

President's Report 2017

Nebraska Library Association Annual Meeting, October 12, 2017, Kearney, Nebraska

This has been a busy, exciting year for NLA. Board members, committee members, and many others worked hard and accomplished quite a lot. Here are a few of the highlights:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: When Executive Director Nicole Zink resigned in April, Michael Straatmann returned to serve as Interim Executive Director. NLA took a hard look at the duties and requirements of the executive director position and decided it was time to hire an association management company to do the job. Joe Pittman and his company Creative Association Management were hired. Joe started with NLA part time at the beginning of September, and became our full time executive director at the beginning of October.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: We convened an Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee, co-chaired by Mike Elsener and Scott Childers. The committee worked with the NLA Communications Committee to design a Strategic Planning and Communications Survey, which was presented to the membership over the summer. We got 168 useable responses to the survey, including a solid 40 pages of comments and suggestions--a far greater response than we anticipated! The survey responses brought to light some systemic issues within NLA, as well as providing many potential solutions. The Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee shifted their focus to producing a more flexible Strategic Directions document, which we plan to have ready by the end of October. The Strategic Planning Committee will be replaced by a Steering Committee, which over the course of the next year, will work on converting those directions into tangible goals and actions.

JOURNAL: Due to the resignation of our editor, coupled with low readership statistics, we ceased publication of the *Nebraska Libraries* journal at the end of 2016, pending input from the Strategic Planning and Communications survey. Based on that input, the journal will not be reinstated in the coming year.

JOINT CONFERENCE WITH IOWA 2019: We met several times with our colleagues in the Iowa Library Association to discuss a joint Iowa-Nebraska conference in 2019. We evaluated three potential conference sites in the Omaha-Council Bluffs area, right where the two states meet, and ultimately selected the LaVista Conference Center. We have officially convened a Joint Conference Planning Committee for the 2019 conference, co-chaired by Rebecca Funke from Iowa and Angela Kroeger from Nebraska, with committee members from NLA, NSLA, and ILA.

JOINT STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS WITH ALA: We've initiated a joint student membership program with the American Library Association, where library students can join NLA and ALA together for a reduced rate.

MEMBERSHIP DUES ASSISTANCE: Rebecca Sims provided a \$1000 grant to aid people from small and rural libraries with their membership dues. One-time grants of \$20 each will be issued

to 50 qualifying members who must pay their dues out of their own pockets. The fund opened for applicants in September 2017 and will remain open until the money runs out.

ADVOCACY: We had a great turnout for Advocacy Day on March 21, with over 90 attendees, including at least 20 senators. NLA's other advocacy efforts this year included a \$100 donation to ALA's National Legislative Day in January; NLA Advocacy Chair Steve Fosselman traveling to Washington, DC, to participate at National Library Legislative Day, funded by a grant from NLC; NLA President Angela Kroeger testifying in support of NLC at the budget hearing before the Nebraska State Legislature's Appropriations Committee in March; and NLA sharing a booth with the Nebraska Library Commission at the League of Municipalities Conference in September.

RESOLUTION: NLA issued a Resolution in Support of the American Library Association's Resolution On Access to Accurate Information in March, in support of intellectual freedom, opposition to censorship, the right to privacy, and the freedom to read.

LIBRARIES ARE FOR EVERYONE: Rebecca McCorkindale, creator of the internationally famous "Libraries Are For Everyone" images, created a special version for NLA's use, "Nebraska Libraries Are For Everyone." She made these images free for any library to download and use as they see fit. NLA is also selling merchandise featuring these images as a fundraiser through our Cafe Press store.

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE: The previously dormant NLA Diversity Committee revived and thrived under the leadership of Diversity Chair Anneka Ramirez, even putting together three sessions for the 2017 NLA/NSLA Annual Conference.

None of this would have been possible without an active, passionate membership. Thank you to everyone who served on a board or committee, ran for office, worked an event, attended an event, made phone calls, responded to surveys, paid dues, volunteered time, shared ideas, or contributed in any other way I've neglected to mention. NLA is great because of our great members. I am proud and grateful to have served as your president this past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Kroeger