PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
by Laura England-Biggs

National Library Week is coming in April. As I write this, I am staring at a button on my corkboard that says "NLWD: National Library Worker's Day - Libraries Work Because We Do!" It’s from a few years ago but the statement is relevant even more in the COVID era. Our communities depend on us to provide them with information resources and services, no matter what is going on around us. Whether you’re working at a school, public, academic or special library, your patrons/customers/users are relying on your expertise and dedication to their needs every day.

On the Public Library Data Survey that is completed each year, there were some new questions that addressed this COVID service model. I’d like to share some of the more interesting statistics according to data I received via Sam Shaw at the Nebraska Library Commission. With 91% of the public libraries responding, the following numbers jumped out at me:

(Con’t on p. 2)
• Print circulation was down (as to be expected when libraries have to close) but electronic circulation increased over 17% for adults and 31% for children's materials.

• 82% of respondents offered services while closed including
  - increased electronic emails
  - Online library card applications
  - Reference and curbside pickup
  - Virtual and recorded programming
  - Extended WIFI

• 11% of staff were reassigned to different departments during COVID closures

I'm sure there are similar stories from the rest of the libraries in our state - librarians are always finding new ways to serve our constituents. We want to help people, it's why most of us got into the profession in the first place. Thanks for all you do to make libraries relevant, timely and available to your community!

PUBLIC LIBRARIES SERVED NEBRASKA COMMUNITIES DURING THE PANDEMIC:

82% offered services when closed due to COVID.

41% presented live, virtual programs during COVID.

33% added or increased electronic materials.

38% offered recordings of programs during COVID.

12% offered library cards online BEFORE COVID.

38% offered library cards online DURING COVID.

84% provided outside Wi-Fi BEFORE COVID.

79% offered outside Wi-Fi DURING COVID.

79% offered reference services during COVID closure.

25% increased Wi-Fi access during COVID.

83% offered outside or curbside services.

5% experienced staff re-assignment to other depts.

*91% of Public Libraries responded to the annual Public Library Data Survey.
2021 Annual Conference Update

The NLA Board is pleased to announce this year’s conference will be a hybrid virtual/in-person event, with a virtual preconference day on Tuesday, October 12, a virtual conference day on Wednesday, October 13, and an in-person conference day on Thursday, October 14. You may register for just the virtual component, just the in-person component, or the whole event. Registration information will be available at a later date.

The Conference Program Selection Committee invites you to submit your proposals for preconference and conference sessions using this Google form. We're looking for programs on topics from all areas of librarianship - academic/public/special; adult services and youth services; access services and technical services; outreach and storytimes...or anything else you would like to present.

We have the following presentation slots to fill:
- 4 virtual half-day preconference workshops
- 4 live online sessions
- 12 pre-recorded online sessions
- 12 in-person conference sessions

Choose to present in-person, live online, or in a pre-recorded video, and share your ideas with your colleagues. Proposals are due by Friday, April 16, 2021. Questions? Contact Emily Nimsakont.

View the Conference Website  View the Conference Program FAQ

New Members Round Table Resume Review

The New Members Round Table (NMRT) is excited to announce a new resume review service! If you have been in the library profession for four years or less and would like feedback on your resume or CV, please email NLAresumereview@gmail.com. We will accept the first 20 resumes received each month. Please allow up to two weeks for feedback.

Newsletter Submissions

Please submit information for the newsletter by the 20th of the month for the following month's issue. (For example, please submit content for the May newsletter by April 20.) We especially would like updates from the sections, round tables, and committees, events or programs open to members, and recognition of award winners. We are also happy to share your events on NLA's social media. Thank you in advance for your help in contributing information! Happy reading!

Submit to: nlacommunications@nebraskallibraries.org
Meet Member
Michael Straatmann

Q: Tell us a little about your background and how you ended up working in libraries.

I started work as a paraprofessional at the University Libraries in 1993. One of my several jobs as a student was in the Libraries, which gave me some idea of what went on. I initially took the staff position to help pay for my undergraduate program (History/Religious Studies), with the idea that I would continue on in an academic field. Life happened, and I ended up really enjoying the library work. My first graduate program was intended to serve as a subject specialist degree (English), but then I took another program and degree in Museum/Archival studies, then eventually my MLIS from the distance education program at University of Missouri.

Q: What is your favorite thing about librarianship?

Librarianship, particularly within Access Services, is an opportunity to directly serve the students and faculty of the University. To be able to directly connect a population of knowledge seekers to services and resources is by far my favorite thing about my profession. The constant variety and diversity of our users and needs is refreshing and it is exciting to try and continually improve our users experience with the libraries.

Q: What do you like to do outside of the library?

Outside the library, I am very active in Scouting, where I have worked with Cub Scout Packs, Boy Scout Troops and Venturing Crews across Southeast Nebraska. I also have a passion for historical reenactment and actively participate in reenacting multiple time periods from Ancient Rome to World War II.

Q: How long have you been involved in NLA? In what capacity?

I first started my NLA involvement as a member of the Paraprofessional Section, then later as a member of the College & University Section. I served on a number of committees and then in 2009, I was hired as Executive Director of NLA. I served in that position until 2015 and helped plan conferences and manage the Association. It was in that role that I met many members from all manner of libraries and services. I returned to serve as an Interim Exec in 2016. Following that, I ran for the office of NLA President, and was elected to serve as President-Elect in 2019. I am currently serving as Past President.

Q: What are you currently reading?

I seldom read just one title at a time, and am currently working through a couple non-fiction titles, but the one I am spending the most time on is Protecting the Roman Empire: Fortlets, Frontiers, and the Quest for Post-Conquest Security by Matthew Symonds.
2021 Outstanding Volunteers

Kellie Crowell
Ravenna Public Library
Nominated by Joy Kyhn

Kleo Dredla
Grant County Library (Hyannis)
Nominated by Jennifer Holthus

Don Jardon
Hoesch Memorial Library (Alma)
Nominated by Keri Anderson

Stephen and Megan Kaminski
Gering Public Library
Nominated by Christie Clarke

Martha Kingsbury
Lincoln Public Library
Nominated by Wyatt Packard

Alberta Olson
Cravath Memorial Library (Hay Springs)
Nominated by Julianne Rasmussen

Dennis Schempp
Ponca Public Library
Nominated by Melissa Ann Kebaili

Kim Sharples
Kimball Public Library
Nominated by Amber Sweetland

Jenny Sollberger
Louisville Public Library
Nominated by Michelle Daniels

Click to read more about these fantastic volunteers!
SPRING MEETINGS:
VIRTUAL LIBRARY TOURS

Come take a virtual look at some newly built or renovated libraries across the state. Great for anyone considering a building project, looking for new design ideas, or simply curious to see some innovative building projects.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7
2-3:30PM CT/1-2:30PM MT

The session will feature a presentation by each library as well as time for Q&A.

Crete Public Library
Crete, in southeast Nebraska, has a population of 7,043. They completed a new construction in 2020.

Ravenna Public Library
Ravenna, in south central Nebraska, has a population of 1,439. They completed a new construction in 2018.

THURSDAY, APRIL 8
2-3:30PM CT/1-2:30PM MT

The session will feature a presentation by each library as well as time for Q&A.

Kathleen Lute Public Library
Ogallala, in western Nebraska, has a population of 4,536. They completed a new construction in 2020.

Norfolk Public Library
Norfolk, in northeast Nebraska, has a population of 24,449. They completed a renovation/expansion in 2018.

Free and open to all NLA Members.
A recording will be available for PLTS Members after the event.
Register for one or both sessions on the NLA website.
Please contact nlaplts@nebraskalibraries.org with any questions.
FROM ADVOCATE TO ACTIVIST

A presentation by EveryLibrary's John Chrastka

FRIDAY, MAY 7, 2021 AT 2:00PM CST

This session looks at how our current advocacy model is failing libraries. We explore strategies and tactics used by some of the best community organizers, political action committees, and politicians. We will emphasize the resources and skills that librarians and library staff need to develop if they want to have the political and community support needed to increase support and funding.

John Chrastka, founder of EveryLibrary, is a long-time library trustee, supporter, and advocate. Mr. Chrastka is a former president and member of the Board of Trustees for the Berwyn (IL) Public Library (2006 - 2015) and is a former president of the Reaching Across Illinois Libraries System (RAILS) multi-type library system. Previously, he was Director for Membership Development at the American Library Association (ALA). He is a member of ALA, the Illinois Library Association (ILA), and the American Political Sciences Association (APSA). He was named a 2014 Mover & Shaker by Library Journal and tweets @mrchrastka.
Third Thursday Chat: April 15 @ 11AM
Topic: Going Fine-Free: How We Did It (And You Can Too!)
Register Here!

2021 NLA Conference
THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN: REINVENTING LIBRARIES IN CHANGING TIMES
Program proposals deadline is April 16!

TINY & MIGHTY INTEREST GROUP
Meets 3rd Tuesdays @ 10am
Mark your calendars!
April 20 & May 18
nlatiny&mighty@nebraskalibraries.org

PLTS Spring Meetings
Wed. April 7
2:00pm CST
AND/OR
Thurs. April 8
2:00 CST
See pg 6 for details.
Click on the date to register!

ALA ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
JUNE 23–29, 2021 VIRTUAL

NLA Advocacy Presents:
From Advocate to Activist
Friday, May 7 @ 2PM
Register Here!
See pg. 7 for details.

Follow NLA!
## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Board Representatives

- **MPLA Councilor**  
  Evonne Edgington  
  nla-mpla@nebraskalibraries.org

- **AFCON Representative**  
  Todd Schlechte  
  nla-afcon@nebraskalibraries.org

- **ALA Councilor**  
  Brenda Ealey  
  nla-ala@nebraskalibraries.org

### Committee Chairs

- **Advocacy** - Deb Robertson  
  nlaadvocacy@nebraskalibraries.org

- **Auditing** - TBA  
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- **By-Laws & Handbook** - TBA  
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- **Communications** - Sarah Haack  
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- **Diversity** - Tim Lentz  
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- **Elections** - Michael Straatmann  
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- **Finance** - Michael Straatmann  
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- **Professional Development** - Emily Nimsakont  
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- **Scholarship & Awards** - Lisa Mount  
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### Round Table Chairs

- **Intellectual Freedom**  
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  nlaif@nebraskalibraries.org

- **New Members**  
  Cali Neuberger  
  nlanmrt@nebraskalibraries.org

- **Technical Services**  
  Kristine Woods  
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### Section Chairs

- **College & University**  
  Julie Pinnell  
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- **Paraprofessional**  
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- **Public Library & Trustee**  
  Jessica Chamberlain  
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- **School, Children's & Young Peoples**  
  Odessa Cooley  
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- **Special and Institutional**  
  Tom Schmitz  
  nlasandi@nebraskalibraries.org

### Interest Groups

- **Tiny & Mighty**  
  Rebecca McCorkindale  
  nlatiny&mighty@nebraskalibraries.org

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Please note: Chairs needed for the Auditing and By-Laws & Handbook Committees!