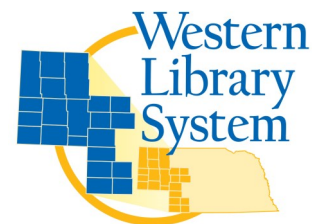


THE WESTERN SUN



Supporting libraries serving our communities

May-June, 2025

World of Possibilities—2025

The Western Library System is delighted to introduce Ethan Nelson, the new Director as of May 1st, 2025. Ethan provided a brief summary of his schooling and work in libraries. Ethan brings opens a world of possibilities to the Western Library System.

“Ethan Eric Nelson holds a Master’s degree in Library and Information Science (MLIS) from the iSchool at the University of Missouri, which he earned in 2025. He grew up as the fifth generation on his family farm, located ten miles west of Dalton, Nebraska. In 2020, he began working full-time as a library assistant at the Lied Scottsbluff Public Library in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. He earned a B.A.in Philosophy with a minor in Cognitive Science from the University of Pennsylvania in 2019, graduating *summa cum laude* and receiving honors in Philosophy.

While attending college in Philadelphia, he received a fellowship from the Summer Humanities Internship Program to work at the Kislak Center for Rare Books and Special Collections. There, he assisted in transcribing and digitizing Francis Daniel Pastorius’s “Beehive,” an eighteenth-century commonplace book that contains a wealth of Information about early American manuscripts, authors, poetry, and linguistics. His other research interests include the history of public libraries, particularly the history of traveling libraries and bookmobiles in Nebraska.

As a public library worker, he discovered a passion for reference services, readers’ advisory, and creating engaging library programs for the community. One of his favorite hobbies is playing board games, and for several years, he has hosted a successful board game group at the Lied Scottsbluff Public Library. He has also spearheaded multiple initiatives at the library, including increasing the number of adult and family programs and expanding the annual Adult

Reading Program. Additionally, he has served on the Western Library System Board since 2022.



Ethan spent several years volunteering with the University of Pennsylvania’s Philosophy for Youth Program, where he developed lesson plans to help children understand fundamental philosophical concepts. As a volunteer, he taught philosophy to middle school students in Philadelphia and coached high school students in their preparation for the Ethics Bowl, a competition in which teams debate contentious ethical and moral issues.

Ethan is passionate about participating in community events and activities. For instance, he is an avid runner who completed the Monument Marathon in 2021. He enjoys living in Western Nebraska and is eager to learn more about the communities, libraries, and library workers across the 21 counties served by the Western Library System.”



Cindy Osborne’s gratitude and appreciation letter to the Western Library System, the Regional Library System Directors, Rod Wagner and the Nebraska Library Commission.

What an honor, privilege and joy it has to been to be the Western Library System Director since February 2020. When I accepted the position, I was excited about the world of possibilities working with the library workers and travelling the beautiful countryside of our 21-county area. The professional and personal growth has greatly exceeding my expectations. Thank you for caring about our valued libraries, academic, public, school and special. Your communities are stronger because you are committed to the services you offer and the residents and students you serve.

It is with deep appreciation and hard to leave yet reassuring to know that Ethan will bring professionalism, a fresh ideas and energy to the position. A world of possibilities awaits both of us..

With admiration and respect for how you serve your libraries and who you are as library workers and individuals. ~ Cindy O.

Mark Your Calendar

May 13: 10:00 Western Library System Board Meeting, Scottsbluff, Riverside Business Plaza

June 2-3: Future Ready Conference, Nebraska Department of Education, Lincoln. Page 13.

June 26-30: American Library Association Conference, Philadelphia. Page 13.

July 31: Western Library System's Annual Meeting. Oshkosh. Page 13.

August 28-29: Joint Services Youth Services Retreat, Camp Carol Joy Holling, Ashland, NE. Page 13.

September 17-20: Association of Rural and Small Libraries Annual Conference, Albuquerque. Page 13.

October 1-3 2025 Tri-Conference: (Joint Conference with NDLA, SDLA, and MPLA) Alerus Center Grand Forks, ND Page 14.

October 16-18: American Association of School Libraries Conference, St Louis, Page 14.

October 22-24: Nebraska Library Association Conference. Holthus Convention Center, York, Page 14.



The world of possibilities awaits you as you begin or hone your skills with AI. One of the most popular AI resources is ChatGPT. To effectively use ChatGPT it is important to develop “prompts” that ensures the results you are trying to achieve

A common library worker question is. “What is the difference between a prompt and a search that is used with Google and other search engines.

Use a prompt when you want detailed, conversational answers of need specific information
Use a search when looking for quick facts or broader information based on keywords.

The GRAPHIC WALKERPYGWALKERWalkRGalleryBlog offers tips on how to create effective prompts. The examples the blog provided were AI based. The examples below are for Interlibrary Loan (ILL) While some of the examples are somewhat far fetched, the terms are practical for libraries.

BASIC PROMPTING TECHNIQUES

- *Be specific and clear with your instructions*
Example:
Use: Explain the difference between a request for Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and a hold
Instead of: What is an ILL?
- *Set Format*—List, paragraph, bullet points, etc.
Example: List 5 key differences between a hold and an ILL
- *Advanced prompting techniques*
Use multi-step prompts for complex queries
Example:
First, explain holds,
Second, explain IL
Third, Discuss the differences and how each are used
- *Prompting for creativity*
Write a quick overview of ILL for Facebook with at least one emoji
- *Dialog and storytelling*
Write a patron story about their positive, uplifting experiences using ILL
- *Instruct the perspective*
Write a paragraph so someone with an 8th grade education will understand
- *Customize output structure*
Heading and Subheadings
Example: Write a patron procedure about ILL with heading and subheadings
- *Lists and Tables*
Create a table showing the difference between a hold and an ILL

- *Handling ambiguity and providing content*

Example:

Explain how ILL connects with other libraries

Explain ILL to a patron without using library jargon

- *Prompting for different content types*

CHATGPT is versatile and can create information articles as well as creative ones. This is why prompts are needed to reflect the intent of your writing.

Informative article example

Write an article about the history of ILL with current statistics

When writing creative stories, ChatGPT can craft engaging and imaginative stories based on themes and/or characters

- *Avoid irrelevant content*

Set boundaries:

Example:

Write a paragraph with the ILL procedures for ages 13 and over.

ChatGPT is a tool that provides a new perspective and understanding of information you are communicating with your reader. Remember that the best, most targeted results are returned when specific prompts and formats are included when working with ChatGPT.

Grant Opportunities

Information on two grants curated by the Association of Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL)

Believe in Reading ~ Grants for Literacy Program

Brief, Basic Information:

Important Dates: Applications are considered when received. No deadlines

Locations eligible: United States

Criteria: 501(c)3, educational institutions and public libraries serving any age supporting reading and literacy including adult literacy. ESL and Braille projects. Literacy based only with reading the primary activity.

Application requirements: Proof of exempt status, history of the organization, statistics of success, population demographics and programming details

Reporting requirements: Outcome based reports at the end of the project. Interim reports are welcomed.

Amount of grant, how money was spent, number of readers served, number of hours of time on the project, Photos are appreciated.

Rural Technology Education & Assistive Technology Grants

Brief, Basic Information:

Important Dates: Open year round, decisions are made in 4-6 weeks.

Locations eligible: Schools and organizations in the United States.

Criteria: Funded projects designed to spark student interest in technology based careers such as computer science, computer engineering, information technology, programming, cyber security, robotics or similar areas. Focus on funding libraries and schools in rural and high poverty areas.

Application requirements: Short form with contact information, demographics, budget and narrative about the project.

Reporting requirements: Periodic updates are preferred and not required.

For more grants, check out the NLC's Grant Opportunities for Nebraska Libraries at <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/grants/index.aspx>

Celebrations and Milestones

New World of Possibilities:

Amanda Ziegler, Wauneta Public Library
Colleen Garner, Hemingford Public Library
Kate Parrish, Palisade Public Library

Contributing their New World of Possibilities to the Western Library System as new Public Library Directors:

Cindi Trickler, Hemingford Public Library
Elaine Bleisch, Lied Scottsbluff Public Library
Lilian Sandoval, Palisade Public Library
Tayler May, Wauneta Public Library



Congratulations to Ashy Blacksheep, Crawford Public Library

Ashy was nominated for the Frontline Employee of the Year Award. Discover Northwest Nebraska presents their Industry Awards honoring the regional tourism industry. The Frontier Employees of the Year is one of three awards. Quite an honor for a Library Director to receive accolades on behalf of her work at the library and community.

Discover Northwest Nebraska Director Kerri Rempp describes the award "We want to honor outstanding performances by the employees and businesses that contribute so much to the economic activity of the region."



Ashy and Smokey!

National Teacher's Day ~ May 6th

National Teachers' Day is observed on the first Tuesday of the first full week of May (May 6) and we're more than ready to show our appreciation to those who have taught us. Everyone has had that favorite teacher that has helped inspire them. This day meant to honor them was actually made by a teacher. None other than First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt herself. Eleanor Roosevelt was more than Franklin D. Roosevelt's wife, she has a history of civic duty and was an advocate for fellow teachers. Her love for education began at a young age when she was privately tutored and encouraged by her aunt Anna "Barnie" Roosevelt. No matter how high she rose on the social ladder, she never forgot where she came from.

Our school librarians are not only welcoming students to the library, the State of Nebraska requires you to have a teaching certificate. Many of you teach classes, couch teams etc. in addition to your hard work in your libraries. The quote below works for the teachers and librarians who guide and educate our future.

A heartfelt thank you to
all the teachers who spend their time, energy, resources and
love to care for our children and young adults and adults.
Especially for school librarian/teachers who support and expand
their education along with a joy for reading!



Library Workers gathered in Alliance and Ogallala to enhance their Summer Reading programs, sharing ideas and enjoying the camaraderie. The March 20 and 21st workshops brought attendees from around the Western Library System. The attendees were enthusiastic despite a month delay in their original date.

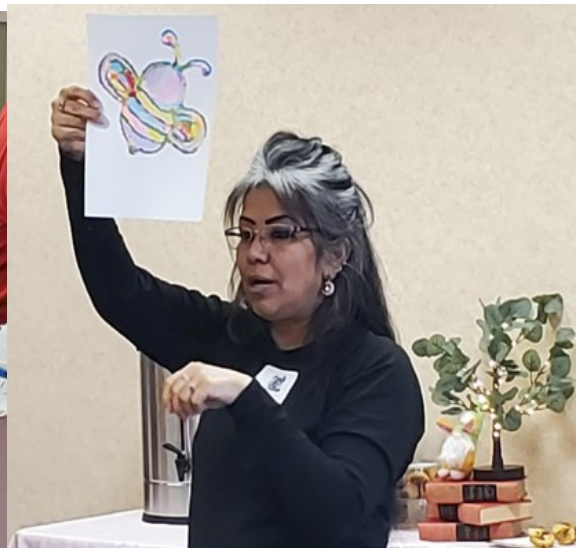
Amanda Sweet and Sally Snyder traversed across Nebraska to present their tech kits and themed book reviews. Everyone learned and enjoyed their presentations.

Richard Landreth captured pictures from both workshops.

Picture highlights from the March 20—Alliance workshop

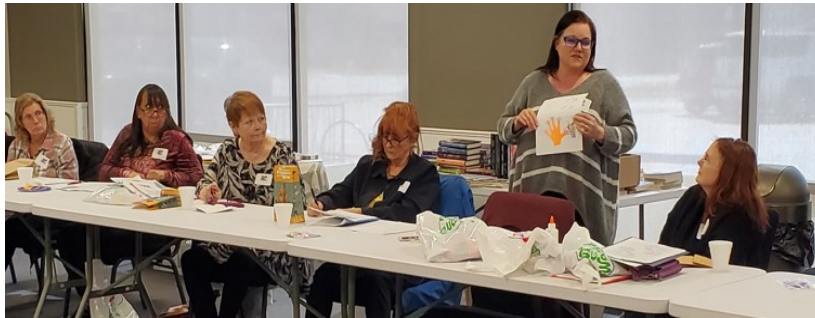
Clockwise from the upper right and corner

The attendees during the lunch time break; Elaine Bleisch, Lied Scottsbluff Public Library presenting a session on how to create a Readers' Theater; Priscilla Plasencio demonstrating unique ideas for the Mitchell Public Library program. Attendees marveling at Priscilla's colorful Twirl-a-gag Rainbow Shape Shifting Toy. Amelia Shada, Kimball Public Library sharing her Teen Summer Reading ideas. She presented information and instructions for puzzle mosaics. The had been excited about this project, yet after making a prototype, decided that this was not the best project for teens!!!



Pictures from the Ogallala workshop. March 20

Spring was celebrated along with hearing Amanda and Sally present and the creative and practical craft and program ideas.



Pictures clockwise from top:

- *Amanda Ziegler, presenting her stained glass craft.
- *Amanda Sweet and her Tech Kit and her services.
- *Sally getting attendees excited about books supporting Color our World.



Chadron State College (CSC) has been supporting the Summer Reading Programs the past four years by supplying the Western Library System's public libraries with magnetic bookmarks. The 2025 contribution is shown to the left.

CSC pays gives homage to the Collaborative Summer Library Program's Color Our World 2025 theme with the colorful paws on the back of the magnet.

CSC's desire is to reach out to the younger students in Western Nebraska to support their summer reading programs and for the college to be a potential choice for continuing education.

The Western Library Systems thanks the Summer Reading Committee for their work and dedication for the content of the folders and the workshops and assistance at the workshops. S

At the workshops, attendees received a folder with Sally's list of best reads for summer, the project idea instructions and a variety of other supporting information and the 2025 themed book, *Pete the Kitty's Outdoor Art Project*.

Libraries that watched virtually and libraries unable to attend a workshop were mailed a folder. a *Pete the Kitty's Outdoor Art Project* book and a supply of the Chadron State College bookmarks. Virtual attendees received the full packet of information.

We also thank the Alliance Public Library and the Kathleen Lute Public Library for their hospitality, beautiful meeting rooms and technology capabilities.

Around the Sun

Cheryl Hamilton—Western Nebraska Community College

Embrace Courage this April

Chances are someone in your life is a survivor of sexual harassment, assault or abuse, even if they have never shared their story with you.

We show our support for survivors of sexual harassment and abuse by elevating survivors' voices and raising awareness.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

The DOVES Program offers free and confidential assistance for survivors.

866-95-DOVES
www.DOVES Program.com

The DOVES Program



DOVES and WNCC Library collaborated on a Sexual Assault Awareness Month display in April.

DOVES provided the flyers, coloring sheets and support information while the NCC Library provided the books and display area.

Jennifer Holthus ~ Grant County Library

Jennifer submitted two informative and creative programs held at the Grant County Library .

“In partnership with Nebraska Operation Lifesaver, the Grant County Library did a presentation for the kindergarten, first and second graders at Hyannis Area Schools on March 5th, 2025 about railroad tracks and train safety.

“Railroad tracks and trains are fascinating to both children and adults alike, yet they also pose significant safety risks that many may not fully understand. According to the Federal Railroad Administration, hundreds of incidents occur each year at railroad crossings, many of which involve children. By educating our young readers about the importance of railroad safety in an interactive and memorable way, we can help prevent future incidents and instill a lifelong awareness of safety practices.”- Nebraska Operation Lifesaver

Library Director, Jennifer Holthus, read a story starring Train and her friend Track. We learned several safety tips from them, like not placing items on the tracks, staying back from the trains and learning to STOP, LOOK and LISTEN before crossing at marked railroad crossings. We went over several Fox, who wanted to play on the tracks and his friend Birdie that kept reminding him that it was not safe.

We also had the children enter a poster contest sponsored by Operation Lifesaver. All of the student's posters will be displayed in Lincoln at the Capitol Rotunda April 29th-May 9th, 2025. They all did a wonderful job! Their inspired posters are featured on page. 7.



The Art of Ukrainian Easter Eggs

One of the favorite parts about being a librarian is to help community members share their talents and crafts with others. Zac, Staci, Braxton and Kyson Adam of Hyannis, with the help of the Grant County Library, shared their family tradition of Pysanky egg decorating with our community. There were 11 adults on March 27th and 15 children on April 4th who got to experience this interesting process of dying eggs.

What are Pysanky? "Pysanky" comes from the Ukrainian word "pysaty," which means "to write" or "to inscribe". Pysanky are raw eggs decorated with intricate, often symbolic designs using a wax-resist method.

The designs are "written" on the egg with melted beeswax, using a tool called a kystka, and then the egg is dipped into colored dyes, layer by layer. The wax layers are then melted off to show the design. Afterwards, the eggs are dipped in a varnish and then the yolk and whites are blown out of two small holes.

Thank you to the Adam family for sharing!



Clockwise from upper left.:

Eggs created by the Adam Family.

A "how to" book.

Eggs made by the adults at the sessions.

Eggs made by the children.



Semper Disco - Always Learning

Upcoming *NCompass* Live

Upcoming *NCompass* Live events: Sessions count for Continuing Education credits.

***NCompass Live* is broadcast live, every Wednesday, from 9am - 10am, Mountain Time.** For more information, to register for *NCompass Live*, or to listen to recordings of past events, go to: <http://nlc.nebraska.gov/NCompassLive/>

Title	Date
Ncompass Live: Everyday Advocacy for Smaller Libraries	May 7
NCompass Live: 2025 Public Accreditation Process	May 14
Ncompass Live: Small Adjustments for Big Change	May 21
NCompass Live: Pretty Sweet Tech	May 28
Ncompass Live: Food for Thought: Addressing Food Waste, Access and Insecurity through Rural Libraries	June 4
Ncompass Live: Sparking Community Connections: Rural Public Library Partnerships	June 11
Ncompass Live: Outreach at any Size	June 18
Ncompass Live: Pretty Sweet Tech	June 25

One of the requirements for Public Librarian Certification is training in the basic skills of librarianship. This requirement may be fulfilled by completion of formal education in an institution of higher learning or completion of approved continuing education or certification courses, including the Nebraska Library Basic Skills Training Courses. Basic Skills training is presented as a series of online courses through *NCampus*. Basic Skills participants are required to complete at least thirteen modules - six requisite modules and seven electives. These must be completed during the first three-year certification period.

For each course successfully completed, participants will earn 2 CE credits. These count toward the 45 CE credits that all participants must earn during each three-year recertification period. The courses for 2025 are listed below:

Class Dates	Class	Instructor	Registration Dates
4/14 - 4/25	Library Finance	-	3/3 - 4/4
5/5 - 5/16	Intellectual Freedom / Core Values*	-	3/24 - 4/25
6/2 - 6/13	Readers' Advisory	-	4/21 - 5/23
7/7 - 7/18	Reference	-	5/26 - 6/20
7/28 - 8/8	Library Policy	-	6/16 - 7/11
8/18 - 8/29	Collection Management*	-	7/14 - 8/8
9/8 - 9/19	Programming & Outreach	-	7/28 - 8/29
9/22 - 10/3	Community & Library*	-	8/11 - 9/12
10/20 - 10/31	Management/Supervision	-	9/8 - 10/10
11/3 - 11/14	Leadership	-	9/15 - 10/24
12/1 - 12/12	Library Services to Children & Teens	-	10/20 - 11/21

(* Required Class)

The Nebraska Library Commission provides this Certification Program Planner.

<https://nlc.nebraska.gov/CE/BasicSkills/NBSplanner.pdf>

Nebraska Librarian Certification Program

BASIC SKILLS

Planned	Requisite (6)	Completed
	Collection Management	
	Communication	
	The Community and The Library	
	Customer Service	
	Intellectual Freedom and the Core Values of Librarianship	
	Organization of Materials	
Planned	Elective (Choose 7)	Completed
	Leadership	
	Library Finance	
	Library Governance	
	Library Policy	
	Library Services to Children and Youth	
	Library Technology	
	Readers Advisory	
	Reference	
	Management & Supervision	
	Programming and Outreach	

You are required to successfully complete 6 requisite modules and 7 elective modules during your provisional certification period.

Apollo Users Meeting in Western Nebraska—Thursday, August 14th.



On August 14th everyone is invited to an Apollo Users meeting.. The workshop is tailored to library staff well versed in Apollo as well as those exploring whether it will work for their library.

The workshop will be a time to learn, network and share Apollo/Biblionix experiences. The day will include the expertise of Sarah Johnson, the Library Director from the Geneva Public Library, imparting education, answering questions and moderating the discussions.

Watch for an announcement of the session, a flyer and registration form with details, the location and a registration form.

Library and Information Services

Fall 2025 Online Course Offerings

Aug. 18, 2025 – Dec. 12, 2025

Registration is open as of April 14, 2025



LIBR 1010 Foundations of Library and Information Services

Marty Magee, Instructor

This course, the recommended first in the Library and Information Services curriculum, provides introductory information in multiple areas.

- Library history and organizations
- Foundational Principles/Code of Ethics
- Information databases and Internet usage

LIBR 2250 Leadership and Management in Library and Information Agencies

Michael Straatmann, Instructor

This course includes the theories, concepts and activities integral to leading and managing 21st Century libraries and information agencies.

- Leadership principles
- Management strategies
- Policies and procedures

LIBR 2940 Library and Information Services Capstone Practicum

Patty Birch, Instructor

This capstone course is the last course in the Library and Information Services program. Students will complete 40 hours of service learning in a host library. The course also includes a review of the principal pieces of learning from the LIS program.

- Prerequisites: LIBR 1010, 2100, 2150, 2210, & 2250

<i>Fall 2025</i>	<i>Spring 2026</i>
Libr 1010 Foundations of Library and Information Services	Libr 2100 Reference Resources and Services
Libr 2250 Leadership and Management in Library and Information Agencies	Libr 2150 Develop and Organize Collections
Libr 2940 Library Science Capstone Practicum	

The Library & Information Services Certificate is a 15-credit hour program. All credits can be applied to a Central Community College associate degree.

For more information on the Library and Information Services program, see:

<https://www.cccneb.edu/list>

For more information concerning Admissions or Registration, contact:

Michelle Setlik msetlik@cccneb.edu 308-398-7341

Central Community College is an affirmative action equal opportunity institution.

Conferences ~ Events



SAVE
the
DATE



July 31, 2025

The Western Library System's Annual Meeting Oshkosh

Historic Oshkosh is home to colorful murals, fascinating stories and
[Mark Ferrari's Specialty Coffees](#)
Hawaii's Famous Kona Coffee! Roasted in Oshkosh
Sold in Oshkosh and online.!

Story from Engler Agribusiness Entrepreneurship Program at the University of Nebraska – Lincoln

Hawaii to the Heartland: Coffee roastery makes its home in Oshkosh, Nebraska
Building Nebraska, February 13th, 2025

A journey that started on the big island of Hawaii's Kona Coast now finds itself on main street of Oshkosh, Nebraska.

The dream of Mark Ferrari Specialty Coffees began with Mark Ferrari's childhood, where he grew up working on his family's coffee farm. Ferrari became a student of coffee roasting, learning from valued mentors and accepting the process of trial and error.

His experiences in Hawaii truly gave Ferrari an appreciation for the art of making good coffee, from seed to cup.

After teaming up with business partner Mark Piva, Ferrari began exploring opportunities to open a coffee roastery on the mainland of the United States. Piva's desire to give back to his hometown of Oshkosh lead him to pitch the rural community as the place to plant their roots.

Beyond being centrally located for coffee distribution, Piva knew the benefits of small town living firsthand. However, he knew Ferrari would take some convincing.

"If I was him, I'd be like this makes no sense," said Piva. "But we found this building and we've been here for 18 years."

Today, Mark Ferrari Specialty Coffees is a roastery with national acclaim, but to the residents of Oshkosh, it serves as a community hub.

"We wanted to create a little Hawaii shop oasis, and hopefully tastefully done," said Ferrari. "It has really exceeded my expectations."

Oshkosh is one of the [Nebraska Passport Stops](#) for their water tower. The Nebraska Passport describes this stop as . "The Historic Oshkosh is the first and only Water Tower in Nebraska to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Plaza beneath the Tower is filled with commemorative bricks that tell a story of Garden County from its pioneer roots to the present. Stay until sundown and enjoy the Tower lights, especially on holidays, when it puts on a show with different colors. Enjoy the latest mural by local artist, Lauren Olson, featuring a sandhill crane among beautiful flower

A registration form will be sent to the libraries at the first of May. More details will be forthcoming.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE
INNOVATING WITH AI, UDL, AND ENHANCED ACCESSIBILITY

 Katie Novak Keynote House Educator	 Ji Soo Song Keynote Director with SEITA	 Nikki Robertson-Griffin Librarian Speaker	 Dyane Smokorowski AI Implementation Speaker
 John Spencer Speaking on AI in EDU	 Rachelle Dene Path Speaking on AI in EDU	 Kristen Mattson Speaking on AI in Libraries	 Brian Lamb Speaking on AI Tools for EDU
 Brian Buffington Speaking on AI & EdTech	 Lauren Heil Speaking on Accessibility	 Jen Roberts Speaking on AI & Writing	 Mike Kentz Speaking on AI Literacy

Join us online or in-person at **NO COST** June 2nd & 3rd, 2025
Register at nefutureready.com

The Future Ready Conference is a statewide partnership between the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), Educational Service Units (ESU's), and the Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council (ESUCC). The Future Ready Framework is Nebraska's PK-12 Digital Learning Plan, and the annual Future Ready Conference is held to equip educators on the framework to help students prepare for future success.

The conference will be held at the:

Nebraska Department of Education
500 South 84th Street,
Lincoln

No cost to the in-person or virtual attendees

Lunch is provided to the in-person participants.

ALA 2025 Annual Conference & Exhibition

Philadelphia | June 26 – 30, 2025

Join us for top-quality education and best practices; featured thought-leaders; and special programming for library professionals looking to further develop their libraries, communities, and careers!



Joint Youth Services Retreat, August 28 and 29

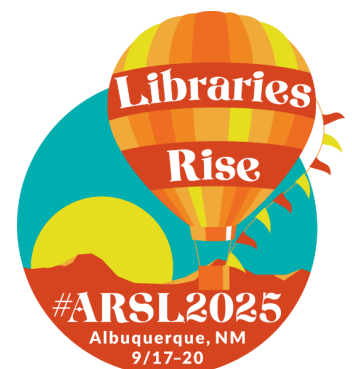


The Joint Youth Services Retreat is designed expressly for Nebraska library staff serving children and teens.

The retreat on August 28th and 29th is a time to spend connecting with and learning from fellow colleagues in the bucolic setting of Camp Carol Joy Holling near Ashland.



#ARSL2025 is *the* conference for rural and small libraries. The conference planners and presenters understand the constraints of shoestring budgets, small spaces, and limited staffing within small and rural libraries, as well as the unique opportunities for innovation and collaboration. The conference is packed full of information you can take right back to your library—no scaling down required.





October 1—3, 2025

- * North Dakota Library Association
- * South Dakota Library Association
- * Mountain Plains Library Association

The event will be held in Grand Forks North Dakota at the Alerus Center.

MPLA Member receive the member rate with this code: 20TR125.

Be an Early Bird, REGISTER April 1st to May 31st		Early Bird Rates: Member: One Day: \$125 Full Conference: \$185 Non-Member One Day: \$165 Full Conference: \$250 Pre-Conference: \$50
Regular Rates: Member: One Day: \$175 Full Conference: \$225 Non-Member One Day: \$225 Full Conference: \$300	Regular registration is from June 1st through September 15th	



The American Association for School Librarians (AASL) was founded in 1914 and became a division of the American Library Association in 1951

A one-of-a-kind conference, AASL25 will feature daily keynotes, more than 150 concurrent sessions, author panels, research into practice sessions, more than 150 exhibitors, the best practice Idea Lab, author signings, and endless networking opportunities.

Content provided at the conference is rooted in AASL's *National School Library Standards*

October 22-24, 2025—Nebraska Library Association Conference



Holthus Conference Center
3130 Holen Avenue
York, NE 68467



October 1—3, 2025

- * North Dakota Library Association
- * South Dakota Library Association
- * Mountain Plains Library Association

The event will be held in Grand Forks North Dakota at the Alerus Center.
MPLA Member receive the member rate with this code: 20TR125.

Be an Early Bird, REGISTER April 1st to May 31st		Early Bird Rates: Member: One Day: \$125 Full Conference: \$185 Non-Member One Day: \$165 Full Conference: \$250 Pre-Conference: \$50
Regular Rates: Member: One Day: \$175 Full Conference: \$225 Non-Member One Day: \$225 Full Conference: \$300	Regular registration is from June 1st through September 15th	

October 16-18, 2025
American Association for School Librarians (AASL)
National Conference, Saint Louis



A one-of-a-kind conference, [AASL25](#) will feature daily keynotes, more than 150 concurrent sessions, author panels, research into practice sessions, more than 150 exhibitors, the best practice IdeaLab, author signings, and endless networking opportunities.

Content provided at the conference is rooted in AASL's *National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries*.

Coming in 2026

April 1 ~ 3, 2026 Public Library Association Minneapolis Minnesota.

Public Library Association (PLA) sponsors a conference every two years. In non-conference years, PLA offers limited programs at the American Library Association Annual Conference. This premier event is designed for public library librarians, support staff, trustees and vendors. More than 100 curated education sessions, inspiring speakers and authors, networking opportunities and endless possibilities.

October 14~16 Nebraska Library Association (NLA) and Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA), La Vista Nebraska

Every year, the Mountain Plains Library Association plans their conference with one of the twelve states included in the Association. The exception is North Dakota and South Dakota who combine their resources when the states join MPLA for a tri-conference. The last time the NLA and MPLA met together was in *2012!* This is a value-added conference.

Phishing not Fishing

Vern Buis, Computer Services Director with the Nebraska Library Commission provided this warning about phishing e-mail. Phishing refers to emails intended to trick recipients into clicking on malicious links, by making the email appear to come from a legitimate source, such as a government agency, health care provider, well-known corporation, etc. Phishing has been responsible for many high-profile data breaches.

Vern uses this website virustotal.com to check files for malicious content and URLs. The site uses the engines of more than 100 antivirus products to scan each file. If you have any doubt about a URL, hover over it to see where it really goes (which may be very different than the displayed URL). Submit to virustotal.com if in doubt.

Things to Watch For

- Misspellings and grammar errors
- Wording that seems odd
- Messages demanding urgent action
- Messages threatening consequences for failure to act
- Messages asking for personal information or asking you to confirm your password
- Attachments
- Links leading to pages requiring logging in

Identifying Suspicious URLs

Malicious actors usually disguise their URLs to make them look legitimate, and they can be very difficult or even impossible to distinguish from legitimate URLs. The most common technique is inserting a legitimate company or government name within a URL.

The most important thing to check are the **rightmost two blocks of a URL**, which are the best indicator of the owner of the domain name.

Examples:

Legitimate Microsoft URL	newproducts.microsoft.com	
Fake Microsoft URL	microsoft.newproducts.com	Rightmost two blocks do not contain "microsoft"
Legitimate Microsoft URL	OFFICE.MICROSOFT.COM	
Fake Microsoft URL	OFFICE.MICROS0FT.COM	Zero in place of the letter O
Fake Microsoft URL	OFFICE.MICROSOFT.COM	Letter I in place of letter l (depending on font, very hard to see)
Fake Microsoft URL	OFFICE.MICROSOF.COM	Misspelling

The 2025 Nebraska Passport Locations in the Western Library System with pictures of selected locations.

Dobby’s Frontier Town (Alliance)

Big Springs Depot Museum and Veterans Memorial (Big Springs)

CocoShack (Chadron)

Burgies Bowling (Chappell)

Western Nebraska Pioneers Baseball Club (Gering)

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument (Harrison)

Lake Minatare State Recreation Area (Minatare)

The Happy Dackle Market (Mitchell)

Eccentric Lamb Fiber Arts, Ltd at the Western Trails Creative District (Ogallala)

Historic Oshkosh Water Tower (Oshkosh)

Savor & Grace (Sidney)

For more information about travel, events and unique destinations in Nebraska, order your free travel guide today at VisitNebraska.com. Then stay connected with Nebraska Tourism on our Visit Nebraska Facebook page, on X



Clockwise from the upper left:

Dobby’s Frontier Town (Alliance)

Agate Fossil Beds National Monument (Harrison)

Historic Oshkosh Water Tower (the 2025 Western Library System Annual Meeting location)

Big Springs Depot Museum

Agate Fossil Beds Nature Center



Featured Resource from the Nebraska Library Commission

JoAnn McManus and the Information Services Team at the Nebraska Library Commission created an impressive webpage with resources on Makerspaces. <https://nlc.nebraska.gov/libraries/maker/>

The webpage offers the following definition and links

Makerspaces are collaborative learning environments that serve as gathering points where people come together to share materials, knowledge, and experiences. Makerspaces can have all different varieties of materials and tools (hi tech and low tech) where the focus is to create, invent, tinker, explore, and discover using the tools, materials, and knowledge available. The mindset of a makerspace is community partnership, colla

- * 2025 Nebraska Makerspace Conference will include:
- * Nebraska Makerspaces and Their Machines/Devices
- * General Makerspace Resources
- * Planning Your Space
- * Makerspace Policies and Use & Liability Forms
- * Training and Program Materials
- * Library Innovation Studios Project

Resources for You

ALSC 2025 Summer Reading Lists

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) released their 2025 Summer Reading Lists, which feature book titles and digital media options to keep children engaged in reading and exploring throughout the summer. The lists are compiled and annotated by members of ALSC's Quicklists Consulting Committee and serve as a resource for children's librarians to share with patrons. Four lists are available for birth–preschool and grades K–2, 3–5, and 6–8. [Download the lists for free.](#)



The Programming Librarian extensive resources provided by American Library Association . Their website is easily searched when you are looking for specific ages and programs.

<https://programminglibrarian.org/>

Apr 24, 2025

Adults (21 and up)+ | \$\$



Charcuterie 101 - Build a Board Like a Pro!

Apr 22, 2025

Children (9 and under)+ | \$



Kindergarten Gear Up

Apr 16, 2025

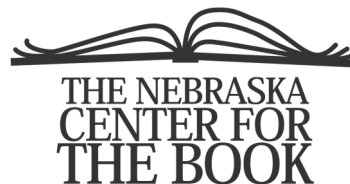
Adults (21 and up)+ | \$



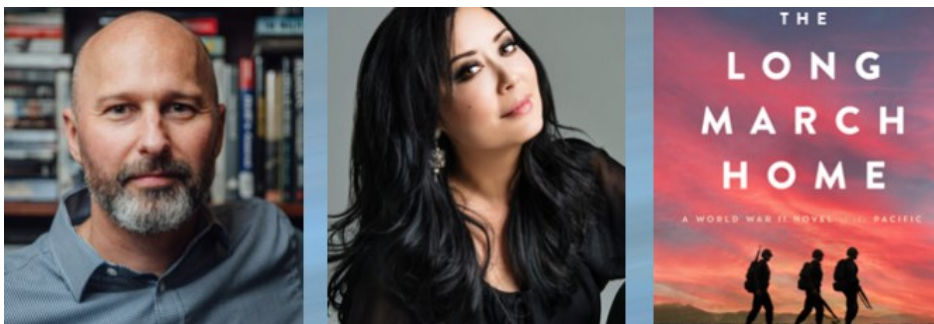
Plant Propagation Workshop



and the



2025 One Book One Nebraska



The Long March Home is a historical fiction novel inspired by true stories of friendship, sacrifice, and hope on the Bataan Death March. From the Inside Cover:

Jimmy Propfield joined the army for two reasons: to get out of Mobile, Alabama, with his best friends Hank and Billy and to forget his high school sweetheart, Claire.

Life in the Philippines seems like paradise—until the morning of December 8, 1941, when news comes from Manila: Imperial Japan has bombed Pearl Harbor. Within hours, the teenage friends are plunged into war as enemy warplanes attack Luzon, beginning a battle for control of the Pacific theater that will culminate with a last stand on the Bataan Peninsula and end with the largest surrender of American troops in history.

What follows will become known as one of the worst atrocities in modern warfare: the Bataan Death March. With no hope of rescue, the three friends vow to make it back home together. But the ordeal is only the beginning of their nearly four-year fight to survive.

Marcus Brotherton is a *New York Times* bestselling author and coauthor, with five *New York Times* bestsellers, seven national bestsellers, and four books have been optioned for movies. He was born in British Columbia and earned degrees at Multnomah University in Portland and Biola University in Los Angeles. He currently lives in the Pacific Northwest with his wife and children.

Tosca Lee is the award-winning and *New York Times* bestselling author of twelve books. Those awards include three International Book Awards, and a Nebraska Book Award for her thriller *The Line Between* and its sequel *A Single Light*. She received her B.A. from Smith College and currently lives in Nebraska with her husband, three of four children still at home, and her 160-lb. German Shepherd, Timber.

Libraries across Nebraska will join other literary and cultural organizations in planning book discussions, activities, and events that will encourage Nebraskans to read and discuss this book. Support materials to assist with local reading/discussion activities will be available after January 1, 2025. Updates and activity listings will be posted on the One Book One Nebraska Facebook page.

2025 will mark the twenty-first year of the One Book One Nebraska reading program, sponsored by the Nebraska Center for the Book. It encourages Nebraskans across the state to read and discuss one book, chosen from books written by Nebraska authors or that have a Nebraska theme or setting. The Nebraska Center for the Book invites recommendations for One Book One Nebraska book selection year-round.

One Book One Nebraska is sponsored by Nebraska Center for the Book, Humanities Nebraska, and Nebraska Library Commission. The Nebraska Center for the Book brings together the state's readers, writers, booksellers, librarians, publishers, printers, educators, and scholars to build the community of the book, supporting programs to celebrate and stimulate public interest in books, reading, and the written word. The Nebraska Center for the Book is housed at and supported by the Nebraska Library Commission.

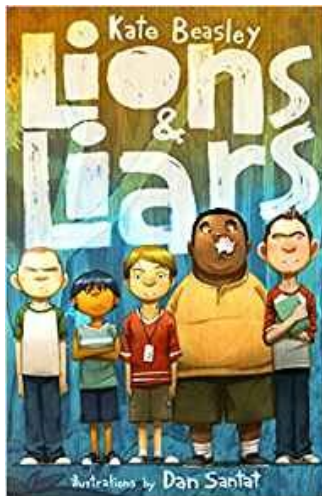
As the state library agency, the Nebraska Library Commission is an advocate for the library and information needs of all Nebraskans. The mission of the Library Commission is statewide promotion, development, and coordination of library and information services, "bringing together people and information."

One Book For Nebraska Kids and Teens ~ 2025

The chosen books for One Book for Nebraska Kids and Teens are *Lions and Liars* by Kate Beasley and *Where You See Yourself* by Claire Forrest,

Kids: *Lions and Liars* by Kate Beasley

Frederick Frederickson is tired of being at the bottom of the schoolyard food chain. When a series of missteps lands him in a disciplinary camp where no one knows who he really is, he has a change to start over at the top - but can he pull it off?



Teens: *Where You See Yourself* by Claire Forrest

Born with cerebral palsy, Effie uses a wheelchair to navigate the mostly-accessible halls of her high school. With college on the horizon, she struggles to picture herself in the typical campus experience. When she does find her dream school, she is afraid to tell her parents, knowing they will be against this choice. Effie's mom is always pushing her to advocate for herself at school; can she stand up to her mom as well?

Links

[Book Website](#)

[Author Information](#)

[Discussion and Activity Guide from Scholastic](#)

Book Club Kit Coming Soon!

[Read-Alikes](#)

Activities

[Mad Libs](#)

[Mini Book Review Sheet](#)

Money for You or Your Library

Funding from the Western Library System

All member libraries and staff are eligible.

- Eligible requests include: Dues for library association membership; registrations and travel expenses for conferences, workshops and presenters.
- Up to \$300.00 per person every two years.
(More than one person in a library can apply for their own professional development.)
- Up to \$300.00 per library for library events



Send all requests to: Western Library System

615 S. Beltline Hwy West

Scottsbluff, NE 69361 OR

Email: wls@westernlibrarysystem.com

Western Library System Board of Directors News

As of May 1st, Ethan Nelson is the new Director of the Western Library System. Ethan was a member of the Western Library System Board. With the new position, there was a vacancy for the District B representative. When a Board members term cannot be completed for any reason, the policies for the Western Library System Board direct the President of the Board to appoint someone to complete the term.



Christie Clarke, Gering Public Library Director, was appointed to complete the term, which will end June 30th, 2026. Christie will be able to run for the position for two full terms.

Ethan was also the Board Secretary. Becky Henkel accepted the secretarial responsibilities beginning with the May 13, 2025 Board meeting.

The Board is scheduled to meet the second Tuesday of every other month at 10:00 at the Western Library System office (Riverside Business Plaza)

Board Meeting Dates for 2025

May 13, 2025

July 8, 2025

September 9, 2025

November date to be determined at the September meeting. The second Tuesday in November is the Veteran's Day holiday.

The results of the Board election will be announced soon after the May~June Western Sun is "published"

Western Library System Equipment Resources

The Western Library System has a binding repair machine that fixes a variety of types and sizes of books. Take advantage of this useful service to save your valuable books and avoid the cost of replacements. You make your own repairs. The office offers print and YouTube instructions for this self-service. Call the office for an appointment.



The Eco Autosmart Repair System is a full service machine, not just a buffer. It cleans and repairs your valuable discs. The machine repairs scratched (not cracked) discs. The office will repair your discs for you. Bring your items to the office or mail them to us.



Western Library System Board of Directors

Amber Sweetland, President
Becky Henkel, Secretary
Beth Falla, Vice President
Carole Matthews
Cheryl Hamilton
Christie Clarke
Dana Morgan
Jennifer Holthus
Judy Starke
Sarah Alfred
Sharon Schluterbusch

Western Library System

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Toll Free: 888-879-5303

Webpage:
<http://libraries.ne.gov/wls/>

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