

Proclamation Ceremony Launches 2009 One Book One Nebraska

Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy launched the One Book One Nebraska yearlong celebration of Bess Streeter Aldrich's *A Lantern in Her Hand* with a proclamation-signing ceremony in January at Elmwood Public Library. Joined by state Sen. Dave Pankonin, members of the Elmwood Library Board, Elmwood Village Board, Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation, and Library Commission Director Rod Wagner, Sheehy urged all Nebraskans to read this classic story of a pioneer woman who withstands the adversity of existence on the prairie to triumph in the joy of everyday life.

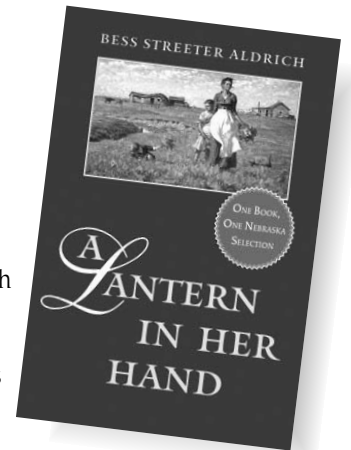
One Book One Nebraska 2009 is sponsored by the Nebraska Center for the Book, Nebraska Humanities Council, Nebraska Library Association, Nebraska Library Commission, and the University of Nebraska Press. This year the reading celebration is hosted by the Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation, www.bessstreeteraldrich.org. Libraries across Nebraska are joining the Foundation and other literary and cultural organizations in planning activities and events that will encourage Nebraskans to read and discuss this story.

As part of the 2009 celebration, the Foundation worked with Nebraska Library Commission staff in a cooperative effort to digitize Aldrich-related materials and photographs of artifacts.

They are available via the Internet through the Commission's **Nebraska Memories** online searchable database at www.nebraskamemories.org.

The remaining activities sponsored by the Foundation this year to help highlight One Book One Nebraska include:

- April 18, 2009: Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation Spring Banquet featuring Carol Miles Petersen's presentation of Bess Streeter Aldrich's story behind *A Lantern in Her Hand*. The winners of the Aldrich short story contest will be honored at the banquet.
- August 15, 2009: Bess Streeter Aldrich Celebration, sponsored by the Elmwood Public Library to highlight the 100th anniversary of the Aldrich family in Nebraska.
- November 14, 2009: *A Lantern in Her Hand* book discussion at the Nebraska Book Festival. *(continued on page 11)*



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Proclamation-signing ceremony features (left to right) Teresa Lorensen, Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation; Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy; Joanne Ferguson Cavanaugh, Nebraska Library Association; Garry Alkire, Nebraska Center for the Book; Rob Clements, Bess Streeter Aldrich Foundation; Sharon Bishop, Nebraska Center for the Book; Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commission; Sen. Dave Pankonin; Tom Swanson, University of Nebraska Press; and Erika Hamilton, Nebraska Humanities Council.

From the Director...

In 1999 we looked to the 21st century with great anticipation. There was expectation that the nearly unprecedented economic growth of the '90s would continue into the new century. A dynamic technology-fueled economy was creating new companies, jobs, opportunities, and wealth at an unimaginable rate. We rolled into the new century with great hope and celebration. And then the new century began and things began to unravel. It's now 2009 and where are we headed?

Libraries are one of the positive constants of this past decade. Far from fading into obsolescence, libraries have experienced steady growth in use. Building on the traditional, libraries are putting to use new technologies and introducing new services. And despite continued budget constraints, Nebraska's libraries offer a range of resources, programs, and services such as career and job information, downloadable books, teen spaces, book discussions, games, language courses, and much more.

It is hard to imagine and comprehend the changes experienced during this past decade. But we all have the opportunity and responsibility to help resolve the problems that have emerged and that confront us. Nebraska libraries serve a vital role as resources for needed information, as places for learning, and as welcoming places for people and families.

When eighty-some Nebraskans gathered this past June for the Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference, I doubt that any had awareness of the economic crisis that was in the making. They did, however, imagine future roles and actions for libraries that will contribute to better communities and a better Nebraska. A central theme that emerged from the Futures conference is the library as a welcoming place for people, ideas, and inspiration. Those are ingredients for a constructive future. Libraries are vital to Nebraska's future and will be contributors to economic recovery and renewal.

Rod Wagner

Ed. Note: See related items on pages 4-5.

Basic Skills Class Slated for Spring

Basic Skills: Public Services will be offered this spring in each of the six Regional Library Systems and online. The class covers basic customer service, reference, readers' advisory, effective library design, and programing and outreach.

New this year, the Southeast Library System class (held in Seward), will be presented in modules or mini-courses, and "blended" learning will be offered, with some parts of the class taught in the classroom and some online. In the online course, new learning management software will provide students a more interactive experience.

Librarians participating in the Nebraska Public Librarian Certification Program must successfully fulfill the Basic Skills requirements by completing the Basic Skills classes or equivalent formal education or training.

Locations and dates for Basic Skills: Public Services are:

Alliance	Wednesdays, April 15, 22, & 29
Gretna	Fridays, April 17, 24, & May 1
Kearney	Fridays, April 10, 17, & 24
Norfolk	Tuesdays, April 7, 21, & 28 (no class on April 14)
North Platte	Tuesdays, April 7, 14, & 21
Online	April 15 – May 29
Seward	Mondays, April 20, 27, & May 4

To register, see the Nebraska Library Commission's Training Portal at www.nlc.state.ne.us/training/train.asp and search for Basic Skills.

For more information contact Laura Johnson, Nebraska Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator, 402-471-2694 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: ljohnson@nlc.state.ne.us.

Libraries Apply for E-Rate

In Nebraska 102 library entities posted their initial Form 470 to participate in the upcoming year's E-rate program.

The Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Service Fund, under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission, provides discounts to help schools and public libraries in the United States "obtain affordable telecommunications and Internet access." The program, known as E-rate, runs from July 1, 2009, through June 30,

2010. Of the 102 libraries posting their Form 470, 46 are seeking discounts for telecommunications (telephone services) only, while 56 libraries are seeking both telecommunications and Internet access.

For more information see www.nlc.state.ne.us/libdev/erate/universal.html or contact Richard Miller, Nebraska Library Commission Library Development Director, 402-471-3175 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: rmiller@nlc.state.ne.us.

NCompass

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Nebraska Library Commissioners:

Mary Nelson, Chair, Holdrege, term expires 2009; John Dale, Vice-Chair, Lincoln, term expires 2009; Jean Ahrens, Scottsbluff, term expires 2010; Patrick Gross, Wayne, term expires 2009; Charles Gordon, Fremont, term expires 2010; and Carol Spencer, Broken Bow, term expires 2010. 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 Librarians Learn 2.0

Nebraska Learns 2.0, Nebraska's version of the popular "23 Things" online learning program developed by Helene Blowers at the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County, officially wrapped up in January. The intent of the 16-week program is to encourage participants to learn about emerging Web technologies that are changing the way people, society, and libraries access information and communicate with each other.

When beginning the program each participant created a blog and registered its URL with program coordinators. During subsequent weeks, participants were prompted to experiment with and blog about a number of new technologies and tools, including instant messaging, RSS, Flickr, LibraryThing, Twitter, Delicious, SlideShare, wikis, YouTube, and podcasts.

In total, 165 participants registered blogs and began the program. During the ensuing weeks they wrote 2,383 blog posts and left 2,257 comments on the Nebraska Learns 2.0 blog. Of the 165 who began the program, 83 finished all 23 Things by the January deadline.

Participants who completed all 23 Things by the deadline received 15 CE credits and had their names entered in a drawing for nine 8GB Creative ZEN MP3




players generously donated by ITART, NEMA, and NLA.

The winners of the MP3 players were:

- Dawn Weber, Gordon-Rushville Elementary School
- Elaine Tobias, Pilger Public Library
- Elizabeth Hajny, Hastings Public Library
- Kathy Nelson, Stromsburg Public Library
- Lauran Lofgren, Wayne Public Library
- Linda Risinger, Orchard Public Library
- Mary Boyington, Hastings Public Library
- Melissa Nielsen, John A. Stahl Library in West Point
- Pam Bohmfalk, Hastings Public Library

The Nebraska Learns 2.0 program is available online at <http://l2ne.blogspot.com/2008/09/thing-1-discovery.html>. The blog will remain live indefinitely. A list of all participant blogs is available at <http://l2ne.blogspot.com/2008/06/participants.html>. Plans for follow-up, including monthly learning activities, will be announced on the Library Commission Website, www.nlc.state.ne.us.

For more information contact Devra Dragos, Nebraska Library Commission Network Services Director, 402-471-4335 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: ddragos@nlc.state.ne.us. 


Library Commission Responds to State Auditor's Report

In February the Nebraska Auditor of Public Accounts issued an Attestation Review of the Nebraska Library Commission's gaming purchase transactions for the period of July 1, 2007, through January 14, 2009. The report is found at www.auditors.state.ne.us/index_html?page=content/news.html.

The Library Commission issued a response, found in full at www.nlc.state.ne.us/epubs/L4000/B050-2009.pdf. Following is a short summary of the Library Commission's response to the auditor:

The Library Commission's action in acquiring gaming equipment and a few representative games is proper and in accord with the agency's state statutory mission and its purposes in introducing new technologies, techniques, and providing information and instruction in using these technologies. Innovation requires latitude in researching, examining, and use of new and emerging technologies to evaluate their usefulness and benefits. The Commission's Network Services staff is expected to research and use new technologies for library applications, programming, and services.

The Nebraska Library Commission has a central purpose in promoting and introducing new technologies to Nebraska libraries. In fact, with gaming in libraries being such a hot topic in the library profession in 2007, the Library Commission would have been remiss not to offer workshops and information sessions on the topic. Few Nebraska librarians can afford to participate in national professional associations and conferences; it is the Commission's role to help them stay up-to-date and current despite this limitation.


The Commission continues to receive interest in the gaming equipment from librarians and will offer future demonstrations and training. 

New NebraskaAccess Website Debuts

NebraskaAccess (nebraskaccess.ne.gov), the portal to information databases for Nebraska residents since 2003, now offers expanded resources and a new look. The redesigned site offers free 24/7 access to evaluated Websites, full-text government publications, and Nebraska historical resources. Nebraska residents also are provided with free online access to over 4,550 full-text magazine, journal, and newspaper articles; biographical and business information; genealogical resources; and more. The Nebraska 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 above. 



What Does the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Mean for Nebraska Libraries?

At this date, it's not clear how libraries will benefit from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, but some provisions could be directed toward local library support, provided that Gov. Dave Heineman and other Nebraska decision-makers choose to include libraries in projects funded under the Act. In the Feb. 12, 2009, *Lincoln Journal Star*, the governor said, "Except for a wish list of 'ready to go' state roads projects totaling \$370 million, I don't have any list," (<http://journalstar.com/articles/2009/02/12/news/local/doc49948a8767de0632310693.txt>). In an article in the *Lincoln Journal Star* on Feb. 18, 2009, the governor stated that a \$32 million infusion of federal stimulus spending would be committed to road construction in Nebraska within three weeks, (<http://journalstar.com/articles/2009/02/18/news/local/doc499c7cb974f89061598078.txt>). To see how stimulus funding is being spent in Nebraska, see www.recovery.nebraska.gov. Gov. Heineman said the site will be updated regularly as funding is received and new projects are announced.

A crucial factor in how much stimulus support libraries will receive will be the role of local library staff and supporters in working with local officials to educate state officials on how investing the funds they receive from Congress in public and school libraries can be essential to economic recovery.

The following list of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act programs that libraries might benefit from is excerpted from the American Library Association (ALA) Washington office, www.ala.org/knowyourstimulus. As information becomes available, the ALA Wash-

ington office will post updates on this page with details, such as how funding will be distributed and how to apply.

- **\$53.6 billion for the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, nationwide.** This program includes \$48 billion in block grants allocated among the states. Out of each state's allocation, 81.8 percent is reserved for education and 18.2 percent is reserved for the governor to use as he or she sees fit. The **Education Block Grant** will be distributed using existing funding formulas, which can be used for preventing cutbacks, preventing layoffs, school modernization (school libraries may benefit from this), or other purposes.

The **Governor's Flexible Block Grant** will be distributed for state fiscal relief or high-priority needs. Gov. Heineman will determine which public safety and other critical service projects will receive funds. This could include public libraries, public school facilities, and higher education facilities. See table below for fund distribution:

State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Block Grants (Total allocated over FY2009-FY2010)		
	Education Block Grant	Governor's Flexible Block Grant
U.S. Total	\$39,524,100,000	\$8,793,900,000
Nebraska	\$234,000,000	\$52,100,000

- **\$7.2 billion for Broadband, nationwide.** This includes \$2.5 billion for Rural Utilities Service and \$4.7 billion for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) broadband grant program for underserved areas. This may include \$200 million in competitive grants for expanding public computer capacity at

public libraries and community college libraries, but at this time there is no mechanism for libraries to apply for these funds and no allocation plan available.

- **Additional \$120 million for the Senior Community Service Employment Program, nationwide.** This funding will provide community service jobs at nonprofit and public facilities (which could include libraries) for an additional 24,000 older Americans. Program participants can be placed in community service positions at nonprofit and public facilities, including schools and libraries. Nebraska libraries may qualify as employment sites. For more information or to become a host agency, see www.experienceworks.org/site/PageServer?pagename=State_Nebraska_Home.

- **Additional \$130 million for the USDA Rural Community Facilities Program, nationwide.** These funds will be distributed through the Housing and Community Facilities Programs at the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture through loan and grant programs. Facilities funded may include rural schools and libraries.

For more information see www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne, www.Recovery.gov, or contact Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commission Director, 402-471-4001 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: rwagner@nlc.state.ne.us, or Richard Miller, see contact information on page 2.



ALA Releases Tough Economy Toolkit

Across the country, families are facing tough economic times. Americans are visiting their local public libraries more often and checking out items with greater frequency. Libraries across the U.S. report that people are turning to libraries in record numbers to take advantage of the free resources there.

Ironically, libraries at the same time are being forced to reduce hours, cut staff, and even close their doors.

Those who love libraries know that libraries are America's great information equalizers – the only place people of all ages and backgrounds can find and freely use a diversity of resources, along with the expert guidance of librarians.

In times like these, shortening library hours or cutting programs and services hurts those who have the least access to such resources outside the library.

A new Web-based resource by the American Library Association (ALA) will help library advocates make the case for libraries during times of economic downturn. The "Advocating in a Tough Economy" toolkit is available at www.ala.org/tougheconomytoolkit.

ALA executive director Keith Michael Fiels said: "With city, county, state and federal budgets under increasing

pressure, we need to make the case for libraries more than ever. All too often, libraries are the first to receive budget cuts. Funders need to understand the essential role that libraries play in our society and economy, with usage up significantly, and increasing numbers of people coming to libraries for job-related services, for access to government assistance programs, and as a way of making their money go further." (Even kids



Lincoln youngsters rally in response to news about plans to close the Lincoln City Libraries South Branch.

can get involved—in Lincoln a group of fourth-graders rallied recently to save the Lincoln City Libraries South Branch from closure. See article and photos at <http://journalstar.com/articles/2009/02/23/news/local/doc49a34508f32ac868685364.txt>.)

The toolkit contains information on how to work with decision-makers, ways to work with the media, and talking points, including the economic value of libraries, with return-on-investment examples; libraries and the economy; and upswings in library usage.

This resource is part of "Advocacy U", ALA's new initiative geared to providing tools, training, and resources to help library advocates achieve real advocacy goals in real situations at the local level. Learn more at www.ala.org/advocacyuniversity.

Libraries Can Help Job Seekers

by Laura Johnson, Nebraska Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator

You've read the headlines and you've heard the news: times are getting tough. And when times get tough, the public library gets busier. The number of library visits and checked-out items grew by more than 10 percent between 2001, the last economic downturn, and 2008, according to the ALA.

Yet library funding is often cut when legislators and council members need to tighten their belts. Librarians can help members of their communities and show officials how the library is a practical and vital resource in the community by demonstrating how they offer services for tough times.

One of those services is helping people who have been laid off or downsized get back to work. Libraries give job seekers a place to work on finding work and a place to network and support fellow job seekers. Public libraries have computers to search for job openings and write resumes and letters, and they have books about how to write a good cover letter. Here are some job resources that Nebraska librarians can show to job seekers:

- The Jobs and Careers page (<http://nebraskaccess.ne.gov/jobs-careers.asp>) from NebraskaAccess at the Nebraska Library Commission lists many links for job seekers.
- Monster (www.monster.com) is the largest online job site. There are job listings, sample resumes and cover letters, and a place to post a resume. CareerBuilder.com (www.careerbuilder.com) is similar.
- Many newspapers now have their job ads online, so check the papers. Links to Nebraska newspapers can be accessed at www.onlinenewspapers.com/usstate/usnebras.htm.

One of the best ways to find a job, they say, is to network. Facebook (www.facebook.com) and MySpace (www.myspace.com) might work for some job seekers, but a networking site such as LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) encourages professional networking.

Library Use Rises

The downturn in the economy has libraries in Nebraska and across the nation seeing increased usage and circulation, with customers using libraries for:

- job searches
- resumes
- job listings online
- entertainment—books, computers, DVDs, and videos

Nebraska libraries report increased usage:

- Omaha Public Library reports a circulation increase of 5% in 2008 and computer usage up by 10%.

- Hastings Public Library reported a 6.6% increase in circulation in 2008 and an 18% increase in summer reading program registrations.

The surge in library visits nationwide has been reported in several media outlets over the past few months, with stories in the *Wall Street Journal*, CBS, NBC, ABC, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, CNN, *Huffington Post*, and more. For more information about increased library usage and the resulting media coverage, see www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/hqops/pio/.

Series Website Assists Librarians

Today I stumbled across a wonderful resource for all of you series readers out there. The wonderful Nebraska Library Commission has a searchable online database where you are able to quickly find the title of the next book in your series. You can search using either the series title, author, or book title. Just think, you'll never have to read series out of order again!

– Tiffany Keenan, Alliance Public Library Reference blog,
<http://allpublib.blogspot.com/2009/01/help-with-your-series-searches.html>

I was just reading my NCompass newsletter and learned about it. School librarians (and I'm sure all librarians) will LOVE it! I am planning on sharing this with as many people as I can! Thank you!!

– Anne Kalkowski, Library Media Teacher, Beveridge Magnet Middle School, Omaha

The Library Commission's Books in Series Website at www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/booksinseries/index.html lets users search book series by author, series name, or book title. If you can't find the series you're looking for, let us know by clicking on the Contact Us link and we will add it. Books in Series is one of the Commission's most popular sites and its strength relies upon users searching and recommending books. It's a terrific resource for librarians and others. Check it out!

For more information contact Lisa Kelly, Nebraska Library Commission Information Services Director, 402-471-4015 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: lkelly@nlc.state.ne.us.



american libraries

American Libraries, the publication of the American Library Association, is now available free online at www.ala.org/ala/online. Login is no longer required to view the current issue or archives online. First-time viewers need to install the ebrary Plug-in Reader™ for Windows, available on the site. There also is a workaround given for Firefox 3 users.



NCompass Live Update

NCompass Live, the Nebraska Library Commission's weekly online broadcast, kicked off in January. Session topics have included an overview of the Library Commission's departments, data collection through Bibliostat™, new downloadable audio books from the Library of Congress Talking Books, free health resources from the National Library of Medicine, and a wrap-up for Nebraska Learns 2.0.

Attendees may contribute to the Web sessions or ask questions of the presenters by using a microphone or text chat. During the

Nebraska Learns 2.0 session, several people who completed the 23 Things provided feedback on Nebraska Learns 2.0. A theme mentioned repeatedly was the sense of community participants felt in working with the social networking tools, within their own libraries and with librarians from around the state.

Sessions are recorded and may be played back at any time via the Internet. For recorded sessions and information on

upcoming sessions of *NCompass Live*, see www.nlc.state.ne.us/ncompass/ncompasslive.asp.



Library Commission "Data Docs" John Felton (left) and Kathryn Brockmeier demonstrated data collection tools, including Bibliostat™ Collect, in a January 21 *NCompass Live* session.

Product Safety Act Implementation Delayed

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced a stay in implementing the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act until February 10, 2010. The legislation seeks to decrease the levels of lead and phthalates in products intended for children and will be enforced by the Safety Commission. Under its interpretation of the Act, books would be subject to the same testing standards as children's toys.

Currently, the Safety Commission is interpreting the law to mean that all books for children 12 years old and younger would have to be tested for lead content. The legislation is retroactive, meaning that every book would have to be tested. Public, school, academic, and museum libraries would be required to test all books or remove all their children's books or ban all children under 12 from visiting their facilities as of February 10, 2010.

As a result of this issue, the Association of American Publishers has tested

the components of books and found that the levels of lead in children's books were far below the future legal requirements at the full implementation of the regulations.

"Libraries now have a little room to breathe, but this announcement is not an end to the problem," said Emily Sheketoff, executive director of the ALA Washington office. "Because children's books are safe, libraries are still asking to be exempt from regulation under this law," she said. The ALA is pledging to continue to work with Congress and the Safety Commission to ensure that the matter is resolved before the 2010 implementation date.

For more information see http://wikis.ala.org/professionaltips/index.php/Lead_in_Books%3F or contact Emily Sheketoff at esheketoff@alawash.org or Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commission Director, 402-471-4001 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: rwagner@nlc.state.ne.us.



2009 NLA Spring Meetings Set

The Public Library and Trustee Section (PLTS) of the Nebraska Library Association (NLA) will hold its 2009 Spring Meetings at Wahoo Public Library on May 1, Bridgeport Public Library on May 6, and Lexington Public Library on May 7. Presentations at each will site cover Legal Considerations of Public Library Policies and Procedures, Developments in the Implementation of Open Source Integrated Library Systems, Mental Health in Public Libraries, and Using Skype® as a Communications

Tool in Public Libraries. For more information see www.nebraskalibraries.org.

“Librarians as Transformers” will be the theme for the College & University Section Spring Meeting on May 15 at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The keynote will be given by Sara Martin, Associate Dean for Technical Services and Library Systems, University of Detroit Mercy. For more information see www.nebraskalibraries.org/cu/conferences.html. ➡

New Advisory Council Members Appointed

The Nebraska Library Commission has appointed new and returning members to the Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries. At the January Library Commission meeting Commissioners re-appointed Cindy Gitt from Holdrege and Kris Rogge from Johnson to second three-year terms. New appointments for three-year terms include Robin Bernstein (Bellevue), Ceri Daniels (Lincoln), Karen Hein (Omaha), Pat Leach (Lincoln), Trine McBride (Ord), and Ellen Weed (Norfolk).

The Nebraska State Advisory Council on Libraries is appointed by the Nebraska Library Commission to advise the Commission on statewide library development and planning.

The Nebraska Library Commission and State Advisory Council on Libraries held a joint meeting in March at the Grand Island Public Library. The Council meets three times a year, with future meetings set for July and November.

For more information contact Rod Wagner, see contact information on page 6. ➡

National Library Week Is April 12-18

Nebraska libraries are encouraged to celebrate National Library Week, April 12-18, 2009, with this year’s theme, *Worlds connect @ your library®*, and to share their stories with the Campaign for America’s Libraries by sending an e-mail to atyourlibrary@ala.org.

National Library Week is sponsored by the American Library Association and libraries across the country each April. It’s a time to celebrate the contributions of our nation’s libraries and librarians and to promote library use. The Campaign for America’s Libraries (www.ala.org/@yourlibrary), ALA’s public awareness campaign, promotes the value of libraries and librarians. Thousands of libraries of all types—across the country and abroad—use the campaign’s “@ your library®” brand.

To download National Library Week materials, see www.ala.org/nlw. For more

information contact Megan McFarlane, Campaign Coordinator, American Library Association, 312-280-2148, e-mail: mmcfarlane@ala.org. ➡



Libraries Can Help Job Seekers *(continued from page 5)*

Professional associations also facilitate networking. The American Society of Association Executives offers an online directory of associations (www.asaecenter.org/Directories/AssociationSearch.cfm) or users can search the venerable *Encyclopedia of Associations*. Using a search engine, Websites can be found for everything from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (www.aicpa.org) to the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (www.aza.org); just search for the name of an industry with the word “association.” The Websites and magazines of associations often run job ads.

Job seekers who have been out of the market for a while may be a little rusty about the best job-seeking methods. The First and Best Cover Letters (www.careerlab.com/letters) is the online version of the standard guide to employment letters by William S. Frank, *200 Letters for Job Hunters*. Richard Bolles, author of *What Color Is Your Parachute?*, offers advice online at JobHuntersBible (www.jobhuntersbible.com).

Job-Hunt® (www.job-hunt.org) provides a directory of job resources on the Web. Libraries can also help job seekers open e-mail accounts and use word processing software. If the library doesn’t have an office software package, Google Docs (docs.google.com) offers an effective Web-based service.

In times of economic downturn, librarians have the opportunity to do a great service for their customers and advocate for the library by letting officials know that an investment in the library is an investment in people and getting them back to work.

For more information about training resources for librarians, contact Laura Johnson, Nebraska Library Commission Continuing Education Coordinator, see contact information on page 2. ➡




Wagner on Board of New ALA Division

Library Commission Director Rod Wagner has been named to the board of the newly formed Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations, or ALTAFF. Friends of Libraries U.S.A. (FOLUSA) and the Association for Library Trustees and Advocates (ALTA) joined forces in February to create an expanded division of the American Library Association (ALA).

This new division will help Trustees and Friends work together at the local, state, and national levels to effectively promote and advocate for libraries. Bringing together Trustees and Friends promises to extend the association's advocacy efforts, boost membership, and grow revenues. Sally Gardner Reed, formerly the executive director of FOLUSA, is executive director of ALTAFF.

In an effort to bring in as many Trustees and Friends as possible, ALA has made special membership pricing available for individuals and associates. The ultimate goal will be to harness the power of hundreds of thousands of library advocates so that libraries can thrive even in times of economic distress. The Nebraska Library Commission supports a membership to ALTAFF for all of the state's public libraries.

For more information see the ALTAFF Website at www.ala.org/altaff or contact Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commission Director, see contact information on page 6. 

Reports Examine Digital Media and Teen Culture

by Kathryn Brockmeier, Nebraska Library Commission Research Analyst/Special Projects Associate

Video games, the Internet, and cell phones: these and other technologies are part of the new digital media that have been part of teenagers' culture since birth. Recent reports from two groundbreaking national projects provide insight into the intersections between digital media and teen culture.

Video Games, Civics, and Teens

The first national survey of its kind finds that **virtually all American teens play computer, console, or cell phone games** and that the gaming experience is rich and varied, with a significant amount of social interaction and potential for civic engagement. The survey was conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, a project of the Pew Research Center, and was supported by the MacArthur Foundation.

The report asserts that teens' gaming experiences are diverse and include significant social interaction and civic engagement. According to the survey of 1,102 youth ages 12-17:

- Game playing is universal, with almost all teens playing games and at least half playing games on a given day.
- Game-playing experiences are diverse, with the most popular games falling into the racing, puzzle, sports, action, and adventure categories.
- Game playing is social, with most teens playing games with others at least some of the time.
- Game playing can incorporate many aspects of civic and political life.
- Game playing sometimes involves exposure to mature content, with almost a third of teens playing games

that are listed as appropriate only for people older than they are.

According to Amanda Lenhart, author of a report on the survey and a senior research specialist with the Pew Internet & American Life Project: "The stereotype that gaming is a solitary, violent, anti-social activity just doesn't hold up. The average teen plays all different kinds of games and generally plays them with friends and family both online and offline."

A focus of the survey was the relationship between gaming and civic experiences among teens. The goal was to test concerns that gaming might be prompting teens to withdraw from their communities. It turns out there is clear evidence that gaming is not just an entertaining diversion for many teens; gaming can be tied to civic and political engagement.

The Mills College Civic Engagement Research Group (CERG) has separately issued a white paper that takes a more detailed look at the civics findings.

Results shared in this report are:

- The quantity of game play is not strongly related to civic and political engagement. Teens who play video games frequently are just as involved in civic and political activities (like raising money for charity and convincing others how to vote) as those who play infrequently.
- The characteristics of teens' gaming experiences are strongly related to teens' civic and political engagement. Of teens who had the greatest number of civic gaming experiences, 70% go online to get information about politics or current events compared to 55% of those who have infrequent civic gaming experiences.

(continued on page 9)

For more information see:

Teens, Video Games, and Civics

MacArthur Foundation White Paper (2008)
www.civicsurvey.org/White_paper_link_text.pdf

The Civic Potential of Video Games

Pew Internet & American Life Project, MacArthur Foundation, CERG (2008)
www.civicsurvey.org/PIP_Teens_Games_and_Civics_Report_FINAL.pdf

Reports Examine Digital Media *(continued from page 8)*

- Many teens have gaming experiences that parallel aspects of civic life. For example, 76% of youth report helping others while gaming.
- Some aspects of the social context of game play are related to civic outcomes, specifically, 64% of those playing games with others in person have raised money for charity.

Writers of this second report recommend that schools learn about and consider varied digital learning opportunities, improve access to such technology, and provide professional development opportunities for teachers and principals. All of these strategies could also be applied to various library settings.

Digital Youth Project

Another recently released report describes the efforts of a team of 28 researchers and collaborators who took an ethnographic approach to documenting youth where they are in their everyday lives and how they are developing important social and technical skills online. Rather than see how their behaviors and actions fit into predetermined categories of socialization, they combined observations from various related studies to discover emerging patterns of social networking skills.

A joint project of the University of Southern California and the University of California, Berkeley, with support by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's digital media and learning initiative, the research spanned three years of interviews with more than 800 youth and

young adults, and included more than 5,000 hours of online observations.


The researchers identified two distinctive categories of teen engagement with digital media: friendship-driven and interest-driven.

Other results of this study include:

- There is a generation gap in how youth and adults view the value of online activity.
- Youth are navigating complex social and technical worlds by participating online.
- Young people are motivated to learn from their peers online.
- Most youth are not taking full advantage of the learning opportunities of the Internet.

Implications shared by the researchers include:

- Adults should facilitate young people's engagement with digital media.
- Given the diversity of digital media, it's problematic to develop a standardized set of benchmarks against which to measure young people's technical and new media literacy.
- In interest-driven participation, adults have an important role to play.
- To stay relevant in the 21st century, education institutions need to keep pace with the rapid changes introduced by digital media.

As evidenced by these two studies, digital media has changed the way teen users of these media interact, explore, play, and learn. These findings can help libraries determine the direction of learning and engagement of youth and all users of digital media. 

Summer Library Program Meeting Set for Omaha


by Sally Snyder, Nebraska Library Commission Coordinator of Children's and Young Adult Services

As current president of the Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP), I'm happy to announce that the CSLP annual meeting will be held in Omaha April 22-24! This is the one time each year that representatives from the member states (47 states plus the District of Columbia) get together to select the slogan and concepts for upcoming years, hold committee meetings, discuss issues, and elect new members to the board of directors.

At this year's meeting we will choose the slogan for 2011 and the general concept for 2012. Attendees bring the preferences selected by the librarians in their state and advocate for their state's favorite slogan. This part of the meeting is almost as popular as the session with Upstart representatives sharing possible items for inclusion in the order brochure.

If any Nebraska librarians would like to visit the meeting and sit in on some of the sessions, please let me know. You will find your Nebraska representatives in the room: Beth Trupp from Gering Public Library and Karen Drevo from Norfolk Public Library, who is the current CSLP Vendor Committee Chair.

The Collaborative Summer Library Program is a grassroots consortium of states working together to provide high-quality summer reading program materials for children at the lowest cost possible for their public libraries.

For more information contact Sally Snyder, Nebraska Library Commission Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Services, 402-471-4003 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: ssnyder@nlc.state.ne.us. 



For more information see:

Living and Learning with New Media: Summary of Findings from the Digital Youth Project

MacArthur Foundation White Paper (2008)
<http://digitalyouth.ischool.berkeley.edu/report>

Hanging Out, Messing Around, Geeking Out: Living and Learning with New Media (published by MIT Press) is forthcoming, with an online version now available from the Digital Youth Website (above).

American Library Association, with funding from the Verizon Foundation


The Librarian's Guide to Gaming: An Online Toolkit for Building Gaming @ your library®
<http://librarygamingtoolkit.org>

Talking Book and Braille Service Updates Catalogs


Many borrowers of the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service enjoy books about cowboys and pioneers, frontiersmen and settlers, emigrants and Native Americans. A recently enlarged and updated catalog of *Westerns and Pioneer* books on cassette provides these borrowers with easier access to fiction and nonfiction about the settlement of Nebraska and the Great Plains. The catalog is available in large print and online.

Westerns and Pioneer is one of a series of catalogs describing books found in the Nebraska Cassette Books Collection, most of which were recorded in the Library Commission's studios. Another catalog in the series, *Books for Young People*, is currently being updated. This catalog describes books on cassette for preschool through eighth-grade students.

The Nebraska Cassette Books Collection complements the Library of Congress collection of cassette books, which also is circulated through the Talking Book and Braille Service. Starting this year, both collections will transition to digital flash memory cartridges for use with Library of Congress digital players.

For more information contact Dave Oertli, Talking Book and Braille Service Director, 402-471-4005 or 800-307-2665; e-mail: doertli@nlc.state.ne.us or talkingbook@nlc.state.ne.us. 

ALA Debuts Free Programming Resource

A new online ALA resource to assist libraries in creating cultural and community programs, www.ProgrammingLibrarian.org, includes a resource library, live learning opportunities, and a blog to keep librarians informed of upcoming opportunities and provide inspiration for new library programs. 

Commission Grants Provide Internships

From 2006-2008, the Nebraska Library Commission provided 57 grants to public libraries for internships. The 21st Century Librarian Internship Program, part of the Institute of Museum and Library Services grant-funded project "Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the Movies," aimed to recruit future librarians for employment in Nebraska libraries.

The Library Commission also partnered with the Nebraska Humanities Council to fund 10 internship stipends for bilingual middle and high school students to work in the Prime Time Family Reading Time® program. These young people spoke Spanish and represented the Hispanic community. They helped with the planning and implementation of the Prime Time® activities held at local libraries.

The success of the Prime Time® internships led to the creation of the additional 47 internship grants to 39 Nebraska public libraries through the 21st Century Librarian Internship Program. Tasks assigned to these interns included assisting with library promotion by writing and submitting newspaper and radio announcements, producing flyers and brochures, making PowerPoint™ presentations, developing displays, and updating the library Website. Student interns also were involved in library programming for youth, assisting customers with the online catalog and Internet computers, and establishing a library *MySpace* page.

Exit surveys collected from the interns revealed positive experiences.

The majority of interns found there was more to library work than checking books in and out. When asked, "After your internship, would you consider working at a library in the future?" 34 of 38 respondents replied affirmatively. Sixteen of 38 respondents answered "I strongly agree" or "I kind of agree" to the statement "Before my internship, I was interested in becoming a librarian." An overall positive shift was noted as the number in agreement rose to 26 in response to the statement "After my internship, I am interested in becoming a librarian."

Many supervisors submitted reports at the conclusion of the internships. The response was overwhelmingly positive, with remarks commenting on the additional help and fresh ideas they received and the desire to continue the program. Additional evidence of the positive outcome of the internships is seen in the continuing requests from local libraries to repeat the experience.

The Nebraska Library Commission is seeking funds to support future public library internships.

At a multistate Prime Time® conference held in Lincoln, Nebraska Humanities Council Director Jane Hood encouraged humanities councils in other states to add this "innovative element" of library

internships to their Prime Time® programs. For more information see www.nlc.state.ne.us/NowHiring/Internships.asp or contact Mary Jo Ryan, Nebraska Library Commission Communications Coordinator, 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: mjryan@nlc.state.ne.us. 

"I now possess a new understanding of how challenging working in the library can be. Additionally, the work I have performed for this internship has inspired me to attend graduate school to earn a master's degree so that I may pursue a more advanced career in the library."

—College-age intern

"I knew that librarians did many of the things I originally thought, but I have learned how much work is involved in this and how busy you can be. Our librarians do so much for our community and take on many activities and programs."

—High school intern

"He (the intern) wanted to spend more time with the computers than patrons, but seemed to enjoy meeting people as he became more comfortable with his duties. He learned to prepare materials for check-out, to shelve, to work with patrons, including those attending after-school programs...I am excited about this program. I think it is a great way to get students interested in library work as a profession." —Intern supervisor

Recruitment Grant Scholarships Awarded

The Nebraska Library Commission awarded 170 scholarships totaling \$365,000 over three years to students in library education programs as part of the 21st Century Librarian Scholarship program, a component of its "Recruiting the Next Generation of Nebraska Librarians @ the Movies" grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The goal of the scholarships was to increase the number of qualified professionals and recruit future librarians for employment in Nebraska libraries.

Seventy-three scholarships were awarded to 46 students in Master of Library and/or Information Science programs, 57 scholarships were awarded to 44 students in Master of Education in School Library Media programs, 16 scholarships were given to 11 students in Bachelor's in Library Studies programs, and 24 scholarships were awarded to 20 students in Library Technical Assistant programs.

Twenty-eight scholarship recipients have completed their degree programs, and 22 recipients have graduated and are working in Nebraska libraries. Another 34 recipients expect to graduate this year.

Follow-up surveys indicated that the availability of the scholarships factored into students' decisions to pursue their degrees and improved students' completion rates.

Educational institutions reported increased and improved educational opportunities as a result of the focus of this grant on library education.

This included development of a library education program at Chadron State College and the University of Nebraska at

Kearney, an increase in master's level library education at the University of Nebraska at Omaha/University of Missouri program, and reorganization of the Library Technical Assistant program under the auspices of Nebraska Central Community College.

The large number of continuing requests for scholarships demonstrates a continuing need for these resources. The Nebraska Library Commission continues to recruit at all levels of the career ladder and to search for funding sources to support this work.

For more information contact Mary Jo Ryan, see contact information on page 10. ➡

"I was working for the library as a page and then a clerk, because of the help of the scholarship my superiors were able to see how serious I was about completing my education and promoted me to Library Specialist."

— MLS scholarship recipient

"I am currently working in the elementary school library because they saw in the local paper that I was taking classes, and called and asked me to apply for my current position. They were excited that I had training and could walk in and go to work since there was no one else working there to show me the ropes. Hence the scholarship recipient piece in the paper led to my current job position."

— LTA scholarship recipient

"This scholarship has given me an opportunity to explore a new educational opportunity. I not only have become more informed in library processes and skills, but I have become a 21st-century learner and I look forward to sharing my new-found knowledge."

— MEd scholarship recipient



Library Commission Helps Build Websites for Nebraska Libraries

The Nebraska Library Commission, in partnership with INCOLSA and PALINET, has joined the Plinkit Collaborative. Plinkit is a Web-authoring tool that makes it easy for public libraries to create attractive Websites. Library Websites are created and edited right through the Web, using templates, built-in text editors, and other powerful features that make it easy for library staff to keep their content current. The Plinkit platform allows small libraries to develop professional-looking Websites.

The Panhandle Library System's Website will be the first in Nebraska to use Plinkit. Once the site is set up and templates are finalized, Nebraska public libraries that currently do not have a Website will be invited to request this new service. The service will later be offered to all Nebraska public libraries. The software and Web hosting (at INCOLSA) is funded by the Nebraska Library Commission at no cost to libraries. Michael Sauers, Library Commission Technology Innovation Librarian, will provide training on the software.

Plinkit Websites can feature photos, graphics, event calendars, database access, and the catalog. This versatile platform can even show videos or slideshows.

For more information about Plinkit, see www.plinkit.org/about/plinkit-features.html or contact Devra Dragos, see contact information on page 3. ➡

Proclamation Ceremony

(continued from page 1)

- A *Journey into Christmas* holiday event, with the Aldrich House decorated for the holidays and open every Saturday and Sunday in December.

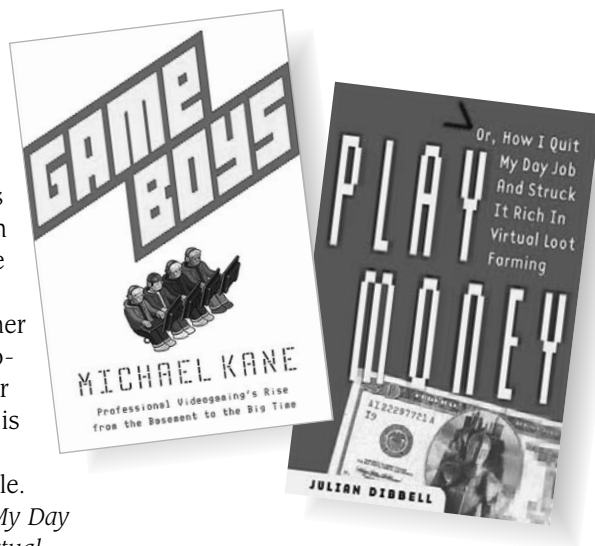
For more information about One Book One Nebraska, see www.onebookonenebraska.org or contact Mary Jo Ryan, see contact information on page 10. ➡

Book Reviews

by Michael Sauers, Nebraska
Library Commission Technology
Innovation Librarian

Gaming is big business. This is something that no longer can be denied. In fact, the video game industry now makes more money annually than Hollywood. But other than in the obvious sell-games-to-make-a-profit way, there are other significant areas in which money is involved: "virtual money" and "professional gamers," for example.

In *Play Money or, How I Quit My Day Job and Made Millions Trading Virtual Loot*, (New York: Basic Books, 2006, ISBN-10:0465015352) author Julian Dibbell takes us through one year of his life in which he attempted to make a living buying and selling virtual goods. Through various schemes, including the ethical creation and selling of virtual goods to the more ethically questionable "gold farming," Dibbell shows us how people attempt to make money online, to varying degrees of success. There's even a section on trying to figure out how to report his virtual income to the IRS. (Hint: Try reading IRS Publication 525 and see if you can figure it out.) By the midpoint of the book you'll be wondering if he survives the year or not. Of course, I won't tell.



In *Game Boys: Professional Videogaming's Rise from the Basement to the Big Time* (New York: Viking Press, 2008, ISBN-10:0670018961), Michael Kane introduces us to the world of the professional video game circuit. Yes, you read that right, video games as professional sports. One can't argue that this hasn't exactly hit the big time, but there are those who dream of the day when ESPN broadcasts these tournaments. (If it can happen to poker...) Kane takes us into the lives of some of the top U.S. players of the game Counter-Strike and shows just how these competitions work. Along the way there are winners, losers, power struggles, jealousy, and plenty of drama to keep you hooked. ➡

Nebraska Unicameral Improves Website

A recent issue of the Nebraska Library Commission's *What's Up Doc?* blog noted changes to the Nebraska Unicameral's Website.

The Statutes and Constitution search link has changed to <http://uniweb.legislature.ne.gov/laws/laws.php>. A new feature is the ability to search by statute range. This could be helpful if users know the number of a specific statute and want to retrieve all sections of it with a single search. For example, a search of 51-412 through 51-418 (the Publications Clearinghouse statute that authorizes the Library Commission to operate the state documents depository program) brings up a list of links for each section. Clicking on "Print Friendly Version of Search" creates a document combining the full text of all sections.

Another improved feature is the ability to perform a single keyword search for previous legislation from this site at www.nebraskalegislature.gov/bills/search_past.php.

Boxes can be checked to allow selective searching of introduced bills, slip laws, committee statements, statements of intent, fiscal notes, and amendments for any or all Legislatures from 1999 to the present.

The *What's Up Doc?* blog by the Library Commission's Publications Clearinghouse Service lists new state and federal documents received, postings about "documents in the news," and highlights Clearinghouse activities.

For more news and updates from the Nebraska Publications Clearinghouse Service, subscribe to the *What's Up Doc?* blog at www.nlc.state.ne.us/blogs/whatsupdoc. ➡

Summer Reading Program Workshops Held

Summer Reading Program workshops were held in February and March at six locations statewide. Alice Boeckman, children's librarian at Bellevue Public Library, presented a variety of ideas on the themes of "Be Creative @ your library®" (children's theme) and "Express Yourself @ your library®" (teen theme). Sally Snyder, Coordinator of Children and Young Adult Library Services at the Library Commission, gave book talks on titles for preschool through young adult ages that will appeal to the summer reading crowd.

For more information contact Sally Snyder, see contact information on page 9. ➡



Alice Boeckman demonstrates a weaving activity for this year's Summer Reading Program.

Commission Purchases Movie Performance License

The Nebraska Library Commission has again funded a statewide license for public viewing of motion pictures in Nebraska public libraries at a cost of \$15,995. 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 30, 2009.

Below are commonly asked questions regarding the showing of movies in public libraries.

Q. If the library owns the videocassettes and DVDs, do we need a license to show them?

Yes, it is necessary for the library to have a license, regardless of who owns the video. Whether it is part of the library collection, someone's personal collection, or rented from a video business, if the film is included in the licensing database, it is legal to show in the library.

Q. Does a Movie Public Performance Site license cover all videocassettes and DVDs?

No, some videos, such as educational and special interest titles, are purchased with public performance rights. Certain videos of motion pictures in the public domain do not require a license. Some motion picture DVDs or videocassettes are not covered by the license.

To learn if a particular title is covered by the license, go to www.movlic.com and type the movie title in the space under the "movie search" tab. The title and rating will appear if the motion picture is included in the license. If it is not included, the screen will read: "There are currently no records that match your search criteria."

Q. If the movie I wish to show is not covered by the Movie Public Performance Site license, what can I do?

You may contact Swank Motion Pictures, Inc., 800-876-5577, or another such company, and ask for the cost to show the film one time only. They will let you know the amount and you can decide if your library has the funds to pay for a one-time license for that specific title.

Q. We do not charge admission. Do we need a license?


Yes, the Federal Copyright Act states that regardless of whether an admission fee is charged, a license is required. In fact, this license only applies to showings where no admission fee is charged.

Q. We would like to show videos to our library cardholders as well as other members of the public? Do we need a license?

Yes, libraries are required to have a public performance license to exhibit to library cardholders at the library, as well as other members of the public.

Q. We would like to publicize the performance. What methods are acceptable?

Announcements of video showings in library newsletters, bookmarks, bulletin boards, etc. are allowed, where the recipients are likely to be library cardholders and staff. In these cases it is permitted to list the title of the motion picture. However, use of public media (TV, radio, or newspapers) to advertise specific titles is prohibited.

For more information about the license, contact Sally Snyder, see contact information on page 9. 

BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation


Staying Connected Grant Concludes

Activity on the Library Commission's \$238,662 *Staying Connected* grant awarded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has concluded, with work focusing on hardware upgrades/replacement, Internet connectivity, training and technical support.

As a result of the grant, three libraries received four upgraded computers. At one library, three additional computers were moved from the school, and the library now functions as the Parent Resource Center for the school and community.

Fifty-two libraries received upgraded Internet connectivity and now provide wireless Internet access within the library, enabling better use of space within the library, and the ability to offer a new service to customers who wish to use their own computers. Nine other public libraries were able to upgrade public Internet access to allow access to Websites, training, etc.

Fifty-three training sessions were offered statewide during the grant period, resulting in 828 library staff receiving training. Other entities, such as the Regional Library Systems and the Nebraska Library Association, also provided increased opportunities for library technology training. The Library Commission is moving toward providing "on demand" training as well as offering more traditional classroom instruction, allowing library staff to utilize the great variety of delivery options available when they need them, such as WebJunction courses and webinars announced regularly on the Library Commission Website, blog postings, and wikis. The Library Commission plans to offer broad technical support through an ongoing, aggressive training program.

For more information contact Richard Miller, see contact information on page 2. 

Commission Profiles

"I care very deeply about what we do in TBBS, and I strive to make the library experience for our patrons as convenient as services from any print-based library would be," says **Scott Scholz**, who has worked



Scott Scholz

as circulation coordinator for the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS) for the past four years. In that role he makes sure books circulate quickly and accurately, doing post-production work in the recording studios such as editing

recordings to make them sound as good as possible; and learns new technologies related to the library's mission. Right now, his department is preparing for the upcoming transition to digital talking books, which Scott says will be wonderful for patrons but will require planning for circulation and converting Library Commission recordings into this new format.

Born and raised in Columbus, Scott has an undergraduate degree in Classical Composition (music) from the University of Denver. He's currently enrolled in the University of Missouri/University of Nebraska at Omaha collaborative degree program, working toward an MLS degree. He says lately he has been reading books on library-related subjects, both for work and class. In general, he says he gravitates toward authors who prioritize creativity and experimentation: James Joyce, William Burroughs, metafiction authors, surrealists, and futurists.

Scott still is very active with composing and recording music, and has done a few short tours in the past few years, loves listening to music, and has built a large collection of recordings. He does some writing for fun, mostly fiction and art/social philosophy. "And I love riding bicycles year-round in Lincoln, including my daily commute to work," he says. "This is a great town for bikes!"

Jenna Smith is an office clerk and support staff for the Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service and in the Library Commission's recording studios. She works in circulation for TBBS, pulling, shelving, and sorting books. In the studios

she works with volunteer narrators to produce quality, accurate recordings of books and magazines with ties to Nebraska or the Midwest. She then assembles the projects into 90-minute "sides" for duplication.

She hopes to continue working with volunteers to contribute great recordings to the collection, to help the library through the transition to digital talking books, and to otherwise serve

patrons the best she can. She'd also like to help recruit new volunteers. Says Jenna: "I feel very fortunate to be able to work with our wonderful, dedicated volunteers. Some of our narrators and circulation volunteers have been with us for more than 20 years! I am humbled by their long-term commitment to our work and their focus and level of perfectionism in the studios."

Jenna grew up in Lincoln, graduated from Lincoln Northeast High School, and earned a B.A. in English and Studies in Cinema and Media Culture from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in 2007.

Lately she has been reading Haruki Murakami, Joan Didion, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, books about her favorite filmmakers, and Loren Eiseley. "Despite being an extremely poor science student in high school and college, Eiseley's writing inspires me to read and think more about our natural world," she says.

Jenna volunteers as an English as a Second Language (ESL) tutor for the Lincoln Literacy Council. Right now she has two one-on-one students and also helps in a Health Literacy class. She is studying the Korean and German languages, loves movies, and spends a lot of time watching and reading about films.

One of the favorite things about her job, she says, is hearing from people, "Oh, you work with Talking Books? The green boxes? My grandpa gets those! Cool! I'm glad to know so many people who are dedicated to making reading accessible for everyone."

Jim Atkins works as a Circulation Clerk in the Talking Book and Braille Service. Says Jim of his job, "It's rewarding



Jenna Smith

knowing that you are doing a real service to someone who is not able to do the things we take for granted."

Jim was born in Lincoln but lived the first 12 years of his life in Vermont. He graduated from Lincoln High School, attended the University of Nebraska, and holds certificates from trade schools, professional organizations, and Southeast Community College.

He has worked in the public and private sectors in various

capacities, including as vice president of a small service station chain, as a grocery store and restaurant owner, head of the state Military Publications Department, as a bookseller at Lee Booksellers in Lincoln, and as a wholesale/retail distributor with Western Publishing Company.

As an active member of several clubs, Jim serves as a board member, newsletter editor, Web page administrator, or photographer for several groups, including the Lincoln Camera Club, Lincoln Gem & Mineral Club, and Prairie Astronomy Club. He helps judge photos at the Nebraska State Fair, and is a regional director for the Photographic Society of America. He's currently working on a program for the Lincoln Camera Club's booth at the Lincoln Children's Zoo to loan digital cameras to kids visiting the zoo. They will put the photos on CD for the kids upon leaving. "We hope this will give them a step up and an interest in photography," he says.

Jim says one his fondest childhood memories is meeting U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Frost. Frost used to meet friends at a small restaurant in Bristol, Vermont, says Jim. "A bunch of us kids would hang around the post office and next door was the restaurant where Frost would go for coffee. He used to stop and talk to us and tease us."

Jim likes to read biographies, and photography and how-to books. "I'm getting ready to read the signed copy I have of Ted Sorensen's *Counselor: A Life at the Edge of History*," he says. He has two favorite books: a signed copy of the *Dead Zone* by Steven King and *Back to the Bat Cave* signed by Adam West.



Jim Atkins

News of Nebraska Libraries and People

■ New Library Directors include: Chadron Public Library, **Rossella Tesch**; Dakota City Public Library, **Barbara Stansberry**; Fairbury Public Library, **Karen Fox**; Hastings Public Library, **Amy Greenland**; Hastings Regional Center, Medical and Patient Library, **Sherry Block**; Milligan Public Library, **Darlene Slezak**; Omaha, Douglas County Historical Society, **Libby Krecek**; Omaha Public Library, Millard Branch Library, **Janet Davenport**; Valparaiso Public Library, **Maria Cadwallader**; Yutan Public Library, **Nicole Irvin**.

■ **Meridian Library System** has moved to 3423 Second Ave., Suite 6, Kearney, NE 68847.

■ **Omaha Public Library's Benson Branch** held its first-ever speed-dating event in February, with 64 participants and 16 on the waiting list. For more information see <http://tinyurl.com/chwlxq> or contact Manya Shorr, manyadanielle@gmail.com.

■ **Friends of the Atkinson Public Library** received a **National Friends of Libraries Week Award** from FOLUSA (now the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations, ALTAFF).

■ **Robin Brooks Clark**, director of **Sump Memorial Library, Papillion**, was elected Mountain Plains Library Association Recording Secretary for 2009-2010.

■ The **Consumer Health Information Resource Service (CHIRS)** offers a free display to Nebraska libraries to highlight library health information services in the library or at a local health fair. Request the display at <http://appl.unmc.edu/forms/library/displayform.cfm> or call Teresa Hartman, 402-559-7075, e-mail: thartman@unmc.edu.

■ **Ralston's Baright Public Library** hosted a February "Intro to Screenwriting Designed for High School Students and Teachers" program.

■ **Mary Reiman**, director of Library Media Services for **Lincoln Public Schools**, received the Nebraska Educational Media Association **Distinguished Service Award** and the prestigious **Mad Hatter Award**.

■ **Morton-James Public Library** in Nebraska City and **Snyder Public Library** will host "Visions of the Universe: Four Centuries of Discovery," a traveling exhibition developed in cooperation with the Space Telescope Science Institute Office of Public Outreach and the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory to mark the International Year of Astronomy in 2009. For more information see www.ala.org/visionsoftheuniverse.



■ **Nebraska Library Commission** Technology Innovation Librarian **Michael Sauers** (above right) teaches the basics of Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to Nebraska state employees and area librarians. Check the Library Commission Training Portal, www.nlc.state.ne.us/training/train.asp, for future sessions.

■ **Valentine Public Library** will host Ted Kooser and Bob Hanna April 25-26 for readings, workshops, and water-color demonstrations, as well as a library fundraiser. For more information contact Anne Quigley, e-mail: anne@shwisp.net.

■ Nine Nebraska libraries were highlighted in *Library Journal's* **LJ Index of Public Library Service 2009**, www.libraryjournal.com/ljindex2009. Based on per capita service outputs (visits, circulation, program attendance, and public Internet computer use), Nebraska's featured libraries include

Atkinson Public Library, Crawford Public Library, Geneva Public Library, Hartington Public Library, Neligh Public Library, Pierce's Lied Pierce Public Library, Ravenna Public Library, Syracuse Public Library, and Wymore Public Library.

■ Jenny Levine's blog, *Twittering Libraries*, highlights the **Nebraska Library Commission** use of **Twitter** to tweet reference questions from the Commission's Ask-a-Librarian service, http://lis5313.ci.fsu.edu/wiki/index.php/Twittering_Libraries#Library_Mini-Case_Studies.

■ University of Nebraska-Lincoln Arts & Sciences Dean David Manderscheid recognized **Katherine Walter**, co-director of the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities at Love Library, as an **Academic Star**.

■ Last summer's **Nebraska Libraries Future Search Conference** produced a variety of ideas and suggestions for action. Information about how local community libraries and library groups are exploring these ideas and, in some cases, initiating action to address library service needs for specific target populations is located at www.nlc.state.ne.us/wikis/fs, click on What's Next. To receive a print copy of the conference report, contact Maria Medrano-Nehls, Nebraska Library Commission Administrative Secretary, 402-471-2045 or 800-307-2665, e-mail: mnehls@nlc.state.ne.us.

■ The March/April 2009 issue of *Nebraska Life* magazine featured the **Library Commission's Talking Book and Braille Service** in an article (www.nebraskalife.com/loveofreading.asp) highlighting volunteer Bonni Faimon reading in the Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service recording studio. ➤



Nebraska Library Commission

Nebraska Public Libraries Meet Local Demand for Quality Information



Prime Time Family Reading Time® at Lincoln City Libraries

- **Nebraskans received answers to**
20,413 **questions per week**
1,061,484 **questions per year**
Answers valued at.....\$7,430,388

Questioners standing single file would stretch from Omaha to Sidney

- **Internet computers available in libraries.....1,674**

- **Percent of Nebraska public libraries providing public access to the Internet.....95%**

- **Interlibrary Loans worth.....\$1,850,275**
Materials Loaned.....39,506
Materials Received.....34,505

- **Multimedia Materials Available to Nebraskans:256,781**

- **271 Public Libraries in Nebraska**

Visits to Nebraska public libraries per week.....170,775
Visits to Nebraska public libraries per year.....8,880,315

compared to

2007 attendance Henry Doorly Zoo.....1,335,170
Total attendance at Omaha Qwest Center.....1,224,100

#1 paid attendance attraction in Nebraska
Henry Doorly Zoo
#1 free attendance attraction in Nebraska
Your Public Libraries

- **Public library hours open per year.....430,846**

- **Nebraska public library employees.....797 FTE**

- **Library youth programs.....16,183**
Library youth programs - attendance.....422,500



Hastings Public Library Summer Reading Program

For more information, see the Nebraska Library Commission Website www.nlc.state.ne.us/statistics/librarydataservices.html

Source: Annual Nebraska Public Library Statistical Survey 2006-2007 collected by the Nebraska Library Commission. Data is based on reports from 85% of Nebraska Public Libraries.



Nebraska Library Commission

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