



# Southeast Signal

*News, Events, and Information from Around the System*

## From the Director



The year was 1876. That was a leap year, but that is just a trivial fact compared to other significant events of that year. It was the centennial anniversary of the signing of the

Declaration of Independence. It was also a year of amazing innovation and set the foundation for many things still going today.

1876 was the year of the world's first registered trademark symbol. Patents for the telephone, four-stroke internal combustion engine, and mimeograph were filed. The meeting that formed the beginning of today's Major League Baseball was held. Wyatt Earp begins working in Dodge City, Kansas and Wild Bill Hickok was killed. The Transcontinental Express makes the trip between New York and San Francisco, making the trip in 83 hours. A lot of notable events in US history, and worldwide happened in 1876.

Of more interest to librarians – the first American edition of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain is published, along with *Rose in Bloom* by Louisa May Alcott, *Peer Gynt* by Henrik Ibsen, and the first edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

More important though were two very important parts of library history. The first was the publication of the Dewey Decimal Classification System for the

first time. The second was the founding of the American Library Association. Melvil Dewey was there, as well as other pioneering librarians of the time such as Charles Ammi Cutter and William Frederick Poole. One of the other movers and shakers in attendance was Charles Evans, who gathered many of the notable librarians of the day for this initial meeting, and a few years later was librarian at Omaha Public Library.

So, in a year that saw the expansion of the transcontinental railroad, the beginning of telephone technology, the 100 year anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, and the winding down of the Wild West period of western US history – we also see the joining together of influential librarians and the beginning of many of the standards we follow to this day.

It just goes to show that as our country grew and progressed, libraries were there adapting and growing as well.

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# Calendar

- May 17, [CASTL, Auburn Memorial Library](#)
- May 22, Sherlock Holmes Day
- May 25, National Tap Dance Day
- May 27, Memorial Day, SELS Office Closed
- May 29, [Golden Sower Reading Day, Seward Memorial Library](#)



- June, Rainbow Month
  - Great Outdoors Month
  - Caribbean American Heritage Month

- June 1, National Trails Day
- June 3, World Bicycle Day
- June 9, Father's Day
- June 12, National Peanut Butter Cookie Day
- June 14, International Bath Day

# Photo of the Month



The Polk Public Library hosted a BUNCO night on April 29th which was attended by 10 ladies. A great time of learning, playing Bunco, eating and visiting was enjoyed. We had so much fun that we are planning a BUNCO night once a month. —Becky Carlstrom

# CASTL Wrap-up

## Upcoming CASTL Meetings

May 17  
 “Policy Writing”  
 Auburn Memorial Library

June 21  
 “Open Meetings Act & Nebraska  
 Law for Libraries”  
 Via Zoom

Our April 19 CASTL was hosted by Crystal Godina, library director at Sutton Memorial Library. Matthew Williams and James Tidei of Kearney Public Library spoke on the topic of “Extreme Customer Service,” with a discussion following.

The key idea behind great library customer service is that librarians want people to really like the library, which causes them to go above and beyond to exceed patron expectations.

Kearney Public Library staff sit down once a year to evaluate their current policies and practices, ask why they do things the way they do, and whether practices benefit the community and patrons as individuals. Potential changes are looked at and may be implemented. They are willing to try new things and then drop them if they don’t work.

Items that Kearney Public Library has instituted, among others, include a fine-free policy, automatic renewals, and simplified processes. They think carefully about whether to add a service (they would rather perform current services optimally rather than add services and decrease overall quality). They attempt to figure out how they can say “yes” to people (which may mean meeting them halfway). Staff is trained to give the public the benefit of the doubt in the case of lost items, to listen carefully to patrons, to greet people, and to answer phone and emails as soon as possible. They also document success stories to share with the community and government officials.

For the entire recording, [you can look here](#).

# Upcoming Basic Skills Classes

To see the list of basic skills classes, [click here](#). Here’s what’s coming up next:

<u>Dates of Class</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Registration</u>
June 3—June 14	Reader’s Advisory	April 29 —May 24
July 1—July 12	Reference	May 27 —June 21
July 22-August 2	Library Policy	June 17—July 12



# News Around the System

## Assistant Director is Hometown Hero

By Tanya McVay

Here at Ashland Public Library we are excited that our amazing Assistant Library Director, Caitlin, has been honored as a Hometown Hero for her incredible commitment to making the library a welcoming and inclusive place for everyone. Two students from our community wrote heartfelt letters about how Caitlin has made a difference in their lives and in the community. Her kindness and patience have left a lasting impact on those she serves. The quote on her plaque sums it up perfectly: "For treating all patrons of the library with patience & kindness and being the person we should all aspire to be."

In Ashland, both our adult book club and our 8th-grade book club delved into the same book, coming together for a collective discussion. It was a delightful experience, hearing the varied perspectives on the book. Caitlin leads both these book clubs, adding yet another reason why we appreciate her presence at the Ashland Public Library.



## Lots of Fun with Harry Potter Day

Provided by Joanne Neeman



On May 1 Beatrice Public Library hosted a Harry Potter Day. There was an escape room (Free Doby), photo booth (with invisibility cloak), trivia, scavenger hunt and Butterbeer!



# News Around the System

## Animal Day with a Veterinary Technician

*Provided by Diane Duren*

On Saturday, May 4th, the Rising City Community Library hosted a guest presenter, Vic Samek, for "Animal Day with a Veterinary Technician." The group of 15 children were informed of the correct ways to feed their animals and proper nutrition, when and how to vaccinate, how to look for signs of invisible threats such as heartworm, and were shown x-rays of animals. The children were able to pet and feed a two-week old baby goat, and a resident of Rising City (Susan Landwehr) provided two kittens about six months old for the group.

The children were engaged and learned a lot, as well as the adults who attended. Vic handed out coloring books/crayon sets, notepads, posters and other informational items. The next "Animal Day with Vic" is being planned and the children requested baby chicks, a baby goat, baby kittens and a baby donkey.

All children were provided snacks at the end of the presentation by the Rising City Community Library.



## Summer Fun Begins Soon in Seward

*By Sherri Payne*

Summer is about to begin, and Seward Memorial Library is getting ready for a fun filled season! On Saturday, May 18, the library will begin with a huge summer kick-off party. Festivities are planned between 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM and will include: a bounce house, an inflatable slide, food trucks, face painting and vehicles from the fire department, police department, National Guard, and the City's electrical truck. This will be followed by a scavenger hunt around town! For the "Adventure Begins at the Library" theme, the library staff has planned a different type of adventure each week. We will be celebrating adventures in space, medieval times, magic, animals, music, nature, science, construction, and gaming. Each week will feature 2-3 programs ranging anywhere from a medieval carnival to fun crafts to a family Harry Potter party. We're looking forward to an exciting summer, and hope to see you at one of our many events!





# News Around the System

## New Traveling Tales Program in Falls City

*Provided by Jayme Coonce*

The Falls City Library & Arts Center hosted an open house on April 11 to invite the community to see the books, games, puzzles, crafts, etc. purchased for our new Traveling Tales program. Funds for the purchase of these materials were provided by The Nebraska Library Commission (2024 Youth Grant for Excellence) and the Friends of the Falls City Library. 25 themed tote bags have been curated and will be used for Traveling Tales, other scheduled story times, and also available for



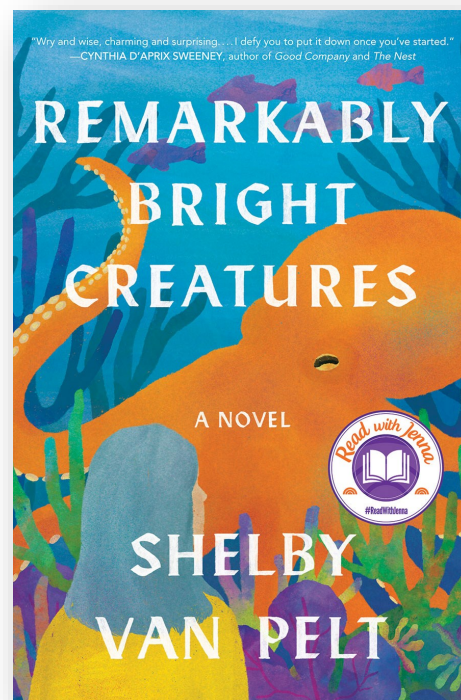
check out to our patrons. Traveling Tales allows our children's librarian to visit area day cares/preschools to provide a story-time program similar to what is provided at the library. We understand that many of our community's children do not have the opportunity to participate in these programs due to their parents'/guardians' work schedules, the library's hours, etc. This program was created to help overcome these challenges and as an opportunity to share our passion for reading, playing, learning, and creating with our youngest friends and neighbors. Visits started April 19 and will be offered 4 days each month.

## New SELS Book Kit Ready to be Loaned!

Our new title is *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt. In this book, Tova's 18-year-old son, Erik, mysteriously vanished on a boat in Puget Sound over thirty years ago. After her husband dies, Tova begins working the night shift at the Sowell Bay Aquarium to keep herself busy.

She becomes acquainted with Marcellus, a giant Pacific octopus living at the aquarium. Marcellus knows more than anyone can imagine and forms a remarkable friendship with Tova. Marcellus deduces what happened the night Tova's son disappeared. Now he must unearth the truth for her before it's too late.

We have 10 copies in hardback. To reserve them, email [selsne@gmail.com](mailto:selsne@gmail.com) or call our office at 402-467-6188.



# From the NLC: Book Kit Spotlight

By MacKenzie Marrow, edited

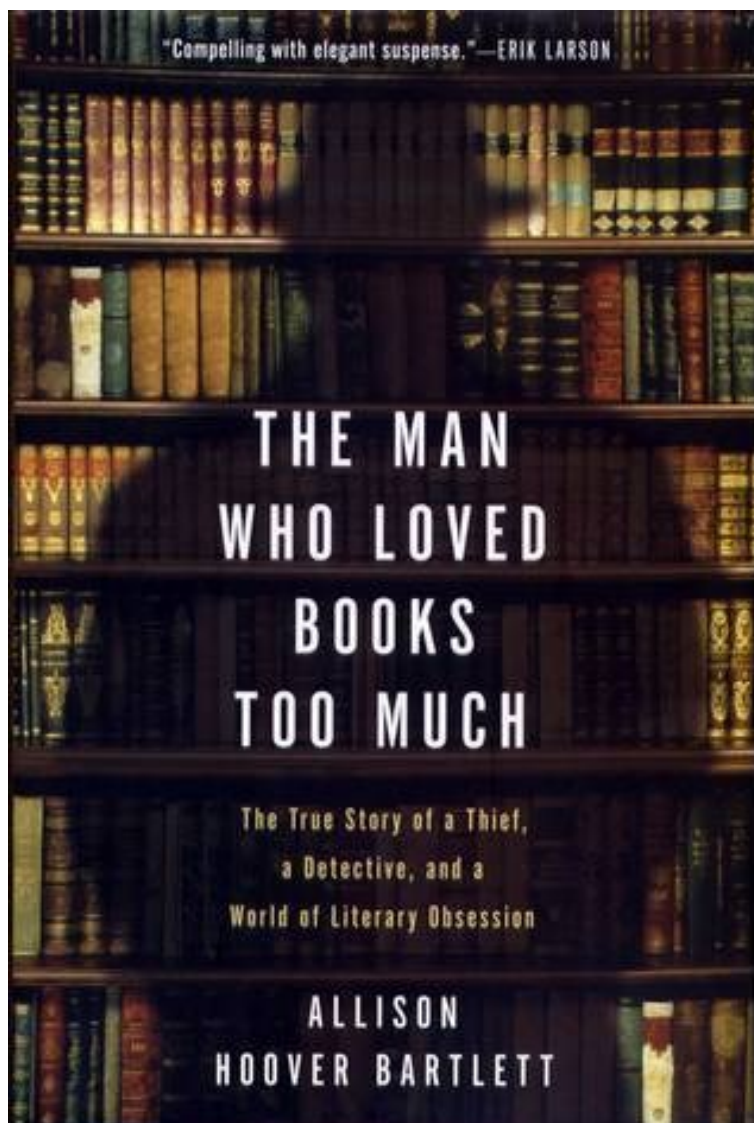
While we all know the importance of the library ecosystem, former San Francisco Library Laureate, Allison Hoover Bartlett, shares the story of what happens when greed and personal gain take over and infiltrate the book market. In her book, *The Man Who Loved Books Too Much: The True Story of a Thief, a Detective, and a World of Literary Obsession*, Bartlett follows the trail of notorious book thief John Charles Gilkey and peeks into the psyche of those who collect rare books, and what happens when that collecting becomes a compulsion.

Allison Bartlett entered into the world of book thieves by way of coincidence. A friend had come into possession of a stolen rare book after his brother's passing, and Allison was drawn to its mysterious pages. As she felt this pull towards the illicit book, she began researching the history of book thievery, asking: "What makes someone cross the line from admirer to thief?" It's not long until two names come to her attention: Ken Sanders, a rare book dealer whose obsession with catching book thieves, leads Allison to the main

focus of her story, John Charles Gilkey. For John, his (stolen) book collection is not about the contents of the books themselves, but merely the status it affords him.

Part True Crime, part history of book collecting and fervor, *The Man Who Loved Books Too Much* is about trying to understand the psyche of these collectors and those who experience book-collecting mania, or [Bibliomania](#). According to Bartlett, in rare book collections, the physical properties of the books, the memories associated with the title, or the historical importance of that edition are often more valuable than the actual contents within them. Book Club Groups will love the low-stakes True Crime aspect and exploring what in the mind can drive us to place such value on having personal library collections.

If you're interested in requesting *The Man Who Loved Books Too Much* for your book club, you can find the Request Form [here](#). **There are 5 copies available.** (A librarian must request items)



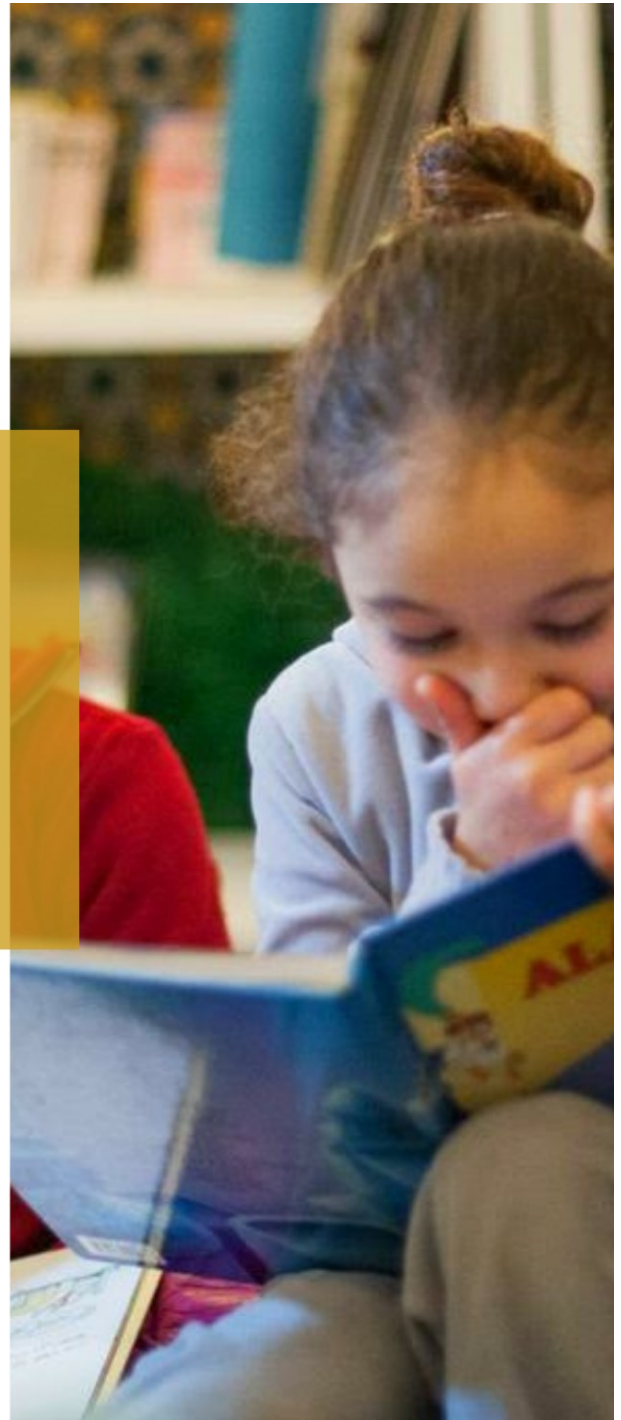




# **GOLDEN SOWER READING DAY**

**Wednesday, May 29  
9:00am-12:30 pm**

Take this chance to read the 2025-2026 potential Bluestem (K-2) nominees. The books will be set out to read, we will have a list of the books for you to annotate, and you can enjoy refreshments while you read!



**Seward Memorial Library**

**[REGISTER HERE!](#)**



*Swanson Center*

Camp Carol Joy Holling

# 30TH ANNUAL JOINT YOUTH SERVICES RETREAT



**AUGUST 29 & 30**

- Hosted by the Regional Library Systems
- A chance to network with your colleagues
- Learn from experienced presenters and from each other

**Save the dates!**

**Planned opening of registration in  
early June**

# System Spotlight

## Puzzle Sharing

Puzzle competitions have become quite popular lately, so at a CASTL meeting the idea was born to enable puzzle sharing between SELS libraries.

The idea was to create a spreadsheet where SELS libraries could view puzzles that other libraries would be willing to share with them and to let other libraries know what puzzles they had and would be willing to share.



Thanks to Joy Stevenson and Becky Baker for making this spreadsheet possible: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/125cLuEYivcw0GBjVP4xwykPrWEBn9GMfpOLaisLOqs/edit?usp=sharing>

This is a “view only” link. If you want to share puzzles with other libraries, just let Todd know at [Todd.Schlechte.SELS@gmail.com](mailto:Todd.Schlechte.SELS@gmail.com) and he will give you the ability to edit the spreadsheet so that you can add your puzzles.

### Southeast Library System

Butler • Clay • Fillmore • Gage • Hamilton • Jefferson • Johnson • Lancaster • Merrick • Nemaha • Nuckolls • Otoe • Pawnee • Polk • Richardson • Saline • Saunders • Seward • Thayer • York

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