

PLAIN SPEAKING

CENTRAL PLAINS LIBRARY SYSTEM NEWSLETTER

Educate | Connect | Inspire

You Have the Best Ideas!...

It never ceases to amaze me, when I stop at our System's libraries, I see new and innovative programming, displays, and passive activities, along with everything else you have going on in your library. We were in Lexington and heard about the new game nights they have for the adults in their community. They have an upcoming jigsaw puzzle competition, too. When stopping in Gibbon, we learned about "Crock Pot Bingo." That is when people over the age of 16 bring something good to eat and share in their crock pot and then spend the evening playing Bingo. As we walked in, Missy and Gabrielle had just finished preschool story time with a sensory activity using Water Beads and plastic toys. Librarians have the best ideas!

If you have a particularly successful program, develop interesting displays, or have found an unusual solution to a library problem, you should consider submitting a conference proposal. The **Nebraska Library Association** is accepting proposals of all kinds right now (see page 6) for their fall conference. It is in York this year, so no big-city driving. **The Association of Rural and Small Libraries** is currently accepting proposals for their conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, being held this September (see page 7). Don't forget about the **Makerspace Conference** in Lincoln next November (see page 4).

Another place to submit a conference proposal is right here in our System. We are going to have another one-day conference in Kearney on April 30, **2026**. That means you have plenty of time to prepare an idea to present. I will be calling for conference proposals this year in September. I hope my Inbox fills up with great ideas.



NEWS INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Continuing Education
Page 2-3

Book Club Kits
Pages 5-6

System Services
Pages 8-9, 12

Summer Reading Resources
Pages 10, 14-15

Deb's Preschool Project
Page 11

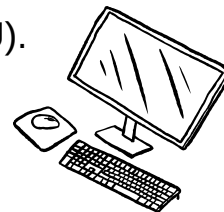
Mark Your Calendars
Page 16

BOARD MEMBERS:

Sharon Bohling
Stephanie Branham
Jody Crocker
Jamie Dennis
Sherrie Dux-Ideus
Jane Hilton
Lisa Mount
Jennifer Norton
Kina Stefka
James Tidei

Thursday Morning Learning

Thursday Morning Learning is held at the same time as our normal Thursday Morning Zoom Meetings, from 10:00 - 11:00am. Everyone on the CPLS email list will receive the Zoom link on the Wednesday before the Learning Session. Each Learning Session is recorded and is worth 1 Continuing Education Unit (CEU).



April 3, 2025 - Open Meetings Act Update

Scott Childers

Public library boards for communities of all sizes in Nebraska are required to follow our state's Open Meetings Act when holding their meetings. In this session, Scott will identify some of the major points of this state law for library boards, changes for 2024 and 2025, and some of the consequences of not following Open Meeting law.

May 15, 2025 - Cricut Design Space Tips & Tricks

Denise Harders

All the Cricut cutting machines can do amazing things because of the free app **Cricut Design Space**. It is pretty easy and user-friendly, but I have tips & tricks that will help you make things with your Cricut faster, easier, and more fun!

Golden Sower Reading Day

Friday, June 6, 2025

1:00 - 4:00pm

Hastings Public Library
314 North Denver Avenue



At this event, registered readers for the Golden Sower Little Bluestem category will have the opportunity to read all of the picture book nominees on the readers list. Readers will then be encouraged to vote for their top ten titles.

If you are not officially a reader, after registering for this event, you will be contacted about how to register by someone on the Golden Sower Committee.

[Click here to register by **May 14, 2025.**](#)

BASIC SKILLS CLASSES

Class Dates	Class	Registration Dates
open	Communication*	available any time
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

[Click here](#) for the Nebraska Library Commission's webpage for the 2025 Basic Skills Schedule and to register for any of the classes.

NCompass LIVE PRESENTATIONS

NCompass Live is the Nebraska Library Commission's weekly webinar series, covering a variety of library activities and topics. The show is free and open to anyone to watch. These one-hour sessions are hosted by Christa Porter, the NLC's Library Development Director, and include a mixture of presentations, interviews, book reviews, Web tours, mini training sessions, and Q & A sessions presented by NLC staff and guest speakers. Attendees ask questions and participate in the show via VoIP, using their own microphone, or in the live text chat.

Every Wednesday 10am - 11am (CST)
To view past presentations, [CLICK HERE](#).

[One Book for Nebraska Kids and Teens 2025](#)

April 3

[Register](#)

[Pretty Sweet Tech: Computers in Libraries 2025](#)

April 30

[Register](#)

Highlights & Trends



Makerspace Conference

The Nebraska Library Commission in conjunction with the Nebraska Innovation Studio is working to bring you the 2025 Nebraska Makerspace Conference scheduled for November 4 & 5, 2025. It will be held at the Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference Center in Lincoln. The Commission has set up a web page for the 2025 Conference that will be updated as plans solidify at:

<https://nlc.nebraska.gov/libraries/maker/index.2025.Conference.aspx>

There you will find a few basics about the upcoming conference. Although the conference lineup and schedule will not mirror the 2021 conference, you can get a flavor for what could come together tapping many of the same organizations that were brought together three years ago. You will notice that we included a link to the 2021 conference flyer on the 2025 conference webpage to give you an idea of the caliber of sessions we would like to offer later this year. We are asking for your help to develop sessions that will appeal to either or both makerspace experts and those who are just beginning to learn about makerspaces (and those that fall in between).

On the conference webpage you will find a “Call for Session Proposals” form that can be completed and submitted by those who want to offer a session, demonstration, or lead a making session at the conference. Even those interested in serving on a panel in a makerspace subject may submit a more loosely-defined proposal. (NOTE: Session proposals will be accepted for consideration as they come in. Closer to the date, a final submission deadline will be communicated to you.)

If you have any questions or input that would be helpful in our efforts, please send those my way.

JoAnn S. McManus
Coordinator
2025 Nebraska Makerspace Conference
Email: joann.mcmanus@nebraska.gov



HELLO
Spring



NEW BOOK CLUB KITS AT CPLS



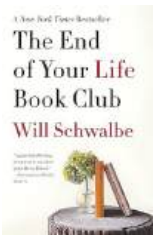
The Christmas Pig by J. K. Rowling (10 copies), Grades 3-4
Jack loves his childhood toy, Dur Pig. DP has always been there for him, through good and bad. Until one Christmas Eve something terrible happens - DP is lost. But Christmas Eve is a night for miracles and lost causes, a night when all things can come to life... even toys.



In an Instant by Suzanne Redfearn (10 copies)
Life is over in an instant for sixteen-year-old Finn Miller when a devastating car accident tumbles her and ten others over the side of a mountain. Suspended between worlds, she watches helplessly as those she loves struggle to survive.



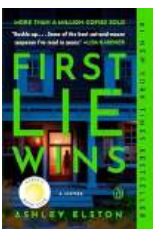
Thunder Dog: The True Story of a blind man, his guide dog, and the triumph of Trust by Michael Hingson with Susy Flory (5 copies)
Donated by Ravenna Public Library
When one of four hijacked planes flew into the World Trade Center's North Tower on September 11, 2001, Michael Hingson was sitting down for a meeting. His guide dog, Roselle, was at his feet. Roselle sat calmly beside him. In that moment, Michael chose to trust Roselle's judgment and not to panic. They were a team.



The End of Your Life Book Club by Will Schwalbe (6 copies)
Donated by Ravenna Public Library
During her treatment for cancer, Mary Anne Schwalbe and her son Will spent many hours sitting in waiting rooms together. To pass the time, they would talk about the books they were reading. Once, by chance, they read the same book at the same time—and an informal book club of two was born.



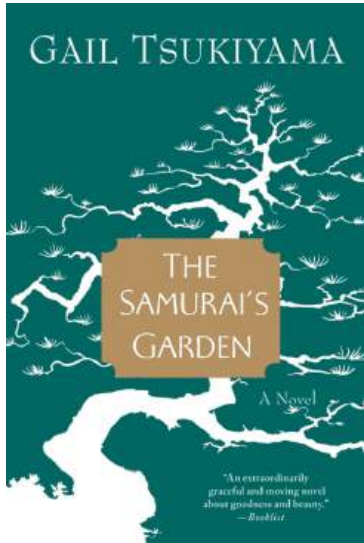
Reclaiming the Sky: 9/11 and the Untold Story of the Men and Women Who Kept America Flying by Tom Murphy
Donated by Central Community College - Grand Island Campus
Among those who died, as well as those who lived and continue to live after the 9/11 attacks, there were many thousands of aviation professionals with names, families, lives, and individual experiences that are an important part of the 9/11 story.



First Lie Wins by Ashley Elston (12 copies)
Evie Porter has everything a nice Southern girl could want: a doting boyfriend, a house with a white picket fence, a tight group of friends. The only catch: Evie Porter doesn't exist.

BOOK CLUB SPOTLIGHT AT NLC

CONTRIBUTED BY MACKENZIE MARROW



In *The Samurai's Garden*, the main character is sent away from his home to recover from Tuberculosis, far from all he knows. And he is not the only one there who is struggling with the isolation of illness. In a nearby leprosy village, Stephen sees first-hand the repercussions of the historical ostracization of these outcast people, if they even made it that far to begin with.

Book Club Groups from teens and above will appreciate the thoughtful discussion on personal survival, honor, and humanity while learning about the different meanings of Japanese gardens which bring the story to life. Tsukiyama explores that while living in turbulent and painful times, we can find peace and beauty in nature and each other, how we can choose kindness and acceptance, even if the world is telling us to turn to hate.

If you're interested in requesting *The Samurai's Garden* for your book club, you can find the Request Form [here](#). There are 8 copies. [Click here to see Mackenzie's full review.](#)

Tsukiyama, Gail. *The Samurai's Garden*. St. Martin's Press. 1994.

The Nebraska Library Association is excited to announce that conference proposal submissions are now open!

Our 2025 Annual Conference will be held in York at the Holthus Convention Center (Oct. 22nd – 24th) with the theme of “Soaring to New Heights.” This year we’re excited to offer a “post-conference” on Friday morning!

Conference proposals can include lightning rounds, table talk sessions, lectures, presentations, panel discussions, workshops, or Friday "post-conference" sessions.

We’re looking for programs on topics from all areas of librarianship in all types of libraries! Even if you’re a student, a new librarian, or have never presented before, here’s your chance!

[Click here to submit your proposal!](#)

Deadline: May 1st

Notifications will be sent on or before June 1st.

Nebraska Library Association Annual Conference 2025

SOARING
to new heights



Don't Forget About...



Reader Zone

The Nebraska Regional Library Systems and the Nebraska Library Commission have teamed up to provide access to Reader Zone. This web-based software lets you create paperless reading logs. Your students and patrons can report their progress through the Reader Zone app or via the Reader Zone website. You will be able to see statistics and reports without having to compile them yourself. **This program is free for your library.** If you are not familiar with Reader Zone, [click on this link](#).

You will be able to create multiple "groups" to best serve your community's needs. For example - you might create a group for young readers that has the goal based on the number of books read per week, one for teens based on number of minutes spent reading per month, and then one for adults that has per-page milestones.

This system is available to public, school, and academic libraries year-round for reading programs for all ages. [Click here to sign up now!](#)

Contact denise.cpls@gmail.com if you have any questions.

This activity is supported in part with funding from the State of Nebraska and from the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the Nebraska Library Commission.

#ARSL2025 Program Proposal Now Open!

Submissions are due Tuesday, April 25, 2025 at 5:00 pm CT.

We invite you to [submit a program proposal](#) for the [2025 Association for Rural & Small Libraries \(ARSL\) Conference](#) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 17-20! We're seeking proposals on all topics relevant to small and rural libraries, from practical how-to sessions to broader explorations of the changing library landscape.

This year's conference theme is **Libraries Rise!**

This theme captures the resilience, innovation, and collaboration that define small and rural libraries. We recognize the challenges our communities face—tight budgets, small spaces, and limited staffing—but also the incredible creativity and determination that allow us to soar despite these obstacles.

Together, we will rise to new heights!

Questions? Contact the ARSL office at info@arsl.org or 206-453-3579 (call/text).



CPLS Will Provide A Speaker for Your Library

Would you like to have a live performance at your library?

Humanities Nebraska has many fine speakers. Browse the Speakers Bureau Catalog: <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/catalog/>.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Buffalo Bill's Nebraska by Jeff Barnes
- Excess Baggage: Riding the Orphan Train by Charlotte Endorf
- Grit 'n' Gumption by Cherrie Beam-Callaway
- Ho for America! Northern European Immigrants to the Midwest by Jeff Kappeler
- Meet Buffalo Bill by Terry Lane
- Music of the Plains by David Marsh
- Nebraska Territory Stories by David Seay
- Overland Trails: The Children on the Trail by Renae Hunt

The Central Plains Library System will provide the administrative fee for each library in our System that books a Humanities Nebraska program this year. That means you can have a terrific live performance any time, without cost for your library.

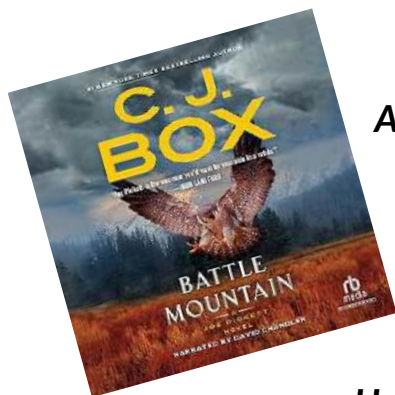
1. First, contact the performer.
2. After your program details are finalized, fill out the form on the Humanities Nebraska website: <https://humanitiesnebraska.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Catagory-I-new.pdf>, print it out and mail it to the address on the bottom of page 2.
3. When completing the form, include the following on the bottom of the first page: "Please bill to CPLS."



AUDIOBOOK COLLECTION

CPLS owns over 1,300 circulating audiobook titles. System member libraries may borrow audiobooks (CD and MP3 formats) for a loan period of 90 days.

Here are some new additions:



- Good Girl* by Aria Aber
- Almost Surely Dead* by Amina Akhtar
- Battle Mountain* by C.J. Box
- First Lie Wins* by Ashley Elston
- Now or Never* by Janet Evanovich
- The Favorites* by Layne Fargo
- The Midnight Feast* by Lucy Foley
- How to End a Love Story* by Yulin Kuang
- Hurt for Me* by Heather Levy
- Robert B. Parker's Hot Property* by Mike Lupica
- Bonded in Death* by J.D. Robb
- Counting Miracles* by Nicholas Sparks



Beaver City Public Library held our first ever stuffed animals sleepover! The children came in their pj's at 5pm on Valentine's Day, with their stuffed friend! We had build your own nacho bar, we sang hush little baby and rockabye baby, we read stories about sleepovers, and finally, the children tucked their critters into the teepee and went home. Mrs Dawn had a long night of stuffed shenanigans! Then, the children came for their stuffed animals and got a stuffed animal tee-shirt, heart shaped treat and photos of the animals at the sleep over! So fun!

4-H Reading Connections “Color Our World” Resources Available

The Nebraska 4-H Reading Connections Resources are adaptable lessons, each featuring:

- Grade Levels: K-6th Grade
- Lesson Length: Approximately 60 minutes
- Career Connections
- Relation to one of the 4-H "Hs"
- Learning Objectives
- Materials List
- Opportunities for Continued Learning through 4-H
- Additional Resources
- Movement Ideas
- Book Suggestions
- A Variety of Activities



These resources are available for download after completing a brief survey at the following link:

<https://go.unl.edu/0gzj>

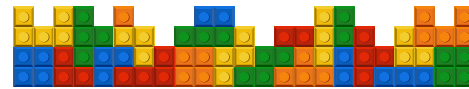
This year, all resources are compiled into one document. Remember, these lessons can be customized for various settings, such as libraries, afterschool programs, school enrichment, camps, and more.

If you're interested in early childhood resources that follow this year's "Color Our World" theme, be sure to explore the following website: <https://child.unl.edu/Nebraska-STEAM/>.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Jennifer Hansen at jhansen6@unl.edu



Lego Guy Programs



My name is Curtis Mork and kids know me as the Lego Guy. Since 2007, I have entertained children at libraries from Colorado to Montana and all the way to Wisconsin. What I provide are exhibits of current creations, both instructional and custom, educational story times on how Lego got its start and where it is today and fun-filled building challenges to help bring out everyone's imagination and creativity.

If your library would enjoy a program with me, all I ask is \$300 for my time. That includes drive time, lodging, food, fuel, the unloading, setup, presentation time and reloading. If you want, or can, team up with another local library close by, I can do one program in the morning and the other in the afternoon for a rate of \$250 per program.



Curtis Mork, The Lego Guy
723 Goodrich Court
Platteville, CO 80651
(303)-775-5673; cmlegoguy@yahoo.com



System Services Spotlight

Deb's Preschool Projects

These craft projects feature shapes made by the System's die cutting equipment. Our intent is to save our CPLS librarians valuable time each month. Place your order for the craft materials before the posted deadline by emailing Deb at cplsasst@gmail.com. There is no charge for this service.

The Preschool Projects are provided for the months of September through May. Since we work one month ahead, this is the last craft for this session. Watch for the September craft on August 1st.

This butterfly has her own personality and she is ready to fly into spring.

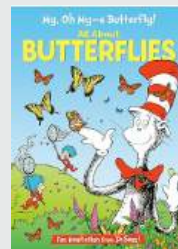
Your preschoolers will need school glue to attach the wings (handprints) to the craft stick. If you choose, you could provide markers to color the craft stick. We will send googly eyes, a half chenille stem, and stickers to complete this craft.

The deadline to request the butterfly craft is **April 21, 2025**.



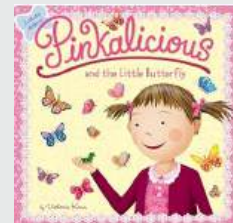
7" h x 9.5" w

Book Suggestions:



My, Oh My--A Butterfly! All About Butterflies, by Tish Rabe (The Cat in the Hat's Learning Library)
3-6 years old

Pinkalicious and the Little Butterfly by Victoria Kann
3-5 years old



Explore My World Butterflies by Marfe Ferguson Delano
2-6 years old



CPLS HAS SCHOLARSHIP MONEY AVAILABLE!

You may be looking forward to attending a training opportunity that will come up in 2025. The System can help! We have money available for you!

CPLS can award up to \$200 per event in Nebraska and \$300 for out-of-state events. These funds are available to help cover expenses such as registration, mileage, meals, etc. Only one scholarship per person per fiscal year (July - June). Each Library Agency shall be limited to two scholarships per year.

Name _____

Library _____

Event _____

Date of event _____

Scholarship requested for _____ (meal, room, etc.)

Amount requested _____

Who should the check be made out to _____

Other information _____

Send your request to: Central Plains Library System
2727 W. 2nd Street #233
Hastings, NE 68901

Disc Cleaning and Repair

The CPLS Office has the ECO AUTO-SMART Fully Automatic Disc Repair System.

It is not just a buffer, but a full-service machine, to both clean and repair your valuable discs. Save those discs that won't play! As long as they are not cracked, we can fix them.

From July 1, 2024, thru June 30, 2025, each CPLS member library has unlimited free disc cleanings available to them.



Nominate Books Now for the 2025 Nebraska Book Awards

The 2025 Nebraska Book Awards program, sponsored by the Nebraska Center for the Book (NCB) and Nebraska Library Commission, will recognize and honor books that are written by Nebraska authors and illustrators, published by Nebraska publishers, set in Nebraska, or relate to Nebraska.

Books published in 2024, as indicated by the copyright date, are eligible for nomination. They must be professionally published, have an International Standard Book Number (ISBN), and be bound. Books may be entered in one or more of the following categories: Nonfiction, Fiction, Children/Young Adult, Cover/Design/Illustration, and Poetry. Winners in each category will be honored at the November 15th, 2025, Nebraska Celebration of Books Literary Festival in Lincoln.

The entry fee is \$40 per book and per category entered. **Deadline for entries is May 31, 2025.** For more information, including entry forms, see

<http://www.centerforthebook.nebraska.gov/awards/nebookawards.html>

Books may be entered in one of two ways, either complete the [Online Entry Form](#) and submit payment through PayPal, then mail three copies of the book to the below address. Or, mail the [Entry Form](#) [pdf], three copies of the book, and the entry fee via a check made out to the Nebraska Center for the Book to the below address:

NCB Book Awards Competition
c/o Nebraska Library Commission
The Atrium
1200 N Street, Suite 120
Lincoln, NE 68508-2023



The Nebraska Center for the Book is housed at the Nebraska Library Commission and 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 supported by the National Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and 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."

Theme Related Die Cuts Available this Summer



Crayon
5 1/8" h x 1 7/8" w



Crayon Box
5 7/8" h x 2 7/8" w



Pencil Bookmark
5 1/4" h x 2" w



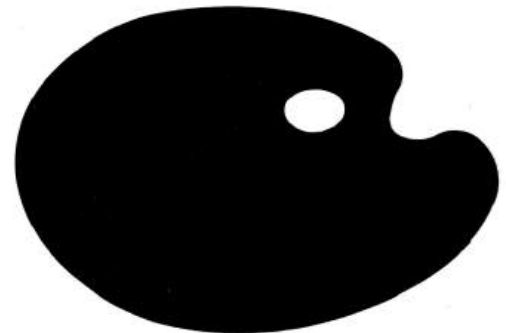
Scissors
3" h x 5 1/2" w



Wide
Paint Brush
5 1/4" h x 2 3/4" w



Palette
3 3/4" h x 5 1/2" w



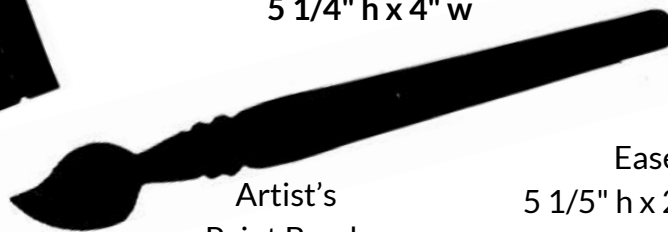
Paint Can
5 1/4" h x 4" w



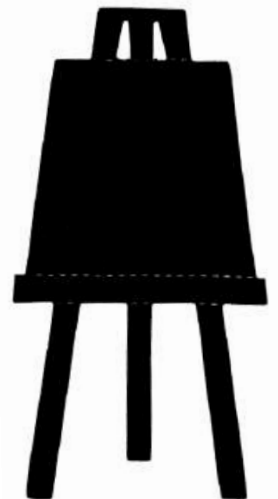
Narrow Paint Brush
5 1/4" h x 1 1/2" w



Artist's
Paint Brush
6 1/2" h x 1/2" w



Easel
5 1/5" h x 2 3/4" w



Please request your theme-related die cuts no later than **April 15, 2025**. We need to know how many of each shape and what color cardstock you prefer or if assorted colors will work for you.

Central Plains Library System Presents: Magical Art

Please request the quantity you need for your program participants
no later than April 15, 2025.

Supplies: 4" x 6" Cardstock
White Crayons
"Bleeding" Tissue Paper Squares
Small Spray Bottles (for water)
Plastic Tablecloth

CPLS will provide all of the above materials.



1. Cover your table with the plastic tablecloth.
2. Give each child a piece of cardstock.
3. White crayons will be shared among the group.
4. Encourage the children to use their imagination to draw/scribble their own magical art with the white crayon.
5. Spritz the paper lightly with just enough water to hold the tissue squares in place.
6. Individual squares of "bleeding" tissue paper are placed on the damp cardstock. (Single layer works best.)
7. Mist the tissue paper to complete the "bleeding" process.
8. Remove the wet tissue squares.
9. Let the cardstock air dry to reveal the magical art.

Have paper towels on hand for clean-up.
Vinyl gloves would help keep little hands clean.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

April 3	Thursday Morning Learning, 10am, Scott Childers, Open Meetings Act
April 10	Thursday Morning Meeting, 10am, All Staff
April 15	Deadline for Summer Reading Program Die Cuts
April 15	Deadline to request Magical Art Kits for your Summer Reading Program
April 17	Central Plains Library System Board Meeting, Lexington Public Library, 10am
April 21	Deadline for Deb's Preschool Project - Butterfly
April 25	Arbor Day Holiday - CPLS Office Closed
April 25	Deadline for ARSL Proposal
May 1	Thursday Morning Meeting, 10am, Directors Talk
May 1	Deadline for NLA Proposal
May 8	Thursday Morning Meeting, 10am, All Staff
May 14	Deadline to register for the Golden Sower Reading Day
May 15	Thursday Morning Learning, 10am, Denise Harders, Cricut Tips & Tricks
May 31	Deadline for Nebraska Book Awards Nominations
June 5	Thursday Morning Meeting, 10am, Directors Talk
June 6	Golden Sower Reading Day
June 12	Thursday Morning Meeting, 10am, All Staff
Sept. 17-20	Association of Rural and Small Libraries, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Oct. 22-24	Nebraska Library Association Conference, Holthus Conference Center, York
Nov. 4-5	Makerspace Conference, Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference Center

CPLS Office:

Office:

2727 W. 2nd St, Suite 233

Hastings, NE 68901

(800) 569-4961

Denise Harders

Cell: (402) 705-1409

Email:

denise.cpls@gmail.com

Deb Fairbanks

Phone: (402) 462-1975

Email:

cplsasst@gmail.com

Nicole Ruzicka

Email:

cpls.nicole@gmail.com

*My grandma always said
that God made libraries so
that people didn't have any
excuse to stupid.
~Joan Bauer*

