



Rural Library Service Newsletter



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ALASKA: Serving the Rural Patron by Land, Air & Sea

"A library without a telephone is really out of luck...how about a town without a telephone?" Only 5 years ago there were 141 Alaskan communities that didn't have telephone communications. With this opening, Alaska's State Librarian, Dick Engen proceeded with a vivid, interesting and informative discourse on what the Alaska State Library has done, is doing and is planning to do and the barriers it has to overcome to serve a truly geographical remote population. Mr. Engen was making his remarks at the PLA's Rural Library Services Committee's ALA program in Los Angeles this past June.

The Alaskan State Librarian said, "It would be hard to consider the problems of library service delivery in the State of Alaska without understanding the size, and the isolation....if a map of Alaska was superimposed on a map of the contiguous 48 states it would touch South Carolina, Mexico, California & the U.S. Canadian border."

However it is not just the sheer size that adds complexity to the delivery of library service but also the awesome geographical features such as the 5,000 active glaciers, the 11 of North America's 20 highest mountains, and that 70% of Alaska's communities are not on a connected road system. While nearly half of the state's 400,000 citizens reside in Anchorage, the other half is scattered throughout a state with four time zones, is equidistance from Japan, Europe & the Eastern seaport; and is so large that it is America's most northern, western and eastern state.

The small population in a huge area results in a density of only .7 persons per square mile. Wyoming the next less densely populated state is 4.6 persons per mile making it nearly 7 times the density of Alaska. As a further comparison California has 151 persons per mile while some eastern states rate even higher figures.

The size of the state, the physical barriers, and the density of its population affects the delivery of library service to Alaskans. Mindful of this Engen spoke of the three factors which underlie Alaska's plan for library services. "1) a person in Nikolai which has a population of 114 people has as much right to library services adequate to meet his needs as the person



Dick Engen, Alaska's State Librarian, speaking at the ALA conference in Los Angeles. Engen spoke at PLA's Rural Library Service Committee's Program "Traditional and Non-Traditional Delivery Systems for Geographical Remote Areas."

living on 42nd Street in New York City. Obviously what we are talking about is access to a communication system that finds what he wants and how we can get it to that person. 2) Cooperation is the key word to providing that access and delivery and this includes all types of libraries in Alaska. 3) And this is very important, technology is a tool it is not the end. What is important about technology is that it may allow us to do something for the first time or to do it efficiently enough so that we can continue to provide that information resource for the people in the state of Alaska."

The need for cooperation among multi-type libraries received significant recognition in 1968 with the establishment of three regional systems. They are the Northern, South Central and Southeastern. Under the state's plan, the local community library is backed up by a major public library which serves as a regional resource library and a regional research library which may either be a university library or the State Library. In addition the regional resource libraries may provide mail service to individuals who are not able to receive interlibrary loans locally. Engen cautions, "Although the three region concept does divide the state into smaller units, please remember the Northern Regional serves an area greater than the state of Texas."

Other on going support efforts, in addition to regional systems, includes the State Library's membership in the Washington Library Network, a bibliographic utility serving the Pacific Northwest. The State also has a state-wide COM Fische Catalog with its 500,000 holdings. The catalog is distributed free to all types of libraries. Currently being developed is a state-wide film booking system with dial access to the holdings of the State Library, the University of Alaska in Fairbanks, Anchorage Community College and Anchorage's Municipal Library.

While regional systems, memberships in utilities, and cooperative adventures are not unique to Alaska, what is distinctive is the varied delivery systems employed to reach patrons. The primary delivery system is mail (the State Library spends annually \$70,000 on postage). While 130 post offices are able to provide next day delivery, some communities receive regular mail service only weekly, bi-weekly or even monthly. For those towns which have a river as their airstrip, they may forgo mail 6-8 weeks if the river is freezing up or breaking up.

Other communities are served by a boat service that has been both called "Bookload" or "Jesus Book." This project uses boats operated by the Presbyterian Church. Throughout the winter, it calls on logging camps bringing books, paperbacks and films.

Another delivery service was the "Fly with a Book Project." Since commuting between villages is frequently by air; the local airport is a central location to the community. Thus collections of adult and juvenile fiction and non fiction paperbacks are placed in airport waiting rooms.

The books, stamped "Please return this book to the Alaska State Library", can be dropped off at any airport in the State.

In some remote areas planes are used. The aircraft often drop books to awaiting anxious readers on the ground, only to have the materials fall into the rivers or lakes.

One avid reader, a wife of a trapper, travels 60 miles one way or 120 miles round-trip by dog team to get her books in addition to other supplies. And Regional library coordinators who frequently use bush planes have been known to back pack materials as well.

In addition to the diversity of its delivery systems, Alaska is also known for its varied use of communication devices. "Much communication is by commercial radio stations using what is called Mukluk tele-

graph. The person calls into the radio station and says "will you tell Aunt Minnie in Minchumina that I am not going to make it out today, but I will try to get out Thursday afternoon."

In some areas there are still no phones or for that matter electricity, batteries and satellites replace them. While there are some microwave systems, they are not heavily used by libraries although the State Library uses microwaves, subcable and over the lines to reach a computer in the State of Washington.

Probably one of the most visible communication uses project is the Learn Alaska Network. Founded in 1980 the Learn Alaska Network is a joint adventure with the State Department of Education, the University of Alaska, and the Department of Administration Telecommunication Services. "We lease two transformers from the Alaskan Satellite which provide both video and audio services twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year. A much used element in the Learn Alaska Network and one which has a great impact on the delivery of library services throughout the state, is the audio-conferencing networking. At the present time we have 214 communities with an earth satellite that can participate in the audio-conferencing network. An additional 100 sites should be added by this fall."

This system has been used widely by librarians. Interlibrary loan librarians hold bi-monthly meetings and have used it to develop a manual; documents librarians use it to discuss classification and utilization of documents; and the governor's advisory council uses it twice a year. A number of statewide library committees such as Collection Development and the Washington Library Network meet regularly through teleconferencing. Plans are currently underway to offer a library technical assistance program through the University of Alaska - Fairbanks, using both visual and audio.

The Fairbanks Public Library used the network to contact several children's authors. The writers located in the contiguous states and the children located in 24 different Alaskan sites talked and discussed books with the authors. Another example of its flexible use was when John Berry of the Library Journal from his office in New York City discussed with Alaskan Librarians 5,000-6,000 miles away his latest editorials.

In addition to the use of the Learn Alaska Network, Alaska Libraries are experimenting with telefacsimile which was reported on in the January/February, 1983 issue of Library Technology Reports and has or soon will be employing Slow Scan TV, Teledon, Electronic Mail Systems, and Class On Tyme II Systems.

Dick Engen commented, "It has been said of the Alaskan communities that we went directly from the 19th century to the 21st century and skipped the 20th..." In serving the rural patron through a variety of technologies and delivery systems, Alaska's Libraries are rewriting the phrase by land, by air and by sea to read by land, sea and airwaves.



Rural Library Service Newsletter

Editor: John M. Houlahan

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Library Programs Take Unusual Form

MANHATTAN--Children in Oskaloosa, Kansas, recently waited eagerly to ride a small state coach pulled by two shetland ponies in front of the city building.

A carnival in town? No, the ride was part of a library program for area residents.

Folks from around Flagler, Colorado, recently covered Main Street examining a display of antique cars & farm equipment.

A local centennial celebration? No, a library program.

Residents of Tonkawa, Oklahoma, and former residents from as far away as Oregon and Florida, donated memorabilia recently for a slide-tape program about Tonkawa's early history.

A project of the local historical society? No, a library program.

Residents of these small towns and others in Kansas, Colorado, and Oklahoma have all been treated to programs sponsored by their local libraries recently thanks to a grant the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded the University for Man at Kansas State University, Manhattan.

The grant has provided for training of the librarians and for funding the programs in the communities selected. The libraries selected for aid are all in towns with less than 10,000 population. Programs focus on three humanities topics: Women of the Plains and Mountains, Literature of the Plains and Mountains, and Heritage of the Plains and Mountains.

Paul McKenna, project director of KSU, says most of the programs have been successful.

"We are using a citizen-involvement model in training the librarians to do programming," McKenna said.

In Oskaloosa, for example, the library program concerned cowboys in Kansas. The stage coach was provided by an area resident. The program included a local young woman ferrier, Kathy Petesch, who talked about the art of shoeing horses. Musical entertainment was provided by a group called the "Spencers," who live about 30 miles from Oskaloosa.

The main portion of the program was done by a University of Kansas professor and author, David Dary. Dary related stories about Kansas cowtowns and cowboys.

In Flagler the program dealt with humanities on the frontier. Local residents contributed to the display of antique cars and machinery. Librarian Jean Strode estimated 300 people attended the program.

"They were all over Main Street. We could not count them all."

Strode said area farmer Walt Witt and members of his family paraded two antique cars and four antique tractors into Flagler just before the program was to begin.

In Tonkawa librarian Sally Caughlin said she and her staff set up 60 chairs for the first public showing of the slide-tape presentation on Tonkawa's first seven years. But 100 people showed for the program making it necessary to go through the program twice.

Caughlin said requests to see the slide-tape program are pouring in from local organizations and schools.

McKenna said the grant has demonstrated that rural libraries can do quality humanities programming. He said that closing workshops will be held in each state in July to bring the librarians together with representatives from state humanities committees and state libraries.

"They will share successful programming ideas," McKenna said.

More programs are still in the works though before the closing workshops. In Phillipsburg, Kansas, for example, residents will be able to attend a "Folksy Fourth" program sponsored by, you guessed it, the local library.

LIBRARY PROGRAM - Con't.

Participating Libraries:

Colorado: Ault, La Jara, Eads, Flagler, Hayden, Leadville, Conifer, Palisade, Trinidad, Victor.

Kansas: Ashland St. Marys, Goodland, Kingman, Linwood, Marysville, Oskaloosa, Phillipsburg, Stafford.

Oklahoma: Boley, Haskell, Hollis, Purcell, Tonkawa, Westville, Wynnewood.

For Information: Paul McKenna (913) 532-5866.

K-STATE NEWS - By Mary Kahl Sparks 6/24/83

Alice Hagemeyer: A Voice for the Nation's Deaf Patrons

Alice Hagemeyer, a deaf librarian from Washington D.C., crisscrossed the country this summer collecting material for her book to be published in 1984, Life in Deaf America. She also was on a mission to promote the Red Notebook. This resource book contains information on such items as captioned films, TDDs and lists local services and programs for the deaf. She believes that the Red Notebook should be in every library regardless of its size so that deaf visitors as well as residents can have full information about the community library and area programs.

A native of Nebraska, Ms. Hagemeyer has worked in Washington D. C. Public Libraries for the past 20 years, 6 of them as a professional since receiving her MA degree in 1977 from the University of Maryland. She said while she knows of other deaf professionals in academic & federal libraries, she believes she is the only deaf professional working in a public library. She is greatly appreciative of both the library program at the University of Maryland and the administration of the Washington D. C. Public Library for their support in her obtaining her professional degree.

In a recent visit to the Rural Library Services Newsletter office, she had these provocative comments about librarians serving this silent minority.

"Workshops (on serving the deaf) are a

waste of time and money, (I) suggest they (librarians) see the film that Gallaudet did on 'how to communicate with deaf people.' Let staff learn through experiences. We must encourage deaf people to use their public library for information of any kind - Exposure to both worlds (for the deaf and the hearing) will reduce problems."

"Deaf people even those with education do not understand the library's role. Very often librarians ask deaf people for advice - they (deaf people) do not know but will give easy & fast answers such as 'Buy a TDD (telephone device for the deaf formerly called TTY) or have staff learn sign.'"

Alice Hagemeyer, (1) the only deaf professional public librarian in the nation & Claudya Muller, Iowa's State Librarian reviewing the Red Notebook, an information source book for and about the deaf and deafness.

Alice Hagemeyer - Cont.

These will not work. The first step in deaf awareness is through the Red Notebook. It can be used to show the deaf what the library can offer them.

Her final comments were, "do not ask the N.A.D. (National Association for the Deaf) for assistance. While they

support libraries, they refer all their library questions to me."

For more information about deaf services or the Red Notebook you may contact:

Alice Hagemeyer
District of Columbia Public Library
901 G. Street S. W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

PALS: A Friend to California's Rural Children

South State Cooperative Library System of Los Angeles, California has received a federal Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) grant for the 1983-84 fiscal year. PALS (Performing Arts, Libraries, and Schools) is a reading motivation project for rural children. The purpose of this demonstration project is to stimulate reading and library use by rural children through their involvement in exciting and high quality performing arts experiences related to literature.

South State will be working with The Performing Tree, a nonprofit arts in education corporation, in the execution of this promising project. Professional artists in drama, dance, poetry, and music will use their expertise and artistic techniques to motivate children to seek out books for pleasure, knowledge and individual growth.

There are two target areas for this project, the Antelope Valley - a geographically isolated desert area of northern Los Angeles County, and the Wasco area - an agricultural community in northwestern Kern County. They hope to increase the number of rural children in the target area who are aware of public library resources through a quality arts in education cycle of programs in rural schools and in the public libraries which serve these schools. There are fourteen schools and five public libraries in the target

areas. The public libraries represent the three member libraries of the South State Cooperative Library System:

- 1) Kern County Library Wasco Branch
- 2) Los Angeles County Lancaster Lib.
Public Library Littlerock Lib.
 Quartz Hill Lib.
- 3) Palmdale City Library

To encourage children to build "the library habit" three cycles of programming are planned throughout the school year. Each cycle begins with a program in the schools and is followed by two programs in the public library. In order to maintain contact with the children between the cycles, a newsletter will be distributed to each child enrolled in the fourteen schools of the target area.

Additional information will be forthcoming in future issues of the South State Express. Subscriptions to the South State Express are available at \$6.00 per year. If you are interested in subscribing, please contact Roy Masukawa, System Assistant at (213) 974-6561

Submitted by: Victoria L. Jenkins,
Administrative Coordinator
South State Cooperative Library System
320 West Temple Street
P. O. Box 111
Los Angeles, California 90053

National Rural Education Conference

MANHATTAN--The Rural Education Association will hold its 75th annual conference in Manhattan, Oct. 15-18.

The Conference will be hosted by the College of Education, the Center for Rural Education and Small Schools, and the Division of Continuing Education of Kansas State University. The meeting will be held jointly with the fifth annual KSU Rural and Small Schools Conference.

Jerry Horn, associate dean of the K-State College of Education and program chairman for the conference, said the conference will enable KSU to highlight education in Kansas, especially among smaller schools.

"The conference will provide a forum for discussion of rural education and will enable Kansans to meet their counterparts from across the country," Horn said.

K-STATE NEWS - By Mary Kahl

Two assistant secretaries in the U. S. Department of Education, Lawrence Davenport and Robert Worthington, and rural education author Jonathan Sher, will be among the speakers at the conference.

Horn said Sher has been a significant voice in the United States calling attention to rural schools and causing some changes in policy concerning rural education.

Speakers representing 14 states have also agreed to be on the program. Program topics will cover all aspects of rural education ranging from computer literacy to gifted and minority students and from four-day week classes to teacher drop out.

For more information about the conference, persons may contact Division of Continuing Education Conference Coordinator Karen Keller, 1623 Anderson, Manhattan, KS 66502 (or call 913/532-5575.)

Sparks - 6-24-83

ETC. ...

FARM WIVES TURN LOBBYISTS

Some Iowa farm wives, interested in speaking out on farm issues affecting their family farming operations, got together (Feb. 16, 1983) in Des Moines to form a group called Women Involved in Farm Economics.

"We're our husbands' right-hand men in our farming operations, and we want to study to be more effective in speaking out on farm issues," said the official spokeswoman for the group, Jo Anne Neuzil of Iowa City.

One of the objectives of the new Iowa chapter of WIFE will be to teach farm wives how to effectively lobby for measures preserving the future of the family farm.

"Times are tough for a lot of folks in farming today, and we think farm women may have more time than our husbands in visiting with key governmental leaders on how to change laws to improve agriculture," Neuzil said.

WIFE, founded in 1976, has 2,000 members nationwide and has been active in seeking labels on imported meat, has been critical of unanswered questions about the payment-in-kind program, has sought lower interest rates and a boost in farm exports.

Taken From: Al Swegle, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Gazette, February 18, 1983, Page - 10c

TRUST FUND HELP SOUGHT

Our library is in the process of establishing a trust fund or endowment and we would like to acquire copies of good trust fund and endowment agreements in use by other libraries. Please forward to Lisa Kinney, Director, Albany County Public Library, 310 S. 8th, Laramie, Wyoming 82070.

CE COURSE:

Timely Topics For The Small Public Library: Understand, Administering, Serving, Wednesdays, Oct. 19; Nov. 16; Dec. 14; Jan. 18; and Feb. 15. (10:00 - 11:20 am). Fee: \$30 (1.2 CEUs). Program description: These sessions will be geared to libraries in communities of 5,000 or less, with materials budgets under \$5,000, and with a maximum of three staff members. The main objective is to present ideas, suggestions & procedures participants can use immediately after each session. Session topics: Reference Materials and Book Selection Tools; Library Board and Librarians--Who Runs the Show; Programming For All Ages; Budget Development, Working with Your Board and Municipality; and Your Community Image. There will be reading or project assignments for each session with time reserved for discussion during each session.

Instructors: Michael Gelhausen, Duerrwaechter Memorial Library Germantown, WI and Pamela Brown, Waushara-Green Lake Cooperative Library Service Berlin, WI.

For More : ETN Registration Office,
Info Write: 101 Extension Building
432 North Lake Street
Madison, Wisc. 53706

COUNTRY KIDS....

is being introduced by the publishers of Farm Wife News and Farm & Ranch Living magazines, and features the same quality of color photos and writing style. Aimed primarily at the 4-12 age bracket, Country Kids is being published in six bi-monthly, 68-page issues, each in a unique 8x10-inch "kids" size, with a beautiful varnished cover and color features inside. Editorial Offices, 5400 South 6th Street, Greendale, WI 53129.

SFEP PLANS AVAILABLE

The Small Farm Energy Project's "vertical wall" solar collector plans booklet, an update and extensive addition to the popular "Rules of Thumb #3," will be available this month. The purpose of the booklet is to enable persons to design and build their own solar space heating systems from the information and research findings contained within. The booklet is a "rules of thumb" guide to site assessment, design, construction and system evaluation, and can be used successfully by interested persons. For more information contact the Center or the project at (402) 254-6893.

Center for Rural Affairs Newsletter, Ju '83
P. O. Box 405
Walthill, Nebraska 68067

PROVIDING FOR THE INFORMATIONAL NEEDS OF THE AGING: THE ROLE OF LIBRARIES.

An institute focussing on the information needs of older Americans will be held on September 28-30, 1983, at the College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN 55105. Featured speakers are Genevieve Casey, author of Libraries Services for the Aged, and Margaret Monroe, author of The Challenge of Aging, both acknowledged as leaders of information and library services for older Americans. The institute addresses the information needs of services in library, human service and health care agencies.

Further information can be obtained from Sue Mahmoodi, OPLIC, 301 Hanover Building, 480 Cedar Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 (612) 296-2821 or Karen Harwood, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105 (612) 690-6653.

RURAL JOB PLACEMENT

Clarion State College's (PA) Center for the Study of Rural Libraries has begun a placement center for rural librarians. Employers may send job descriptions to the center for free. A dollar fee is charged for prospective employees.