	June 9, 2008	PM
W10 (13) NEBRASKA ACCESS	June 9, 2008	AM
W11 (15) PODCASTING	June 10, 2008	AM
W12 (15) QUICK PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS	June 10, 2008	PM
W13 (15) PODCASTING-If needed**	June 9, 2008	AM
W14 (12) GARAGEBAND - if NEEDED**	June 9, 2008	PM

Classroom Instruction

Podcasting, Web 2.0 tools, iMovie, Open Office, Paperless Classroom, Clickers, Interactive Boards, Elementary Classroom Applications, Virtual Field Trips, Patriotic America, Classroom Apps for High Ability Learners, Zoho and More, Creative Curriculum, Digital Citizenship, Nvu, Jazz Up Your Lessons in 5 Minutes, Gaggle, Internet Safety, Free Graphic Software, MS Office Projects for Elementary, Webquest in the Classroom, Using Audacity, Classroom Apps for Special Needs, Technology Apps for HS teachers, Interactive White Boards, MIMIO, InspireData

DL Strategies

ANGEL (basics—first day), ANGEL (advanced- using Angel in the classroom), Strategies and Equipment, NROC

On-line Curriculum/Management

NROC, OdysseyWare

Foreign Language

LinguaFolio into your Classroom, Great Websites, Using Podcasting & GarageBand in the Spanish Classroom, On-line Spanish

Media

Nebraska Access, PowerMedia Plus , Dr. Pasco, Web 2.0 Tools in the Library, New AASL Standards NE Nebraska Access, Virtual Field Trips

Fine Arts

Photoshop Elements, Quick Photoshop Elements, GarageBand, Music Practice Software, I Can't Believe This Was Done In Garageband.

LAN Managers

NOC Strand Security, Setting up VLANS, Window Management Client, Apple Client Management, Virtualization,



NORFOLK PUBLIC LIBRARY'S 14TH ANNUAL LITERATURE FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2008 / 9:00 A. M. - 4:00 P. M.
NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE / LIFELONG LEARNING CENTER
801 East Benjamin Avenue, Norfolk, NE

This year's Festival has been funded by the Norfolk Library Foundation, the City of Norfolk, & SCYP.

FEATURING:

DOUGLAS WOOD

2009 Golden Sower Award nominee for NOTHING TO DO

Also author of OLD TURTLE—OLD TURTLE AND THE BROKEN TRUTH—A QUIET PLACE—WHAT DADS CAN'T DO—WHAT MOMS CAN'T DO—WHAT GRANDMAS CAN'T DO—WHAT TEACHERS CAN'T DO—THE THINGS TREES KNOW—HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

CYNTHIA LORD

2009 Golden Sower Award nominee for RULES

Also author of TOUCH BLUE

HAN NOLAN

2009 Golden Sower Award nominee for A SUMMER OF KINGS

Also author of WHEN WE WERE SAINTS—IF I SHOULD DIE BEFORE I WAKE—SEND ME DOWN A MIRACLE—DANCING ON THE EDGE—A FACE IN EVERY WINDOW—BORN BLUE

ALSO: 2008-2009 Golden Sower Previews by Karen Drevo & Marci Retzlaff; Book Display & Discount Sales by Norfolk Public Library Foundation of titles by Wood, Lord, & Nolan; Sales of Golden Sower Items; Autograph Session/Book Signing with Douglas Wood, Cynthia Lord & Han Nolan; Door Prizes; 5 Continuing Education Hours (for all day attendance) from the Nebraska Library Commission for School & Public Librarians; 5 Professional Growth Points (for all day attendance) for Teachers/Staff employed by Norfolk Public Schools

TICKETS: Youth (18 & under): \$5.00/advance & \$7.50/door
Adults: \$20.00/advance & \$25.00/door

!Free admission for current SCYP members!

Advance tickets are available at Norfolk Public Library OR by mail order. To order tickets by mail, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope with full payment (make checks payable to "Norfolk Library Foundation--Literature Festival") to:

Literature Festival
Norfolk Public Library
308 Prospect Avenue
Norfolk, NE 68701

For more information, contact Karen Drevo at NPL by phone (402/844-2108) or e-mail kdrevo@ci.norfolk.ne.us

A wonderful way to spend a summer day FOR LITERATURE LOVERS OF ALL AGES!



The Reviewer's Chair

One for All—All for One

By Brigitte Wininger

Illustrations by Eve Tharlet. This is a sweet book about a little mouse finding his way in the world with the help of friends he meets along the way. This story teaches an important lesson, that everyone had strengths and weaknesses and is made to be part of a group. The illustrations are sweet and will catch children's attention and hold their interest.

This book would be a great addition to any library and would be suitable for children from preschool through early elementary.

Looking for Normal

By Betty Monthei

Annie and Ted's Daddy can't seem to hold a job. He resents getting help from his in-laws because they looked down on him when Mamma and he had to get married young. Daddy has been drinking more and more. He yells at them a lot and hits Mamma.

One day, the principal calls Annie and Ted out of class. Their stern grandmother is there to

take them to live with her and quiet grandpa. Daddy shot Mamma and then himself. Life will never be the same. The author writes this sad story with sensitivity and empathy. It almost seems that it came from personal experience. The affects of alcohol and spousal abuse causes loss of love and life.

This may be a story to share with someone, who has lost someone because of similar circumstances. Its content is more for a middle or high school student. The reading level is 5.2.

~~Claudette Wielechowski,
North Platte, NE

Best Friends: The True Story of Owen and Mzee

By Roberta Edwards

This is a great story about a baby hippo and how he loses his mother and comes to live at the zoo. He meets a tortoise called Owen and they become great friends.

The special feature of this book is a map and that it is a science level reader. This level reader book is easy to select for certain readers. This is a great book and has true information in the story. I recommend it for school and public libraries for kindergarten through 1st grade.

~~Angie Vavra, Pierce, NE

The Game

By Diana Wynne Jones

Hayley is sent to live with

her aunt after she angers her grandmother for some unknown reason. When she arrives she finds a world of kids and fun that she has never known before. She is introduced to a game that takes her and her cousins into the mythosphere. Following strands she is taken in other worlds where she must perform a duty that will win her the prize. When Uncle Jolyon is told about the games he comes to punish Hayley and all who are participating. Hayley learns she has the power to overtake her uncle and free everyone from the punishments Jolyon has fostered on them.

This is a well written book. Adults who have an understanding of mythology will greatly appreciate the story the author weaves. Though an accelerated reader, use caution when recommending this book to young readers with lack of mythology knowledge. Reading level: 5th through 8th grade

~~Diane Limoges, Eastern Township Library

The Mine-O-Saur

By Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen

My story hour kids' aged K-2nd grade loved this book. It was something they had all had to deal with a time or two and so it held much interest for them.

Meet the little dinosaurs at school who have to play with Min-o-saur who doesn't like to share his belongings with others. The teacher tries to keep the little bully in line but



it takes several incidents and a show down where the other "saur" won't play with him to make him realize that if he doesn't learn to share times could be tough. The pictures are bright, large and colorful and lent much to the book.
 ~~Carol Tramp, Wynot Public School

Looking for Jaguar and other Rain Forest Poems By Susan Katz

This book has an interesting concept – combining poetry and an introduction to creatures large and small as well as the fauna of rain forests. From an anaconda to a walking tree, many of the organisms presented via rhythmical description will evoke wonder in young readers.

Dependent on the artwork to make the poetry understandable to very young users, this is a stimulating title to use in discussion and presentations about the relevance of poetry as a medium for introducing and understanding a variety of life forms in an environment.

The book also includes a short index at the back that provides a little more information about the subject of each poem. The audience for this book includes youngsters who will marvel at the illustrations but who will need to have the poems read to them, as well as students of poetry who should appreciate the intriguing illustrations.

I recommend this book for public and school libraries for grade 4 on up.
 ~~MeMe Smith, Schuyler Public Library

City of Dogs By Livi Michael

Jenny, a mysterious dog, shows up on Sam's birthday and is adopted by him and his mom. As she meets the other neighborhood dogs, she encourages them to help in her quest to prevent the destruction of the world.

If someone really likes mythology, they might like this book. I do enjoy some mythology but this was a difficult read. The mythological names were hard to pronounce and the chapters jumped back and forth as the author tried to establish what was happening, making it difficult to follow. If this is the first book someone reads that has mythological content, I would guess they won't enjoy it. For someone who has read much mythology and enjoys it, this might be for them.

By the title and description, I expected more when reading this book. Not as much fun as other books I've read with animal characters. I would hesitate to recommend it. The terms relating to mythology made it difficult to read and I enjoy reading mythology. And although it had mythological references in it, it was so far fetched at times I felt like I didn't want to continue reading.
 ~~Deb Daehnke, WSC

Passage

by Lois McMaster Bujold

Having his family exile him for marrying outside his community, former Lakewalker captain Dag and his beloved wife, the farmer's daughter Fawn head to her home, Bluefield Farm. His dream of an understanding between farmers, riverfolk and Lakewalkers shattered. However, all three groups question the need of change since a millennium of doing things in the old ways has kept the peace and restrained the deadly malices through Lakewalker control of "ground energy".

Dag and Fawn lease a houseboat from a riverfolk, but the owner and others and their boats mysteriously vanish soon after. Dag begins to investigate even as he begins to explore his expanding powers now that he has broken out of the Lakewalker limits. His ground-sense warns him a new deadly danger to the world order is coming as farmers settle into new lands and riverfolk extend their water world.

The third cerebral Sharing Knife fantasy 'see LEGACY and BEGUILEMENT' continues to explore the negative impact of prejudice on people. Each of the three prime groups has vivid pictures of how they see the other two races and cannot get past those beliefs.

Well written and exciting, I recommend this book for all public libraries.
 ~~Kathy Ellerton, NLS



EXCALIBUR AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING PUBLIC LIBRARIAN

The Public Library Section of the Nebraska Library Association accepts nominations for the Excalibur Award for Outstanding Public Librarian. This award honors the career accomplishments of a public librarian who has demonstrated an outstanding record of service to his/her local library and to the library profession.

The following categories suggest areas in which the nominee may have rendered significant service. Preference will be given to those nominees who have achieved excellence in more than one of these areas:

- Development of outstanding service in field(s) of expertise, e.g. reference, children's, technical, administrative.
- Involvement in statewide library service.
- Record of library leadership in local community, regional area or in the Nebraska Library Association.
- Encouragement of community/institutional support for the library.

The nominee must be a member of the Public Library Section of the Nebraska Library Association. Send a statement of nomination with a description of the nominee's contributions to any Excalibur Nomination Committee member. Supporting letters of nomination and other materials may also be submitted with nomination. Deadline for nominations is August 1.

Person Nominated _____

Library and Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Nominated By _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Send nomination forms by August 1 to:

2008 Excalibur Award Committee:
Diane Downer
ddowner@geringlibrary.org
(308) 436-7433
Gering Public Library
1055 P Street
Gering, NE 69341



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"There is a great deal of difference between an eager man who wants to read a book and the tired man who wants a book to read."

~~ G.K. Chesterton

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