

BIENNIAL REPORT

NEBRASKA PUBLIC LIBRARY
COMMISSION

July 1, 1954 - June 30, 1956

Lincoln, Nebraska

To His Excellency
The Honorable Victor E. Anderson
Governor of Nebraska

Dear Sir:

We are pleased to present herewith the biennial report of the Nebraska Public Library Commission covering the period from July 1, 1954 to June 30, 1956 as required by Section 51-403 Revised Statutes Supplement, 1955.

This does not cover a fiscal biennium, but the last year of the 1953-1955 biennium and the first year of the 1955-1957 biennium. In order to have the figures for the 1953-1955 biennium complete, we have included some information carried in our last report.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas E. Adams, Jr., President
Nebraska Public Library Commission

NEBRASKA PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

Members of the Commission

	Term Expires
Thomas E. Adams, Jr., Beatrice, President	1958
Mrs. Chester Hugo, Gothenburg, Vice President	1959
Earl Meyer, Allicance	1960
Mrs. Barton Kline, Chadron	1961
Mrs. Martin E. Lof, Omaha	1957

Staff

Louise A. Nixon, Executive Secretary
Dorothy W. Lessenhop, Librarian, Books for the Blind
Marguerite N. Johnston, Library Consultant
Jessie Robertson, Reference Librarian
Harriet Clark, Cataloger
Mrs. Mary Eckles, Community Loans

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Nebraska Public Library Commission

July 1, 1954 - June 30, 1956

Organization and Responsibility

The Nebraska Public Library Commission is the official library extension agency of the state. Established in 1901 it is governed by sections 51-401 through 51-410, Revised Statutes of Nebraska, 1943, Vol. 3A, reissued in 1952.

The administrative policies of the agency are established by a governing board of five members. These Commission members are appointed by the Governor for terms of five years and serve without pay. The Commission employs an executive secretary, who by law is required to be a trained and experienced librarian, to administer the work of the agency.

The function of the Public Library Commission is to promote and improve public library service in Nebraska; and to carry out that function the following activities have been established:

Book Collection

The book collection contains some 90,000 volumes. Three-fourths of the titles in the adult collection are nonfiction which enables the Commission to reinforce the collections of the small public libraries and to provide reference service to public libraries wishing to use it.

Great effort has been made during the biennium to strengthen the book collection. The continuing heavy increase in demand shows clearly the need for an expanding collection. Direct loans are made to those Nebraska residents who have no local library service.

Union Catalog and Interlibrary Loan Service

The Nebraska Union Catalog was deposited with the Nebraska Public Library Commission in 1938. The Commission has assumed the cost of maintaining the Catalog which includes not only the filing and withdrawing of catalog cards sent by the 28 member libraries but also the searching for location of books requested by public libraries which are not available in the Commission's collection.

By June 30, 1956 there were 1,921,938 entries in the Union Catalog and more than 3,500 requests were searched during the biennium. A large interlibrary loan service has developed in Nebraska, made possible by the Union Catalog.

The Nebraska Public Library Commission has a special agreement with the University of Nebraska Library which enables the Commission to borrow books on interlibrary loan from the University Library for individuals who do not have access to a local public library. As a result, practically the total library resources of the State are available to all Nebraskans, either through the local public library or the Commission.

Consultant Service

Consultant services of the Commission are available on request to librarians, public library trustees, government officials and to groups of interested citizens concerned in the improvement of local library services. A traveling consultant in addition to advising with the groups mentioned above, gives technical assistance and instruction to librarians on cataloging, weeding book collections and other problems.

The executive secretary advises with librarians and library trustees when requested and other members of the staff are available for specialized assistance.

Demonstration Bookmobile

In 1953 the Nebraska Public Library Commission received a gift of a Bookmobile and funds for its operation from the Woods Charitable Fund, Inc. Equipped with books by the Commission the Bookmobile is available for loan to communities wishing to demonstrate Bookmobile service. The purpose of such demonstrations is to interest the community in adding bookmobile service as a permanent activity to the local library.

To date the Bookmobile has been loaned to the Beatrice Public Library, to the Douglas County Superintendent of Schools and to the Lincoln City Library for a summer reading program. The Bookmobile has been in great demand at county fairs and was exhibited at the Wayne and Scottsbluff County Fairs and the Harlan 4-H Fair in 1955.

Books for the Blind

The five member Commission, the governing body of the Nebraska Public Library Commission, in assuming the responsibility of furnishing library service to the blind of Nebraska, believed that it is clearly as much the responsibility of the state library agency to supply library service to this segment of the population as it is to provide direct library service to those people of the who have no local library service.

The Commission was designated by the Library of Congress as the official agency for the State of Nebraska to provide books for the blind. Books in Braille and recorded books, Talking Books, are furnished to the Commission by the Library of Congress. The Commission houses this collection, catalogs the books (both Braille and Talking Books) and employs librarians to administer this library service to persons with impaired sight. The service has grown rapidly since it was transferred to the Commission in 1952.

Exhibits

The Commission has made available to the libraries of the state a number of exhibits including the Traveling Exhibit of Children's Books, the Nebraska High School Art Exhibit, the Exhibit of Foreign Children's Books and the Portfolio of Books on Exhibit. In addition exhibits of books on special subjects are assembled and loaned on request.

The Traveling Exhibit of Children's Books is made available by an agreement with the Children's Book Council which arranges with the publishers of children's books that various state library agencies are to receive gifts of children's books, prepublication. The state library agency agrees to assemble the books thus received as an exhibit and to circulate it throughout the state as a traveling exhibit. This exhibit which has between three and four hundred books each year is available to public libraries, schools, colleges, university, and local groups. It is used extensively by public libraries, by colleges and university libraries, especially as a part of the summer school program.

The Nebraska High School Art Exhibit was assembled by the Association of High School Art Teachers and is loaned only to public libraries. The Foreign Children's Books were a special gift to the Commission and this exhibit has been used by public and school libraries during United Nations Week and Children's Book Week.

Rural Reading Conference

The First Nebraska Rural Reading Conference, made possible by a grant of funds from the Woods Charitable Fund, Inc., was sponsored by the Home Extension Service of the College of Agriculture of the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska Public Library Commission. Designed to explore means of providing better library service to rural areas through a closer cooperation between local librarians and the Reading Chairmen of the County Home Extension Clubs, one librarian and one reading chairman from each of the 93 counties were invited.

Speakers included Mr. Alfred Stefferud, editor of the "Wonderful World of Books"; John Walker Powell, author of "Education for Maturity"; and Miss S. Janice Kee of the American Library Association.

The representatives of each county were expected to report to the County Home Extension Clubs as part of the follow-up of the Conference. Materials circulated to the participants since the Rural Reading Conference included "Let's Talk About Something We've All Read", by John Walker Powell; "Keeping Up With 1956" by Alfred Stefferud; and special reading lists compiled for members of the Home Extension Clubs.

Publications

As required by statute, the Nebraska Public Library Commission collects and publishes library statistics for the state. Other publications include a biennial report and a Newsletter to Nebraska Librarians which is issued bimonthly.

Appropriations and Expenditures

Appropriations for the Nebraska Public Library Commission for the biennium of 1953-1955 totaled \$116,900 from tax and cash funds. In addition the Commission received a grant from the Woods Charitable Fund, Inc. of \$9,614.75 for the purchase of a Bookmobile and for the cost of operation of the bookmobile for a five year period.

Expenditures for the first year of the 1953 - 1955 biennium were given in the 1952-1954 Biennial Report. Expenditures for the second year, 1954-1955 and the total expenditures for 1953-1955 follow. The expenditures of 1955-1956 (the first year of the 1955-1957 Biennium) are given also.

EXPENDITURES, 1954 - 1955
(2nd year of 1953-1955 Biennium)

Unexpended Balance 7/1/54	\$ 61,418.44
Expenditures for Salaries, 7/1/54 to 6/30/55	42,939.22
Expenditures for Maintenance, including purchase of books, 7/1/54 to 6/30/55	16,272.06
Total expenditures, 7/1/54 to 6/30/55	\$ 59,211.28

EXPENDITURES FOR BIENNIUM, 1953 - 1955

Appropriation for Biennium, tax and cash funds	\$ 116,900.00
Grant of funds from Woods Charitable Fund, Inc.	9,614.75
Expenditures for Salaries, 7/1/53 to 6/30/55	81,519.40
Expenditures for Maintenance, including books and Bookmobile	42,788.19
Total Expenditures of the Biennium	\$ 124,307.59

EXPENDITURES, 1955 - 1956

Appropriation for Biennium, 1955-1957, tax and cash funds (Includes Bookmobile operating funds, reappropriated)	\$ 129,814.16
Grant of funds from Woods Charitable Fund, Inc., 1956 (for Rural Reading Conference)	4,230.00
Expenditures for Salaries, 7/1/55 to 6/30/56	42,475.26
Expenditures for Maintenance including books, 7/1/55 to 6/30/56	20,300.66
Expenditures for Rural Reading Conference and Bookmobile operation	4,074.00
Total Expenditures for the Fiscal Year 7/1/55 to 6/30/56	64,849.92

Circulation

Circulation figures for the year 1953-1954 are repeated from the 1952-1954 Biennial Report in order that the total circulation for the fiscal biennium, 1953-1955 will be available. Circulation figures for the first year of the 1955-1957 (1955-1956) are given also.

	1953 - 1954		1954 - 1955		1953 - 1955	
	Requests	Volumes	Requests	Volumes	Requests	Volumes
Reference and One-Month Loan Division	11,491	35,481	12,466	38,178	23,957	73,659
Three-Month and Community Loans	1,690	77,141	1,932	83,033	3,622	160,174
Books for the Blind	7,124	12,075	7,568	12,951	14,692	25,026
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Totals	20,305	124,697	21,966	134,162	42,271	258,859

In comparing totals for the 1953-1955 biennium with those for 1951-1953 the increasing use of the Commission is apparent. Requests increased from 30,199 to 42,271 or 10,116 while the number of volumes circulated increased from 210,766 to 258,859 or 18,390.

Circulation for First Year of the 1955-1957 Biennium

	1955 - 1956	
	Requests	Volumes
Reference and One-Month Loan Division	11,555	39,186
Three Month and Community Loan Division	2,043	78,510
Books for the Blind	8,208	12,927
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Totals	21,806	130,623