

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES UNDER THE LIBRARY SERVICES ACT

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR

July 1, 1962 - June 30, 1963

by the

Nebraska Public Library Commission

This descriptive report covers the activities which are made possible by funds received under the Library Services Act. This is the seventh 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

The adoption of a regional plan for library development by the Nebraska Library Association in October, 1962, gave increased momentum to the expansion of the South Central Regional Library. The plan, Regional Organization for Nebraska Libraries, A Plan With Minimum Standards, which designated the South Central Regional Library as the model on which the plan is based; and which definitely listed the six counties in Region XVI (see attached map) brought requests for demonstrations from Gosper county, from the part of Kearney county not now served and from an additional community in Furnas county.

On February 1, 1963 service was extended to the Furnas county village of Arapahoe (pop. 1,084) and the Arapahoe Public Library joined the demonstration as a cooperating library. Also in Furnas county the village of Holbrook voted local support to continue the regional library service when the demonstration ended.

Plans were developed in the late spring of 1963 for demonstrations to be started in both Gosper and Kearney counties during fiscal 1964.

Regional Library Building - The completion of the new building, financed entirely by funds from the city of Holdrege and Phelps county, and the consolidation of the book collections, regional and local into one collection of 50,000 volumes was a dramatic achievement.

Project A. con't.

The building is spacious, attractive and completely air conditioned, including the bookmobile loading area where two bookmobiles can be loaded simultaneously. There is space for adult, library sponsored activities for the entire region and room for a growing book collection.

Circulation 1962 - 1963 - There was some loss of circulation when the libraries were closed for moving into the new building and some shifts in circulation, yet the overall increase was substantial:

South Central Regional Library	99,128
10 cooperating libraries to their local communities*	142,823
Total for region, 1962-63	<u>241,951</u>
Total for region, 1956	93,493

Expenditures 1962 - 1963

Local funds	\$27,368
Contracted funds	13,074
Federal funds	9,585

Total \$50,027

Total local funds, 1956 \$22,169

There is some increase in expenditures for local library service in addition to local funds paid to the regional library for contracted services.

Consultant Service - Continuing consultant service has been furnished the regional library as demonstrations continue and assistance was needed in consolidating the units and uniting the staffs when the Regional and the Holdrege-Phelps County libraries were moved into the new building. Additional assistance was furnished from the cataloging department of the Nebraska Public Library Commission as the card catalogs were combined.

PROJECT B. Strengthening the Nebraska Public Library Commission

As outlined in the 1962-1963 State Plan all additional activities to develop better public library service under the Library Services Act are grouped here. This includes all of the readiness programs following the pattern begun in 1961-1962.

With the loss of two full time consultants whom we have not been able to replace (Esther Shenk and Marian Walcott), a plan was developed of employing, on a part time basis, the professional librarian in a public library which would eventually be the Headquarters library for a region, to serve as consultant for the region.

\* Bloomington Public Library (Franklin county) had to drop service. Arapahoe Public Library (Furnas county) was added.

Project B. con't.

For example, in Region VI, the librarian of the Norfolk Public Library, with the full approval and complete cooperation of the library board, serves as consultant to the small public libraries and communities in the seven county area. She is working closely with the libraries and communities which request her services of the Commission. These libraries and boards are informed of the regional plan and advised and assisted in getting ready for regional cooperation. The travel expenses and salary for the time spent in these activities are paid from LSA funds. No cut in the librarian's regular salary is made for time spent as a consultant.

This plan proved so successful that the same arrangement was made in Region VIII, where the librarian of the Grand Island Public Library is following the same pattern for the six counties in this region.

Plans have been made with the Scottsbluff Public Library to initiate the same pattern of consultant service for Scottsbluff and Morrill counties early in August, 1963. (Part of Region XVIII)

In Region XV, two public libraries in Dawson county, Cozad (pop. 3,184) and Lexington (pop. 5,572) have requested and received considerable readiness assistance in planning for expanded library service. Both are concerned about the role they will play in regional service.

While originally planned as a separate short time project (Project H) the assistance given to Hall county in the establishment of a county library consisted only of a loan of a bookmobile and the gift of 500 books from the Traveling Exhibit of Children's Books which had been sent to the Commission through the Children's Book Council. No funds were spent for salaries, as the county supervisors provided all of the necessary funds and were opposed to using any federal funds.

Hall county established county library service through a contract with the Grand Island Public Library. A new bookmobile was purchased and an appropriation of \$1,000 a month was voted to pay the Grand Island Public Library for county wide service.

The establishment of the Hall county library is a step toward the establishment of regional service in Region VIII. The Aurora Public Library in adjoining Hamilton county is looking forward to cooperation in regional service in Region VIII.

Consultant services to the demonstrations are described in the separate project reports.

PROJECT C. Keya Paha, Brown and Rock counties. The two year demonstration to Brown county was completed September 1, 1962

Project C. con't.

without provision for local funds to continue the service. (A local quarrel between the officials of the city of Ainsworth and the Brown County Board of Commissioners, with the Alder Public Library caught in the middle, blocked an appropriation.)

After three months without county library service the rural population of Brown county, under the leadership of the Brown County Farm Bureau, became very active in trying to solve the problems and restore library service to the county. The movement was successful, plans were made and an appropriation voted for the restoration of the service beginning in September, 1963. Thus the tri-county service of Keya Paha, Brown and Rock is established with bookmobile service to the three counties from the two cooperating libraries the Alder Public Library, Ainsworth and Rock county library, financed by local funds. (Transitional funds to Brown county were not paid in 1962-63 but will be paid 1963-1965.)

A proposition to increase the mill levy for the Rock County Library carried at the November, 1962 election by a two-to-one majority. The Rock County Library Board, encouraged by this vote of confidence is eager to play an important part in regional service. These three counties, KBR, are part of Region XIX.

Some interest in bookmobile service has developed in communities in Boyd county and they are asking for service from Rock county. No demonstration in that area is planned before 1965.

PROJECT D. Thomas, Blaine, and Southern Cherry Demonstration

The popularity of the bookmobile service which was started in March, 1962 from the Thomas County Library to Blaine, southern Cherrry and Thomas counties has been surprising because of the sand hill area. The total circulation of 27,631 (1962-1963) in an area with a population of 2,994 in an area of 2,427 sq. miles.

A new bookmobile was purchased in January, 1963 - labeled Sandhills Regional Library Service in anticipation that it will be used for a much larger area eventually, as other counties in Region XIX ask for service. Region XIX has a total of 17 counties (there may be some shifting, of course) and for the most part sparsley settled.

PROJECT G. Arthur County Library

The reference department of this little library was strengthened in 1962-1963 by the addition of some reference materials. The mill levy has not been increased, as provided in the agreement, as it was necessary to wait until the general election in 1964 to put the proposition on the ballot.

Project G. con't.

No interest was developed in McPherson county for library service from Arthur County Library. There is some indication that McPherson county would prefer to be served from Thomas county via Hooker county, which will be satisfactory.

Because of its new location in the new court house, its attractive new furniture and improved book collection, and longer hours (two hours a day, five days a week) the library is becoming a more important agency in the life of the county. Arthur county has a population of 680 and an area of 706 square miles.

PROJECT H-J. The designation (H) was originally assigned to Hall county; but as indicated in the report of Project B, there were no expenditures listed to this project as the county was unwilling to have any federal assistance.

Thus the designation H-J was used for the Sidney-Cheyenne County demonstration in March, 1963, when the Sidney Public Library in cooperation with the Nebraska Public Library Commission initiated bookmobile service to Cheyenne county.

Considerable assistance had been given to the Sidney Public Library in preparation for a demonstration. The population of Sidney is, 8004 and of Cheyenne county is 14,828. The city had doubled in population following World War II and has the youngest population in the state.

The problems of a community which grows this fast are many and the influx of young married people with growing families increased the demands for more and especially better service from the public library. The library board worked hard in increasing the appropriations for the library and began seeking technical assistance from the Commission. They not only wanted immediate help but also a plan to extend services to the county as soon as possible. A readiness program was set up for the library as described in the 1961-1962 report.

While this was in progress a growing interest in county library service developed in the rural areas under the leadership of rural organizations such as the Home Extension Clubs, the Rural Area Development Club and the Wheatbelt Public Power District. Requests for a demonstration were received from these organizations by the Nebraska Public Library Commission and the interest was very high before the demonstration ever started. The county commissioners were made aware of the interests of these rural groups and a complete understanding of the services to be expected and the eventual responsibility of the county at the close of the demonstration to finance the service if it were to be continued.

This meant that the bookmobile was used from the very first day by parents and children and there has been a corresponding increase

Project H-J. con't.

in the use of the Sidney Public Library. The three small public libraries, Dalton, Lodgepole and Potter have cooperated and experienced an increase in their own local service.

The county agent of Cheyenne county set up an opinion sampling project in connection with the demonstration; but entirely separate from the library or the Commission. An area of the county where the farm and village (Dalton) population were practically equal; where there was a regular agricultural program on the local radio; and where there was a very small, inadequate public library was chosen and an initial questionnaire was mailed before the bookmobile service was started. The questionnaire was discussed on the radio program and reminders were given of the date for returning the answers. The questions were simple: How many books did they read last year, did they use the Dalton Public Library, how many books did they purchase during the past year, did they plan to use the proposed bookmobile service?

A second questionnaire will be mailed in 1963-1964 and a third just before the proposition for local support goes on the ballot.

The readiness and eagerness of people served, created by local initiative have made this demonstration quite different from earlier demonstrations.

This project has required much assistance and a consultant spends three and one half days a week in Sidney and Cheyenne county.

# PROPOSED REGIONAL ORGANIZATION

