



Your guide to the Nebraska Library Commission

N Compass

NEWSLETTER

FY98 & FY99 Biennium In Review

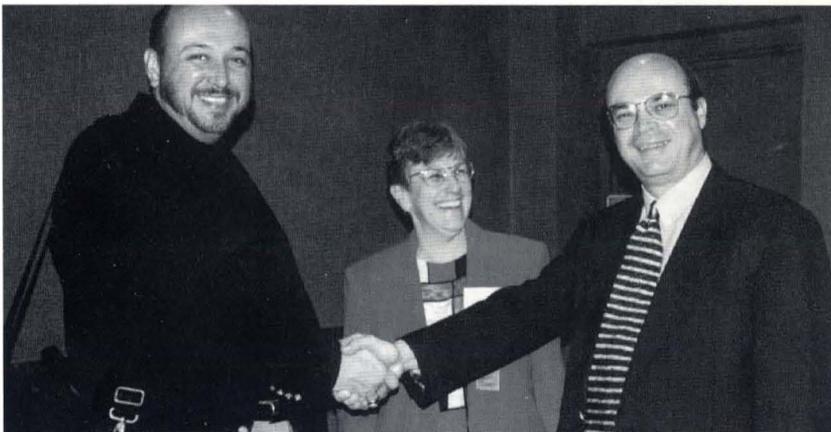
Vol. 6 No. 1

Databases Available Statewide

Four hundred thousand dollars in new state funding was added to the Library Commission's budget for fiscal year 1998-99.

This funding is the result of efforts by the Nebraska Library Association, State Advisory Council on Libraries, Nebraska Library Commission, and many other Nebraska library supporters. The new state funds are being used to contract for online databases, including full-text of articles from hundreds of journals and periodicals, for local public libraries, school media centers, and college libraries across the state. Some of the funds will be used to provide unlimited public access for all Nebraska libraries to the OCLC FirstSearch reference service at no charge to any Nebraska libraries for this service.

These databases provide librarians and library users with more cost effective access to online information resources. The cost for a single library to subscribe for a single user to access the package of OCLC



▲ Bowker's Ed McBride (left), the Commission's Jo Budler (center) and Rod Wagner, announce Nebraska is first to offer statewide access to Books in Print with Reviews.

FirstSearch databases is \$7,200. This is cost-prohibitive for most libraries. These services are being made available to all libraries across the state regardless of geographic location. Training for librarians and documentation and teaching aides assist librarians and library users in the use of electronic resources.

Nebraska libraries were also given the option to promote customer access to FirstSearch from computers outside the library. Many libraries distributed bookmarks to encourage customers to get help for

information needs from their homes or offices.

Funds were also used to offer libraries online access to *Books in Print with Reviews*, *Electric Library*, and *Health Source Plus*. The 1999 Legislature allocated \$150,000 per year in new state aid funding in addition to the \$400,000 allocated in FY 1999. For more information, see the Library Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Databases. ▲

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From the Director...

Biennium In Review

The 21st century—are we there yet? Not quite. There is still much unfinished business. While there is much thought and more worry about the arrival of the new century, this biennial report is intended to review and highlight activities and events of the past biennium. There is, though, a connection between the past and the year ahead.

Over the past few years, the Nebraska Library Commission, working with other library organizations, has promoted a vision that calls for “affordable, reliable, progressive, and equitable library service for all Nebraskans regardless of their economic status and geographic location.” This vision is a product of the work of the State Advisory Council on Libraries, Nebraska Library Association, regional library systems, library representatives, and citizens throughout Nebraska under the *Libraries for the 21st Century* theme. This theme has been central to a number of Library Commission activities—promotional, educational, and financial.

Among the successes of the past two years is an increase in funding with the appropriation of an additional \$550,000 in state funds to support the licensing of commercial online databases, other technology based services, and aid to libraries. The 1998 portion of these new funds (\$400,000) was used for commercial online database licensing and technology related training. An additional \$150,000 per year in new state funding was added by the Legislature and Governor for the upcoming biennium. The new funds have helped and will continue to support licensing for online resources made available through Nebraska’s public, academic, school, and special libraries. This was a major step forward in the multi-year campaign to increase the level of state aid for library services. The response has been tremendous. We look forward to continuing this effort and securing additional support to help Nebraska libraries provide services to Nebraskans.

The Nebraska Library Commission provides an array of services in carrying out its mission for statewide promotion, development, and coordination of library services. The summaries and highlights presented in this report underscore efforts of the Commission and of libraries across the state in providing the library services needed by the people of Nebraska. I hope readers will find useful information in this report on the work of the Library Commission during this past biennium. ▲
Rod Wagner

Funding/Grants FY98 & FY99

Grants

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Nebraska Center for the Book | \$15,000 |
| Children’s Services Grants | \$30,230 |
| Cooperative Library Grant (Saunders County) | \$2,400 |
| CHIRS (Consumer Health Information Resource Service) | \$11,984 |
| Statewide Database (IAC) | \$11,827 |
| Institutional Library Grants | \$21,500 |
| Public Library Technology Grants (Title I) | \$19,649 |
| Interlibrary Loan (Lender Compensation) | \$265,193 |
| Library Systems | \$1,282,362 |
| Public Library Construction & Technology | \$232,139 |
| State Aid to Public Libraries | \$672,747 |
| Urban Resource Libraries (MURLS) | \$79,407 |
| Nebraska Library Association | \$9,500 |
| Motion Picture Agreements for Public Libraries | \$10,065 |
| LSTA Grants | \$178,788 |
| Services for Visually Impaired (Newline Project) | \$10,000 |
| Modem and Internet Grants for OCLC Computers (CatExpress Libraries) | \$571 |
| Libraries for the 21st Century | |
| Online Databases | \$332,309 |
| Outreach | \$16,932 |
| OCLC CatExpress Libraries | \$23,660 |

Funding

| | |
|---------------|-------------|
| State Funds | \$6,164,677 |
| Federal Funds | \$2,026,254 |
| Cash Funds | \$206,100 |
| Other | \$47,262 |

Total Biennium Budget Expended: \$8,444,293

NCompass

NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Mary Jo Ryan
Design and Production: Joanne Crawford
Word Processing: Mary Geibel
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FY 1998 & 1999 Biennium In Review

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Commissioners: Jean Sanders, Lincoln, term expires 1999; Karen Warner, Norfolk, term expires 2000; Robert King, Holdrege, term expires 2000; Wally Seiler, Alliance, term expires 2001; Richard Jussel, Kearney, term expires 2001. Commission meetings are held the second Friday of every other month, or as scheduled by public action of the board.

Federal Funds to Nebraska Libraries

FY 98 federal grant process was delayed due to the replacement of the Library Services and Construction Act by the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

LSTA grants were awarded in October 1998.

Twenty-two public libraries and three library consortiums received a total of \$226,635. Projects ranged from funding CD-ROM towers and Internet access, to automating library catalogs and circulation systems and purchasing materials for non-English speakers.

A total of \$291,644 in 1999 LSTA Grants were awarded to public libraries and two library projects in 28 Nebraska communities to improve information technology services and/or improve information access for underserved populations.

Children's Grants for Excellence

The Commission awarded \$13,810 in Grants for Excellence in Children's Library Services to 15 libraries in 1998. Projects ranged from a television withdrawal program, to outreach materials for daycare centers and homeless shelters, and book buddies between high school seniors and grades 1-4.

In 1999, the Commission awarded \$16,420 in Grants for Excellence in Children's Library Services to 11 libraries. Projects ranged from services to children and parents in correctional facilities, to training children to use information resources, and multicultural awareness programs.

Commissioners/Staff FY98 & 99

First term Library Commission appointments: Katherine Fletcher, Omaha, effective February 1997 to June 1999; Robert King, Holdrege, effective August 1997 to June 2000; Wally Seiler, Alliance, effective June 1998 to June 2001; Richard Jussel, Kearney, effective June 1998 to June 2001; Velma Sims, Fremont, effective March 1999 to October 2001; Kristen Rogge, Johnson, effective June 1999 to June 2002. Karen Warner, Norfolk, was reappointed for a three-year term until June 2000. Frankie Lovell, Ron Norman, and Jean Sanders completed their second terms on the Commission. Katherine Fletcher resigned from her first term.

Arrivals

Kandi Thomas, Library Technician; **Richard Miller**, Library Development Director; **Bonnie Henzel**, Staff Assistant II; **Devra Dragos**, Librarian; **Kimberly Shelley**, Librarian; **Renee Ryan**, Library Technician; **Janet Mares**, Talking Book & Braille Service Cassette Maintenance Clerk; **Dan Hogan**, Talking Book & Braille Service Cassette Maintenance Clerk; **Jacque Crocker**,

Staff Assistant I; **Susan Knisely**, Online Services Librarian; **Diane Dreith**, Talking Book & Braille Service Cassette Maintenance Clerk; **Maria Medrano-Nehls**, Administrative Secretary; **Sarah LaBrie**, Talking Book & Braille Service Book Circulation/Readers Services Clerk

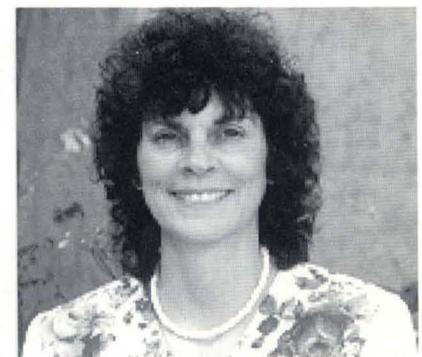
Departures

Kandi Thomas, Library Technician; **Annie Sternburg**, Librarian; **Angela Ames**, Office Clerk II; **Maria Ford**, Talking Book & Braille Service Cassette Maintenance Clerk; **Janet Mares**, Talking Book & Braille Service Circulation Clerk; **Kami Bulin**, Office Clerk III; **Burns Davis**, CM, Library Services Coordinator

Reclassifications

Mary Geibel, Secretary II; **Brad Hauptman**, Audio Tape Duplication Coordinator; **Kami Bulin**, Office Clerk III; **Paul Jacobson**, Library Audio Playback Equipment/Duplication Coordinator; **Doreen Kuhlmann**, Business Manager III; **Kathleen Keller**, Librarian; **Vern Buis**, IT Infrastructure Support Analyst Lead; **Dennis Klebe**, IT Infrastructure Support Analyst Senior; **Janet Greser**, IT Infrastructure Support Analyst Technician

Staff of the Year FY98 & 99



▲ Employee of the year, Lori Sailors (top) and Manager of the year, Lisa Brawner.

▲ Employee of the year, Janet Greser (top) and Manager of the year, Beth Goble

Commission Staff Join Lincoln Library Staff on Radio Booktalk

The Library Commission and Lincoln City Libraries staff joined forces to initiate a local radio

program promoting books and libraries. Booktalk, broadcast on Lincoln's community radio station KZUM (98.3 FM), reaches out to people who like to read and who like to know what other people are reading (and why). Half a dozen booktalkers participate. Usually two or three on each particular program. The booktalk on-air talent include staff from the Lincoln City Libraries, Nebraska Library Commission, and other local organizations, not necessarily scholars or professors or academics, just ordinary people who like to read.

The booktalkers describe books, stories, and reading experiences that



▲ Lincoln novelist Mary Swick (left) talks about her recent book with Library Commission staff Mary Jo Ryan (center) and Kit Keller.

have made a difference in their lives; conduct author interviews and occasional call-in shows; and share information about favorite sites on the Internet World Wide Web. Booktalkers encourage book lovers across the state to start their own local Booktalk program. Lincolnites can listen to Booktalk in Lincoln at

6:30 P.M. on Wednesdays. Nebraskans outside the listening area who want help getting started on their own local radio show, can contact Mary Jo Ryan for tapes of past shows at 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjryan@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Library Commission Funds Systems

The award of \$1,259,771 in FY 97-99 grants funded

library support, training, and development assistance for

Nebraska libraries through Nebraska's six Regional Library Systems.

Each of the six Regional Library

Systems submitted a *Plan for Library Service 1997-99*. The Library Commission approved these plans and funded the new agreements, representing a 6% increase over funding for the last biennium. The Library Systems partner with the Library Commission to help Nebraskans get answers to questions, borrow books and other materials from anywhere, access

Information Technology including the Internet, and learn about library services. They also provide training and Continuing Education workshops for library staff and board members. This continuing partnership between the Regional Library Systems and the Nebraska Library Commission has been in existence since 1985. ▲

OCLC CEO Leads Issues Discussion

In Spring 1999, OCLC's CEO and President, Jay Jordan participated in a discussion with Nebraskans about the longtime partnership between the Nebraska Library Commission, NEBASE, and OCLC. NEBASE is Nebraska's regional network for member libraries to cooperatively purchase library services. OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) services include reference, preservation, digitalization and archival services, as well as interlibrary loan and catalog-

ing, moving toward OCLC's vision for the future as "the leading global library membership cooperative."

Nebraska librarians have a long history as NEBASE/OCLC members and an even longer history of cooperation. Upon this foundation we have built many projects, most recently the Commission's statewide purchase of electronic resources with state tax funds. Summarizing the opportunities for libraries Jordan stated, "This is a GREAT time for libraries." ▲

Senator Crosby Is Library Champion

Senator LaVon Crosby received the 1999 Nebraska Library Association Library Champion Award for exemplary library support and advocacy. Her introduction of LB95 to the legislature in

1997 brought the *Libraries for the 21st Century* campaign for improved library service to the attention of Nebraska senators across the state. As the lead sponsor of LB95, Senator Crosby helped instigate the appropriation of \$400,000 by the legislature and the governor, resulting in the availability of online

resources for all types of libraries in Nebraska. The Library Champion award ceremony was part of the 15th Annual Nebraska Library Association (NLA) Legislative Day. For more information about NLA see <<http://www.nol.org/home/NLA/>>. ▲



▲ Senator Crosby.

Commission Distributes Publications

The Nebraska Library Commission distributed multiple copies of the Nebraska Trustee Handbook and the Nebraska Laws Pertaining to Libraries and Library Operations to libraries and Library System Administrators. The *Trustee Handbook* was a collaborative effort between the Commission and the Trustees, Users, and Friends section of the Nebraska Library Association. Additional copies can be ordered by contacting Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>.

The *Nebraska Public Library Profile*, with statistical data collected from Nebraska public libraries, was printed and mailed to public libraries each year. The *Profile* is a compilation of the data collected by participating Nebraska libraries as part of the Federal-State Cooperative System for Public Library Data. To access the information from the 1994-98 *Profiles* in electronic format, see <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Statistical Report. For more information about how to use these comparative statistics to tell your library story, contact Kit Keller, Library Technology Coordinator, 402-471-3216 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <kkeller@neon.nlc>.

state.ne.us>. These publications are accessible from the Commission home page, search on their titles at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>.

A listing of new publications received by the Commission's Publications Clearinghouse Service was printed and distributed each year. They list publications available for loan from the Commission's Reference/Information Services, 402-471-4016 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <ready@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. The most recent version of this listing is located on the Library Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Publications List. ▲

Certification Evaluation Initiated

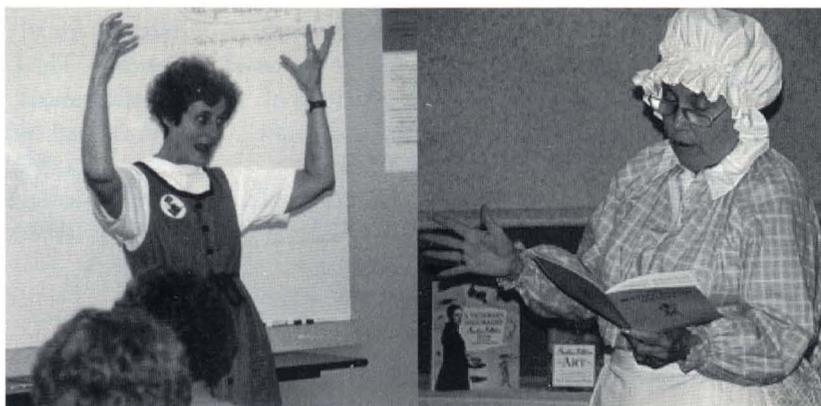
The Nebraska Library Commission and the six Regional Library Systems convened a task force to review the Nebraska Public Librarian and Board Certification program, including the Basic Skills courses. This is the first comprehensive evaluation in the ten years that the Certification Program has been in existence. The goals of the Public Librarian Certification Program are to improve library service throughout the state; motivate public librarians to acquire, maintain and develop skills; recognize public librarians who update their knowledge and skills; update the image of librarians and libraries; and provide guidelines for public library boards to select and retain personnel. The goals of the Board Certification Program are to improve the library, increase Board involvement, fulfill Library Accreditation requirements, and organize continuing education activities for Board members.

The task force, in conjunction with Debra Wilcox Johnson, Consultant, Johnson and Johnson Consulting, designed and administered the evaluation to determine whether the programs succeeded in achieving these purposes and goals. The group also developed recommendations, for consideration by the Library Commission Director.

Participants in the Certification program were contacted for opinions on the program's effect on library skills and library services. For the latest information on the evaluation of Public Librarian Certification Program, see the Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Certification Evaluation. For more information about library certification requirements or other continuing education needs, contact Ellen Van Waart, 402-471-4004 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Interstate Enrichment Through Children's Services

Eighty children's librarians and media specialist attended the Library Commission's 1997 Children's Services Share Fairs in Ogallala and Lincoln. Participants were also presenters, presenting and learning about such diverse topics as "Scenario Thinking," "Partnership IDEAS," "Family Literacy," "Kids as Authors," and "Web Sites for Children." They browsed displays, won prizes, and heard Storyteller Nancy Duncan's tales showcasing the magic of libraries. Thirty-six librarians attended the 1998 Share Fair in



▲ Nationally known storyteller Nancy Duncan (left), spinning a tale at the Share Fair in Lincoln and Barbara Fawl as Beatrix Potter at the Grand Island Share Fair.

Grand Island, which featured Barbara Fawl as Beatrix Potter; Jeannie Gaston, Lincoln Public Schools, on "The Titanic as a

Research Hook;" and Laurel Muff, Lincoln Public Schools, on "Pam Conrad's Prairie Stories." ▲

Computers Donated to Small Public Libraries

In partnership with the Nebraska Library Commission, OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) made six computers available

to Nebraska public libraries to provide FirstSearch access to communities that would otherwise not have this service. Libraries that received these computers were Oshkosh Public Library, Yutan Public Library, Arlington Public

Library, Hooper Public Library, Osceola Public Library, and Louisville Public Library. ▲

Council Cites Priorities

The Library Commission's State Advisory Council on Libraries identified the following priorities and activities:

- Facilitating increased legislative awareness of the presence and importance of all types of Nebraska libraries
- Supporting statewide advocacy workshops
- Examining the mission of the Council and adjusting the bylaws
- Discussing and communicating a wide range of library service issues
- Assisting with the transition in federal funding
- Awareness raising re: issues addressed in "Access to Electronic Information."
- Promoting and increasing public relations for libraries
- Promoting Internet access for all accredited libraries in the state
- Supporting cooperation, especially between schools

and public libraries

- Exploring the mechanics of a statewide library card, NebrasKard
- Examining the status of continuing education for librarians

• Educating the library community re: preservation of electronic records and other archival material

The Council passed resolutions to formally support the following:

- E-rate discounts offered to libraries through the Universal Service Fund for Telecommunications Discounts
- *Libraries for the 21st Century* funding increasing state support for libraries

For more information including agendas and minutes, see the Library Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Advisory Council Minutes. ▲

Library Commission Sponsors Continuing Education

The Library Commission sponsored Continuing Education in a variety of formats. Internet-based mini-courses were

instituted this biennium. The mini-courses address topics and issues that library staff encounter in the daily operations of the library. Currently, they include *The Internet and Intellectual Freedom*, *Using the Internet for Reference*, and *Reach Out: Using Electronic Resources to Serve your Community*. For information about the latest options, see the Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Mini-Courses.

The series of four Basic Skills Training Courses designed to focus on core library services and functions were offered throughout the biennium. Completion of these courses is one of the requirements for Public Librarian Certification. The Basic Skills Courses include Collection Development, Organization of Library Materials, Public Services, and Public Library Admin-



▲ Kit Keller (center, standing) helps students in a Basic Skills class learn to use the Internet for reference.

istration. The 1999 Public Services class inaugurated an Internet-based component, with extensive homework assignments. Collection Development classes are scheduled for fall 1999. The Library Commission supported continuing education delivered via teleconference technology by purchasing a statewide license to offer Nebraska institutions free unlimited access to programming for library professionals from the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, IL. Sessions focused on Technology, Disaster Planning, Vision and Excellence, Intellectual

Freedom, and Customer Service.

In addition, Library Commission staff planned and provided a variety of workshops and training sessions for Nebraska's librarians throughout the biennium. These sessions, often cosponsored with library groups across the state, were designed to help librarians plan for the future, continue their education, and develop policies. Information about the latest offerings can be located by searching the Nebraska Library Calendar on the Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>> for dates and locations. ▲

Library Commission Supports Center for the Book

Since its creation in 1901, the Nebraska Library Commission has been linked to the world of writing and books. Historically, the Commission served as a library for rural Nebraskans who lacked a library in their community. Boxes of books, traveling libraries, and books-by-mail programs were among the many efforts to get books into the hands of Nebraska readers. Interest in good writing and quality books has always been part of the Library Commission's purpose. The opportunity to support the creation of a Nebraska Center for the Book was a natural step in our work promoting the value of writing, books, and reading. A decade ago, the Nebraska Library Commission convened a meeting to explore creating a state affiliate of the Library of Congress Center for the Book. A steering

group prepared a proposal and the Library of Congress gave its blessing to the new Nebraska affiliate.

The Nebraska Humanities Council and the Nebraska Library Commission are two statewide organizations that have contributed ongoing support for the Nebraska Center for the Book. In this biennium, the Library Commission provided additional support, including development of a membership and contact database, publication of the newsletter, public relations assistance, limited staff support for the Center for the Book board, and funding for publications and program support expenses. The Library Commission's role as the "host" agency for the Nebraska Center for the Book will be evaluated in the coming biennium to determine future roles and relationships. ▲

Memory of Volunteer Honored

In a small ceremony marked by words of gratitude, hugs of comfort, and tears of sorrow, the Frank H. Wood Chapter of the

Independent Telephone Pioneers presented the Talking Book and Braille Service with a donation in memory of their longtime member and our longtime volunteer Lowell Tuxhorn. Mitzie Tuxhorn, Lowell's widow, Chapter President Suzanne Frasier, and Community Service

Chairperson Mary Keef joined Commission staff in remembering Lowell and his years of dedication to talking book service.

Lowell first joined the Talking Book and Braille Service as an outreach volunteer while still working at Lincoln Telephone Co. Following his retirement, Lowell increased his volunteer commitment to repairing talking book players.

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



▲ TBBS Director Dave Oertli looks on as Chapter President Suzanne Frasier hugs Mitzie Tuxhorn.

Nebraska Libraries Apply for E-Rate Discounts

Universal Service Fund Telecommunications Discounts

were made available to Nebraska libraries. The Library Commission submitted a consortia type application on behalf of the state's libraries and individual libraries submitted separate forms with local information. The Library Commission, Department of Education, and the Educational Service Units collaborated on a Web site to disseminate the most current

information regarding the discounts at the Commission home page, <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on E-rate.

The purpose of the Universal Service Fund discount (or "E-rate" program) is to provide discounts for libraries and schools on basic and advanced telecommunications services ranging from plain old telephone service to broadband network connections, Internet services, and internal connections. The discounts, from 20% to 90%, work on a sliding scale tied to level of eligibility for the local school

lunch program. Ninety-two public libraries in Nebraska were refunded \$219,040 in discounts on their 1998 telecommunications costs through the E-Rate program. These (and other) libraries are now in the process of applying for discounts on telecommunications services for July 1, 1999 through June 30, 2000.

If you have questions about this program, contact Rod Wagner, 402-471-4001 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <rwagner@neon.nlc.state.ne.us> or The Schools and Libraries Corporation, 888-203-8100, <<http://www.sl.universalservice.org/>>. ▲

Nebraska Selected for Community Library Advocacy Project

Nebraska is one of eight states to participate in the Community-Library Advocacy Project funded by the Viburnum Foundation. Libraries for the Future and Friends of Libraries U.S.A., are coordinating this advocacy training effort. Co-hosted by the Library Commission, the Regional Library Systems, and the Nebraska Library Association's (NLA) Legislative Committee and Trustees, Users and Friends Section, this initiative strengthens library advocacy by building relationships between communities and public libraries and developing tools and resources for local library advocacy. The project focuses on existing library trustees and friends groups, while reaching out to new

types of library supporters.

Ellen Van Waart, Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator, and Maggie Harding, NLA Executive Director and Project Coordinator, co-chair the project. They joined librarians and library supporters from across the state and nationally recognized library advocates for an advocacy workshop at the York Public Library to begin a planning process for effective library advocacy. For more information, contact Ellen Van Waart, 402-471-4004 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <evanwaart@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>, or see the Community-Library Advocacy Project home page at <<http://www.nol.org/home/NLA/advocacy/>>. ▲

Surveys Answer Burning Questions

File Facts is the Nebraska Library Commission's fast response survey used to gather facts when no existing information is available. It requires little effort from respondents and the results are compiled rapidly.

File Facts Survey #1 queried librarians about fee collection and utilization. It was sent to 279 public libraries with a 60% return. Of 160 libraries, only six libraries do not charge for any services and an additional 12 do not charge any overdue fees. The majority of libraries responding (76%) have no restrictions on spending money generated from fees. The monthly fees collected range from \$1 to \$19,000.

File Facts Survey #2 asked about challenged materials in Nebraska public libraries, materials that customers complain about because of content or request removed from the collection. With a 46% return rate, 27% of respondents indicate that they consciously avoid making purchases of items which might be considered controversial or to which they might anticipate a challenge. Seventy-seven percent of those responding have a form

for reconsideration of library materials to use in facilitating the challenge process.

File Facts Survey #3 asked about Nebraska librarian training needs and issues. With a 44% return rate, responses indicate that continuing education programs and training workshops are meeting their needs, helping to improve library service throughout the state and motivate librarians to acquire, maintain, and develop their skills. Ninety-five percent of respondents said that they would attend Continuing Education programs regardless of whether there was a certification program or not.

If you have ideas for upcoming surveys, contact Kit Keller, 402-471-3216, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <kkeller@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. For details see <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on File Facts, or contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us> for a print copy.

For more information about evaluation methods, request *The Tell It! Manual: The Complete Program for Evaluating Library Performance*, American Library Association, 1996, from Library Commission Information Services, 402-471-4016, 800-307-2665, e-mail: <ready@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Nebrask@ Online Designated Official State Home Page

Nebraska's official state home page got a new look this biennium with the designation of Nebrask@ Online as the official address.

Services from the Nebraska State Government home page were added to the original Nebrask@ Online home page.

Providing access to state government information in a variety of formats has been part of the Library Commission's mission since 1972, when the Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse Service was established by statute. Over the years the Commission has collected more than 80,000 state government publications, listed them in the Commission online catalog, loaned them out, and distributed many of them on microfiche to depository libraries. As agencies began providing government information electronically, the Library Commission helped provide access through the original Nebraska Online electronic bulletin board (started in 1992). The Nebraska State Government home page was created in 1995. The Commission was a lead agency in establishing the current Nebrask@ Online service, a public/private partnership contracting with state

agencies to post government information on the Internet. It is now overseen by the State Records Board and managed by Nebrask@ Interactive.

In March 1998, the Nebrask@ Online home page was designated Nebraska's official home page. The Nebraska State Government home page maintained by the Commission was discontinued. Users can now reach state government information at <<http://www.nol.org/>> or <<http://www.state.ne.us/>>. The Library Commission continues to provide government information services and maintains several finding aids linked from the "Search State Government" button on Nebrask@ Online. These include an e-mail link to the Commission's Information and Reference Services, a subject guide to state government, State Government Publications Online (a title listing of online publications arranged by agency), Nebraska Frequently Asked Questions, links to the government section of the Commission's Electronic Library, and a link to the Commission's online catalog. ▲

Library Commission Receives Development Network Awards

The Nebraska Development Network's annual meetings focused on coordination of technology between government, communities, and education. Network members set priorities for the future and learned about leadership and economic development tools.

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



▲ Lance Hedquist, South Sioux City Administrator (left) and Lt. Gov. Kim Robak (right) present the 1998 award to Library Commission Director Rod Wagner.

Development Network Board of Directors. Awards were presented each year recognizing the Commission's contribution to the Network. Nebraska librarians interested in exploring the library role in community economic development are encouraged to join

the Nebraska Development Network. For more information, see <http://www.nol.org/home/NDN/> or contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us for print information. ▲

Federation Legislation Passes

With passage of LB 362 by the 1999 Legislature and approval by Governor

Johanns, public library laws changed to permit formation of public library federations. This new

legislation provided a mechanism for independent public libraries to collaborate to form a library federation for cooperative library service arrangements. Two or more local government entities can now form a federation, not relinquishing their individual autonomy. The new law provides a governing structure

and methods for organization and administration. Federations may be organized within a county or beyond a single county. The federation model is a companion to legislation enacted in 1997 which reorganized statutes for county public library systems. ▲

Nebraska Pilot Announced at NEBASE Annual Meeting

Seventy-seven librarians representing 16 public libraries, 19 academic libraries, seven schools (K-12), four Library Systems, and one institutional library attended the 1998 NEBASE Annual Meeting in Hastings. Rod Wagner, Director of the Nebraska Library Commission, provided the welcoming address, focusing on the long-standing connection between Nebraska and the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC). Wagner pointed out how OCLC has changed in recent years, no longer providing only Cataloging products and Interlibrary Loan processing, but recently moving to the top provider of Reference Service through FirstSearch.

OCLC's work with a Small Library Initiative Task Force to provide small libraries with a cost-effective and efficient way to acquire "good" copy cataloging was highlighted. Wagner also announced that the resulting pilot product, tested in Ohio, will be field-tested in Nebraska.

Eric Childress, Senior Product Support Specialist, gave an overview of this new integrated service for small libraries that require mainly copy cataloging and do little, if any, original cataloging. Other components are Interlibrary Loan, Reference, and Selection. ▲

State Government Publications Online Home Page Expanded

Many Nebraska state agencies, boards, commissions, elected officials and state-funded colleges now have World Wide Web Internet sites. Increasingly these agencies are using their Web sites to post frequently-requested information and publications for the public. To help other agencies make information available,

the Library Commission's Publications Clearinghouse service scans selected state agency publications and posts them on the Internet in PDF format. The Nebraska State Government Publications Online page on the Nebraska Library Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>> (search on publications online) indexes these publications and includes pointers to several hundred publications posted on agency web sites. Internet

users can access the site, locate a state agency, and bring up a title listing of hotlinks to online publications and information. For more information about the Nebraska State Government Publications Online page, contact Bonnie Henzel at the Nebraska Library Commission, 402-471-6285 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <bhenzel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. ▲

Youth Advisory Board Revises Plan

The Nebraska Library Commission Children's Improvement Plan (CHIP), developed in 1990 by a team of children's librarians working with the Library Commission to address issues facing children's library service in Nebraska, was updated this year. The

Library Commission's Youth Advisory Board worked with commission staff on a revised plan to address problems that face today's children and youth librarians. This revised plan is available on the Commission home page at <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Youth Improvement Plan. For a print copy, contact Mary Geibel, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665,

e-mail: <mgeibel@neon.nlc.state.ne.us>. For questions or comments, contact Mary Jackson, 402-471-4006 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: <mjackson@neon.nlc.state.ne.us> or the Youth Advisory Board member from your library system area. The current board is listed on the Commission home page <<http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/>>, search on Youth Advisory Board Members. ▲

28,000 Children Read 400,000 Books in Summer Reading Programs

Twenty-eight thousand Nebraska children enjoyed games, excursions, special events, and reading last summer through participation in the statewide summer reading program. The 1998 summer theme, *Rock-n-Read*, encouraged children to read nearly 400,000 books. Summer reading experience encourages children to maintain their reading skills during the months without formal reading instruction and to return to the classroom more ready to learn.

Virtually every Nebraska community with a public library offers a summer reading program, lasting from one week to two months. Many schools are now offering summer reading programs as well. Children may earn a certificate of recognition for their participation in the summer program, however many of the libraries involved do not give certificates, preferring instead to emphasize reading as a satisfying pastime, rather than another source of pressure to achieve. The 1999 Summer Reading Program was *Treasure Your Library*. ▲



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Library Commission Highlights FY 1998 & FY 1999

- ★ 2249 librarians attended 152 Continuing Education Sessions sponsored by the Library Commission, including 298 participants in Basic Skills Sessions
- ★ **Nebrask@ Online** got an average of 909,903 hits per month in FY 1998
- ★ 345 public libraries were accredited
- ★ 334 libraries received state aid
- ★ 31,655 talking books, magazines, and braille materials circulated each month (average)
- ★ The Talking Book and Braille Service recorded 305 issues of magazines and 54 books.
- ★ The Talking Book and Braille Service duplicated 96,609 audio cassettes
- ★ 6 million records with 6.3 million holdings in the Nebraska State Database as of 12/31/98
- ★ 453,794 total items cataloged by NEBASE members
- ★ 3040 items originally cataloged by NEBASE members
- ★ Commission borrowed 3479 items from other libraries
- ★ Commission loaned 684 items to other libraries
- ★ NEBASE libraries borrowed 156,880 items from other libraries
- ★ NEBASE libraries loaned 134,569 items to other libraries
- ★ At the end of the biennium, NEBASE membership included 61 full-cataloging members, 5 CatExpress members, 33 NEON/CatExpress members, and 41 NEON members
- ★ 8,495 state documents added to the Commission's collection, bringing the total to 96,985
- ★ 21,534 federal documents were added to the Commission's collection, and 65,534 federal documents were weeded, bringing the total to 211,297
- ★ 1720 state documents circulated in FY 98 & FY99
- ★ 8,163 information requests were filled by Commission's Library and Information Services staff
- ★ **28,000** children in Nebraska registered for the 1998 Summer Reading Program, *Rock-n-Read*. The 1999 Summer Reading Program was *Treasure Your Library*.

Nebraska Library Commission



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