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Nebraska MPLA Board Report  
July 24, 2004

Submitted by Nina Little, Nebraska Representative

The Golden Sower Award - The Nebraska Children's Choice Literary Award

On top of the Nebraska State Capitol in Lincoln, stands a 19,000 pound, bronze statue known as the Sower. He stands barefoot and without hat, sowing seeds by hand. He is symbolic of the state of Nebraska as a major agricultural state. He is not merely sowing seeds of grain, but something much greater. He is the symbol of sowing the seeds of agriculture, life, hope and prosperity.

The Sower was chosen as the symbol of the Nebraska children's choice literary award for similar reasons. The Golden Sower Award program was designed to develop an appreciation among Nebraska's youth for excellence in writing and beauty in illustrations. For more information regarding the Nebraska Golden Sower Award visit: <http://www.nol.org/home/NLA/golden/sower.htm>

A total of 48,162 votes were cast in the 2004 contest.

Winner - Grades K-3: Salt in His Shoes: Michael Jordan in Pursuit of a Dream Deloris Jordan and Roslyn M. Jordan (authors) and Kadir Nelson (illustrator)

Winner - Grades 4-6: Skeleton Man Joseph Bruchac (author)

Winner - Young Adult: Touching Spirit Bear Ben Mikaelson (author)

First presented in 1981, the awards are now presented annually at the Fall Conference sponsored by Nebraska Library Association and Nebraska Educational Media Association. The 2004 NLA/NEMA Conference will be held in Grand Island, NE, Oct. 6-8, 2004. For more information on the conference as well as on the Golden Sower Award presentations visit: <http://www.papillion.ne.us/~NLA2004/>

NLA/NEMA 2004 Conference Presentation - Grand Island, NE - October 6-8, 2004

A program titled Making MPLA Part of Your Professional Life will be presented by Dr. Nina Little (NLA Representative to MPLA), Deb Robertson (Director of Library/Resource Center Northeast Community College), Cecilia Lawrence (Director North Platte Public Library) and Linda Rea (Director Hastings Public Library) during the 9:10-10:00 session Thursday morning October 7, 2004. Deb was Nebraska's attendee to the Ghost Ranch Leadership Institute in 2002 and is a member of the MPLA Nominating Committee. Cecilia was Nebraska's attendee to the Ghost Ranch Leadership Institute in 2003. The brief description of the session, used in the preliminary program, is as follows: "Make an investment in your professional future while enjoying yourself at the same time. Begin laying the foundation for your career development by joining active leaders in the MPLA region's outstanding libraries." An MPLA information and membership table has also been reserved and will be set up in the non-profit exhibitors area. Exhibit setup will be after noon on Wednesday, October 6th. Exhibits will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 7th. On Friday, October 8th, exhibits will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For more information on the conference as well as registration visit: <http://www.papillion.ne.us/~NLA2004/>

Nebraska's Library Budget Dilemma

The Nebraska Legislature reduced the Nebraska Library Commission's state funding by 1% (operating budget) and .5% (state aid to libraries) before adjourning on April 15. The revised budget also eliminated \$17,900 in the Library Commission budget for employee insurance expenses, due to insurance cost estimates that were higher than actual costs. The reductions total \$22,230-operating budget (not including employee insurance expenses) and \$6,265-state aid to libraries. It may not sound like much but to each of the six regional library systems in Nebraska it meant tightening the belt one more time.

The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, in partnership with Target Stores and in cooperation with Nebraska Center for the Book and Weekly Reader Corporation, was pleased to announce that a Nebraska student

writer was selected as a national winner in the 2004 Letters about Literature. Jackson Fisher, Lincoln, was honored for his letter to Carl Hiaasen, author of HOOT.

Kathy Ellerton was hired as Administrator for the Northeast Library System. Kathy has experience working in libraries in Colorado, Montana, Missouri, and the Sultanate of OMAN.

#### New Members Round Table Mentoring Program

NMRT has announced the beginning of the NMRT Mentoring program in the NEBRASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY, Summer 2004, Vol. 35, No. 2, p. 32. The QUARTERLY can be found at [www.nebraskalibraries.org](http://www.nebraskalibraries.org)

According to the article the benefits of the program for new librarians are to be multi-faceted, including acculturation into the Nebraska professional library world; leadership development; increased awareness and internalization of professional responsibilities and ethics; improved self-confidence within the field; decreased isolation; and the provision of a safe environment in which to test ideas. Mentors also will benefit from the satisfaction of influencing new professionals, as well as in other ways.

The mentoring program is intended to be semi-formal in that it has some broad guidelines:

- Participation is voluntary;
- Each relationship has a clear and well-defined purpose, i.e. to share practical experience and to develop leadership skills and professional ethics;
- There is a mechanism by which mentors and protégés are matched according to factors such as type of library and proximity, as well as experiences of the mentor and interests of the protégé;
- Both participants adhere to a set of minimal guidelines to mediate the interchange between mentor and protégé.

For more information visit the NMRT web page: <http://www.nebraskalibraries.org/NMRT>

Congratulations to Marty McGee, McGoogan Library of Medicine; Casey Kralik, Joslyn Art Reference Library; Jodene Glaesemann, Nebraska Library Commission; and Susan Franklin, Republican Valley Library System. These folks graduated with their MLS degrees on May 14, 2004 from the University of Missouri at Columbia.

#### MPLA Road Trip in the Works

According to VALLEYTALK, Republican Valley Library System's newsletter for June 2004, a road trip is in the works. After listing a number of authors who are expected to be a part of the CLA/MPLA joint conference being held in Denver Oct. 21-24, 2004, VALLEYTALK suggests that it would be an ideal time for those who have not had the opportunity to experience a national conference to make plans to attend. The Nebraska Regional Library Systems think it sounds like an ideal time to consider a group Road Trip. If there is enough interest they are hoping to charter a bus.