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NEBRASKA STATE REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

June, 1999

Golden Sower Awards

The School, Children, and Young People's Section of the Nebraska Library Association has named its 1998-1999 Golden Sower Award winners:

- K-3 Rugby and Rosie by Nan Parson Rossiter
- 4-6 Shiloh Seas by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor
- Young Adult The True Colors of Caitlynn Jackson by Carol Lynch Williams

This Nebraska Award is voted on by children and is given to outstanding books written for children and young people. It's named after the Sower, the bronze monument atop the State Capitol Building.

National School Library Media Program Award

The Lincoln (NE) Public Schools have been named the 1999 National School Library Media Program of the year by the American Association of School Librarians. Subsequently, Nebraska's Legislature passed a resolution congratulating the Lincoln Schools on receiving the award.

Public Service Award

The Nebraska Library Commission received the Public Service Award from the Nebraska Development Network "for its statewide promotion, development and coordination of library services." "The Commission's dedication to the state's libraries and the network has ignited flames of economic and community development and helped to make Nebraskans more connected."

Library Champion Award

Senator LaVon Crosby received the 1999 Nebraska Library Association Library Champion Award for exemplary library support and advocacy. "Her continued support for increased state funding for libraries helps to make the vision of affordable, reliable, progressive, and equitable library service for all Nebraskans regardless of their economic status and geographic location a viable reality."

Libraries for the 21st Century

The Libraries for the 21st Century Campaign for Improved Library Service initiative has been successful in gaining additional funding support for libraries and in promoting the roles and value of libraries.

State Aid Funds

In addition to this year's \$400,000 in state funds appropriated for licensing of online databases and technology training, \$150,000 has been approved by the State Legislature for each of the next two years of the biennium. This will increase state aid for public libraries and regional library systems.

Public Library Laws

The Legislature approved public library laws that will permit formation of public library federations. "The purpose of the new legislation is to provide a mechanism for independent public libraries to cooperatively form a library

federation for cooperative library service arrangements. The new law provides a governing structure and methods for organizing and administering a federation."

Basic Skills Evaluation

An evaluation of the ten-year old Basic Skills Educational Program for public library personnel and certification program for public librarians is expected to be completed this summer.

Library Building Activities

Many communities have either completed new library buildings or have secured the funding for new buildings or for renovations. The LaVista Public Library and the Metropolitan Community College are building a new joint facility.

Nebraska Literature Festival

The eighth Nebraska Literature Festival will be September 17-18, 1999 at the Chadron (NE) State College. This multistate celebration hosted by Chadron State College and Oglala Lakota college (SD) will focus on the theme, "Crossing Borders: Geographical, Ethnic, and Literary Frontiers in Plains Literature."

Widening Our World (WOW)

The U S West Foundation, in conjunction with the Math and Science Teaching Center of the University of North Colorado, are sponsoring WOW by "helping people communicate more effectively with each other through their hand-on classes on how to access and navigate the Internet." Locations of the WOW vans include public libraries.

NLA/NEMA/MPLA Tri-Conference

"Beyond the Horizon . . . Charting Our Course to the Future" is the theme for the October 25-28, 2000 conference in Omaha, Nebraska. Conference Program Committee members are currently being named. The White House Conference on Libraries & Information Services (WHCLIST) annual conference will be meeting concurrently. Programs of all four organizations will be available for conference attendees. A separate report will be made on this topic.

Submitted by Verne Haselwood, Nebraska MPLA representative