

RURAL LIBRARY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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SISKIYOU RURAL OUTREACH COOPERATIVE

Today's Western "frontier" for library services is California's Siskiyou County. Pronounced sis'-ki 'yoo, the county's territory (6300 sq. mi.) is large enough to have the states of Connecticut and Rhode Island fit inside its borders with room to spare.

This Siskiyou County frontier is one of cooperation, commitment, and decision by three diverse and separate library jurisdictions seeking to provide the very best library service to their patrons as well as the entire rural population of the county. Joining forces to combine their catalogs and to actively deliver their library and media materials throughout Siskiyou County are the Siskiyou County Public Library, College of the Siskiyous, and the Mount Shasta Union School District. We have seen examples of resource sharing before but never before has a California community college been willing to combine its card catalog with a public library system in order to more effectively and efficiently serve its public in general and its students in particular. The added participation of the Mount Shasta Union School District makes this cooperative venture unique in the state -- perhaps, in the nation.

The Siskiyou County Public Library serves a county-wide population of 38,750 through seventeen branches and stations located in such former mining and logging camps as Sawyers Bar, Happy Camp, Scott Bar, and Fort Jones. The former company mill towns of Weed and McCloud are also served by the public library. These outlets are separated from the main library in Yreka by as little as six miles and as much as 100 miles. Travel time between these sites

is greatly hampered by the mountainous terrain, narrow roads, snow, wind, ice and open range cattle. Some of these small roads turn one-way during the spring and summer as they give way to thunderous logging trucks that haul timber out of the forests. Over forty percent of the county's land is covered with forests which is harvested as one of the major economic activities of the area. Forests, agriculture and recreational activities are the mainstays of the county's industry as is a high readership through the public library. Collections in the branch outlets range from 200-300 volumes in small store-front locations to 10,000 - 14,000 in the larger towns. The county's 38,750 residents borrow an impressive 328,195 (1979) items per year from the public library alone. This is an admirable 8:1 circulation per capita and must be considered in light of the fact that only one card catalog exists at the main library for all 17 outlets.

College of the Siskiyous chose the town of Weed for its home in 1958 when it opened its doors to 200 students. Since, then, the enrollment of this public, tax-supported and tuition free community college has grown to over 1400 students. The curriculum includes a full range of freshman and sophomore coursework as well as a wide variety of occupational fields. New programs in appropriate technology, solar systems, cordwood construction, holistic health and healing, and achohol fuels have brought wide recognition to the campus.

The College library has a very solid collection of over 31,000 volumes with very strong collections in philosophy, religion, and mysticism. It has always been open

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to the public but again because of distances and geography only those near the campus gain access to the college's materials. Again, due to the vast distances and mountainous terrain, the college has established satellite learning sites in communities throughout the county. These off-campus learning sites offer college courses in remote towns; some so remote that classrooms have their own power generators for electricity.

The Mount Shasta Union School District enrolls about 800 students in a kindergarten through eighth grade curriculum. The District was established in 1970 and has built a fine 10,000 volume school library book collection of its own.

The seed for the Siskiyou Rural Outreach Cooperative was germinated in November, 1979, as California State Librarian Ethel S. Crockett offered a special invitation opened the door for school libraries and public libraries to jointly apply for Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) grants.

Work on the application was begun at the College of the Siskiyous as a way to expand the delivery and access of learning resources to a largely underserved, rural population. As the planning progressed, the fact that the college maintained outreach learning sites in eleven of the seventeen branch locations of the public library, was enough to open discussions with the county about cooperation on a grand scale. The college and the county library suffered from the same distances in travel between sites and from less than total access to available resources for their patrons and students. The Mount Shasta Union school District also desired access to the county's collection some forty miles away and would, in turn share its resources with the public library. Cooperation, not consolidation would work best in this situation. It would also serve as a demonstration to others that distance and administratively different jurisdictions could overcome these barriers in an effort to improve library service. This

cooperative commitment would be taken on by each library despite the earlier passage of Proposition 13.

The proposed commitment became a reality in May, 1980, when an LSCA grant of \$89,000 was awarded by the State Library. This was the largest award given that year for school library/public library projects. The project seeks to combine in COM(computer output microform) format the catalogs of the public library, the college library, and the school library, and to distribute the COM catalog to eleven college outreach sites as well as ten public library outlets all of which are now without any card catalog. Materials requested at each of these locations would be delivered by a vehicle headquartered at the college. The union catalog project effectively opens up the college's media and book collection, and the school's library patrons. Students at the college and the elementary school have immediate access to the county's 150,000 holdings and almost overnight delivery of available items.

Retrospective conversion of all library holdings is being accomplished through the use of OCLC terminals. Com fiche will then be produced for the outlets and outreach learning sites with standard 16mm reel film at each main library. The fiche readers were purchased through grant funds while a total of eleven film readers were purchased by the individual jurisdictions for their main libraries.

The retrospective conversion process is not new, the union Com catalog is not new, but the efforts and commitments of these independent and diverse libraries to combine catalogs and actively share resources is a new and positive example of cooperation. An additional year's funding of \$25,775 has been awarded to the Siskiyou Rural Outreach Cooperative by State Librarian Gary E. Strong for the 1981/82 year. His award letter stated: "When completed it will have not only demonstrated a new approach in bringing library services to isolated rural areas, but will also serve as a model of cooperation and sustained, coordinated community effort to achieve a common goal.¹" Siskiyou county is

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rural and isolated but its library patrons and students share a 190,000 item resource catalog that will enrich and educate following the strongest traditions of library service.

1. Strong, Gary E., California State Library LSCA Award Letter, 3 April 1981.

Caroline County Agri-Directory

Planning for the agricultural information program of Maryland's Caroline County Public Library began with an LSCA grant in July 1979. The grant had four objectives, one of which sought to apprise the agricultural community of library services and to meet identified needs of providing information about agricultural agencies and organizations.

During the grant year, all agribusinesses and farm agencies were visited and interviewed. Hand-outs publicizing library services were left for distribution. A list of the county, state and the nation's agricultural agencies and organizations was compiled. This list evolved into a brochure, entitled "The Agri-Directory of Caroline County". A farm agency in the County offered to send a copy to each farmer in the county in their monthly billing envelopes. And, of course, copies were available in the Library and its branches, banks, agribusinesses, etc., for the general public.

The grant year succeeded in fostering the Library's good rapport with farm agency and business officials. Feedback concerning the Agri-Directory, which included suggestions, prompted the development of a 2nd and revised edition. This brochure was paid for through the Library's budget; LSCA monies having a small part.

Planning for this edition included research into the county's agricultural profile, and succeeded in revealing a strong agricultural leadership in both the state and the nation. Planning also involved an Advisory Panel, consisting of farmers, agribusinessmen and others, who took part in

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deciding what would be included, as well as adding any others. A list of the county's farmers was obtained through the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service; farmers were telephoned and asked if they would like to be included in a listing of the county's farmers. Approximately 1500 phone calls, 250 letters and 47 interviews succeeded in compiling the information needed, with about 80% success ratio. A requirement to keep, on file, a consent form from each farmer included in the directory was also met. The directory has received good publicity and a favorable response from the farmers, agribusinessmen, Maryland State Department of Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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Ed. note:

Copies of the Agri-Directory are available from Mr. Sands at the above address. There is a \$1.00 charge to handle the cost of mailing. Described on the cover as a listing of farmers and of farm related businesses, agencies, and organizations, the Directory has such entries as Farmers and Farms, Aerial Application Services, Bee Colony Rentals and Honey Sales, Chicken House Cleaning Services, Custom Farming Services, Farm Equipment, Feeds and Seeds, Farm Labor for Hire, and Hay and Straw. The Directory also lists county, state and national organizations, clubs, and agencies.

ETC...

DEREGULATION OF RADIO TO HURT SMALL TOWNS'

Globe-Gazette, Mason City, Iowa
December 3, 1981, p. 8

Iowa City (AP) - Residents of small communities and rural areas will hear less diversity of ideas and information on local issues if moves to deregulate radio are carried through, a University of Iowa media expert says.

Many residents of rural states depend on one or two radio stations for broadcast coverage in their town or county, said Robert Pepper, an associate professor of broadcasting at Iowa.

Current proposals to repeal the fairness and equal-time provisions of U.S. broadcasting law could lead to the airing in these areas of view points held by one group or candidate, he said.

The fairness provision of the Federal Communications Commission rules require stations that express points of view to provide free air time for opposing opinions on the same subject.

The equal-time provision requires stations to offer broadcasting time at equivalent rates to all qualified politicians running for an office if one politician is sold time.

Mark Fowler, the new chairman of the FCC favors a repeal of the section containing the two provisions. This, Pepper said, is in step with a 10-year-old drive by the federal government toward deregulation.

Proponents of deregulation point to the large number of radio stations in the United States as proof that there is a shortage of wave-lengths available.

PUBLICATIONS

The National Rural Center has announced a number of publications that may be of interest to rural constituents. The Rural Library Service Newsletter publishes the following list solely as information and

neither recommends the approval or disapproval of the materials.

An Agenda for Small Farms Research (\$10)

Public Agricultural-Food Policies (\$7.50)

Energy and Small Farms (\$7.50)

The U.S. Tax System and the Structure of American Agriculture (\$7.50)

Marketing and the Small Farmer (\$7.50)

OFF-Farm Earnings and Small Farms (\$7.50)

Production Efficiency and Technology for Small Farms (\$10)

Structure of Agriculture and Information Needs Regarding Small Farms (\$10)

For the Soul and the Pocketbook a resource guide for the arts in rural and small communities (\$15)

Order from: Publications,
National Rural Center
1828 L Street, NW
Suite 1000
Washington, D.C. 20036

AGRICULTURE INFORMATION COLLECTION-AIC

The Agriculture Information Collection located at the Fort Morgan Public Library, Fort Morgan, Colorado, to meet the needs of the farming community in Morgan County, Northeastern Colorado and the High Plains Regional Library System contains current materials and information for the professional farmer. An intense one year public relations campaign began on January 1, 1981 featuring bookmarks, posters, information handouts, subject bibliographies, and a Quarterly Project Newsletter the AIC News.

Ken Sertic is the Project Director of AIC and can be reached at:

Fort Morgan Public Library
City Park
Fort Morgan, Colorado 80701
303 - 867-9456

HMM!?

The following quote is for those librarians who assume the extension services are satisfying all the information needs of rural patrons. The quote is from Orville Beuch a Henderson, Minnesota farmer who recently returned from a tour of Russia with other Minnesota farmers. His comments were published in "Minneapolis Tribune, "Picture Magazine" November 15, 1981, p. 28.

"We've (farmers) been raised to be adapters. We take information from the seed companies or fertilizer companies -- not the University (of Minnesota) Extension Service, though; they're always 10 years behind us --and put it to work, and we tinker with things to fit them to our own farms.

In the Soviet Union the farmers don't have access to the same information we do, and it takes them 10 years to do what we can do in two.

In fact, the Soviet agriculture system is a lot like the university extension service.

They're both big bureaucracies that don't dare make a move until they've tested everything to death, and by the time the university says something is good or bad, we already know that and we're busy working on something else."

RURAL LIBRARY SERVICE COMMITTEE

PLA's/SMLS Rural Library Service Committee will be meeting twice during ALA's Denver Midwinter: 2:00 - 4:00 Monday, January 25th - Denver Marriott.

11:30 - 12:30 Tuesday, January 26th - Denver Downtown Holiday Inn.

Terry Weech of the University of Illinois and Danny Hales of Live Oak, Florida are planning the RLS Committees' Summer 1982 Program in Philadelphia. The Summer program is scheduled for 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. on Saturday July 10th, 1982. A meeting place has not yet been assigned.

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