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Cover Photo Credit: Juanita enjoys a book at the Omaha W. Dale Clark Branch. Photo by Atiim Jones.
Welcome readers to the November issue of *Nebraska Libraries*! Our theme for this issue is access — library service to the disabled, minority, homeless, distanced and underserved citizens in our community. These services require patience, specialized resources, and out of the ordinary programming. There are plenty of Nebraska libraries who are engaging underserved populations in unique ways.

I sat down with Scott Scholz of the Nebraska Library Commission’s Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS) library. This library is a prime example of our statewide dedication to serving the reading impaired. With their newly designed facility and innovative recording equipment, TBBS empowers patrons to learn and discover new information.

We’ll also look at efforts made by libraries across the state and resources essential in providing quality service to underserved populations. Molly Aschoff of Education Service Unit 8 will explore the diverse array of field trip opportunities available virtually to schools and libraries with tight budgets. Claire Chamley will show us how the UNO Criss Library’s Human Library event opened doors and broke barriers for unique stories and their readers. Mary Jo Ryan from the Nebraska Library Commission will list the assistive technology made available to Nebraska public libraries via the Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities Project. MeMe Smith and Juan Sandoval will tell the success stories of their Hispanic business classes. Tina Walker will cover the distance learning opportunities provided at the Mid-Plains Community College library.

This issue, we have a special treat from local freelance photographer Atiim Jones. Originator of the local photo project “Crossroads,” Atiim’s featured photograph essay includes first-hand accounts from Omaha area library patrons accompanied by beautiful portraits of them enjoying the library.

Our libraries exist as microcosms of our society, agents of change able to influence communities to do good. Library service to underserved patrons — whether they be disabled, minority, homeless, or distanced — requires unique access that may be met by some with hesitation. But, especially after certain current events in the media, this is probably one of the most important tasks of libraries today.

Before you delve into these inspiring and empowering stories, I’d like to take this time to thank you for supporting *Nebraska Libraries* in our third year. This journal is still young, and we appreciate all of your comments and suggestions that have led to this publication becoming the one-stop shop for anything and everything related to Nebraska libraries.

The theme for the February issue will be announced shortly. If you have an idea for an article, column, or you want to become a regular contributor to our “Book Bites: Book Reviews (and More!)” column, contact me now at NLAeditor@nebraskalibraries.org.

Rachel Kenny
Interim Editor,
*Nebraska Libraries*
Featured Nebraska Library: NLC’s Talking Book and Braille Service

Rachel Kenny interviews Scott Scholz

This week, Nebraska Libraries sat down with Scott Scholz, the new Acting Director of Nebraska Library Commission’s Talking Book and Braille Service. This unique library has been serving Nebraskans with reading disabilities for 63 years.

To give our readers some context, could you introduce the overall collection and who it serves?

The Nebraska Library Commission’s Talking Book and Braille Service began in 1952. It is part of a nationwide network of cooperating libraries headed by the National Library Service (NLS), a division of the Library of Congress. We serve any resident of Nebraska who cannot see to read regular print, or hold a book or turn its pages. We also serve those with reading disabilities that limit the use of regular print, like dyslexia. NLS produces a wide range of “talking books,” which are audiobooks in a specialized format with enhanced (but very easy to use) navigational features. We circulate these digital talking books on specially designed flash drive cartridges, along with the playback machines needed to use them. Additionally, we supplement the NLS collection with our own book and magazine recordings, focusing on Nebraska authors or publications about Nebraska and the Great Plains.

Our books, and the playback machines required to use them, are delivered by mail as Free Matter for the Blind. Patrons who are comfortable with downloading books to their computers can also use a website called BARD, hosted by NLS, to get books instantly. Those books can be placed on flash drives or blank cartridges to be used in our digital talking book players. For patrons who use mobile devices, there are iOS and Android apps to access the collection on BARD as well.

What are perhaps the most unique items in your collection?

Several fascinating small collections come to mind. We have a number of print/braille books for children that have regular print and illustrations that look very similar to conventional children’s books at first glance. They are bound with transparent braille overlay sheets to help both parents and children learn to read braille. These are also sometimes referred to as “Twin Vision” materials. Then we have descriptive videos in both VHS and DVD formats, which are films and television shows with an additional audio track that describes what's happening on-screen, drawing attention to any important plot elements that might be conveyed visually. The narration track is carefully crafted to stay out of the way of dialogue or sound effects already in the video. We also circulate small collections of old-time radio shows on
both CD and cassette, which are a big hit with a lot of patrons.

How does a library patron go about retrieving items from the Talking Book and Braille Library?

First, new patrons fill out an application form that must be signed by a certifying authority, usually a patron’s doctor or nurse. The application form contains questions about personal reading interests and preferences that help us to select books each patron will enjoy. Other kinds of institutions like schools, nursing homes, hospitals and assisted living facilities can also use the service for their students or residents.

Upon receiving new applications, we have three excellent Reader Advisors who will help new patrons get started with the service. The Reader Advisors become the main point of contact with patrons, helping to select materials and making sure that each borrower is getting the right number of books and magazines to meet their needs. They can also address any technical problems that might arise in using the books and players. Most patron contact with Reader Advisors is conducted via telephone, though they can also be reached via email or by coming to visit us in person.

Patrons can find out about newly available materials by subscribing to our bimonthly newsletter called Interchange, which can be delivered in audio, large print, braille, or accessed on our website. NLS also produces a bimonthly publication called Talking Book Topics in audio, large print, and online format. The large print versions of Interchange and Talking Book Topics include order forms for new books that can be returned by mail, or patrons can call their Reader Advisor to discuss new books they’d like.

These book requests generate mail cards, which our circulation staff match with the books each patron has requested. The mail cards are inserted into the container that houses each book, and then the books are delivered by the post office. When patrons are done with the book, they can simply turn the mail card over and put it back in the mail, and the books come back to us at no cost. The playback machines are delivered in the mail the same way, and patrons can keep the machines as long as they’re using the service.
What is the process items recorded in-house go through before they are added to the shelf?

Books and magazines are selected with emphasis on Nebraska authors, or subject emphasis on Nebraska and the Great Plains. Before we start recording, the print resources are “mapped” by planning the sequence of recording different elements: main text, captions, sidebars, charts, etc. Two copies of each recorded item are prepared, and our studio staff follows along with a copy of the text while a volunteer narrator reads, stopping to correct any deviations from the text, mispronunciations, or extraneous sounds that might occur.

After recording, the next process is assembly, where staff edit the recordings into 88-minute sections of audio and add any additional kinds of opening and closing announcements. Then they go to postproduction, where we can apply any necessary equalization, compression or other kinds of effects to make the recordings sound their best. The next stage is review, where book recordings are evaluated again against a print copy to find any errors that might have been missed during recording. Fixes are made with the narrator, a round of final postproduction is done, and then the materials go into markup, where the recordings are placed into specialized software that can add navigational systems to the audio that are recognized by our patrons’ playback devices. These finished recordings in the Digital Talking Book (DTB) format are then duplicated onto cartridges using specialized software and hardware running in a Linux environment, and then they’re ready for patrons.

Volunteers are an essential part of the recording process. Volunteer narrators visit us for two-hour recording sessions once or twice each week. Volunteers also help us with some clerical tasks like preparing mailings and organizing new books as they arrive. Last fiscal year, 60 volunteers worked a total of 2700 volunteer hours, an average of 224 hours each month. Without their enthusiasm, expertise, and dedication, we wouldn’t be able to supplement the national collection with local materials. Volunteers are the heart of our recording studios.
Talking books have gone through quite an evolution from records to cassette tapes to USB cartridges. How has the Talking Book and Braille library adapted to this change? Is there still some hesitation to the new formats?

While there was some hesitation among patrons when the change from vinyl records to cassettes happened many years ago, our transition to digital cartridges from cassette has been widely embraced. In fact, we had a waiting list for the first digital talking book players!

The digital books offer so many advantages over cassette that almost everyone made the change within the first year of their availability. They sound much better and can be turned up much louder. If you like to browse or skim materials instead of reading cover to cover, you can easily skip between articles in magazines or various sections and parts in books. You can insert your own digital bookmarks for later referral as well, an excellent feature if you’re taking notes as a student, or reading for a book club discussion. If you like to read many books and magazines at once, the digital player will remember your place in all of them, so when you return to a book that you had set aside, it will tell you what section you’re in and continue where you left off. You can increase and decrease the speed of playback without changing the pitch. And there is a “sleep” button on the machine that you can activate to turn it off in 15, 30, 45 or 60 minutes.

All of the buttons on the digital talking book player are soft pads with special shapes and colors to help with identification. The user guide is built right into the machine—just turn it on (which can be done automatically by plugging it into an electrical outlet) and start pushing buttons, and the machine will play a message to describe the functions of each button you push.

The digital machines are more portable now, too. They’re lighter and more compact than the cassette machines, and because there are no moving parts, the battery life is well over 20 hours before recharging. While the cartridges are roughly the same size as cassette tapes for ease of handling, each book or magazine can fit on a single cartridge now (the majority of books on cassette required swapping multiple cassettes to finish a book).

For patrons who use the BARD download site or subscribe to national magazines, the player also has a “Bookshelf” feature. Using Bookshelf, multiple books or magazines can be placed on a single cartridge. You could fill up a blank cartridge before going on vacation, for...
example, and just leave it in the player for ease of packing.

There are staff productivity benefits with the digital books, too. When cassettes were returned in the mail, they required a lengthy inspection process to make sure all of the proper tapes were in the box, that each tape was rewound to its beginning, and that there were no physical problems with any of the tapes. There are lots of moving parts in a cassette, not to mention the fragile ribbon of tape itself, and we frequently had to repair or re-dub tapes that were missing or damaged. With digital, we still open each cartridge box to make sure the correct book is inside, but inspection is much faster. The digital playback machines are similar: cassette players use small, complex mechanisms that are easy to knock out of alignment and wear out with use. With the new players, batteries are the only part prone to needing regular replacement under normal operating conditions.

What is the importance of providing widespread access of this type of material? Do you have a particular story to share?

The access is absolutely essential for so many people who otherwise would not be able to share in many kinds of experiences and knowledge through reading. Our sense of community, belonging and participation in society is inextricably linked to literature.

Our Senior Reader Advisor Kay Goehring has had the most direct contact with our patrons over many years, and she shared a few of her experiences with how much this service changes lives:

“I have had older adults tell me that this service has ‘opened their world’ that was shrinking because of disabilities. They can discuss and participate in conversations and groups. Without this access, they would no longer be able to keep up on many subjects and authors they enjoyed when they had their sight. They feel they are a part of the community and still learning.

“We have numerous patrons who are able to join book groups, and several of them contribute to the clubs by choosing some of the selections the whole group will read. Others are taking their turn at leading the discussions.
“Several years ago a mother set up her grade school age son. Among his disabilities was the fact that he was mute. He was ignored by the children in the neighborhood so had no friends. When he received the machine, he sat out in the yard and played books. Soon some of the children became curious and came and sat with him. They accepted him for what he could contribute to the group. Several years later his mother called me and said there was someone who wanted to talk to me. It was her son and he was able to say ‘thank you.’ The books and his contact with other children had helped him push through his limitations and learn to speak.”

**What advice would you give to librarians serving patrons with disabilities?**

Listen, listen, listen, and be gentle. Every patron’s situation is unique, and the only way to meet the needs and capabilities of patrons is by asking them what they need, and doing our best to fill their needs. In the case of talking books, some patrons have very specific reading requests, while others prefer to provide general areas of interest and have us select materials for them. Those needs are always subject to change, and we aim to give each person what they need. Additionally, many patrons come to us having experienced recent vision loss, and can be understandably frustrated or distracted by the many other changes happening in their lives. It’s important for us to be patient and welcoming while they learn to navigate the library.

**The Talking Book and Braille Service went through a recent relocation. What all needed to be considered to make this move?**

Yes, we just relocated our circulation stacks, recording studios, and a variety of meeting/training areas, break rooms and offices from the basement to the first floor of our office building. We considered the move an opportunity to reevaluate our needs. For example, our post-recording processes were being done in noisy open spaces or with headphones, mostly on mismatched
equipment. In addition to installing new studio booths with upgraded recording equipment and computers in the new location, we were able to include multipurpose editing rooms appointed with equipment that matches the studios. This has streamlined the process for editing, review, postproduction, and adding navigation to the audio.

Most of our planning related to downsizing, though. We went from roughly 12,000 sq. ft. down to 8,000 sq. ft. in the new location, which was possible though requiring less space for circulation (the digital collection has a smaller footprint than the cassette collection of the past), and meeting/training rooms could be reduced in size because so much of that activity happens through webinar formats now.

I could write a book about all of the infrastructure details one has to consider, including working with architects and contractors, navigating the RFP bidding process for parts of the work, negotiating with building owners, and verifying that various systems like electrical, data, telephone, intercom, HVAC, and fire alarms are adequate. A recent episode of the Library Commission’s NCompass Live went into detail about the process and can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EDWACfL5i0.

**What can we expect for the future of the Talking Book and Braille library? Are there any projects or initiatives on the horizon?**

The library will continue to adapt as technology evolves (and as it becomes more economical). The ecosystem around digital books has been built to accommodate new delivery options as they become both possible and affordable: adding the “bookshelf” feature to the players for multiple books on one cartridge, for example, or the apps for reading books on mobile devices.

It’s important that talking books be provided with equitable levels of service across the country, regardless of where patrons live, so some approaches that might already be possible in a few areas will need to wait until
everyone can use them. If we someday end up with a kind of national Wi-Fi utility, for example, it would be possible to deploy a distribution system that worked something like the Kindle or Nook, “pushing” and “pulling” books to patrons as they need them. But the infrastructure isn’t quite there yet for even wired high-speed internet access.

At the local level, all of those changes in technology may bring added convenience to the system, making the books easier to use and quicker to arrive, but I think it’s important that we continue to supplement the national provisions of the service with local assistance and materials. The relationship between patrons and Reader Advisors is so much more personal than any book-finding algorithm could ever be, and making materials of local interest available helps to keep patrons plugged into what’s happening in their own communities. Because many patrons come to our service having only recently developed vision problems, nurturing local and human connections is as critical a part of our service as keeping people informed through reading.

Scott Scholz is finishing his Master’s degree in library and information science at the iSchool at University of Missouri. He was recently appointed Acting Director of the Nebraska Library Commission Talking Book and Braille Service (TBBS), part of a nationwide network of cooperating libraries headed by the National Library Service (NLS), a division of the Library of Congress. Previous to this appointment, he was Circulation and Audio Production Coordinator for TBBS for 10 years. He served on the NLS Collection Development Advisory Group in Washington, DC in 2007 and 2008, and presented on the creation of Digital Talking Books using the Telex Low-Complexity Mastering System at the NLS national conference in Newport, Rhode Island in 2012. In 2014, he coordinated moving the Nebraska Library Commission’s 12,000 square feet of lower level circulation stacks, recording studios and training facilities to a new location on the first floor of the Atrium building in Lincoln. Previous to his library work and educational pursuits, he received his Bachelor of Music in composition from the University of Denver in 2000, and remains active as a freelance music reviewer, radio/podcast host, and small label curator in fields of avant-garde and experimental contemporary music. He and his wife live in Lincoln, NE, where they host regular book discussions, irregular surrealist game parties, and care for a menagerie of two and four-legged friends.
Would you like to take your students or patrons on a field trip? You can travel to faraway places without leaving the library or classroom. There are no requirements to ride a bus for a full day or pack a lunch. It is really quite easy. All you need is a computer with a microphone and webcam, a projection system, and reliable Internet access. Now you’re ready to travel!

You might ask, “Is it really that easy?” and “Where shall we go?” My answers are “YES!” and “ANYWHERE!” I help schools in my ESU 8 region take their students virtually to the moon with NASA, to zoos across the nation, museums, the Football and Baseball Halls of Fame, and many more places. In previous years, both the sending and receiving sites needed expensive videoconferencing (VC) equipment. As the technology has evolved, the videoconferencing equipment has become more affordable. This has allowed schools and libraries that do not have access to VC equipment to participate in Virtual Field Trips (VFT) with a laptop or mobile device and a cloud-based conferencing resource like Skype, Google Hangouts, or Zoom.

The beauty of VFTs is what they add to an educational setting. VFTs are real-time experiences, where an individual at a remote site interacts with the participating students. An expert in the field of study, a museum curator, an author, or a scientist, communicates live with participants. These professionals possess exceptional knowledge of the content and the ability to engage and communicate well with students. Many VFTs incorporate primary documents, video, artifacts, live animals, music, and text. The content provider of a VFT often provides pre- and post-activities for a teacher to use with his or her students. Most of all, students get to interact with the presenter by asking and answering questions, which allows for a more engaging experience.

Most of us would agree that first-hand experiences are always best. If you can’t take your students to the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, is it not better that they experience it virtually than not at all? There are many benefits of VFTs which include but are not limited to the following:

- **Budget-Friendly:** Some have a participation fee but it is usually less than purchasing fuel, food, and accounting for travel time.
• Time Sensitive: In the age of high stakes assessments, students and teachers do not have to give up a whole day to take a one hour visit to a museum.
• Best Practices: VFTs are interactive, standards-based, of high technical quality, suited for specific grade levels, and highly engaging.
• Real-World Experiences: They expose kids to careers they may not know even exist.
• Fun: Kids and teachers love them!

According to an article in *US News and World Report* (2015), the value of field trips, whether virtual or in person, should not be overlooked. When a field trip is connected to the content that the students are studying, it makes a lasting impact.

In the state of Nebraska, there are many content providers and the list is growing. Check out the following sites to learn more about their VFT experiences:

- **Durham Museum** - Omaha, NE
- **Homestead National Monument** - Beatrice, NE
- **Joslyn Art Museum** - Omaha, NE
- **MONA - Museum of Natural Art** - Kearney, NE
- **Morrill Hall (Elephant Hall) University of NE** - Lincoln, NE
- **Henry Doorly Zoo** - Omaha, NE
- **Agate Fossil Beds National Monument** - Harrison, NE

It is also important to remember that VFTs are not just for kids. Many of the content providers tailor their programs for adults and elderly populations. Retirement homes, assisted living residences, and libraries are holding VFTs for this group of non-mobile lifelong learners.

There are so many ways to enrich your programs by using Virtual Field Trips. As it becomes a struggle to get people in our doors due to the rise of online resources and technology, why not use it as a hook to get them to come to the library and take them to the moon!

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**References**


**Further Reading**


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Molly Aschoff is currently the Distance Learning Coordinator and Media Specialist at ESU 8 in Neligh, NE. She is in her 20th year in education; before coming to the ESU, she was an elementary and special education (SPED) teacher. As the distance learning (DL) coordinator, she supports instructional design for teachers teaching distance-learning courses including development of instructional strategies, course materials, assessment techniques, appropriate integration of instructional technologies and best practices. Molly promotes engagement in the classroom by use of technology tools, virtual field trips, personalized learning, and “just good teaching” strategies.
Have you ever wanted to talk face-to-face with a refugee? Or maybe, find out about a mental illness from a person who lives with it, rather than from a textbook? The students of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Omaha community members, had the opportunity to do just that at Criss Library’s Human Library event. This event took place in April of 2015, and was one of the first in the state of Nebraska. In order to put on an event such as a Human Library, it takes a lot of dedication, planning and help from other folks, but the result is an amazing, life-changing program. The Human Library can help break down stereotypes, bring together folks who might not have met otherwise and, most importantly, can give an entirely different perspective than one that you may have. If you are looking for a unique, exciting program, the Human Library could be the perfect thing to try.

The Human Library is an event that has been going on for a while. It started in Denmark in 2000, as a way to promote peace, after there was an act of gang violence. Despite its humble roots, this unique event has evolved over the past fifteen years, and has become a unique way for people to combat the stereotypes they hold, and learn more about lifestyles and people that they otherwise would not. I first saw this event on Facebook; a friend of mine who attended Syracuse University had posted that their library was holding their own Human Library. It seemed like such an interesting and fresh idea to me, and Criss Library seemed like the perfect place to hold it. My idea was approved by my supervisor, Melissa Cast-Brede, and the wheels started rolling after that.

Because Criss Library had never held an event like this one, I emailed the folks from Syracuse University with some questions as to how they went about getting their “books” (the people featured in the Human Library), getting everything set up, and how they advertised the event. They responded with some great suggestions, which helped immensely in our process. We took our idea to the Department of Education Diversity Committee, because we wanted this event to be primarily about diversity, and they agreed to help us with it in any way they could. Because April is Diversity Month, we settled on the event happening in April of 2015.
In January of 2015, Melissa and I sat down with our Patron Services Director, Joyce Neujahr, to collaborate on this event. We decided on a solid date of April 16, which fell not only during Diversity Month, but also National Library Week. During this meeting, we discussed a number of ways to get the students to participate, including a theme and the possibility of an extra credit or class assignment component that professors could assign their students. We also came up with a list of different experiences that we thought would be interesting, including: foster care, a previous gang member, a refugee, a transgender individual, someone who has bipolar disorder, someone who is HIV positive, a Holocaust survivor, an individual with PTSD, and a young person who suffered or had recovered from cancer. While we did not find a representative of every single experience that we had discussed, having a big list of options to choose from made it easier for us when we started “collecting books.”

Melissa, Joyce, the Diversity Committee and I all tried to come up with people we knew, or people who we could contact about finding individuals that fit the experiences for which we were looking. With the help of the committee, and various organizations around Omaha, we were able to come up with our final “book list” — a transgender individual, a second generation Nichiren Buddhist, a Bhutanese refugee, an individual who has bipolar disorder and had underwent ECT or Electroconvulsive therapy, an individual living with HIV, a hard of hearing individual, a city councilman, a colon cancer survivor, an Afghanistan refugee, a Kenyan woman who came to the United States for school, and an urban youth activist. While we had planned on having a number of other books, we were very happy with the folks that we got. Having a solid book list was a huge asset to the event, because that allowed the people who came to the event an opportunity to choose beforehand, and think deliberately about what type of story they wanted to hear.

One challenge about this program was the gathering of books and getting them to commit to the event. During the “collecting” phase, we did have a few books who agreed to take part in this activity, but because of their own circumstances, they were unable to attend. We hit another hiccup during the event with one book becoming ill, but luckily, we were able to come up with a solution on the fly with another book. Because life can get so crazy, having a lot of ideas about books is a good idea — you never know what can happen!

By the middle of March, we had the books in place, but we needed to figure out how to go about getting the word out to campus and the community. The first step was to become an official organizer from the Human Library group. Becoming an official organizer is a quick, simple process that allowed us to use their branding, and have access to additional resources from the original organization. Through the end of March, we papered the campus with flyers about the event, and sent out reminders to professors and various listservs to ensure that people knew about it. We also were able to get word out on social media platforms such as the library’s Facebook, Twitter, our own personal social media accounts, and the library webpage. Additionally, we made a libguide to help folks understand exactly what the Human Library is,
and how they could get involved, if they so wished. We tried to get the word out any way possible.

Once we had spread information about the Human Library to the public, we spent most of our time concentrating on the logistics of the event itself. We were lucky enough to get a $1,000 grant from the Eastern Library System, which helped us when it came to tending to the needs of our books. Because the books were putting in a good three hours of their time, we provided food and drinks for them. Additionally, we were able to get a T-shirt made for them, as a small token of thanks for their willingness to participate. After this, we made library cards for both the books and readers, a catalog for readers to look through, a question prompt for the books to have ready for readers who needed an idea of what to say, and an exit survey for both books and readers to assess the program.

As April rolled around, we only had a couple things left to do. Although there were some hiccups and rough spots during the initial planning, we did a couple things that worked wonderfully. The first thing was to make an online reservation form for people to sign up to talk to the books. This reservation system allowed folks, especially those whose were able to attend the event for extra credit, reserve a book early, to ensure that they were able to check out a book and get the credit. This made the event run smoothly for those of us running it, but also for the books and the readers, as they were able to see the schedule or time constraints ahead of time and work around them. This helped keep the program organized, especially because we did have quite a few readers drop in, rather than first make a reservation. Then, we recruited a student to volunteer to act as a library page, and help get the book and the reader together when it was time for their session. The reservation link was posted on the libguide that we made about the event, as well as attached to the various posts we had put on social media.

When the actual day of the event came, for the most part, it went off without a hitch. We did have one last minute hold up, with one of our books getting sick and being unable to attend the event. By a stroke of luck, we had another book, who we had not heard from since our initial contact, get back to us and express his interest. We got him added to the catalog in a hurry, and he ended up being one of our most popular books. Before the event started, we had some members of the Diversity Committee come over and hold a short training session for the books about answering uncomfortable questions. This also gave the books a chance to get to know each other, and practice before the readers got there. We had a computer set up, where I was taking reservations from online, and room for the books to rest and eat. The library page helping out was able to find the books, and unite them with their next readers. After the readers were finished with the books, they had the opportunity to fill out an exit
survey, which served as a head count and reaction sheet. The “books” also had surveys to fill out, in order to get their point of view.

Reading the responses that we got from the “books”, and the “readers” was a huge eye opener for me. Being able to see the response, and any sort of critique folks had of this project was something I had looked forward to since the idea. We were met with an overwhelmingly positive response from both the books and readers. One of the most popular comments from the readers’ responses was to do this event again. In addition to the positive comments, we were able to get some good suggestions, from both books and readers, pertaining to what might work better for the next Human Library event. Some of the suggestions included: more break time for the books, and advertising this event earlier, and on more platforms.

What’s next for the future of the Human Library at UNO? While we may not have it totally figured out, we do know that we are planning on a second Human Library event. We have thought about partnering with the Omaha Public Library, or a virtual Human Library, with “e-books” for the distance learning classes. The possibilities seem endless with an event so versatile.

No matter how we decide to proceed with event, I hope that people stay interested and continue attending — you never know what, or whom, you could learn from!

For more information about the Human Library at UNO and beyond, check out the following resources:

Official Website for the Human Library Organization: http://humanlibrary.org/

Official Facebook for the Human Library Organization: https://www.facebook.com/humanlibraryorg

UNO Criss Library libguide: http://libguides.unomaha.edu/HumanLibrary

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Claire has an MLIS from San Jose State University and works for the University of Nebraska Omaha Criss Library as a reference associate. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, playing board games, tennis, and spending time with family and friends.

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2016 Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates) Research Grant

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), the fastest growing division of the American Library Association (ALA), is offering the Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates) Research Grant for 2016. This grant of $1,000 provides seed money for small-scale projects that will encourage research that responds to the YALSA Research Agenda.

Details regarding the applications for the 2016 Frances Henne YALSA/VOYA Research Grant are available from the YALSA Website at http://www.ala.org/yalsa/awardsandgrants/franceshenne.

Applications for the grant are due in the YALSA Office by December 1, 2015. For more information please contact us via e-mail: yalsa@ala.org or by phone: 1-800-545-2433, ext. 4387.
Our Libraries:
An Intimate Insight into Nebraska Public Libraries as Crucial Resources to the Underserved Populace

Atiim Jones

**Why do you come to the library?**
I come here to have visits with my Mom. I live in a foster home and I see my mom on Wednesday and this is where we spend our time together. She helps me with my homework and sometimes we play board games.

**How does the library improve your life?**
It allows me to spend quality time with my mom. It also allows me to do research for school. It's a place where I can just pick up a book about anything and read for fun.

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PHOTO ESSAY

Christina

*An Intimate Insight into Nebraska Public Libraries as Crucial Resources to the Underserved Populace*

Atiim Jones
I’m from Nepal. It’s a very poor country. There was a lot of civil war and political unrest and I eventually came to the United States. I applied for a scholarship and was accepted to Winona State University in Minnesota. Unfortunately I lost my scholarship and I had a friend who was attending Bellevue University, which was much cheaper. Through a series of unfortunate events, my life took a turn for the worse and now I’m living at the Siena Francis House. I’m not in a situation to work right now.

How does the library help your situation?
I come here to study, use the Internet and Wi-Fi. It gives me something constructive to do. I like to stay occupied. The library keeps me comfortable and constructive.

Is there a way you think the library can improve?
I would like to see them serve lunch. Right now, non-profit organizations serve food outside of the library, just across the street. You can bring it inside, but maybe some company or organization could subsidize in order to create a lunch program inside. I think it would be a nice thing to see.
Why do you come to the library?

The first time I came here I read many books and spent a lot of time on the computers. I realized that a good book is like a good friend. I don’t have that many friends, but when I came to the library I discovered that there are good friends hiding on the shelves. When I became interested in the library, I brought my kid here and he found so many interesting things in the books and computers, so we like it as a family. The things here encourage you to further your education. It’s like a safe haven. I'm from South Sudan and went to a refugee camp in Ethiopia when the religious war broke out. Eventually I got a resettlement form to go to Boston, Massachusetts. I wasn't very happy there and many of my friends from my same refugee camp were in Omaha. When I talked to them over the phone, they convinced me to come here for housing and jobs and at that time they were hiring at Tyson Foods in Council Bluffs. I came here and started working at Tyson Foods and stayed there for 13 years.
Why do you come to the library?
I come here to get some fresh air, relax and use the Internet to do research. If there's any kind of research I want to do, this is where I come. I read lots of non-fiction, biographies, civil rights leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and inspirational people. There's knowledge that you can only get from a library, whether it be a book or the Internet. I'm always looking for information and sometimes you have to research more than one book, just like the Internet. I've been doing a lot of research about Freemasonry, their practices and the meaning behind the symbolism within the organization. There's always more to what you see and hear and this is where I come to educate myself on some things I can't learn anywhere else.

Is there something you think the library needs to better serve the public?:
The libraries need programs for kids of all ages after school. The less productive kids are, the more likely they are to get into trouble. If they don't have productive activities to do, that's when they turn to the streets. I think the city has money to do more for our youth. Even for kids in daycare. Libraries need to be more advanced.
Why do you come to the library?
I use the library to read the newspaper. One time I arrived early and was able to get coffee. I just happened to catch it that one day, but I usually have instant coffee with me regardless.

So you come to read the newspaper? Why the library?
I just read it and continue with the rest of my day. Depending on what time I get here, I figure out what to do until dinner time because too much free time gets me into trouble. I walk to the library from 39th & Dodge, read the newspaper, walk around the Gene Leahy Mall, then back home. That’s my exercise. Using the library is part of my daily routine. I’m not in a position to get a newspaper because I live in a transitional house with mentally challenged people and materials like newspapers go missing very easily. That’s a reason why I use the library. It keeps me occupied. I’ll be getting my own place soon and it helps me to maintain a schedule until that happens. It’s peaceful here, people respect others’ space, it’s quiet. I can come down, relax, read the newspaper and head out. It gives me time to clear my head and get a game plan for the rest of the day. I was an alcoholic for a lot of years and this was like my home many years ago. It kept me warm during cold winter days.
This library is actually quite central to a lot of things, especially for the homeless population. We have a place to come where we are safe. We can grow some knowledge, maybe plug in our phones so that night our sister or kids can get a hold of us and not worry about our safety. I haven’t found any problems with this library in particular. I know that Nebraska has cut down on the hours of a lot of the libraries in the city. We kind of found that to be a bit of a problem, even with my kid and studying, they don’t get out of school until 3:30, they only have an hour and a half to go to library, well they have to be back at school the next day. This is also a great place for people watching. You get to know people here. People you never would have thought of saying "hi" to. In a lot of ways you’re either in the same place or you all want the same things. You have the Gene Leahy Mall over there. These are some reasons I moved back to Omaha.

It’s special, even at night. It brings a little happiness, a little sadness, but that’s life, you know. The Open Door Mission picks up right across the street. Things change day to day, people change day to day, circumstances change day to day. Hopefully this weekend I won’t be homeless. I may not be down here all the time but I’ll make sure to come down here once a week to touch base. The library staff is quite nice, the security guard is nice. He actually talks "to" you and not "at" you or "through" you and that helps keep down confrontation. We have a lot of people who are mentally ill that spend a lot of time in here so the staff’s approach is important. If I wasn’t down here, I don’t know what I’d be doing. Being able to come here, sit and wait, use the Wi-Fi. It’s nice.
Why do you come to the library?

I come to the library to use the computers for job searching, product research and reading. It would be a good idea for the library to extend the hours due to people’s work schedules. When I get off of work, most times I would rather come to the library than go home. It’s one of my pastimes and I’m also in the process of job searching after coming off disability. I don’t own a computer so I go to the library to use the Internet and extending the hours would help myself and many others. Extending the hours from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday through Saturday, would be ideal. I believe I speak for a lot of people. They would love to have extended hours. We don’t want to lose our libraries at any cost. Extending the hours and keeping them open is very important. I have seen a few small libraries close down, but I’m trying to be optimistic that our libraries stay open for students. I’ve worked in Omaha Public Schools and I’ve seen how important the library is to students’ success.
The library went from a books and materials system to a computer system and that was kind of a slow transition. I do find myself on the computer a lot more than I used to. I very seldom ever check out a book and read it. There also started to be a "few problem childs" coming into the library, people misbehaving. It got to the point where the library was being used for loitering, lounging, almost anything but reading and honest use of the resources. It wasn't all that bad, because sometimes people just needed a break and the library provided that, but no one likes to sit around and do nothing, they pretty much have to do something to enhance their lifestyle so they won't be bored. But in retrospect, the behavior started to become a bit more coarse. People seemed to be a bit on edge and at odds, tempers flared a lot more and as a result, there were more situations which involved security guards to help keep the peace.

At one time people used to do a lot of sleeping here. I did myself… I guess the older I got, the sleepier I got. But for the most part it wasn't my intention to come and sleep. It was nice to be able to sit down in a chair, catch a nap, wake up and use the library for what it was meant for. All kinds of people come to the library but since it is in the downtown area, there was a certain clientele, there was a patronage here but of course people move on. Sometimes the library was very busy, other times it was very quiet and kind of dead and I think that may be one reason for the shortened the hours. They also started programs to help kids and adults. I myself haven't gotten involved in any of them, but the library really affects downtown and the community at large. It does help a lot of young people and adults. And it is a great source of free literature and information, especially if you don't have a computer.
I have always had a fascination with photography. I'm an entirely self-taught photographer and have been working tirelessly for the past few years to develop my own unique skill and be the absolute best at what I do. I specialize in creative photography, photos which are powerful, emotional and can speak without words. I also love photojournalism, taking a photo and having a story to go along with it makes for a more complete experience. All people have incredible things to say if they're asked the right questions and given enough time. This is what I have experienced with the assignment the Nebraska Library Association has given me. Although I work at UNMC, I would eventually like to do photojournalistic/artistic/corporate photography full-time some day. For now, photography is a hobby, with an occasional job or assignment. I am currently working on the largest creative photography project in the Midwest — "Crossroads" — in which people from all walks of life are photographed, street portrait style, in the Old Market. You can see the project at www.facebook.com/atiimjones. My ultimate goal is to turn it into a book someday. When I'm not photographing, I love to exercise, and go to quiet places where I can meditate, reflect, read, and enjoy fresh, clean air. Places like the library! You can contact me at atiimjones@yahoo.com.
The Nebraska Library Commission provided Assistive Technology (Easy Reading) Workstations to eighty-one public computer centers in Nebraska public libraries through the Library Broadband Builds Nebraska Communities Project. Library customers with visual limitations, dexterity issues, keyboarding issues, or who struggle with the English language benefit from the assistive technology workstation because of the specialty software imaged onto the desktop computer. Workstations included an adjustable desk, an adjustable chair, a scanner, a trackball mouse (for ease of use for individuals with dexterity issues), a ZoomText keyboard, and a desktop computer with a 22-inch monitor — the minimum suggested size for viewing Assistive Technology software. Software included the following:

**ZoomText Magnifier/Reader from AI-Squared** – ZoomText offers magnification; color scheme, pointer and cursor enhancements; and screen reading for individuals with visual impairment, with the options of creating a downloadable sound file and magnifying images.

**Kurzweil 1000 from Cambium Learning** – Kurzweil 1000 software has text-to-speech capability that makes printed or electronic text readily available to people with visual impairment. Library customers may translate English text to other languages, with the option of a downloadable sound file.

**JAWS Screen Reader from Freedom Scientific** – JAWS is a navigational program with screen-reading capability. Keyboard shortcuts facilitate using computer programs to create and edit documents, as well as navigate and read web pages without using a mouse.

**Dragon Naturally Speaking from Nuance** – Dragon Naturally Speaking is speech-recognition software that converts speech to text for dictating documents or emails, or to search and navigate the web without using a mouse.

Two years after the end of the grant, we asked Nebraska libraries to share the stories of their local library
Customers’ use of the workstations. Below are two examples of responses that demonstrate the personal empowerment that can result from providing equipment in the library that equalizes opportunities available to all our library customers.

**Lyons Public Library**
An older gentleman in Lyons, a former mayor, used the Assistive Technology computer a lot when it first became available thanks to the grant program. He is legally blind so this unit provided him a new “window to the world,” one he had not been able to experience since his vision left him. He was a baseball player in his younger days, playing in the major leagues. When he left the majors, he returned home to Lyons where he played a big part in youth baseball and was mentioned a great deal in area media for his dedication to sports. As he got older, he also became involved in preserving history in the community, putting together video/computer presentations. Thanks to the library’s Assistive Technology (computer, software and scanner), he has been able to continue this work and continue providing this valuable service to the community. He can view and manipulate photos and he recently successfully produced a DVD collection of pictures from the early to mid-1900s, which was sold as a fundraiser for the Happy Days Senior Center in Lyons. And the specialized software and equipment allow him to enjoy reading local history — including all of the news articles about his earlier days in baseball.

**Schuyler Public Library**
One of our library staff tells a story about an elderly person (in her 80s) coming in and asking the staff member to type a letter for her because vision problems made her unable to use her typewriter at home. The staff member demonstrated our Assistive Technology computer with zoom capability and the customer was thrilled that she was able to type up a letter herself and that she could send it out inviting others to a class reunion.

The key to success in serving this special population (a growing demographic in many of our Nebraska communities) seems to be:

- Outreach to groups that might have use for this service,
- Enlisting trusted intermediaries that can help you paint the picture of how “easy reading” on a large monitor or speech recognition can change the experience of using a computer, and
- Encouraging satisfied library customers to tell their story to their friends.

For more information contact Mary Jo Ryan via email at maryjo.ryan@nebraska.gov, or via phone at 402-471-3434 or 800-307-2665.

Mary Jo Ryan is the Communications Coordinator for the Nebraska Library Commission. She has spent the past twenty-nine years coordinating statewide library promotional efforts and marketing campaigns. An undergraduate degree in English and Journalism and a master’s degree in Adult Education and Public Administration provided an eclectic foundation for a career of more than forty years dedicated to staff development, community organizing, grant writing, and marketing public services. Combining her many years of experience in community planning and education with her background in marketing, she approaches library service communication from a planning perspective—encouraging librarians not to sell library service like breakfast cereal, but to approach marketing from a planning and problem-solving perspective.
Reaping Community Rewards

MeMe Smith & Juan Sandoval

As librarians we are used to finding the answers to questions that are posed by our patrons. We pride ourselves on being able to help with research, technology, and readers advisory. But, even we cannot always pull a rabbit out of a hat. That’s the way I felt about providing computer classes to our Spanish-speaking residents.

Schuyler sits at the crossroads of highways 30 and 15. It is a community that grew significantly between the 2000 and 2010 census. It is becoming an increasingly diverse community with 65.4% of its population claiming Hispanic or Latino descent. Census figures from 2010 show that 40% of the occupations in the community are in production and 62% of the major industry involves manufacturing. Cargill Meat Solutions is the major employer.

Data shows many individuals over 40 years old lack knowledge of technology because they weren’t exposed to computers when they were younger. Recent studies conducted by the Pew Research Center identify Latino computer ownership at 72% but the study doesn’t go deep enough to identify who uses the equipment (parents or children) and what programs are being used. With 86% of Latinos owning a cell phone and 49% having a smartphone, Latino Internet users are more likely to navigate online using a mobile device as opposed to desktop computers. U.S. Hispanics spend an average of 29 minutes per day on social networking sites, 10 minutes more per day than non-Hispanic Whites.

Our Hispanic/Latino community was comfortable using the library. The Head Start facility in the community used to be located across the alley from us until they built a new facility across town. Most of their clientele is Latino. They used to hold monthly meetings in our meeting room. We provided them with story times on a consistent basis. Many people came for ESL classes. Others came for GED classes. They brought their youngsters to the Summer Reading Program. We knew that our residents wanted to learn. Our problem was that we had a very limited budget and no funds to pay a Spanish-speaking computer instructor.

Then, Juan and I met and more things began to fall into place. The Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP) had been conducting classes at the Schuyler Resource Center, but they no longer had Internet access. REAP is part of the Center for Rural Affairs and is committed to strengthening rural communities through small, self-
employed business development. REAP Latino Business Center clients have expressed a great need for computer classes. And, the library had free Wi-Fi, a meeting room with openings in our schedule, and use of laptops from a Broadband Technologies Opportunities (BTOP) grant.

REAP has been developing trainings in Spanish since the Latino Business Center began in 2004. One of the first classes was held at the Columbus Public Library. Some of the students are still in business and have been extremely successful as micro-entrepreneurs. They are special, not only because Juan has known them for years, but because they were in that first class he taught.

At the Schuyler Public Library we began with REAP providing a Computer Basics class, then moved on to presenting Beginning Microsoft Office, and then offered Business Plan Basics. Although the classes were developed to provide assistance to small business owners who have no previous experience working with computers, REAP has made them available to all interested parties.

The Microsoft Office Training was created to provide information to small business owners. From creating a document in Word to starting an Excel spreadsheet to track mileage or inventory, the 12-hour course is an excellent tool to increase knowledge about Microsoft Office Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

Bringing people together through these types of classes offers them the opportunity to get to know each other, share ideas, work on plans, and motivate each other to learn and sometimes open a new business. There is great satisfaction when someone who didn’t even know how to start a computer sends a friend request on Facebook at the end of class.

Another benefit to students is the practical example instructors use during classes. Participants learn to navigate city and county websites, as well as schools, libraries, and other organizations of interest in the community. The classes also provide a new way to interact with family members in other countries, do business transactions, have contact with teachers and school staff members, and create a new set of skills at their place of work.

Marketing for these classes included the distribution of local brochures to library patrons and to ESL students.
Information was also distributed through the Chamber Newsletter and publicized in library newspaper articles. Because city council meetings are aired on the local cable channel, we promoted the classes along with reports to the city. Advertising was sent to the Cargill Learning Center for sharing with their students.

Evaluation comments from some of the classes have included:

- “Great Class”
- “My business knowledge increased (sic) dramatically after class”
- “Would like to take other courses about customer service, marketing plan (sic) and short term and long term planning”
- “Learned how to prevent Identity Theft and creating an e-mail account”
- “The course is excellent. I learned how to use a computer”

The community has been impacted in a variety of ways. We have more knowledgeable residents, hopefully new library users, and at least two new local businesses have opened. A student who took classes told her ESL instructor that now she is much more comfortable using computers and her school email. Because the word has spread about these classes, new partnerships between other libraries and REAP have begun.

This has been a great partnership, but not without some challenges. Because our meeting room is used for a variety of purposes, we have to take time to set up and take down furniture and laptops in the meeting room each week. We are still trying to find the best way to get the word out; there are few local Spanish language resources for us to use to promote the classes. We were concerned that promoting business planning could be perceived as trying to “steal” workers from the Cargill business in the community. It is a challenge for REAP to find qualified and available instructors for classes. Our old rebar reinforced building with very thick walls makes for a somewhat inconsistent WiFi signal to our meeting room.

Even with these challenges, we feel that we are providing a service to the community that it would be hard for residents to have access to via any other economical means.

Of course there are things that we would like to do better. We would like to provide more consistent promotion, further in advance of class starts and through different venues. We would like to carve a little time out of each course offering to better promote the library and our resources. We will be discussing the possibility of offering additional classes such as QuickBooks. We would like to see what we can do to help develop an entrepreneurial spirit in the community. We will look for other means to help increase workers skills for current jobs and new endeavors.

Other offerings we have provided at the library in the past that have met with varying degrees of success, but have hopefully made a difference for our Hispanic/Latino
population, are the following: We provide consistent help to people who need access to the USCIS website. We help patrons scan documents and send via email to appropriate authorities. We have held Day of the Book, Day of the Children events. We recently conducted our largest fundraiser in recent years, Dancing Like the Stars, and worked hard to make it an inclusive community event.

Over the years we have consistently added to our language-learning resources for our Hispanic/Latino population and have maintained a collection of Spanish-language fiction and non-fiction titles that have been well received. We have had people come from outside of our service area just to use our Spanish materials.

Now that our community is becoming even more diverse, we have begun adding resources in other languages for our newer immigrants from African nations. The Center for Rural Affairs is also working to develop more diversity and inclusion in the communities of Schuyler and Columbus. The Farm and Community program is in charge of that work.

Although the rewards have not been huge or visible to a lot of people, we continue to look for ways to help provide educational and inspirational resources for our community. The partnership between Schuyler Public Library and REAP is an important part of providing lifelong learning opportunities to our residents and those of the surrounding area.
References


MeMe Smith — Even though I took a circuitous route from my dream as a youngster in Seattle to be a librarian, I’m pleased to have eventually ended up in 2001 as the director of the Schuyler Public Library. I have a BA in Organizational Management from Concordia College and an MA in Library Science from the University of Missouri-Columbia. I’ve found that there are not enough hours in my life to bike as many trails as I might like, boat as many lakes as I desire, crochet as much as I fancy, or read as many books as I crave. I am always ready to make time for family get-togethers.

Juan Sandoval — I grew up in the third largest city in Venezuela. When I moved to Norfolk, Nebraska, in 1999, it was a bit of a culture shock. But I love that everyone in town knows who I am. My passions are food and baseball. I do a lot of traveling with my job, which is the perfect excuse to taste the surprisingly diverse culinary offerings of rural Nebraska. I really enjoy conducting training for new business people. Being a Venezuelan native, I grew up with a passion for baseball. It’s like growing up in Boston or New York. (I’m a Red Sox Fan, so Boston has to be first!) For me, each and every business I help is like my own, so I want the best for it.

Book Your Trip to PLA in Denver, Colorado!

This year, the PLA Conference is in Denver, Colorado. The Nebraska Library Association, with funds made available from the Legacy Fund, is pleased to offer a group trip via bus to the Mile High City. The bus will leave in the early hours of the morning on April 5, 2016, stopping in Omaha, Lincoln, Grand Island and North Platte, arriving in Denver before Anderson Cooper takes the stage at the opening session. The bus will leave following the closing session of the conference and will return home. The cost of this trip is only $80. Registration is open and you can pay directly online through the NLA website at https://nebraskalibraries.site-ym.com/events/event_list.asp.

If you have any questions, contact Jake Rundle or Julee Hector. Looking forward to traveling with you all!
Extending Library Access to Distance Learners
Tina J. Walker

In 2011, I began as the Library Director for Mid-Plains Community College overseeing the von Riesen Library in McCook and Learning Resource Center in North Platte. At first, it took me some time to fully comprehend the size of the area that our college services. I knew I would have to travel to four extended sites and the two main campuses, but I didn’t realize that our service area ran from the South Dakota border to the Kansas border, from central Nebraska to Ogallala, NE. We cover an 18-county service area or 20,500 square miles. In that area we service a population of roughly 93,000 people (MPCC, 2015). This is a great deal of area and a large population to service. This is not unlike many of the public libraries in Nebraska. They too service many counties and regional areas.

As the new director one of the first things I noticed about general library services, such as checking out books, magazines or other library materials, was that we did not circulate to any patron who didn’t live in the city limits of the two main campuses, McCook and North Platte. So, I thought, We have students located all over this service area, but they can’t use the library resources? I had a hard time wrapping my head around not providing library services to a large portion of our registered students. How on earth were they going to complete their assignments?

As of the Fall 2015 semester, our online student population was about 28%. So out of approximately 1800 students, 504 could not use the library resources such as print materials and reference services (Odean, personal communication, September 27, 2015). And on top of that, I discovered registered patrons were not automatically loaded into the Library Information System (LIS). Students had to come into the library to set up a library account. How many students had the time or money to travel up to two hours to a main campus library? So one of my main priorities at the beginning was to get library services provided to all students, regardless of location. This included print materials, electronic resources such as databases and e-books, reference services, and library instruction sessions.

To help us in this endeavor, we created our first ever mission statement. One of the key aspects of this was the portion “to provide services to all MPCC students, regardless of physical location.” In order to successfully meet this mission we changed the following services:

1. All registered students of MPCC are automatically enrolled in the library ILS and account access is issued. This allowed access to all electronic resources to each and every registered faculty, staff, and student.

2. We changed the checkout procedures (actually wrote them since none existed), and added that all registered students could borrow print resources from the library at no cost to the student. We would mail the items directly to their homes or to the extended campus sites for pickup. They could mail the items back, or just drop them off at any of the four extended campuses to be sent back to us.
3. We began making semester visits to extended campus sites to give a library overview to the directors. We advertised the change in our services to assist with Distance Learning classes, online classes, and hybrid classes. We also asked if there were any additional services we could provide.

4. As a result, we purchased additional copies of physical items that were on reserve in our two main branches, and sent them to the extended campus sites for use during the semester. This created a collaboration with those campuses to keep track of our materials and get them back to us each semester and with faculty to increase support for the curriculum.

5. We began providing Library Instruction sessions to the extended campus instructors where we drive out to their locations and give instruction in-person and via the Distance Learning platform. We also extended Library Instruction services to area-wide high schools that are part of Distance Learning. We also provide print materials to these students as well.

6. We began taping our instruction sessions and creating short how-to videos on using our library resources and adding them to our YouTube Channel as well as linking them through our LibGuides.

7. We purchased an online chat service called Library H3lp, to provide assistance to individuals that could not make it to campus for assistance or that couldn’t use the telephone for assistance. We can answer questions, send files, help walk them through using our services, and see a transcript of the conversation for follow-up if needed.

8. We also are in charge of providing all identification badges for MPCC, and we extended those services to all area staff, faculty and students, by making arrangements with the staff at the extended campus sites to take the pictures and email them to use for printing IDs. (It has been a success!)

9. We partnered with the local public libraries, so that our students can obtain a local public library card for free to use materials at those public libraries as well. Otherwise, these public libraries would have charged out-of-county fees or denied them a library card for the public libraries.

Most of these services have been in place now for over 18 months. We now feel that all registered students at MPCC, regardless of where they are taking courses, have access to the same benefits and library services, as every on-campus student. Students that can’t physically come to our campus, but still take courses, can feel equally supported. These service changes have become a part of what we do every day. We hope that this increased service is making an impact on the graduation rates and enrollment numbers of the extended campus students.

Our assessment data shows an increase across the board in our library Key Performance Indicators (KPI) such as checkouts, database usage, and extended campus lending. We have also received feedback from faculty, distance students, and extended campus directors that is positive and supports the continuation of these extended services. Our plan now is to grow these services, increase the usage, and continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach. As the number of online, hybrid, and Distance Learning classes continues to rise, these services will continue to serve future area students and MPCC. This has certainly taken many hours to develop and implement, but library staff go that extra mile (all 20,500 of them) because we believe in giving superior customer service to any and all patrons in our service area, who deserve no less.

Reference
Tina is the Area Director of Learning Resources for Mid-Plains Community College libraries. Her other duties include Adjunct Business Instructor, campus Administrator, and advisor to the Gay Straight Alliance student organization. She currently serves on the MPLA Board of Directors, the MPLA Administrative Committee, the MPLA Communications Committee (Chair), the LLAMA Program Review Committee, and the NLA Editorial Board for "Nebraska Libraries". Tina is a current doctoral student at UNL where she will further her education in Higher Education Administration. Her memberships include: CPLA, NLA, MPLA, LLAMA, ACRL, ALA, and ASRL.

The Knowledge River Cohort 15 for Academic Year 2016-2017 is now Open!

It is a pleasure to announce that Knowledge River is now accepting applications for the 15th Cohort. The priority deadline for Cohort 15 is March 1, 2016. Knowledge River is an educational experience within the University of Arizona School of Information that focuses on educating information professionals who have experience with and are committed to Latino and Native American populations. Knowledge River also fosters understanding of library and information issues from the perspectives of Latino and Native Americans and advocates for culturally sensitive library and information services to these communities. Since its inception, Knowledge River has become the foremost graduate program for training librarians and information specialists with a focus on Latino and Native American cultural issues. To date, over 170+ scholars have graduated from this program. The Knowledge River package may include:

- Financial Aid covering tuition and fees
- Work Experience in a graduate assistantship
- Cohort Support
- Mentorship
- Professional Development with support for professional development events
- Enhanced Curriculum from Latino and Native American perspectives.

To find out more about the program, please take a look at the following presentation created with Voice Thread: https://voicethread.com/share/7017243/. For information on how to apply, visit the program website at http://si.arizona.edu/knowledge-river-0.
Below is the 2015 Treasurer’s Annual Report, as presented at the 2015 NLA Annual Conference on October 15, 2015. On the next few pages, you may view the entire budget spreadsheet.

- In late 2014 the NLA Board voted to close the Ameriprise CD account. Those monies were transferred to NLA’s Mutual of Omaha Money Market account in January of 2015 in order to provide easier access to these additional funds.

- Thank you to everyone for your patience with our new website and credit card function. The transition was more difficult than anticipated. I particularly want to thank our sections and round tables for waiting so long for their income.

- The 2015/2016 budget was approved at the September 18 board meeting. The Executive Committee worked hard to create a balanced budget for the first time in a number of years.

**Summary of Annual Report, as of 9/30/2015**

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<td>$44,704.24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mutual of Omaha CDs</td>
<td>$35,369.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ameriprise CDs</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funds</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Louise Nixon Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>$77,173.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLA Legacy Fund</td>
<td>$60,991.27</td>
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<p>| | |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Assets:</td>
<td>$246,409.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Available Funds:</td>
<td>$108,244.65</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YTD Income</td>
<td>$56,997.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>YTD Expenses</td>
<td>$57,145.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>YTD Total Net</td>
<td>-$148.25</td>
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# Nebraska Library Association Budget

## 2014 / 2015 Budget & Expenditures

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<th>Assets</th>
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<th>As of:</th>
<th>Annual Report</th>
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<td>9/30/2015</td>
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<td>Less TSRT Funds</td>
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<td>Less NMRT Funds</td>
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<td>Less IFRT Funds</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS:</strong></td>
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<td>6/30/2015</td>
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<td>Nixon Scholarship Fund (Lincoln Community Foundation)</td>
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<td><strong>$71,173.57</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>NLA Legacy Fund (Nebraska Community Foundation)</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL UNAVAILABLE FUNDS:</strong></td>
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## Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>2014 Budget</th>
<th>Oct-Dec</th>
<th>Jan-Mar</th>
<th>Apr-Jun</th>
<th>Jul-Sep</th>
<th>Yr to Date</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dues</td>
<td>$22,000.00</td>
<td>$2,175.85</td>
<td>$1,630.00</td>
<td>$8,175.00</td>
<td>$8,912.07</td>
<td>$20,892.92</td>
<td>94.97%</td>
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<td>Conference Profit</td>
<td>$20,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$27,923.08</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$27,923.08</td>
<td>139.62%</td>
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<td>NIAQ Advertising and Royalties</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>$56.82</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$117.07</td>
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<td>Interest - Checking &amp; Money Market</td>
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<td>$2.27</td>
<td>$4.85</td>
<td>$6.49</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$13.64</td>
<td>35.89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sales Tax from sections</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$431.01</td>
<td>$357.70</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>$788.71</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>1,267.44</td>
<td>1,267.44</td>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$2,660.40</strong></td>
<td><strong>$20,915.67</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,238.30</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,176.51</strong></td>
<td><strong>$51,002.88</strong></td>
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## Funds Received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funds Received</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nixon Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
<td>$1,265.89</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLA Legacy Fund</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$220.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebraska Advocacy Day</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$175.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEMA funds/Conference Exec Sec'y</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,600.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,485.89</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,875.00</strong></td>
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## Total income

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>$47,888.00</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$11,790.67</strong></td>
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## Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>2014 Budget</th>
<th>Oct-Dec</th>
<th>Jan-Mar</th>
<th>Apr-Jun</th>
<th>Jul-Sep</th>
<th>Yr to Date</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section Allocations</td>
<td>$6,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>$1,677.00</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>$4,018.17</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
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<td>Bank Charges</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
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<td>Nebraska Community Foundation Fees</td>
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<td>$90.18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$90.18</td>
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<td>$677.84</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>$677.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>YourMembership.com</td>
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<td>$2,247.50</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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## Funds Disbursed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funds Disbursed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nixon Scholarship Fund</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLA Legacy Fund</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska Advocacy Day</td>
<td>$3,500.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$3,849.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Legislative Day</td>
<td>$1,800.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$1,841.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship Grant</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>$7,400.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,849.28</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,841.73</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Year to Date** | $16,411.84 | 153.74% |
| **%** | 100.00% | 0.00% | 109.98% | 102.32% | N/A | 101.93% |
## SPECIAL FEATURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses (cont.)</th>
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<th>Oct-Dec</th>
<th>Jan-Mar</th>
<th>Apr-Jun</th>
<th>Jul-Sep</th>
<th>Yr to Date</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>$7,400.00</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$3,849.28</td>
<td>$3,841.73</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$7,691.01</td>
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<td>$2,835.00</td>
<td>$2,835.00</td>
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<td>$1,080.00</td>
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<td>$1,080.00</td>
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<td>$1,080.00</td>
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<td>Nebraska Library Leadership support</td>
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<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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<td>$1,900.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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<td>Vice-President</td>
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<td>$776.35</td>
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<td>$1,026.23</td>
<td>68.42%</td>
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<td>$75.00</td>
<td>$-</td>
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<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>$113.00</td>
<td>$69.57</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>$49.00</td>
<td>$143.57</td>
<td>127.05%</td>
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<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
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<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALA Councilor</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>$647.70</td>
<td>$69.57</td>
<td>$576.50</td>
<td>$1,033.38</td>
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<td>98.20%</td>
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<td>$-</td>
<td>$981.53</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td>$4,838.00</td>
<td>$2,011.50</td>
<td>$1,466.99</td>
<td>$601.50</td>
<td>$2,061.90</td>
<td>$6,143.89</td>
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<td><strong>Committees</strong></td>
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<td>Advocacy</td>
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<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>$-</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>League of Municipalities Meeting Booth</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
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<td>$235.00</td>
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<td>$235.00</td>
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<td>117.50%</td>
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<td>0.00%</td>
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<td>By-laws</td>
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<td>0.00%</td>
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<td>Continuing Education</td>
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<td>$-</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
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<td>Diversity</td>
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<td>Nominating</td>
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<td>$-</td>
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<td>Scholarships</td>
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<td>$-</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
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<td>$-</td>
<td>$235.00</td>
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<td>$334.51</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$46,183.00</td>
<td>$12,139.16</td>
<td>$17,673.59</td>
<td>$13,157.47</td>
<td>$14,210.41</td>
<td>$57,145.63</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Net</strong></td>
<td>$1,705.00</td>
<td>-$8,183.87</td>
<td>$14,117.08</td>
<td>-$3,899.17</td>
<td>-$2,417.29</td>
<td>-$148.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Oct Dec | Jan-Mar | Apr-Jun | Jul-Sept | Yr to Date |
---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
$1,705.00 | -$8,183.87 | $14,117.08 | -$3,899.17 | -$2,417.29 | -$148.25 |

39
Library catalog records provide access to library materials; if people cannot find something, they will not be able to use it. Catalog records serve as surrogates for the items they represent; they should have enough information in them for a library user to decide if it is worth his or her time to go to the shelf and retrieve the item. In the United States, if your first language is not English, this can be difficult to do. While the titles of non-English language materials will be in the language of the text, subject searches will be difficult, since subject headings are assigned in English. Anyone who wants to do something other than a known-item search is out of luck.

For example, if you know the title of the children’s book ¡Hola! ¡Gracias! ¡Adiós!, you would be able to find this book, but if you were a Spanish-speaking patron looking for books to help your child adjust to the idea of moving, you would have a hard time doing a subject search, if the catalog record has only the English subject heading “Moving, Household -- Fiction.”

Of course, ideally, a variety of languages would be represented in library subject headings. Spanish is the primary language in which progress in this area has been made, and so that is the focus of this article.

A great resource for finding Spanish subject headings can be found at http://www.lcsh-es.org. This database was created from a number of controlled vocabularies for subject headings in Spanish. For more information, read the presentation “Subject Headings in the 21st Century” found at http://www.personal.kent.edu/~mkreyche/ifla2008/SubjectHeadings21stCenturyIFLA.pdf.

Several libraries are implementing Spanish subject headings in their catalogs, including the Chicago Public Library, the San Francisco Public Library, and the Queens Library. In these libraries’ catalogs, Spanish subject headings supplement English subject headings for Spanish language items. In the San Francisco Public Library catalog, for example, the book ¡Hola! ¡Gracias! ¡Adiós! has subject headings that include “Etiqueta -- Ficción juvenil” along with “Etiquette -- Juvenile fiction.”

Librarians who are interested in bilingual subject access should be excited about the potential capabilities of library data in the Linked Data environment that is supposed to replace MARC data. In such an environment, in theory, it would be possible to input a URI for a subject term, rather than a text string, and then the subject heading could display in any number of languages, if the right information is included at the URI. For example, this authority record from the Art and
Architecture Thesaurus (AAT) for the term “chairs” includes the appropriate term in a number of languages. With the right technology, a user would be able to choose which language he or she views the subject heading in. Since the AAT is available in a Linked Data format, a cataloger would have to do no more work than inputting a single URI – “http://vocab.getty.edu/aat/300037772.”

Subject access is an important way of making library resources available to patrons who do not have a specific item in mind when they are searching. Bilingual subject access is an important way of expanding this access to people whose first language is not English.

Emily Dust Nimsakont is the Head of Cataloging & Resource Management at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln Schmid Law Library. She teaches cataloging courses at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and University of Missouri and is currently serving as chair of TSRT.

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ALA—American Library Association Liaison
Planet Library
Brenda Ealey

Lincoln City Libraries had guest speaker Warren Graham, author of The Black Belt Librarian: Every Librarian’s Real-World Guide to a Safer Workplace, for the 2015 staff in-service workshop. He provided great tools and information from his experience and knowledge base as a security professional for us to consider and put in place at the library – which he referred to as Planet Library. Graham’s passion for his work is obvious and as librarians we need a similar drive and energy in expressing the values and ethics that speak to our vantage point so we don’t lose out in the conversation.

Foundational principles can be difficult to sell to customers and staff. Below are several that come to mind:

- Weeding - particularly when it involves removing from shelves beloved copies of literature.
- Changing societal expectations that shift resources to online and mobile tools and resources.
- Customer service that includes outreach and advocacy to elected officials and funders.
• Intellectual Freedom and access that encourages tolerance and diversity.

Intellectual freedom is the one that can be put at risk under the guise of security and safety with discussions that include cameras on library property, logs that record customer information and activity, and filters on Internet computers. That doesn’t mean we don’t consider those options in providing service but rather that we give consideration to how those decisions affect intellectual freedom. Intellectual freedom is a tenet that makes our profession unique—in serving minority as well as majority, in collections that reflect the unpopular as well as the popular and in doing our utmost to protect the privacy of library use. We, like few other organizations, often serve those who many would rather not see in the community, or who may be seen as disposable. That puts us in agonizing positions at times—but that’s what ethics does for any profession. Let’s not lose that.

I hope librarians are as passionate about intellectual freedom as a piano tuner is about defending the value of a tuned instrument to someone who can’t hear the difference. We need to insert our incomparable knowledge into discussions with elected officials, criminal justice professionals, vendors and others to create a balanced response regarding policy and procedure. We need to make certain we have a voice in conversations that recognizes and values the philosophy, education and experience we have as a profession.

I don’t take lightly staff or customer safety in the library. That’s important to me. If there is anything that pushes my buttons, it’s someone feeling threatened or not being treated courteously. However I am passionate about the values of librarianship that speak to intellectual freedom and access. It’d be easier if those things didn’t keep me up at night, have me running through scenarios of situations, or feeling compelled to speak up on issues that are not comfortable—and yet, fall within the protections of my profession.

I’m a mom, a Bible-reading, church-going, rule-abiding, Zydeco-loving, tax-paying individual with some very strong feelings about how life should be lived. Intellectual freedom cannot be limited or extended by personal beliefs and preferences. It must be inclusive not exclusive, regardless of how we live and view life. My profession often stretches me way beyond my comfort level. I don’t think that’s a bad thing—but it’s not easy. Let’s not neglect to give voice to the premises that speak to the values of our profession with an expectation that it will be honored and that we can find balance that does not sacrifice the basic doctrine of Planet Library.

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Brenda Ealey is the Gere Branch Manager for Lincoln City Libraries. She currently serves as the American Library Association Nebraska Chapter Councilor and is Secretary for the NLA Intellectual Freedom Round Table and serves on the board of ACLU Nebraska. A current endeavor is to master the perfect selfie, even while hiking the meadows and mountains of Colorado (see picture for reference).
The Knee Bone’s Connected to the…
Multilingual & Multicultural Health Resources

Christian Minter

Did you know that 1 in 5 people (over 60 million) in the United States speak a language other than English at home? Did you also know that over 40% of multilingual people have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)? (Ryan, 2013). LEP is defined as a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. There is a range of levels within LEP, but it basically includes anyone who is not fluent in the English language. Patrons with LEP can experience barriers in understanding health information in English, and this in turn can contribute to low health literacy and poorer health outcomes.

Providing patrons with access to resources in their own language is important to their health literacy success. Health literacy requires a patron to be well informed about their health and the health care choices available to them. Having access to written information that is easy to read and understand helps patrons as they make decisions about their health.

With over 300 languages spoken in the U.S., you may be wondering, Where can I find the right resources to meet my patrons’ needs? Well, I’m glad you asked! Here are some websites from the National Library of Medicine and other organizations that provide quality health information in multiple languages:

MedlinePlus
www.medlineplus.gov/languages

MedlinePlus is provided by the National Library of Medicine, has over 900 health topics in English and Spanish, and includes a collection of additional materials in over 40 languages. You can browse an A-Z list by languages available, or by the specific health topics that have resources in multiple languages.

HealthReach – Health in Many Languages

HealthReach is a resource from the National Library of Medicine for multilingual and multicultural health education materials in a variety of languages and formats (documents, video, and audio). It also includes provider tools (cultural information and best practices), and special collections on emergency and disaster, women’s health, and mental health.
Ethnomed
https://ethnomed.org
Ethnomed provides information about cultural beliefs, health issues, and other topics related to health care of immigrants. It includes a collection of patient education materials in 10 languages. The site is maintained by the Harborview Medical Center at University of Washington.

DeafHealth.org
http://www.deafhealth.org
DeafHealth.org provides health education videos in American Sign Language. The resources include information on diseases, medical tests, and a database of deaf-friendly doctors in the U.S.

Consumer Health Information in Many Languages
Resources
http://nnlm.gov/outreach/consumer/multi.html
Consumer Health Information in Many Languages provides links to many other websites that have health information in multiple languages, and includes a list of resources for specific languages. It also provides a customized search engine to search for a topic across all the sites included on this list. This page is maintained by the National Network of Libraries of Medicine.

Reference

Christian Minter is the Nebraska Outreach/Education Coordinator for the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, MidContinental Region. She has an MS in Library and Information Science from The Catholic University of America, and a Consumer Health Information Specialization from the Medical Library Association. Christian is based at, and serves on the faculty of, the McGoogan Library of Medicine at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. She can be reached at christian.minter@unmc.edu
The State of Nebraska Libraries
Recent Legislative Action

Ken Winston


Governance of public libraries has been a thorny issue for many years. Second class cities (5,000 population or less) and villages have libraries board with governing authority. Library boards in larger communities are a mix of governing and advisory boards. The League of Nebraska Municipalities have made several attempts to convert all library boards to advisory status. LR 288 is an interim study in which the League is again promoting this agenda. Regardless of whether a library board is governing or advisory, cooperation and trust between city government and library administration is paramount. At the hearing on LR 288, city officials attempted to promote their views with innuendoes and inaccurate information, which the Nebraska Library Commission and the NLA attempted to combat.

The message from the cities was that there are problems with allowing libraries to govern themselves and that cities want the authority to govern libraries.

City managers from Gretna and Yutan testified in support of granting cities authority over library functions. Lynn Rex from the Nebraska League of Municipalities testified that 2nd class cities and villages should have the same ability to choose whether to have a governing library board or an advisory library board that first class cities have. She also said the primary class (Lincoln) and metropolitan class (Omaha) cities should have the same authority. When questioned, she said that it was politically difficult for first class cities to go to governing boards because libraries have their own constituencies. What she didn’t mention is the vital function that libraries perform in their communities and there is a good reason for libraries to have a strong supportive constituency. Marty Bilek, Omaha Mayor Stothert’s chief of staff, presented the most negative and factually questionable testimony. He stated that the “library doesn’t have the same sense of fiscal responsibility of other city departments.” He also complained about the city’s inability to choose the library director. In response to a question from Senator Larson, he stated that the city wouldn’t want to get into issues of library content or First Amendment issues. They just want control over the budget and personnel issues.

Richard Miller testified on behalf of the Library Commission. He pointed out there are as many problems created by small cities and villages as there are by libraries and library boards. He talked about education and cooperation being the best solution to these problems, rather than legislation. He pointed out the fact there are currently 18 first class cities with governing boards and 12 first class cities with advisory boards. In response to a question he provided several examples of problems created by cities and villages. Gayle Roberts testified on behalf of NLA. She pledged NLA’s cooperation in working toward solutions to the problems being discussed. She also asked that any proposed solutions put the interests of patrons first and to make sure their rights are protected.

Mike Feeken from St. Paul testified about their hybrid city-school public library. He wanted to make the committee aware of another issue that would need to be addressed if they changed the governing authority of libraries.

Bottom line, the NLA should expect that there will be legislation granting cities on all levels authority to govern their public libraries, and that this would cover at least having full control over the budget and personnel of libraries.
Book Bites: Book Reviews (and More!)

**A Quilt for Christmas by Sandra Dallas**
St. Martin’s Press, 2014

*A Quilt for Christmas* is Sandra Dallas’ thirteenth fiction book since 1990. Known for her historical fiction, Dallas sets her story in 1864 during the Civil War. Despite the title, this is not a Christmas story but rather begins with our main character, Eliza Spooner, sending a special quilt as a Christmas gift to her husband Will, who has joined the Kansas volunteers to fight for the Union. With many of the men in Waubaunsee County at war, Eliza and the other women are left to care for their children and farms. The story really expresses the hardships these women faced and how they came to depend on each other for support and friendship. Newly widowed Missouri Ann and her young daughter especially provide help and comfort when they move in with Eliza. The novel takes place over the course of a year and it’s interesting to see how the quilt returns to Eliza as the story comes full circle. *A Quilt for Christmas* is a quick, inspirational, and enjoyable read. It received high marks by all in one of my book clubs!

**The Dogs of Christmas by W. Bruce Cameron**
Forge Brooks, 2013

Do you love dog stories? Looking for a quick, lighthearted, enjoyable read with a happy ending? Then *The Dogs of Christmas* might be for you! W. Bruce Cameron, known for the best-selling books *A Dog’s Purpose* and *A Dog’s Journey*, has yet another title that Kirkus Reviews describes as being “a book about dog lovers by an author who understands the canine soul.” Josh Michaels, our newly single main character, suddenly finds himself unwittingly caring for his neighbor’s very pregnant dog, Lucy. He has absolutely no pet experience but strives to do the best he can for Lucy and later her five pups (Sophie, Oliver, Lola, Rufus, and Cody), with humorous results. He receives assistance from Kerri, a local animal shelter employee, who quickly becomes a potential love interest. Josh and Kerri work together to place all the puppies into good homes through the shelter’s Dogs of Christmas Program, but not without several mishaps along the way. Fun read!

—Nicole Caskey, Resource Librarian at Clarkson College
Mission

*Nebraska Libraries* is the official journal of the Nebraska Library Association. It strives to inform its members and subscribers of NLA’s activities and represent the broad scope of issues and news that affect all Nebraska libraries. To encourage the sharing of knowledge and inspiration throughout the state, *Nebraska Libraries* is an inclusive, flexible journal that publishes feature articles, editorials, news, and reports from anyone who cares about and is involved in the library world.

Content

*Nebraska Libraries* welcomes content from volunteer authors, including feature articles, news briefs, columns and opinion pieces, and photographs and artwork. Content is also provided by overseeing NLA Communications Committee members. The *Nebraska Libraries* Editor and the Communications Committee have the responsibility to publish accurate information regarding NLA and its activities and to provide a balanced spectrum of coverage for all Nebraska libraries and members. Content is accepted or rejected at the discretion of the Editorial Board and is subject to editing for clarity and grammar.

Editor’s Responsibilities

The Editor is responsible for each journal issue providing a balanced mixture of relevant and thoughtful articles and features on the interests, responsibilities, problems, and concerns of the varied library professionals throughout the state of Nebraska. The Editor is responsible for determining the strategic direction for the practitioner journal and developing editorial policies and submission standards, actively soliciting manuscripts from various library professionals, conducting manuscript revision and editing, and serving as a primary liaison with authors. By submitting an item to this publication, an Author is implicitly granting the Editor permission to make minor editorial changes, such as correcting grammar, punctuation and spelling, and making layout and formatting changes as needed to speed along the publication process.

Author’s Rights

An Author agrees upon the stipulations of the Submission Policy when submitting an article to the Editor. Upon submitting works to the Editor, if revisions are needed the Author will receive a copyedited version of their work and be given a one-week deadline to contest or make any changes. If the Editor does not hear from the Author within that deadline the article, as per the Editor’s responsibilities, will be published as the Editor sees fit, or saved for a future issue, in order to speed along the publication process. Authors should explicitly note when a submission is a creative work, such as poem or story, where such changes would negatively impact the Author’s intent.

After a period of six (6) months from the date of publication of the article, the Author shall also have the non-exclusive right to use, reproduce, distribute, and create derivative works, including update, perform, and display publicly, the article in electronic, digital, or print form in connection with the Author’s teaching, conference presentations, lectures, other scholarly works, and for all of Author’s academic and professional activities.

NLA Communications Committee Purpose

The NLA Communications Committee assists the Editor with the direction, publication, and distribution of *Nebraska Libraries* and ensures that the journal meets the needs of the Nebraska library community. The committee aids the Editor in developing *Nebraska Libraries*’ policies and procedures, and its members contribute to the journal as well as solicit content from the broader library community.

Disclaimer

The statements, comments, or opinions expressed by *Nebraska Libraries* contributors are those of their respective authors and do not represent the views the Nebraska Library Association.
Who Can Submit

Nebraska Libraries publishes articles and creative content from authors actively involved in the library world within the State of Nebraska. If you are unsure whether or not your piece would fit with our publication, please query the editor at nlaeditor@nebraskalibraries.org.

Nebraska Libraries requires that all submissions be original contributions and that full disclosure of possible redundant publication must be made in the letter of submission.

Editor & Author Review

Authors are asked to review their edited submissions within one week of being sent the final Editor-approved draft. If the Editor does not hear back from the Author within that week, the submission will be published as the Editor deems fit in order to not stall publication.

Submission Guidelines

Nebraska Libraries will start publication as a quarterly practitioner’s journal. If interest is high, bi-monthly publication could occur in the future. Submissions for quarterly issues are due as follows:

- February Issue = Due January 1
- May Issue = Due April 1
- August Issue = Due July 1
- November Issue = Due October 1

Any submissions received after a due date will be held and considered for the following issue. Submissions accepted but not published in the current issue may be published in a future issue with the author’s permission.

Please send all submissions in Word .doc or .rtf forms. Please no PDFs.

The submission of photos to accompany articles is encouraged. Please send all photos saved as high-quality JPEG files. Please send all photos and artwork as separate files not embedded in the Word document.

If your article has sidebars or any special items that need to be formatted a certain way, please clearly state this in the submission.

Nebraska Libraries is a practitioner journal and not a peer-reviewed scholarly journal. Not all articles will require sources and citations; however, if citations are needed in your article, the citation style used by Nebraska Libraries is APA.

Please send all articles, ideas, and other queries to the Editor at nlaeditor@nebraskalibraries.org.

Items Eligible for Publication

We are looking for the following items or columns but we are open to submissions of all kinds:

- Feature articles about anything library related, including successful programs, collaborations, events, etc., at your library and how they are applicable to other Nebraska libraries
- Opinion pieces about hot topics in the library profession
- Short columns in each issue by members of the sections and round tables that highlight advantages conferred via section or roundtable participation, hot topics in the profession, or opinions
- New briefs—what has happened at your library or within your section/round table? Is there something notable upcoming?
- Member announcements (jobs, births, marriages, retirements, deaths, publications, etc.)
- Guest columns
- Spotlights on new NLA members
- Suggestions for future columns, article ideas, etc.
- Recommendations for the “Digital Watercooler” column (recommended blogs)
- Recommendations for the “Beyond the Stacks” column (interviews with interesting people who work in libraries)
- Recommendations for the “My Own Private Library” column (share your book collection with NLA)
- Recommendations for the “Featured Libraries” column (a spotlight on a specific Nebraska library)
- Creative works—short stories, poems, art, etc.
- Reviews of books, software, online resources, library products, etc.
- White papers (not sought but will be considered for publication)

Recommended Article Lengths

- Feature Articles: 600—1800 words
- Opinion Pieces: 300—600 words
- News Briefs: 50 words or less
- Reviews: 100—200 words

Articles longer than the recommended length may still be considered; however, articles may be truncated in the published issue with a link to the full article on the Nebraska Libraries website provided.
Two blind students studying map of the United States by touch at the Nebraska School for the Blind in Nebraska City, Nebraska, circa 1916. In November 1873, Samuel Bacon crossed the Missouri River from Iowa, where he established a school for the blind. After lobbying the Nebraska Legislature, Bacon, who was blind himself, was able to convince such a school was needed. The Nebraska School for the Blind opened on February 19, 1875.

*Nebraska Libraries* would like to thank the Nebraska Library Commission and the Nebraska Memories Project for making this treasured resource available publicly online at [http://memories.ne.gov/](http://memories.ne.gov/).