

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES UNDER THE LIBRARY SERVICES ACT

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR

July 1, 1961 - June 30, 1962

by the

Nebraska Public Library Commission

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This descriptive report covers the activities which are made possible by funds received under the Library Services Act. This is the sixth year that funds have been received under L. S. A. As in previous years Nebraska was able to qualify for the full amount of funds available to the state by using as matching funds the expenditures of the Nebraska Public Library Commission supplemented by the funds expended by local libraries which were cooperating in the demonstration.

This report is made by projects as they are listed in the official State Plan for the Further Extension of Library Service to Rural Areas in Nebraska.

PROJECT A. The South Central Regional Library

In fiscal 1962 three demonstrations were completed and the three local units contracted to become permanent parts of the regional library and supplied local funds for its support: Oxford in Furnas county, October 1, 1961; Axtell Township Library, Mirage Township, Kearney county, November 1, 1961 and the village of Edison in Furnas county, April 1, 1962.

Circulation. The nine cooperating libraries and the regional headquarters serve 28,692 persons. Circulation from the regional library and the bookmobile totaled 92,052 and from the cooperating libraries 135,277 with a total for the area of 227,329. (Total books circulated in the area in 1956, 87,849.)

Regional Library Building. A successful bond election in May, 1962 for a new building to house the Phelps County-South Central Regional Libraries was tangible evidence of the impact of the regional library on the city of Holdrege. Its cultural value to the community was emphasized in the campaign and the growing importance of the library to the future of the area was clearly outlined. Completion of the building in the late spring of 1963 will unite the library collections and activities in one building, provide adequate auditorium space for library sponsored activities for the area, especially adult activities: film programs, adult discussion programs, art exhibits, etc.

Union Shelf List. Satisfactory progress was made in the Union Shelf List of the cooperating libraries. It will be completed and it is hoped some form of cooperating processing will be underway in 1963.

New Service. A gift of a collection of framed prints to be loaned to patrons of the regional library added a much needed picture service to the area.

Film Service. This service grows in popularity and many films were borrowed in addition to the regular circuit films. The program planning services have been greatly increased by the availability of films. Ninety-eight films were shown in the area to a total audience of 4,368.

In Service Training. Regular workshops were formed to help the librarians and trustees of the nine cooperating libraries. The Standard Catalog Series is being checked for holdings and the establishment of local strengths and areas of interest.

PROJECT B.

Consultant Service. The consultant staff of the Commission which was increased by three part time persons (totaling one full time person) extended the readiness program considerably during 1963. By working with public libraries which have active library boards interested in expanding services and willing to work for increased book budgets and better staff in preparation for membership in a regional library demonstration, much has been accomplished.

For example: In Clay county where four small public libraries have weeded their collections, checked them against the Standard Catalog for Public Libraries. They are well on the way to checking against the other standard catalog series and to the adoption of new book selection policies. They are working for increased book budgets.

The Aurora Public Library Board and the librarians with considerable assistance from the consultant not only made the same sort of improvement as the libraries in Clay county but they became an active member of the film circuit. In addition working with rural groups, the city council and the county commissioners, a movement for a county library was initiated, without asking for a LSA demonstration. It is anticipated that the county library will be established in 1963 for Hamilton county.

The Auburn Public Library developed greatly with consultant services. Reorganization of the library, adoption of library objectives and book selection policies, discussions of expanded services led the board to request a series of community interviews. These were arranged and the consultant sociologist who had served as an advisor and interviewer for the Library Community Project and as a member of the Survey Team was selected to do the interviewing. Results include an improved book budget, better services to adults and a readiness on the part of the library and the community for expanded services to Nemaha county and the region.

In Sidney a readiness program was initiated by a recataloging of the library at the request of the library board. This involved weeding the book collection and considerable rearrangement of the library. The regional consultant working closely with the library board, exploring with them the possibilities of a county and/or regional library demonstration. The board secured an increased appropriation for 1963 and has contracted for a demonstration of county wide library service, for Cheyenne county.

A similar assistance was given to the Burwell Public Library which extended free library service to Garfield county and began supplying large loans of books to the Taylor Public Library for Loup county. Results include an increased appropriation, a better book selection policy adopted and a growing understanding of the advantages of cooperation and expansion of service.

Four libraries in and near the metropolitan area of Omaha: Ralston, Papillion, Plattsmouth and Millard have all had similar assistance. All of this ties in closely to the State Plan which the Library Development Committee has been working on during 1962.

Film Circuit. The film circuit completed its second year June 30, 1962. Thirty public libraries, including the nine public libraries in the South Central Regional Library, are members of the circuit. During fiscal 1962 there were 1,517 showings of films to a total audience of 54,664. These are adult films loaned to clubs and organizations. The public libraries are enthusiastic about the programming planning assistance they are able to supply to local clubs.

PROJECT C.

The demonstration of county library service to Brown county from the Rock County Library was continued with the cooperation of the Ainsworth Public Library (Alder). Bookmobile service was provided to the rural areas of Brown County by the Rock County Bookmobile. In addition the residents of the county made extensive use of the Ainsworth Public Library. Ainsworth is the county seat of Brown county.

Circulation in Brown county in 1962 totaled 41,819 an increase of 9,614 over 1961.

Film service continued to be popular in Ainsworth and the county.

The demonstration for Brown county runs until September 1, 1962. Keya Paha and Rock counties had completed their demonstrations and been on local support for two years. Rock County is planning to submit a proposition on the general election ballot for an increased levy for the support of new services.

PROJECTS D. Thomas-Blaine Counties Demonstration

Bookmobile service was started in Blaine and Thomas counties and a small part of southern Cherry county in March, 1962. The bookmobile

travels an 800 mile route every two weeks. It serves a very sparse population of 2,878 in an area of approximately 2,500 square miles.

There are no public libraries in Blaine county nor in southern Cherry county. The Thomas County Library reports a circulation of 17,200 for the fiscal year.

It is anticipated that several counties may be added to the demonstration which has been referred to as the Sandhills Regional Library. This name will undoubtedly be changed when the new State Plan is adopted.

PROJECT E.

The survey report, Nebraska Libraries Face the Future is in the process of being published. It has been studied carefully by the Library Development Committee of the Nebraska Library Association. A state plan and minimum standards have been developed and will be distributed in October.

The report of the Survey at NLA State convention in October 1961 stimulated great interest in library development in the state and accounts in part for the readiness program as described in Project B.

PROJECT F.

The Valentine Public Library in cooperation with the Nebraska Public Library Commission undertook to extend loans to three public libraries in northern Cherry county: Cody, Merriman and Wood Lake.

Some children's books were purchased for the three libraries and adult titles were loaned to them, from the Valentine Public Library which had strengthened its nonfiction and reference collection. A subscription to the McNaughton service made current titles available to the three libraries through the Valentine Library.

A total of 1,580 books were loaned to these libraries and all four experienced increased circulation with a total increase of 8,452 over circulation of these libraries in 1961. The total population served is 4,218 and total circulation for fiscal 1962 was 30,138.

PROJECT G.

The Arthur County Library has expanded its services by opening the library every day and providing free library service to residents of McPherson county. Arthur county has an area of 706 square miles and a population of 735. The total population is 1,415 and total area is 1,561.

The collection was appraised before the library moved into its new quarters and increased budget is projected.