

Your guide to the
Nebraska Library
Commission
July 1, 2008–
June 30, 2010
Biennium in Review
FY2009/FY2010

Compass

N E W S L E T T E R



Vol. 16 No. 1

Gates Foundation Partnership with Nebraska Libraries Continues



Customers at Lincoln's
Bennett Martin Public
Library use the
computer lab.

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Activity on the Library Commission's \$238,662 **Staying Connected** grant awarded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation concluded in FY2009, with activities focusing on hardware upgrades and replacement, Internet connectivity, training, and technical support. Fifty-one libraries received Wi-Fi routers, mobile computers, and books, and now provide wireless access within the library, enabling better use of space within the library and the ability to offer improved service to customers. Fifty-three training sessions were offered statewide during the grant period, resulting in 828 library staff receiving training.

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation **Connectivity Upgrade** grants to nine Nebraska public libraries in FY2009 to provide increased connectivity speed for library public access to the Internet, improving from no current Internet access or dial-up access only. The grants provided each library a computer and monitor, wiring (if needed), payment for labor involved in making the library Internet-ready, and funding to cover the costs of two years of connectivity. This two-year connectivity funding is provided by the Nebraska Library Commission as part of the matching funds for the Gates Foundation funding.

Opportunity Online Hardware grants, the latest and last round of hardware grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which focus on sustaining library

technology services, were initiated in Nebraska in July 2009. Thirty-seven Nebraska libraries became eligible for partial funding for 122 computers. To emphasize the expectation of ongoing local funding for computer hardware updating, the two-phase grants required matching funds for the hardware component. Advocacy training, *Turning the Page: Building Your Library Community*, was provided in Sioux Falls, SD, to help libraries raise those funds, with all training and travel expenses financed by the Gates Foundation. All thirty-seven libraries completed Phase I of the grant, purchasing a total of 103 computer workstations. Phase II of the grant is scheduled for 2011, when the libraries will raise the rest of their matching funds and purchase the remaining computers.

The Nebraska Library Commission acts as intermediary on behalf of the Foundation, verifying completion of requirements and dispersing the funds. For more information contact Christa Burns, Nebraska Library Commission Special Projects Librarian, 402-471-3107 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: christa.burns@nebraska.gov.

Ed. Note: After the biennium the Nebraska Library Commission was awarded a Broadband Technology Opportunities Program grant from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provided \$1.2M as match for the \$2.4M federal grant. ◆◆

About the
BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, the foundation is led by CEO Jeff Raikes and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett. ◆◆

From the Director...

Navigating the “New Normal” in Nebraska

The Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries adopted the “new normal” as a theme for council meetings in 2010. Steve Fosselman, Council Chair, used the City of Grand Island’s public service priority setting process as an example of one community’s approach to deciding how to allocate funds to address public service needs. Other advisory council members shared their own experiences dealing with flat or declining budgets and adapting to new or different circumstances. There were few experiences of increased funding support for library services. Whether new or usual, change is normal, continuous, and challenging.

In light of the “new normal,” Nebraska’s experience is typical of the rest of the country, though less severe. Libraries have experienced steady public service growth over a number of years. The challenge for libraries is typically less funding support with increased service demands. When the economy declines — higher unemployment levels, less personal income, business slumps — library services are in even higher demand.

The Nebraska Library Commission’s *NCompass* “Biennium in Review” highlights the many activities, events, and services in which the Commission has been involved over the past two years. Notable are the proliferation of publishing in different formats, multiple uses of social media to communicate and connect, the growing use of downloadable books, the role of libraries as public computing centers, the contribution of all libraries in developing 21st century skills, and much, much more.

Nebraska libraries are vital to the state’s prosperity and the well-being of the people who live here. That’s a constant, thanks to all the many people who work in or on behalf of Nebraska libraries.

Rod Wagner 

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Nebraska Library Commissioners: John Dale, Chair, Lincoln, term expires 2012; Charles Gordon, Vice-Chair, Fremont, term expires 2013; Steve Batty, McCook, term expires 2012; Diane Boyd, South Sioux City, term expires 2012; Sherry Crow, Kearney, term expires 2013; and Patricia Gross, Bayard, term expires 2013. Commission meetings are held the second Friday of every other month or as scheduled by public action of the board.

This publication was supported in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provision of the Library Services and Technology Act.

Nebraska Library Commission Funding July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2010

State of Nebraska Funds	\$ 7,882,117
Federal Funds	3,202,827
Cash Funds	580,487
Total	\$11,665,431

Grants Funded through the Nebraska Library Commission July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2010

Braille Services (Utah State Library)	\$ 6,720
Collaborative Summer Library Program	10,795
Continuing Education and Training	50,469
Electronic Information Resources	986,525
FOLUSA – Friends of Libraries U.S.A.	39,843
Gates Foundation-funded Grants to Libraries	278,160
Interlibrary Loan (Lender Compensation)	338,074
LSTA/Library Improvement	396,819
Motion Picture Licensing for Public Libraries	32,112
Nebraska Center for the Book	15,000
Nebraska Leadership Institute	24,000
Nebraska Library Association/NEMA Conference	8,869
Nebraska Library Association Paraprofessional Section	680
OverDrive Downloadable Books	32,326
Public Library Statistical Reporting Software	50,490
Regional Library Systems	1,397,061
Scholarships: MLS, LTA, MEd, BA	108,359
State Aid to Public Libraries	777,733
Youth Grants for Excellence	70,981
Total	\$4,625,016

Note: Grant funds may be distributed over more than one fiscal year.

Thank You, Commissioners



As their terms expire, **Mary Nelson (Holdrege)** and **Patrick Gross (Wayne)** are thanked for their years of service on the Nebraska Library Commission.

The Nebraska Library Commission staff members would like to thank the Library Commissioners who served during the biennium for their commitment to improving Nebraska library services. As

representatives of the public, the Commissioners are the primary force ensuring that the agency is fully responsible for the statewide promotion, development, and coordination of library programs and services in accordance with nationally acceptable library standards. Their primary areas of focus involve policy making, director relations, strategic planning, fiscal matters, operations, and advocacy. Commissioners are appointed by the governor and serve three-year terms. Meetings are held the second Friday of

every other month or as scheduled by public action of the board. For more information, including meeting minutes and agendas, see the Library Commission Website at www.nlc.nebraska.gov, search on Commission Meetings.

Commissioners who served during the biennium were:
 Steve Batty, *McCook*
 Diane Boyd, *South Sioux City*
 Sherry Crow, *Kearney*
 Mary Nelson, *Holdrege*



Carol Spencer (Broken Bow) [left] and **Jean Ahrens (Scottsbluff)** are honored for their years of service.

John Dale, *Lincoln*
 Jean Ahrens, *Scottsbluff*
 Patricia Gross, *Bayard*
 Patrick Gross, *Wayne*
 Charles Gordon, *Fremont*
 Carol Spencer, *Broken Bow*

Ed. Note: Due to state budget reductions, future print editions of the NCompass newsletter will be limited to the Annual/Biennial Report editions, until further notice. To receive regular information from the Nebraska Library Commission, subscribe to the **weekly NCompass E-Newsletter**. Fill out the form at

<http://eepurl.com/HSkX> to receive a weekly e-mail in your inbox (currently Mondays around 9:00 a.m. CT). This e-mail offers a short summary of each posting on the NCompass Blog from the previous week. Click on the headline in the e-mail message to read the complete content of the blog post and to comment on the content.

Library Commission Staff Transitions

Arrivals

- **Emily Dust Nimsakont**, Cataloging Librarian
- **Kathryn Brockmeier**, Research Analyst/Special Projects Associate
- **Travis Bossard**, Talking Book and Braille Clerk
- **Gabe Kramer**, Talking Book and Braille Clerk

Departures

- **Jenna Smith**, Talking Book and Braille Clerk
- **Travis Bossard**, Talking Book and Braille Clerk
- **Kathy Dukes**, Talking Book and Braille Clerk, Retired

Reassignment

- **John Felton**, from Research Analyst to Planning and Data Services Coordinator

Employee of the Year

- **2009** – **Annette Hall**, Volunteer Services Coordinator



Annette Hall

- **2010** – **Diane Wells**, Emerging & Special Technologies Coordinator



Diane Wells

Manager of the Year

- **2010** – **Mary Jo Ryan**, Communications Coordinator



Mary Jo Ryan

Commission Allocates State Aid to Libraries

The Nebraska Library Commission made state aid payments of \$777,733 during the biennium, including Dollars for Data and other incentive awards. To be eligible for direct state aid and incentive payments, libraries must be accredited by the Nebraska Library Commission, submit their Public Library Statistical Report data online using Bibliostat™ Collect, and receive local funding equal to or greater than that of the previous years.

- **Direct State Aid:** In 2009, **171** libraries earned state aid payments, with **78** libraries earned additional payments to acknowledge their achievement of enhanced or excellent accreditation status. In 2010, those numbers changed to **170** and **85**, respectively. The Library Commission paid an additional \$625 to each library with excellent accreditation and \$175 for enhanced status. In 2010, **one** library increased its accreditation status from essential to excellent; **ten** libraries improved their status from essential to enhanced; and **five** libraries changed their accreditation level from enhanced to excellent.

- **Incentive Payments:** A total of \$67,861 was distributed during the biennium as a one-percent incentive for libraries that received addi-

tional funds from another public entity.

- **Dollars for Data: Forty-three** unaccredited libraries that submitted the Public Library Survey received \$250 Dollars for Data payments each year. Providing public library data is an important activity for all libraries to ensure an accurate picture of public library service throughout Nebraska communities. Since this is a necessary step toward meeting the standards of service outlined in the Public Library Accreditation Guidelines (www.nlc.nebraska.gov/libdev/accred.html), these libraries are closer to achieving accredited status. **Three** libraries that received Dollars for Data incentives subsequently became accredited.

- **Interlibrary Loan:** Nebraska library customers benefit from materials provided by other libraries through Interlibrary Loan (ILL). The Nebraska Library Commission's ILL compensation encouraged this sharing and helped offset local staff and postage costs. In the past biennium, compensation totaled \$338,074, ranging from \$2.75 to \$3.50 per item, depending on funds available. **Eighty-eight** Nebraska libraries loaned **104,858** items to meet the needs of customers in other Nebraska libraries. 

Motion Picture License Purchased

The Nebraska Library Commission funded a statewide license for public viewing of motion pictures in Nebraska public libraries during the biennium at a cost of \$32,112. All Nebraska public libraries are covered by the license between the Library Commission and Movie Licensing USA. With this license, motion pictures may be shown as part

of various library services and programming at the library through September 2011. For more information contact Sally Snyder, Nebraska Library Commission Children and Young Adult Library Services Coordinator, 402-471-4003 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: sally.snyder@nebraska.gov. 



Nebraska OverDrive Libraries

Download Audio Books

Browse a dynamic digital collection of audio books! Check out and download best-selling titles to your PC, then transfer to a portable device or burn some titles to CD and enjoy anytime, anywhere.

my library, anytime

nebraska.lib.overdrive.com
powered by OverDrive

Overdrive Thrives in Nebraska Libraries

Listen up! Nebraska *OverDrive* Libraries (<http://nebraska.lib.overdrive.com>) provide customers the opportunity to download audio books to their MP3 devices from a shared collection. In addition to paying annual maintenance fees, the Library Commission coordinates and supports the service, to which any Nebraska public, school, or academic library (serving a population under 50,000) may subscribe.

The consortia started with twenty-five libraries and increased to forty-seven libraries during the biennium. From July 2008 through June 2009, the audio book collection increased from 785 copies to 1,596 copies which were checked out 22,610 times. From July 2009 through July 2010, the collection increased to 2,581 copies and checkouts climbed to 38,452.

For more information see the Library Commission *OverDrive* Website at www.nlc.state.ne.us/netserv/pricing/overdrive.html or contact Susan Knisely, Nebraska Library Commission Online Services Librarian, 402-471-3849 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: susan.knisely@nebraska.gov; or Devra Dragos, Nebraska Library Commission Technology & Access Services Director, 402-471-4335 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: devra.dragos@nebraska.gov. 

Commission Awards Training Grants

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded \$39,947 in Continuing Education and Training grants during the biennium. Awarded through a competitive grant process to twenty-two public libraries, institutional libraries, and Regional Library Systems, the funds were used to provide training and continuing education to Nebraska library workers and trustees.

The funding allowed library personnel to attend national and regional library meetings—including a bus trip to the American Library Association Conference in Chicago, library colloquia, “Every Child Ready to Read” training, and county-wide cooperative

training. Grants brought in speakers to address such topics as library governance, ethical dilemmas, the future of prison libraries, managerial and leadership issues, and trustee training.

The grants are representative of the Library Commission’s commitment, established in its *2008-2012 LSTA Five-Year Plan*, to provide Nebraskans with enhanced library and information services provided by qualified library workers. For more information contact Laura Johnson, Nebraska Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator, 402-471-2694 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: laura.johnson@nebraska.gov. 

Youth Grants Awarded

Youth Grants for Excellence totaling more than \$70,000 were awarded during the biennium to forty public libraries and the Regional Library Systems. The Library Commission awards the grants annually to give Nebraska libraries the opportunity to expand youth services in new directions. It is expected that the funding will provide a foundation for ongoing services that will be continued with community support or through

reallocation of library funds.

Among the projects funded were programs for preschoolers, drawing and writing programs, creation of teen spaces, book discussion programs, gaming activities, family reading, young adult audio book purchases, craft days, mystery and gaming clubs, Golden Sower book activities, arts workshops, and infant and toddler storytimes. For more information contact Sally Snyder, see contact information on page 4. 

Library Improvement Grants Funded

The Library Commission awarded Library Improvement grants totaling \$224,518 to twenty-nine library entities during the biennium. They were selected through a competitive grant process from forty-nine applications requesting \$619,743. The grants facilitate development of library programs and services in Nebraska public and institutional libraries.

Funding is provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and is administered through the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). Libraries are required to match the

grants with local funding. Funded projects included an open source Integrated Library System pilot project, photo digitization, Spanish and computer lessons, disaster preparation programs, teen areas, a portable computer lab, a video welcoming members of ethnic minority groups, upgraded computer labs, and upgraded library circulation equipment. For more information, contact Richard Miller, Nebraska Library Commission Library Development Director, 402-471-3175 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: richard.miller@nebraska.gov. 

Internship Grants Awarded

The Nebraska Library Commission and the Nebraska Library Association awarded internship grants to ten public libraries in June 2009 and to twelve in June 2010. The grants are part of the *Cultivating Nebraska Librarians 2.0: Building 21st Century Skills* initiative. Student interns learn about library work as they help with day-to-day operations and work on special projects. They lead Summer Reading Program activities, conduct technology training sessions for senior citizens, help with One Book One Nebraska book discussion activities, help develop and update library Websites and Facebook pages, create young adult library programs and spaces, sort and preserve archival materials, and work on publicity materials.

\$10,000 in grant funding was provided each year through the generosity of a Nebraska charitable foundation that wishes to remain anonymous. “The Nebraska Library Commission appreciates the renewal of foundation support for the internship grants,” said Nebraska Library Commission Director Rod Wagner. “The internships are a great opportunity for students to work in libraries, contributing needed help and sharing skills for a variety of summer and year-round library projects. Benefits abound for all involved—for the interns, for the libraries, and for the people served by the participating libraries.”

The following libraries received internship grants in one or both years:

- Ainsworth Library Foundation
- Arapahoe Public Library
- Atkinson Public Library
- Bassett, Rock County Public Library
- Blair Public Library
- Emerson Public Library
- Lexington Public Library
- Lincoln City Libraries
- Norfolk Public Library
- Orleans, C.B. Preston Memorial Library
- Papillion, Sump Memorial Library
- Ponca Carnegie Library
- Schuyler Public Library
- South Sioux City Public Library
- Stromsburg Public Library
- Ulysses Township Library
- Verdigre Public Library
- Weeping Water Public Library 

More information about grants awarded by the Nebraska Library Commission—including a database of recipients since 1998—is located at www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/grant.html.

Commission Assists Center for the Book



THE NEBRASKA CENTER FOR THE BOOK

The Nebraska Library Commission provided financial and staff assistance during the biennium to the Nebraska Center for the Book, which brings together the state's readers, writers, booksellers, librarians, publishers, printers, educators, and scholars to build the community of the book. The Library Commission supported the following projects:

Nebraska Book Festival. The festival was held twice during the biennium at the Nebraska State Historical Society's Nebraska History Museum in downtown Lincoln. Events featured author readings, award presentations, exhibits, panel discussions, music, and activities for children. The festival was jointly sponsored by the Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Library Commission, Nebraska Humanities Council, and the Nebraska State Historical Society, with additional support from Duncan Family Trust, University of Nebraska Press, Woods Charitable Fund, *Prairie Fire* Newspaper, and Nebraska Arts Council.

Jane Pope Geske Award. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries' Archives & Special Collections (<http://libraries.unl.edu/spec>) was honored in 2008 for preservation and providing access to manuscripts, university records, and rare book collections. The 2009 winner was the Golden Sower Award Committee of the Nebraska Library Association's School, Children, and Young People's Section. The Golden Sower Award is Nebraska's children's choice award for literature. Thousands of Nebraska children participate each year, with 66,648 children voting for their favorite reads in 2009. The award—a piece of art by a Nebraska artist—is given annually to honor exceptional contribution to

literacy, books, reading, libraries, bookselling, and writing in Nebraska.

Mildred Bennett Award.

In 2008 Dr. Robert Manley was recognized for his significant contribution to the fostering of the literary tradition in Nebraska, highlighting his more than fifty years as a noted Nebraska historian, teacher, and author of more than twenty-six books. He made hundreds of public presentations playing guitar, singing folk songs, telling stories of pioneers and the hard times of the Great Plains, and lecturing about historical events, places, and people. In 2009 Ted Kooser was recognized as one of Nebraska's most highly-regarded poets. He is the winner of many prestigious awards, including the Pulitzer, Nebraska Book Award, Friends of America Writers Literary Award, Barnes and Nobel Discover Great New Writers, and the Nebraska Library Association's Marie Sandoz Award. Kooser was a founding member of the Nebraska Center for the Book and the former United States Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress (2004-2006).

Nebraska Book Awards. Nebraska books were honored in the categories of anthology, children/young adult, cover/design/illustration, fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. To be eligible for nomination, books must be written by Nebraska authors, published in Nebraska, or set in Nebraska. For a complete list of winners, see centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/awards/winners/nebook.html.

NCB News. Library Commission staff helped develop and distribute four editions of the Center for the Book newsletter. To access the newsletters, see centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/news.html.



National Book Festival.

Library Commission staff members Mary Jo Ryan and Devra Dragos joined Sharon Bishop and Sherry Houston, of the Nebraska Center for the

Book Board, and volunteers from the Junior League of Washington, D.C., to staff the Nebraska exhibit at the Pavilion of the States in Washington, D.C., greeting more than 5,000 visitors during the festival held each year of the biennium.

National Idea Exchange. Each year the Library Commission provided financial assistance for Nebraska Center for the Book volunteers to represent the Center for the Book at the National Idea Exchange events in Washington, D.C.

Letters about Literature. Each year Nebraska students were recognized by Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy or Governor Dave Heineman for their letters to influential authors. This annual national reading/writing contest invites young readers to write a letter to an author explaining how his or her work changed their way of thinking about the world or themselves.

For more information about Center for the Book activities, contact Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Library Commission Communications Coordinator, 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: maryjo.ryan@nebraska.gov. ➔



Council Advises Commission

The Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries was established by the Nebraska Library Commission to advise on statewide library development, planning, and federal library programs. The geographically diverse members represent a cross-section of libraries in the state and are appointed by the Library Commission. They met six times during the biennium, in Chadron, Omaha, Grand Island, Elmwood, and via videoconference. Steve Fosselman, Patricia Gross, and Marty Magee served as chair during the biennium. State Advisory Council members included:

- Robin Bernstein**, Freeman-Lozier Library, Bellevue University
- Patty Birch**, North Platte Senior High School
- Kate Borchman Hassebrook**, Lyons, Nebr.
- Pam Bohmfalk**, Hastings Public Library (NLA Liaison)
- Janice Boyer**, Criss Library, University of Nebraska at Omaha
- Deb Carlson**, Scottsbluff Public Library
- Ceri Daniels**, Cline, Williams, Wright, Johnson and Oldfather, LLP
- Kathy Ellerton**, Northeast Library System
- Steve Fosselman**, Grand Island Public Library
- Joan Giesecke**, Love Library, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

- Cindy Gitt**, Holdrege Area Public Library
- Patricia Gross**, Gering Public School
- Gretchen Healey**, Omaha, Nebr.
- Karen Hein**, Library Media/Library Science Education Programs, University of Nebraska at Omaha
- Jayne Hlavac**, Schuyler Central High School
- Theresa Jehlik**, Omaha Public Library
- Diana Johnson**, Stromsburg Public Library
- Pat Leach**, Lincoln City Libraries
- Marty Magee**, National Network/Libraries of Medicine, University of Nebraska Medical Center
- Trine McBride**, Ord Township Library
- Rebecca Pasco**, University of Nebraska at Omaha
- Kristen Rogge**, Johnson, Nebr.
- Todd Schlechte**, Gretna Public Library
- Mary Ann (MeMe) Smith**, Schuyler Public Library
- Susan Warneke**, Norfolk, Nebr.
- Ellen Weed**, Norfolk Regional Center
- Glenda Willnerd**, Lincoln Public Schools (NEMA Liaison)
- Merrillene Wood**, Learning Resource Center, Western Nebraska Community College-Sidney
- Frank Zimmerman**, Auburn, Nebr.

Libraries Explore Open Source Systems

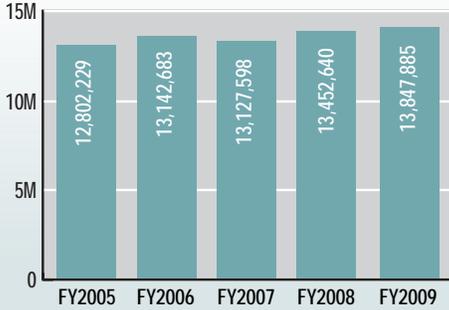
The Nebraska Library Commission funded a \$75,000 grant during the biennium for a pilot project to create an open source cooperative library catalog and circulation system in Nebraska. Open Source Software (OSS) can be customized and shared among users, creating a flexible, affordable, Web-based option for Nebraska libraries to replace current systems at lower costs. OSS software replaces the standard model of purchasing software and doing only what the software allows users to do with free software that allows users to change it to fit their needs. While the software itself is free, there can be costs for customization and maintenance which could be shared by partners using the system.

A group of seven libraries of all sizes (Lincoln City Libraries, Omaha Public Library, St. Paul Public Library, Gretna Public Library, Grand Island Public Library, Bellevue Public Library, and Holdrege Area Public Library) participated in the Nebraska Pioneer Project. The group tested Koha (www.koha.org) and had a scoping study conducted to determine the feasibility of using open source software to design a shared Integrated Library System (ILS) for Nebraska libraries. For more information contact Steve Fosselman, Pioneer Consortium President, Grand Island Public Library, 308-385-5333, e-mail: sf@gi.lib.ne.us or see lcpioneer.wordpress.com.

Ed. Note: As this report goes to print, five of the original partners have signed an agreement with Progressive Technology Federal Systems (PTFS), a content and knowledge management provider, to convert current systems. The Pioneer Consortium has asked other Nebraska libraries that are interested in finding out more about joining this consortium to contact Steve Fosselman, contact information above.

Nebraska Public Library Statistical Survey—2005-2009

Annual Circulation (Items Borrowed)



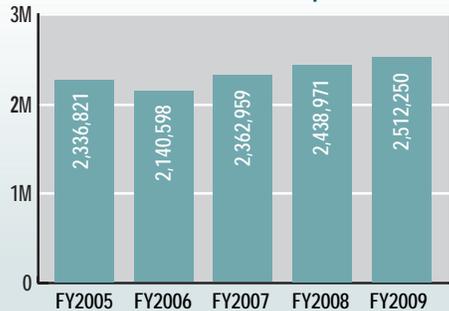
Total Library Visits



Reference Transactions



Use of Internet Computers



The State of Public Libraries in Nebraska

Each year the Nebraska Library Commission collects statistical data from public libraries in the state. This same activity is repeated in each of the other states and the District of Columbia. This national survey shares a uniform set of questions that results in an annual census of U.S. public libraries. The national data can be accessed through several sources, including:

- The library statistics section of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) Website at <http://harvester.census.gov/imls/publib.asp> provides the data files from the survey. Use the *Compare Public Libraries* tool to create a report comparing one library to others in the country.
- Another source of federal information is www.data.gov, a one-stop shopping source for data collected by the U.S. government. Raw data from the *Public Library Survey* can be found by selecting Institute of

Museum and Library Services in the agency list.

Results of the 2007-2009 Public Library Statistical Surveys for Nebraska provided a view of the status of library service in the state. Each year surveys reported data from about 82 percent of the 272 public libraries in Nebraska. A notable trend is the prominent role played by electronic resources. The proportion of print materials comprising library collections appears to be decreasing as the number of electronic and non-print resources increases. In fact, over a one-year period the number of E-books grew by over 20%, while the number of physical books actually decreased by over 4%. This movement is reflected in collection expenditures, which demonstrate a shift in spending towards materials in digital format. Nebraska libraries increased the number of public access Internet computers available by nearly 4% over last year, while the number of customers using those computers rose by 3% during that period. Since the

(continued on next page)

	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	3-Yr Change
Registered Borrowers	936,745	995,391	965,037	3.02%
Circulation	13,127,598	13,452,640	13,847,885	5.49%
Reference Transactions	1,061,484	1,099,552	1,061,662	0.02%
Library Visits	8,880,315	8,606,618	8,887,654	0.08%
Hours Open	430,846	435,541	420,376	-2.43%
No. of Internet Computers	1,674	1,773	1,842	10.04%
Users of Internet Computers	2,362,959	2,438,971	2,512,250	6.32%
Programs Offered	20,828	22,335	24,256	16.46%
Program Attendance	514,257	559,101	585,006	13.76%
Number of Books Held	6,193,152	6,229,052	5,956,954	-3.81%
Number of Electronic Books	303,002	370,525	446,367	47.31%
Number of Audio Materials	275,627	280,946	294,548	6.86%
Total Library Materials	7,487,366	7,590,905	7,672,764	2.48%
Print Materials Expenditures	\$4,750,873	\$4,843,490	\$4,586,148	-3.47%
Electronic Materials Expenditures	\$768,528	\$798,529	\$1,014,000	31.94%
Other Materials Expenditures	\$1,060,620	\$1,079,482	\$973,095	-8.25%
Total Materials Expenditures	\$6,580,021	\$6,721,501	\$6,573,243	-0.10%
Local Government Revenue	\$43,703,830	\$43,268,437	\$43,929,932	0.52%

The State of Public Libraries in Nebraska (continued)

2007 fiscal year report, the number of computer users has risen over 6.3%.

There are many signs that library usage continues to increase. The number of registered borrowers is up by 6.3% this year and those customers borrowed 2.5% more materials and engaged in 3.6% more reference transactions. The number of people using our libraries increased despite a decline in public service hours during the biennium. With 8,887,654 visitors, libraries are in no danger of losing their ranking as the most well-attended attraction in the state. In fact, Nebraska's library users could fill the University of Nebraska's Memorial Stadium 106 times. We have also seen a dramatic increase in the number of programs offered and attendance at those events. Local financial support for public libraries has been relatively flat over the past three years.

Some interesting facts about Nebraska public libraries:

- 58% serve populations under 1,000.

- 86% provide free Internet access.
- Nearly 96% of Nebraska's counties have at least one public library.
- Over 19% of the state's public libraries have Main Street in their address.
- As of 2009, 69% provide wireless Internet access, a 21% increase over 2008.
- Nebraskans borrowed 13,847,885 items in 2008-2009, a two-year increase of 5.5%.
- The latest library survey indicated that over 2.5 million Nebraskans use library Internet computers annually.
- The number of electronic books available through Nebraska libraries increased by over 47% between 2007 and 2009.
- Nationally, Nebraska ranks first in the number of registered public library borrowers per capita and third in the number of library visits per capita.
- Ten Nebraska public libraries were recognized as "Star Libraries" in the 2009 *Library Journal* Index of Public Library Service.

ALTAFF Supports Citizens for Libraries

Nebraska Library Commission Director Rod Wagner was named to the board of the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF). Friends of Libraries U.S.A. (FOLUSA) and the Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA) joined forces in

"Citizens for Libraries"

ALTAFF

Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations

A division of the American Library Association

formerly the executive director of FOLUSA, is executive director of ALTAFF.

The Library Commission supports membership to ALTAFF for all of the state's public libraries to ensure that Nebraska library staff, friends, trustees, and foundations

can take advantage of services to enhance fund raising, advocacy, and public awareness. For more information see the ALTAFF Website at www.ala.org/altaff or contact Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commission Director, 402-471-4001 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: rod.wagner@nebraska.gov.

Nebraska Public Library Statistical Survey—2005-2009

Number of Library Internet Computers



Library Program Attendance



Number of Library Programs



Local Government Revenue for Libraries



How Do Interns Perceive Librarians and Librarianship?

A recent evaluation analyzing input from seventy-five interns from 2006 to 2010, found that after participating in paid jobs through public libraries throughout Nebraska, interns are more likely to consider librarianship as a viable career and more likely to perceive librarians as interesting, cool, and young. For 67 interns (89.3%), their ideas about the work of librarians “changed a little bit” or “changed a lot.” The shift in their perceptions of librarians, for the most part, was positive.

Before the internship, 53.3% of students wanted to work in a library. After the internship, 89.3% reported that they would consider working in a library in the future. Before their internship, 41.3% showed an interest in becoming a librarian. After the internship, 69.3% showed an interest in becoming a librarian. These internships may well have served as an effective recruiting tool, changing young people’s perspectives of library work and librarians. For more information contact Kathryn Brockmeier, Nebraska Library Commission Research Analyst, 402-471-4002 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: kathryn.brockmeier@nebraska.gov. ➔

Ed. Note: Funding for future internship grants will be expanded by combining funding received by the Nebraska Library Commission through the IMLS Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program with private foundation funding received through the Nebraska Library Association.

Nebraska State Government Electronic Documents Collection Nears 4,500

Since 1996 the Nebraska Library Commission has linked to publications posted on Nebraska state agency Websites via the State Publications Online Website (www.nlc.state.ne.us/statepubsonline). Special attention is paid to annual reports, statistics, and major reports. Increasing demand for and concern about continued accessibility of online Nebraska government publications led to a new initiative. The Library Commission discontinued microfiche distribution of key state agency publications to depository libraries and switched to an electronic archiving program. These publications continue to be systematically downloaded from state agency Websites or scanned from print copies and stored on a Library Commission server. E-docs Alert Lists include the title, OCLC accession number and URL of newly downloaded publications and are posted on the site (www.nlc.nebraska.gov/epubs) and announced in *What’s Up Doc* blog (www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/whatsupdoc) postings. These publications can be located by clicking on the URL in the

publication record in the Library Commission catalog or using the search on the State Publications Online Website. They are also searchable via Google.

We are committed to providing permanent storage and access via stable URLs so that key state agency publications will remain available to citizens and researchers into the future. Since 2005 more than 4,500 online publications have been added to the collection. Three of the most popular are *University of Nebraska Personnel Roster*, www.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/u0100/b003.html, *State Personnel Almanac*, www.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/P2000/B004.html and *Nebraska Livestock Brand Book*, www.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/B7100/H001.html.

For links to State Publications Online, Library Commission Catalog, and more information about the Electronic State Documents, see www.nlc.nebraska.gov/epubs. For more information contact Beth Goble, Nebraska Library Commission Government Information Services Director, 402-471-4017 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: beth.goble@nebraska.gov. ➔



Library Commission Creates Book Club Wiki

In support of Nebraska book groups, the Library Commission created a book club wiki at nebookclub.pbworks.com, combining the titles of all Nebraska libraries willing to loan book club kits. The wiki provides the added benefit of facilitating discussion among librarians about why a specific book might be a good or bad choice for book club discussions. Librarians can select from more than **189** kits

currently available for loan and share their book club opinions and experiences with their peers. The collection has a special focus of books with a Nebraska connection. Contact the Nebraska Library Commission Information Desk to check out book club kits, 402-471-4016, 800-307-2665, e-mail: nlc.ask@nebraska.gov, chat: www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/contactus.asp. ➔

Nebraska Memories Continues to Grow

Making Nebraska's past unforgettable—*Nebraska Memories* continues to be a popular site. For example, of the 3,285 unique visitors in April 2010, many visited the site multiple times. One visitor stated: "This is a remarkably fine and informative site. After lengthy searches of the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian, I found the materials needed (Thurlow Lieurance) on your site. Thank you."

Another said: "Efficient, attractive, very well designed by comparison to many excessively 'crowded' sites."

Launched by the Nebraska Library Commission in 2005, the *Nebraska Memories* project works with libraries, museums, historical societies, universities, and other cultural institutions to provide access to Nebraska-related primary source materials. The collection, available via a searchable database at <http://memories.ne.gov>, includes

digital images of glass plate negatives, photographs, postcards, stereoscopes, sheet music, maps, and documents.

Children and teacher in front of school
Photographer, John Nelson; owned by NSHS
<http://memories.ne.gov/u/?nshs,117>



In FY2009, eight new participating institutions added 590 digital images to the database, and five existing participants added 1,155 digital images. In FY2010, five new participating institutions added 169 digital images, and four existing participants added 467 images. That

brought the total images available as of June 30, 2010, to **8,672**.

While a few participants do the scanning and cataloging themselves, the project works with a number of small institutions with wonderful materials but without staff for digitization projects. For these institutions, Library Commission staff scan and catalog up to fifty items at no charge. For more information contact Devra Dragos, see contact information on page 4, or Beth Goble, see contact information on page 10. ➡

Libraries Receive E-Rate Discounts

Nebraska schools and libraries received \$21.2 million in discounts on telecommunications costs during Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010 (July 1, 2008-June 30, 2010) through the Universal Service Fund (E-rate) program. Schools and libraries in the state submitted 1,650 applications for 3,278 requests. Nebraska libraries were awarded \$590,405 in discounts. Discounts ranged from 20 to 90 percent, with 107 of the state's public libraries participating, including the Nebraska Library Commission and Regional Library Systems. All received telecommunications discounts, and 53 of these libraries also received discounts on Internet services. 86 of the 107 libraries participating in the

E-rate program had 60 to 70 percent discounts on their telecommunications and/or Internet access bills. Discounts are awarded on a sliding scale based on the percentage of students in the local school district who are eligible for the free and reduced school lunch program, an indicator of the local level of need, and the County's Rural or Urban status as determined by the U.S. Census.

The Library Commission provides education, training, and consultation services to Nebraska library staff to assist with E-rate application. For more information about the program, see www.usac.org or contact Christa Burns, see contact information on page 1. ➡



New NebraskaAccess Website Introduced

NebraskaAccess, the portal to information databases for Nebraskans since 2003, was expanded and redesigned. The site (nebraskaccess.ne.gov) provides access to evaluated Websites; government publications; Nebraska historical resources; more than 4,500 full-text magazine, journal, and newspaper articles; biographical and business information; genealogical resources; and more. The Library Commission provides access to these resources with funding from the State of Nebraska and the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services. For more information contact Devra Dragos, see contact information on page 4. ➡

Books in Series Website Grows

The Nebraska Library Commission's Books in Series Website (www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/booksinseries) continues to be very popular with both librarians and library users. Our current database has nearly 43,000 records, but no tool can be 100% complete. We've heard from readers, librarians, and (on occasion) authors, when we are lacking a particular series in our database. We always appreciate such input. Whenever you find missing data, don't hesitate to contact us. We can easily add a series. For more information, contact Lisa Kelly, Nebraska Library Commission Information Services Director at 402-471-4015 or 800-307-2665, email: lisa.kelly@nebraska.gov. ➡

Committee Helps with Digital Transition

The Advisory Committee to the Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service was created to represent the needs of borrowers and to make recommendations concerning library policies, services, and programs. Members are primarily library users, but may include librarians, educators, health care workers, and other service providers. During the biennium, the committee focused on ways to promote the service to teachers, school media specialists, veterans' organizations, and consumer groups such as the Learning Disabilities Association of Nebraska and Visually Impaired Peer Support (VIPS). Other strategies included demonstration of new books and players, and solicitation of organizations to post information about and links to the Talking Book and Braille Service.

The committee explored ways to make talking book borrowers comfortable with the transition to digital talking books and players and strategies for allocation. They helped to set priorities for converting Nebraska-based books onto digital cartridge. Committee members helped to form strategies to introduce Nebraska schools to downloadable talking books and magazines from the Library of Congress Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) Website. During the biennium, Advisory Committee members were:

Joan Davis, North Platte
Bob Deaton, Lincoln
Brenda Elson, Omaha
Shelly Gray, Omaha
Marjorie Harrison, Gering
Ana Kalin, Lincoln
Robert Kalin, Lincoln
Nancy Larimer, Lincoln
Brad Meurrens, Lincoln
Shirley Schmidt, Columbus
Rebecca Sims, Offutt AFB
Mary Trenerry, Omaha



Talking Books Service Enters Digital Era

After forty years of talking books on audio cassette, the Nebraska Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service supplemented cassette holdings with digital books and players from the Library of Congress. A modest collection of 3,800 digital titles on cartridge now serves 2,000 Nebraskans with Library of Congress digital players. The digital book collection grew by approximately 200 titles per month; and the number of borrowers with digital players increased 100 to 150 per monthly player allocation from Library of Congress.

Talking Book and Braille Service began digital recording, duplicating, and circulating Nebraska books and magazines on digital cartridge during this biennium, becoming one of the first talking book libraries in the nation to circulate its own materials on cartridge. On May 6, 2010, staff duplicated its first Nebraska-based book on cartridge: *Heart of a Husker: Tom Osborne's Nebraska Legacy*, by Mike Babcock. On May 27, staff first circulated a Nebraska-based magazine, the May/June issue of *Nebraska Life*. The Library Commission's Blog featured a YouTube video that describes the process of making a digital talking book. The video is archived on the Library Commission Blog (www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/NLC/ — click on Talking Book and Braille Service in Categories) or www.youtube.com/watch?v=4hxd97DJYPo.

The new digital players from Library of Congress received rave reviews from Nebraska's talking book borrowers. Talking book customer Steve Aden, of Grand Island, compliments the compact size of the new

digital player and books: "I don't have to carry four or five cassettes around all the time to enjoy a book. I really like it, especially the clarity. It is crystal clear." Another talking book customer, Nancy Mead, of Lincoln, describes the new player and books as wonderful. "I'm in love," she said. "The unit is lighter to carry around. It is smaller and easier to handle. I

..... DIGITAL
Audio Books
 NOW AVAILABLE

- Audio Books
- Magazines
- Readers services
- Select titles downloadable

Available for individuals who:
 Have difficulty seeing regular print, struggle to hold a book or turn pages, or have a reading disability

Try it now!

Nebraska Library Commission
 Talking Book and Braille Service
 800-742-7691 • www.nlc.nebraska.gov/tbbs
nlc.talkingbook@nebraska.gov

can't wait to take it with me on a trip. I don't have all those tapes. And the tone is infinitely better." Betty Bacon, a talking book customer in Alliance,

appreciates how the new player and books contribute to her love of reading. "I love it. It is so easy to start and stop again," she said. "It tells me how much time I have left on the battery and on the book. And the voice is clearer."

Internet Downloads Available

In addition to receiving talking books and magazines through the mail, borrowers of the Talking Book and Braille Service now have the option of downloading materials from the Internet. Known as Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD), this National Library Service site is available for use twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. More than 20,000 audio books are now available for download. Borrowers can search by author, title, subject, narrator, and keyword. A "Recently Added" link lists the new titles, and a "Most Popular" link lists the highest-demand books. Forty-eight magazines, including back issues, can be downloaded. Library of Congress digital players are compatible with BARD.

(continued on next page)

Talking Books Service Enters Digital Era (continued)



Nebraska Life, Nebraska's first digital magazine, was circulated to Talking Books customers in May 2010.

Outreach to Nebraskans

A variety of outreach strategies were used during the biennium. Paid ads appeared in Nebraska publications, including *Nebraska Life* and *Living Well*, and articles were published in Nebraska newspapers, magazines, and library system newsletters. Staff met with the public at the Nebraska State Fair, community health fairs, diabetes fairs, volunteer service fairs, Older Blind Conference, Learning Disabilities Association of Nebraska conference, events to honor veterans, and

consumer group meetings. Packets were mailed to eye clinics, school media specialists, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and diabetes educators. Staff were interviewed on radio and made four presentations on *NCompass Live*.

Volunteers are Key to Success

Talking Book and Braille Service volunteers were recognized with receptions at the Library Commission, individual recognition for length of service, and with ads in the *Lincoln Journal Star*. Five and ten-year volunteers were recognized during the Lincoln/Lancaster County Volunteer Recognition Event.

Nebraskans are eligible for Talking Book and Braille Service if they struggle to read regular-sized print or hold a book or turn its pages, or if they experience a reading disability such as dyslexia. To find out more about the new digital player and books, contact David Oertli, Nebraska Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service director, 402-471-4005 or 800-742-7691; e-mail: david.oertli@nebraska.gov. ➡



Project Impact volunteers from Lincoln's Union College help sort and clean talking books.

Nebraska Learns 2.0 Continues

Nebraska Learns 2.0 is the Nebraska Library Commission's online, self-directed learning program that encourages participants to experiment with and learn about new and emerging technologies that are reshaping the way people, society, and libraries access information and communicate with each other. The first iteration of Nebraska Learns 2.0 debuted on October 1, 2008, and covered 23 "Things" (lessons) in sixteen weeks. Eighty-three participants completed all 23 Things in the allotted time and earned fifteen continuing education (CE) credits.

In May 2009 staff introduced an ongoing "a la carte" version of Nebraska Learns 2.0, featuring one new Thing each month. Participants pick and choose which Things they want to do. They no longer have to do every Thing to earn continuing education credit. They receive one CE credit for each Thing completed before the end of the month in which it was introduced. At the end of the biennium (June 2010), *Thing #37: Engaging Your Users with Polls and Surveys* was posted. That's fourteen Things in fourteen months! Topics covered in these months included Google Reader, Facebook, and screen-casting, to name a few. From May 2009 through June 2010, 35 participants completed a total of 121 Things. Our most prolific participant completed thirteen Things! To learn more see the blog at <http://nelearns.blogspot.com/>. For more information contact Susan Knisely, see contact information on page 4. ➡

Library Commission Partners on Preservation

In August 2009 the IMLS *Connecting to Collections Bookshelf*, a core set of conservation books and online resources donated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), was made available through the Nebraska Library Commission to help preserve treasured objects and artifacts held by Nebraska libraries and museums. The IMLS *Bookshelf* focuses on collections typically found in art or history museums and in library special collections, with an added selection of texts for zoos, aquaria, public gardens, and nature centers. It addresses such topics as the philosophy and ethics of collecting, collection management and planning, emergency preparedness, and culturally-specific conservation issues.

In April 2010 the Institute of Museum and Libraries awarded a \$40,000 *Connecting to Collections* planning grant to the Nebraska State Historical Society, with the Library Commission as a grant partner, along with the State Historic Records Advisory Board, Nebraska Arts Council, Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Museums Association, and Nebraska Library Association. The IMLS *Connecting to Collections* planning initiative is designed to help libraries, museums and archives address issues identified in the *Heritage Health Index (HHI)*, a report on the dire state of the nation's collections. The HHI survey, conducted by Heritage Preservation with IMLS support, found that 80 percent of collecting institutions did not have an emergency plan for their collections or trained staff to carry it out, and approximately 190 million objects could be lost. Planning and Implementation grants are designed to foster statewide organizational networks, provide safe conditions for collections, develop emergency plans, assign responsibility for collection care, and marshal public and private support for collection care.

The Nebraska planning grant, titled "A Plan of Action for Nebraska Collections" is being used to assess collection preservation needs and develop a statewide action plan to address them. For more information contact Beth Goble, see contact information on page 10. ◆◆

Library Commission Supports Summer Reading

The Nebraska Library Commission supported the statewide Summer Reading Program during the biennium by providing training sessions and materials. The 2009 theme was Be Creative @your library® and the young adult theme was Express Yourself @your library®. The 2010 theme was Make a Splash—READ!, with Make Waves @your library® for teens and Water Your Mind—READ for adults. The Library Commission provided workshops across the state, co-sponsored by the Regional Library Systems. Alice Boeckman, children's librarian at Bellevue Public Library, and Jody Crocker, children's librarian at McCook Public Library, presented a variety of programming ideas at the workshops. Sally Snyder, Nebraska Library Commission Children and Young Adult Library Services Coordinator, gave book talks across the state.

The Library Commission supplied book and video lists to complement the themes. Additional materials such as public service announcements, clip art, and manuals from other states were available on the Library Commission Website. Children and teens also participated in the Summer Reading Program through the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service. As a member of the Cooperative Summer Library Program consortium, which consists of forty-nine member states (and the District of Columbia and two territories), the Library Commission contributes funding for development and distribution of Summer Reading Program materials. Members in the consortium obtain high-quality materials at lower prices, share creative ideas, and invest less time on this annual program at the state level. Sally Snyder served as president of Cooperative Summer Library Program consortium in FY2009. The group's annual meeting was held in Omaha in April 2009. For more information contact Sally Snyder, see contact information on page 4. ◆◆



Nebraskans Advocate for Libraries

Nebraska library representatives traveled to Washington, D.C., in 2009 and 2010 to participate in national library advocacy activities. Major library related issues addressed during the 2009 National Library Legislative Day included E-rate funding for schools and libraries, Library Services and Technology Act appropriations and re-authorization, federal funding for libraries, and school library provisions of *No Child Left Behind* legislation.

Nebraska library representatives participated in Library Advocacy

Day activities in June 2010 during the American Library Association's annual conference. Major library-related issues addressed included appropriations and re-authorization of the Library Services and Technology Act, Elementary and Secondary Education Act re-authorization, E-rate funding for schools and libraries, and legislation clarifying exemption of library books from consumer product safety legislation per legislation introduced by Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (H.R. 1692). ❖



Participants in May 2009 included: Back row from left to right: Brenda Ealey, Administrator, Southeast Library System (Lincoln); Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE); Rod Wagner, Director, Nebraska Library Commission (Lincoln); Jenni Puchalla, Chair, Nebraska Library Association Legislative Committee (Lincoln); Kathleen Tooker, Executive Director, Eastern Library System (Omaha); Jean Ahrens, Commissioner, Nebraska Library Commission (Scottsbluff); Front row from left to right: Carol Spencer, Commissioner, Nebraska Library Commission (Broken Bow); Robin Schrack, President, Nebraska Educational Media Association



2010 Advocacy Day participants included: Back row from left to right: Rod Wagner, Director, Nebraska Library Commission (Lincoln); Brenda Ealey, Administrator, Southeast Library System (Lincoln); Julie Beno, Lincoln City Libraries; Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE); Deb Levitov (Lincoln); Marvel Maring, Nebraska Library Association College and University Section (Omaha); Robin Clark, Chair, Nebraska Library Association Legislative Committee (Papillion); Jolene Langan, Springville Elementary School (Omaha); Front row from left to right: Kristel Mayberry, Liberty Elementary School (Omaha); and Judy Henning, Kearney Public Schools Media Services Director (Not pictured: Carrie Turner, Nebraska Educational Media Association President [Omaha])

NEBASE Discontinued due to OCLC Changes

Changes continue to occur due to the structural reorganization of OCLC (Online Computer Library Center)—through which many Nebraska libraries receive cataloging, interlibrary loan, databases, and other services. In June 2009 the Nebraska Library Commission ceased operation as Nebraska's regional OCLC network, NEBASE. Under the new structure and its compensation, it was not economically feasible for a small network like NEBASE to continue.

While OCLC took over all technical support, Nebraska OCLC libraries were transferred to BCR (Bibliographical Center for Research), a western regional OCLC partner, for training, ordering, renewals, and billing questions on OCLC products and services. The intent was to allow libraries to try out BCR for a year, with the option to then switch to another OCLC partner that might be a better fit. However, in April 2010, BCR, after months of cutting expenditures, announced it would close its doors and its members would be moved to another OCLC partner, LYRASIS. LYRASIS, which charges a membership fee for its non-OCLC services, offered former BCR members free access to all its services for the first year. OCLC, however, chose to require that all BCR members formally request a transfer to a partner, whether it was LYRASIS or another partner. If a library did not choose a partner, all billing, ordering, etc., reverted to OCLC directly. Some Nebraska libraries opted to move to other OCLC partners, including LYRASIS and MLNC (Missouri Library Network Corporation). Most libraries let their accounts be transferred to OCLC.

The Library Commission **does continue to coordinate** group purchases of OCLC products such as CatExpress, WebDewey and Dewey Decimal Classification publications. The Commission also **continues to purchase** a statewide subscription to OCLC's FirstSearch base package of databases. For more information contact Devra Dragos, see contact information on page 4. ❖

Commission Supports Regional Library Systems

The Library Commission provided \$1,397,061 in continuing financial support for Nebraska's six Regional Library Systems during the biennium. These nonprofit organizations worked to improve library services through cooperation between all types of libraries and media centers within each System area. With the support of the Library Commission, the Regional Library Systems provided to member libraries:

Resource Sharing – Among items loaned were book discussion kits, videos, laptops and projectors, Wii gaming kits, Playaway books, professional journals and magazines, storytelling kits, iPods and MP3 players, laminator, binding system, Spanish-language kits, DVD players, cutting machines and dies, and scanners.

Consultation – System administrators consulted on numerous topics with member libraries, including weeding, collection development, E-rate discounts, personnel policies, automation systems, interlibrary loan, computer security, censorship, and *Bibliostat™ Collect*. They communicated with member libraries in person and through newsletters, Websites, flyers, e-mail, listservs, and annual meetings.

Continuing Education – The Systems partnered with the Library Commission to present sessions on Trustee Training and Board Development, leadership (including the Fifth Library Leadership Institute), summer reading programs, library ethics, intellectual freedom, vod and pod-casting, and LibraryThing. They facilitated meetings for public library directors and youth services librarians, workshops on automation software, and contracted with Warren Graham, Theresa Dickson, and Pat Wagner for sessions at Nebraska Library Association/Nebraska Educational Media Association (NLA/NEMA) conferences. Administrators taught Basic Skills courses and arranged for a variety of national speakers to come to Nebraska.

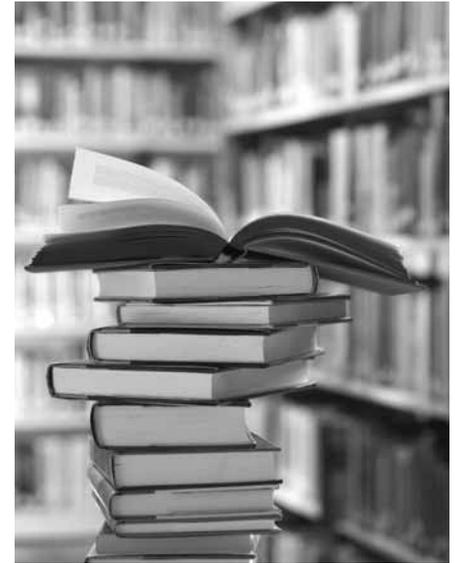
Biennium Regional Library System Highlights:

Eastern

- Wrote grants and sponsored fall and spring colloquia with Southeast Library System.
- Co-taught with Southeast Library System the Basic Skills Collection Development Class.
- Planned and facilitated 128 hours of Continuing Education.
- Held six DIRECT meetings for public library directors and four CLICK meetings for youth services librarians each year.
- Spoke on a variety of topics to University of Nebraska at Omaha library science classes.
- Wrote grants and sponsored annual Youth Services Retreats with Southeast Library System.
- Published twelve online *Eastern Express* newsletters.
- Sponsored a School Librarian Training Day with Nebraska Educational Media Association.
- Checked out 81 book bags for kids to schools and public libraries to use in book discussion groups.
- Awarded grants and scholarships to system members.
- Executive Director Kathy Tooker participated in National Library Legislative Day. She was also awarded the Communication and Leadership Award from District 24 Toastmasters International.

Meridian

- Presented or co-presented at several workshops, including Theresa Dickson, the Leadership Institute reunion, Policy and Procedures Workshop for SD libraries, and summer reading program.
- Sponsored a workshop on Government Documents and Websites.
- Worked with seven libraries on weeding projects.
- Co-sponsored Trustee Training workshops.
- Facilitated "Let's Talk about It" meetings.



- Awarded \$250 youth services grants to member libraries and media centers for acquisition of children or teen materials.
- Loaned gaming equipment, book discussion sets, Accu-Cut machines, portable audio devices, laptop/LCD projector for presentations, portable microphone, and automation system scanner, and saw a significant increase in rotating book collection circulation.
- Attended Mountain Plains Library Association conferences.
- Ruffled ten audio book sets for system libraries.
- Facilitated the Nebraska Librarians Talk Books online discussion group (www.librarything.com/groups/nebraskalibrariansta).
- Administrator Sharon Osenga taught Basic Skills courses.

Northeast

- Provided thirty-eight workshops or other continuing education opportunities (including partnering with the Library Commission and other systems on Basic Skills, Summer Reading, Database Roadshows, etc.), with 961 people attending these events.
- Loaned more than 542 items to member libraries, including book sets, DVDs, cutting dies, and journals.
- Consulted with libraries on a variety of topics, including technology, library and board relationships, and collection management.

(continued on next page)

Commission Supports Regional Library Systems (continued)

- Sponsored a TARGET meeting for directors of small libraries.
- Met with Library Technical Assistant (LTA) students to educate them about the Nebraska Regional Library Systems.
- Sponsored seven scholarships for attendance at NLA/NEMA conferences.
- Visited thirty libraries, traveling more than 1,500 miles.
- Administrator Kathy Ellerton facilitated the NLA/NEMA conference session, "Teen Technology 101: Facebook, YouTube and MySpace."
- Administrator Kathy Ellerton resigned to pursue a new challenge in July 2009. New Director, Jessica Chamberlain, began in March 2010.

Panhandle

- Provided eight Jobalike sessions and nineteen public librarian meetings for networking and sharing ideas in the region.
- Facilitated tours of the system area by authors Natasha Friend and Ellen Klages, and participated in Cradle Catchers reading promotion for mothers of newborns.
- Helped libraries improve their collections by assisting with weeding and collection development projects, adding materials to the professional resources collection, routing professional journals, adding resources to LibraryThing, and created a rotating DVD collection with a grant from the Library Commission.
- Circulated books, videos, iPod, inventory scanner, journals, book bags, binding system, laminator, and Wii gaming kit to system libraries.
- Assisted system libraries in applying for public computer center funding through the Library Commission.
- Helped nine Panhandle libraries join Nebraska Libraries on the Web.
- Facilitated training, including joint workshops with NEMA, other systems, and the Library Commission (Basic Skills, Summer Reading, Database Roadshows and a variety of technology-related sessions).

- Worked with the Panhandle Technology Committee to investigate a shared automation project.
- Administrator Marjorie Harrison made 182 library visits and handled 406 requests for information or consultation from 243 individuals or member libraries. She also served on the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service Advisory Committee.

Republican Valley

- Held Valley Visits at several locations in the System area, providing an opportunity for librarians to give feedback to the Library Commission on Public Library Accreditation Guidelines changes.
- Loaned 26 book sets with study guides, cutting die machine, numerous magazines and professional development guides, puppets, poetry trunk, and a Wii game to member libraries.
- Worked with Hastings Public Library to bring in Karen Hyman to train on Customer Service and to offer Winter Workshops.
- Assisted system libraries in applying for public computer center funding through the Library Commission.
- Facilitated training, including joint workshops with UNK, NEMA, and the Library Commission (Basic Skills, Summer Reading, Database Roadshows, and a variety of technology-related sessions).
- Administrator Sherry Houston visited nearly every library in the system area. She served as treasurer of the Nebraska Center for the Book Board and chaired its Funding/Membership committee.

Southeast

- Facilitated training, including joint workshop with NEMA in Dorchester, carpool to OLA/MPLA, Trustee Training with Jim Connor (supported by Library Commission grant), colloquia with Tracie Hall and Terry Pettit, SELS Training Extravaganza with twelve sessions, and Youth

- Services Retreat (in partnership with Eastern Library System).
- Partnered on the Heartland School Librarians Conference at UNO, with more than 200 attendees from across Nebraska and outside the state.
- Assisted with hosting authors at area events, including James Solheim, Terry Pettit, Gary Moore, Ellen Klages, and Jean Lukesh.
- Collaborated on projects with more than fifteen organizations including ACLU Nebraska, Southeast Community College Diversity Office, and library organizations.
- Loaned Wii & games, dies and book discussion bags.
- The system van carpoled more than 3,854 miles with no less than 43 passengers.
- Promotion and Advocacy included Banned Books display at Duffy's Tavern in cooperation with ACLU Nebraska and AFCON; Legislative Hearing (LB898) on Student Expression Act; meetings with students in the library associate and MLS degree programs, and booth with the Library Commission and other systems at League of Nebraska Municipalities Conferences.
- Consulted on wide-ranging topics, including Wi-Fi, fund raising, joint facilities, children's services, personnel policies, NebrasKard, computer troubleshooting, and county funding.
- Facilitated ten Conversations Among Small Town Librarians (CASTL) meetings in eight of the fifteen system counties on a variety of topics, including soliciting input for Library Commission review of the Nebraska Public Library Accreditation Guidelines.
- Regular meetings with and continuing education provided for corrections librarians, including helping establish policies and procedures.
- Administrator Brenda Ealey received the NLA Meritorious Service Award.

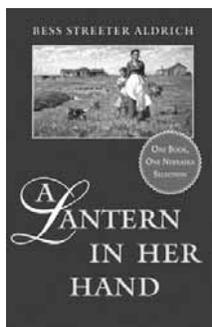


Commission Facilitates Websites for Public Libraries

In early 2009 the Nebraska Library Commission joined a multi-state cooperative, the Plinkit Collaborative, to offer Website design and hosting services for public libraries. During the biennium it was determined that a combination of software update issues and monetary costs made it infeasible to continue to participate in Plinkit. In May 2010 the Commission decided to change the underlying technology, but still offer the same service—renamed Nebraska Libraries on the Web—with WordPress replacing Plinkit and hosting the service on Library Commission servers instead of offsite. This method provided more immediate and direct control over the whole system, with the cost of a new server representing the only additional funds required.

The new server was purchased and WordPress was installed within a few weeks. The first group of eight libraries (five public libraries and three regional library systems) was trained on how to use WordPress, with the first group of Websites live within ten weeks. Criteria for selection of the first groups of participating libraries included distance from a training location, number of open hours, and the lack of any previous Web presence. For more information see <http://libraries.ne.gov> or contact Michael Sauers, Nebraska Library Commission Technology Innovation Librarian, 402-471-3106 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: michael.sauers@nebraska.gov.

Ed. Note: Since the end of the biennium twelve addition libraries have joined the group and plans are underway to broaden the criteria and invite more Nebraska libraries to set up their Websites through Nebraska Libraries on the Web. ➡



Commission Supports Statewide Reading Programs

The Nebraska Library Commission worked with the Nebraska Center for the Book and the Nebraska Humanities Council to encourage reading of Nebraska literature during the biennium. Nebraskans were invited to read *A Lantern in Her Hand*, by Bess Streeter Aldrich, for the 2009 One Book One Nebraska celebration and *The Home Place*, by Wright Morris, in 2010. The 2009 reading celebration was hosted by the Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation, www.bessstreeteraldrich.org, with the 2010 statewide read hosted by the Lone Tree Literary Society. Libraries across Nebraska joined the two author groups and other literary and cultural organizations in planning activities and events encouraging Nebraskans to read and discuss these books.

The Library Commission sponsored One Book for Nebraska

Kids/Teens to encourage kids and teens all over Nebraska to spend some time talking about books with each other and with adults in their lives. The 2009 One Book for Nebraska Kids selection was *The Green Glass Sea* by Ellen Klages, (<http://onebook4kids.nebraska.gov>), aimed at readers in Grades 4-6. The 2010 One Book for Nebraska Teens was *Unwind* by Neal Shusterman, aimed at Grades 10-12. The Nebraska Library Commission distributed book bags through the Library Commission Reference Department and Regional Library Systems. In Fall 2009 the Nebraska Humanities Council provided financial support to help the Library Commission sponsor a statewide tour, bringing author Ellen Klages to libraries and schools across Nebraska. For more information contact Sally Snyder, see contact information on page 4. ➡

Contact Commission Reference Librarians

Everyone has a preferred way to communicate. The Nebraska Library Commission attempts to make available multiple ways to

contact us for any sort of question or interlibrary loan need. E-mail is by far our most popular method, and please note our new address: nlc.ask@nebraska.gov. The same address can be used for text messages. Nebraska library staff are encouraged to keep this address handy in their address books, so we

can help when you're away from your computer—no matter where you are located.

Some people like chatting with instant messaging

and you may certainly chat with us during the hours we are open at www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/contactus.asp. As always, you may telephone us at 402-471-4016 or 800-307-2665 or fax us at 402-471-6244. No one way is preferred or handled above others, so please use whatever is easiest for you. We're happy to help! ➡



Ask A Librarian

Library Commission Funds Training

The Nebraska Library Commission continued a long-standing commitment to support improved library service in the state by providing numerous continuing education opportunities for library personnel. From July 2008 through June 2010, 6,029 library workers attended 649 continuing education events sponsored or underwritten by the Library Commission. Included were Basic Skills classes, coordinated by the Library Commission and the Regional Library Systems and held at sites across the state and online. Librarians participating in the Nebraska Librarian Certification Program must successfully complete Basic Skills classes or have formal education or training covering equivalent subject matter. The Library Commission again negotiated a statewide license for Nebraska library staff to participate in the College of DuPage teleconferences free of charge. New in FY2009 was *NCompass Live*, a series of weekly webinars on a variety of topics. Also new was the daylong Library Camp, an “un-conference” where librarians came together and discussed topics of their choice.

The Library Commission continues to encourage continuing education and professional development for Nebraska library staff through continuing education grants for educational programs and to help underwrite costs for attendance at regional and national conferences. Nebraska Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator Laura Johnson provided information about free Webinars on the Library Commission Blog. The Library Commission also encouraged modifications to the Library and Information Services education program offered by the state’s community colleges, now available throughout the state through Central Community College.

Other highlights of continuing education activities provided by the Library Commission included:

- Database Roadshows at locations around the state with hands-on practice, featuring enhancements and upgrades to the new NebraskAccess Website, eLibrary interface, Wilson databases, and new databases.

- NEBASE annual meetings and NEBASE Hour sessions.
- Workshops at four locations on using Return on Investment (ROI) information as a communication and development tool.
- Colloquium events coordinated and arranged for by the Eastern and Southeast Library Systems.
- Sessions across Nebraska on WebJunction and Technology Planning for public libraries.
- Classes on Web 2.0 topics including creating Web pages with XHTML, Cascading Style Sheets, blogging, and RSS.
- Cataloging Workshops.

You spoke. We listened.

A survey of Nebraska library staff to assess Continuing Education and Training needs confirmed that new technologies have joined old technologies in successfully delivering continuing education programs, but the new technologies have not supplanted face-to-face delivery. Responses and comments point toward a conflict of the ideal with the feasible. As one respondent commented, “I enjoy the interaction with my peers that attending in-person workshops provide[s]. Financially and time-wise, it is easier for me to do online workshops that are recorded and I can access when my schedule allows.” Seventy percent of respondents agreed that attending online Webinars is a good way to learn.

The number one training topic requested was grant-writing, followed by budgeting and fundraising. Library directors would also like training in computer/network operations and maintenance and Web page creation. Directors think that their staff members need customer service training, children’s services training, and more skills using NebraskAccess databases. While there were some small differences in the rankings of topics between library directors and library staff members, the two groups agreed on the top five topics.

Contact Laura Johnson for more information about Library Continuing Education, see contact information on page 5.

Nebraska Public Documents Website

“The public documents Web page is terrific! I’m finding lots of good stuff!” was the comment of one happy person who asked the Library Commission for information about the amount of grapes produced in Nebraska prior to Prohibition, and who found the answer at the Nebraska Public Documents Website (<http://nebpubdocs.unl.edu>). Students, researchers, and citizens are finding information on all sorts of topics in this online collection of historical state government reports.

In 2005-06, the Nebraska Library Commission, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and University of Nebraska-Omaha pooled funding and resources to begin digitization of the *Nebraska Public Documents*, a set of many annual reports of State of Nebraska agencies dating from the 1890s through 1956. Until this time, access to the *Nebraska Public Documents* was limited to an un-indexed, fragile print set held by a few libraries and a microfilm set owned by New York Public Library. A copy of the microfilm was purchased, making it possible to launch a digital project that would serve the needs of librarians and the public in ways never before imagined. The Nebraska State Records Board provided a second grant in 2009 for the project.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Libraries E-Text Center contracted for digitization of the microfilm, and Center staff created a searchable database, which is hosted on the Nebraska Public Documents Website. So far, reports from late 1929 into 1942 have been digitized. For more information about the Nebraska Public Documents Website, contact Katherine Walter, UNL Libraries, 402-472-3939, e-mail: kwalter1@unl.edu.



Nebraska Library Commission

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Nebraska Library Commission Highlights and Statistics July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2010

- ☞ The Nebraska Library Commission circulated **5,450** items.
- ☞ The Library Commission served **6,079** customers onsite.
- ☞ The Library Commission loaned **788** items to other libraries.
- ☞ Nebraska Library Commission staff answered **31,290** information requests.
- ☞ The Nebraska Library Commission borrowed **18,450** items from other libraries for Nebraska customers.
- ☞ Nebraska library customers downloaded **61,076** *OverDrive* audio books.
- ☞ **4,449** state documents were added to the Library Commission's collection, bringing the total to **155,414**.
- ☞ **1,368** federal documents were added to the Library Commission's collection, bringing the total to **50,136**.
- ☞ **2,012** electronic state documents were added, bringing the total of state e-docs to **4,415**. These e-docs were accessed **366,911** times.
- ☞ The Nebraska State Database was increased to more than **9.2 million** holdings in **47** participating libraries, serving **419,641** Nebraskans. These items, cataloged by staff of Nebraska libraries, are reflected in the OCLC WorldCat database of library holdings.
- ☞ The Library Commission's Nebraska Memories collection grew to **9,462** items.
- ☞ Nebraska Library Commission staff and guests broadcast **68** *NCompass Live* sessions, with **1,071** attending and **2,855** viewing the archived recordings.
- ☞ The Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service circulated **301,402** talking books, magazines, Braille materials, and videos with audio description to **4,285** customers.
- ☞ The Talking Book and Braille Service recorded **273** magazine issues and **62** books.
- ☞ The Talking Book and Braille Service duplicated **77,170** audio cassettes and **314** flash memory cartridges.
- ☞ Talking Book and Braille Service customers downloaded **7,254** audio books and **308** audio magazines.
- ☞ **6,029** Nebraska library staff and board members attended **649** continuing education events sponsored or underwritten by the Nebraska Library Commission, including **266** who participated in Basic Skills sessions.
- ☞ **174** public libraries were accredited.

*The Nebraska Library Commission Reference Service had the busiest month ever during FY2009 when staff members responded to **1,737** reference requests in March 2009. This was repeated in March 2010 when staff responded to **1,743** reference requests, another all-time high!*

