



Rural Library Service Newsletter



Vol. 5 No.1

Feb. 1985

ALBERTA'S RURAL SYSTEMS: BETTER, BIGGER, AND BOOMING

Alberta Canada has become a hot spot for the development and promotion of rural library cooperation. Not new to providing services to rural patrons, the Canadian province appears to have gained renewed vigor in the 80s to recommit itself to developing services to rural populations. Dating back to late 1950 Alberta has had a rural library system. In 1959 the Parkland Regional Library began. It started with thirty school and 8 public libraries and today it has sixty-one schools and twenty-six publics. The oldest of the Alberta regions, it has a collection of 356,000 volumes in addition to the materials owned by the school and public libraries. Its combined school and public library circulation of nearly 1.2 million annually makes it the highest per capita use in all of Canada.

In 1970 the Yellowhead Regional Library System headquartered in Spruce Grove was started. It now serves 87 schools and 31 public libraries in an area of 9,074 square miles and a population of 117,000. It owns 283,791 books & has an automated database of 526,000 volumes with 110,000 titles. The region has recently acquired the GEAC Library System and will be using its software to produce branch catalogs, interlibrary loans, block circulations, and accounting and statistical reports. It also will be used for communication and to maintain the region's union catalog.

In the 1980s Alberta has witnessed the start up of the Marigold Library System and the emergence of two cooperative projects; the Peace Region with a membership of 40 libraries and the Northern Lights Cooperative with 31 libraries. For these last two cooperatives, support is being sought to create them into normal regional library systems. At the September 1984 Rural Library Conference in Ankato, Minnesota, Rural Library Service Newsletter spoke with Caroline Bodmer, a trustee from the Marigold Library System

headquartered in Strathmore, Alberta. This region began in 1981 and serves 36 communities with a total population of 50,000. The Director is Ms. Pat Cavill.

Mrs. Bodmer has been a trustee of the Marigold Region since it began a little over 3 years ago. She resides in Carbon with her husband and two girls and is employed as the administrator of her home village of 450 people. In describing the size of the region Mrs. Bodmer said, "I don't know how many miles it is but we call it 6 hours by 4 hours or 24 square hours." Following is a condensed and edited version of her comments on library service, her region, and the role of the trustee.

The Department of Alberta Culture has a library service branch similar to a state library in the U.S. One of its main thrusts has been to try and increase the level of library services in rural Alberta through the development of library systems. Currently there are three established regional systems,



Caroline Bodmer is a trustee for the Marigold Regional Library and an administrator of the Canadian Village, Carbon. In a recent interview she described the successes and services of the 3 year old regional library.

Parkland which is celebrating its 26th anniversary, Yellowhead and us. Parkland and Yellowhead serve both school and public libraries while we serve only public libraries.

These differing regional roles are the result of the different types of local government in the province. In the Parkland and Yellowhead regions the majority of the rural areas are governed by structures which have responsibility both for educational and municipal services. In Marigold there are separate agencies to operate municipal services and the school system. The municipal district, similar to a county in the U.S., historically hasn't had anything to do with libraries. They fight the battles of getting rid of garbage and building roads. Because municipal districts lack precedent in providing library services and because as they say "No one is speeding past our door telling us that they need library service", nearly half of the population of the region do not belong to the library system.

The region's people and land is diverse. There are villagers, city commuters, ranchers, farmers, and persons employed in the gas and oil industries. The land ranges from a national Park to places so dry its almost like desert.

The region also has a history of rural cooperation. As an example the Regional Resources Project Number 1 is an association of 10 municipal councils that are working toward increasing economic development in the area. Because the private sector lacked the faith that one could build a house in a small town Alberta and sell it for a profit, the association built houses. The association has also gone into the areas of recreation, city beautification, community promotion, and have purchased sites for future industries. They have provided local communities assistance on restructuring their interest rates, advise on residential law, and information on water and sewer treatment projects.

This history and experience of successful cooperative adventures among neighboring villages was a valuable recruiting model in forming the cooperative Marigold Regional Library System. These successful community experiments taught library supporters the value of cooperation

and also created a certain band wagon effect. All ten towns which had worked together on the earlier cooperative projects within a very short time of each other joined the regional library system.

The most exciting thing about our region is because we are so new, 3 years old, we've been able to try a lot of different things. A lot of our investment has gone into a computer system. New acquisitions are being added to a microfiche catalog and a retrospective conversion project has been initiated. When the conversion task is completed we hope to have a catalog of 100,000 unique titles. The incredible thing is how little overlap in holdings there is in the Small Libraries collections. Thus far two issues of the microfiche catalog have been published and interlibrary loans now occur between libraries rather than only through headquarters.

In addition to sharing materials area libraries along with the Marigold staff have brainstorming sessions. Last year they came up with the reading program "Reach for the Stars" capitalizing on the stars, space and of course ET themes.

The region also uses special grants from Alberta Culture to sponsor regionwide programs. Examples have been performances by a ventriloquist and a magician. The excitement generated by performances of this type in a very small community of the size of ours (450) is just incredible. We can have a quarter of the population turn out for some of these events.

The regional system has two publications the Marigold Report and the Marigold Library System Newsletter. The Newsletter is for the staffs and volunteers of the membered libraries and the Report is for board members and councilors. We are trying to serialize a lot of the trustee development type of workshops in the Marigold Report. This allows all trustees access to the same information without relying on the report of one attending trustee. It also allows time to think about the issues and to apply them in ones own situation.

One of the strengths of the Marigold System is its interest and work in developing the local trustee and librarian. I think we need

to develop our Trustees for the job is too monstrous for the librarians alone. It's just unfair to put that much on one person.

The Marigold Library System board has 36 members; one from each community. Seven (7) trustees are then selected to serve on the Executive Board. Each of these 7 chair a sub committee. For example there is a committee that is responsible for standards and services. It has 7-8 members and is concerned with the level of service that is going to be provided by the system.

Trustees from its beginning play and have played important roles in the Marigold Region. Gae Ross, a trustee from Drumheller, came up with the idea of the Marigold Library System and is also responsible for its name. She was looking for a symbol and decided that the Marigold flower was unique and that it would grow virtually in every climate from one border to the other in Alberta. It was a hardy plant which would withstand drought and once established be hard to eradicate because the seeds were so prolific.

The Marigold is still spreading as the region continues to lobby local councils who are not members to join....

Reporter John M. Houlahan

Editor's Note:

Aiding in the development and promotions of rural library services are two informative and visually pleasing publications: Wild Rose Rising and the Peace Region Newsletter. Ian Ferguson, Library Consultant for the Alberta Culture Library Service, wrote "the purpose of the Wild Rose Rising is to develop a dialogue between librarians and library trustees interested in rural library systems development. There is no charge for a subscription. We invite articles from anyone interested in systems development and services to rural patrons."

While much of the news in the publications maybe of only provincial interest, the August 1984 issue of Wild Rose had lengthy

listings of practical suggestions under the title "Marketing your library." Topics and Tips covered in the article include the following headings: Spruce up Your Collection, Make Good Use of Your Volunteers, Want to Liven Up the Childrens Corner, Attracting Young Adults, Promoting an Author's Visit, Children, Adults, and Beautiful Garden Contest.

If interested in obtaining copies of the newsletters or to learn more about rural library services and development in Alberta you may wish to write:

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Alberta Culture
Library Services
16214-114 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5M-2Z5



Rural Library Service Newsletter

Editor: John M. Houlahan

The RURAL LIBRARY SERVICE NEWSLETTER is issued quarterly in February, May, August & November, by the Northwest Regional Library System, 6th & Jackson Streets, Sioux City, IA 51105. 712/279-6186.

Fourth-class postage paid.

ALA Expanding Rural Interests

PLA's SMLS Rural Library Service Committee will be repeating much of the highly successful Midwest Rural Library Conference which was held this past September in Mankato, Minnesota. The program entitled "Rural Roots: a conference on Country Libraries" is tentatively set for April 3, 1986 in Saint Louis. It will feature a combination of speakers and round table discussions. The program is part of the Public Library Association's Second Conference. The first one was held in Baltimore in March of 1983.

A major topic at the Rural Library Service Committee meeting in Washington on January 6, 1985 were plans for the Chicago 1985 program.

The program not yet titled will be on in-house training for nonprofessionals. The program will have a Keynote speaker and then 4 to 5 discussion leaders. Sue Gallinger, Assistant Director of the Tacoma Public Library, Tacoma, Washington will relay information on her library's successful use of video tapes and materials for in-house training. Discussion leaders include Sue Mahmoodi, Minnesota State Library, on Library Selfawareness & Collection Development; Nancy Bolin, Maryland State Library, on reference communication; Nabia Toran, Southern Maryland Regional Library, on Maryland's comprehensive training program for small libraries; other topics to be covered are children services and catalog. At the day of the program a resource list and a bibliography on training materials will be distributed. For more information on the program contact Paul Deane, Allen County Public Library, P.O. Box 2270, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801.

An effort has been made by the Regional Library Service Committee to identify persons throughout the country who work in or serve those who work in rural areas; who would be aware of events and news relevant to serving rural populations, and who would share news on rural people, places and events. Sixty to sixty-five names nationwide have been identified to serve as a rural library contact or correspondent. The goal is to have 2 persons per state for the purpose of establishing a communication network to keep the committee inform-

ed on rural libraries and to transmit news on rural services and programs. Persons willing to serve as a network correspondent should contact Loretta Flowers or Laureen Riedesel.

Laureen Riedesel
Beatrice Public Library
218 North Fifth Street
Beatrice, Nebraska 68310

Loretta Flowers
Division of Library Service
R. A. Gray Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Ann Scott Terry of Rock Hill, South Carolina and John Houlahan, editor Rural Library Service Newsletter met with PLA's Editorial Committee about a column in Public Libraries for Small and Medium Sized Libraries (SMLS). The committee expressed their concern, interest and desire for news and stories from this library constituency. However all of Public Libraries column space is committed. Until one of the current columnists abdicate or is willing to share their column, small and medium size libraries won't be regularly featured. The Editorial Committee did strongly encourage news and stories on Small and Medium size & rural libraries be sent to current columnists or to Ken Shearer, the editor of Public Libraries.

In related news the PLA's Small and Medium Size Libraries committee is working on establishing a newsletter. The twice a year publication is being developed by a committee headed by Marianne Cassell of the Vermont State Library.

Work on a rural library survey proposal continues. Lisa de Gruyter of Columbia, Tennessee and Terry Weech of the University of Illinois are the principal initiators. The purpose of the survey is to gather data on smaller libraries which usually does not come out of other compilations. The committee is seeking to obtain permission from ALA to go after an approximately \$50,000 grant to pay for a major indepth profile of rural libraries and their services.



Janet Steener describes South Central Research Library Council of Ithaca, New York services to rural hospitals. Librarians from seven (7) states participated in one of the first meetings of ASCLA's new discussion group -- Rural Library Cooperatives.

A Rural Library Cooperative discussion group has just been started. Heading it is John Christianson of the Traverse des Sioux Regional Library of Mankato, Minnesota. The group is sponsored by the American Library Association's Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA). Participating in the Washington discussion were librarians from Illinois, Wisconsin, New York, Minnesota, North Carolina, Alabama, and Iowa. The group stresses that rural library service is not the exclusive domain of public libraries but is a concern shared by all types of libraries. Underscoring that awareness the group has chosen a program for the American Library Association Chicago 1985 Program on meeting the needs of the rural hospital. The South Central Research Library Council from Ithaca, New York will speak on their experience of bringing library service to the staffs of rural hospitals. They have modeled their program after a pilot project developed by a Pennsylvania system.

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RURAL COMMUNITIES

Of the 45,000 rural communities in the contiguous United States, 35 percent are incorporated cities; the remainder are unincorporated areas such as townships. Most rural communities have small populations; nearly 30 percent of incorporated places have fewer than 2,500 residents, and only 5 percent have more than 10,000. Unincorporated communities range in size up to 49,000 citizens, but most of these, too, have fewer than 2,500.

Eighty-five million people live in rural communities. While many are in sizable communities, most are in unincorporated areas or incorporated places of under 10,000 inhabitants. Over two-thirds of rural residents live in the North Central region, which has half of all rural communities & in the South.

J. Norman Reid & Patrick J. Sullivan

"Rural Infrastructure: How much, How Good?"
Rural Development Perspectives, Vol. 1,
Issue 1, October 1984.

SERVING THE RURAL ADULT - For Rural Adult Postsecondary Education.

Conference Topics and Highlights:

- 1) A Demographic Portrait of Rural Adult Learners.
- 2) Professional Development Activities for Rural Postsecondary Educators.
- 3) New Sources for financing Rural Programming.
- 4) Presentations of Cost Effective Learning Models.
- 5) Linking Educational Telecommunication Projects around the country--a look at their adaptability to your area.
- 6) Focus on Rural Education as it relates to Economic and Rural Development.
- 7) Effective Models for Reaching the Underserved Learner.
- 8) Strategies to Influence Educational Policy at the state, regional and national levels.
- 9) Creation of a Regional Network of educators, learners, and policy-makers to influence rural education policy.

Conference Sites:
Southern Regional Conference
17-19 February
Lexington, Kentucky

Western Regional Conference
10-12 March
Logan, Utah

Midwestern Regional Conference
22-24 April
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Eastern Regional Conference
5-7 May
Skytop, Pennsylvania

For more information contact:

Sandra K. Moore
Action Agenda
1221 Thurston
Manhattan, Kansas 66502
(913) 532-5866

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COLORADO DEVELOPING EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR DIRECTORS OF SMALL LIBRARIES:

A project of the Colorado State Library & the University of Denver aims to develop a set of training materials for the education of directors of small public libraries.

Under the direction of Dr. Edward P. Miller and funded with \$50,000 in LSCA money, the project aims to serve libraries with budgets of less than \$30,000. It will present a training institute May 20-24, hosting 50 librarians who will receive a full scholarship plus living expenses and travel allowance.

Fred Glazer, West Virginia State Librarian, will keynote the institute, which will bring a team of experts from around the country to instruct the group.

The learning materials developed will be aimed at newly appointed librarians in small Colorado libraries.

Dr. Miller, formerly with the University of Missouri Library School, is now active in Library Planning and Management Consulting, at 1048-B Josephine Street, Denver, CO. 80206.

Library Hotline, December 17, 1984.

Volume XIII-42, page 4.

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LTLS EXHIBITS AT FARM PROGRESS SHOW

Lincoln Trail staff and board members greeted thousands of people from Illinois and throughout the Midwest at the Prairie Farmer Farm Progress Show held in rural Champaign County September 25, 26, 27.

The System's "Libraries--Never Out of Season" exhibit which featured three freestanding kiosks graphically promoting ILLINET and System library services, was visited by approximately 16,000 of the estimated 300,000 who attended the world's largest agricultural show.

The modular display and accompanying promotional materials were developed as part of an LSCA Title I Grant to promote ILLINET Services in rural communities.

Connections, Lincoln Trail Libraries System
October 1984, Vol. 7, No. 9

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NAL RECEIVES LANDMARK FLORICULTURE FUNDS

On December 10, Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block signed a precedent-setting agreement under which the National Agricultural Library (NAL) will receive funds from the American Florists Endowment (AFE) to be used to disseminate information on floriculture to growers, wholesalers, and retailers in the floriculture industry.

"This agreement is a trail-blazer," Block said. "No other major agricultural industry has developed and funded such a program with the NAL. We hope this action will encourage other agribusiness groups to work with the Library to establish similar information projects for our mutual benefit and that of agriculture generally."

Agricultural Libraries Information Notes
January 1985, Volume 11, Number 1.

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GEORGIA PUBLIC LIBRARIES WIN CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT:

The recent election promises to have long-term beneficial effects on library construction in Georgia. The state has long preferred to finance capital (nonlibrary) projects from general obligations bond funds; libraries are now included and the chances of the state library agency getting its annual budget package through the legislature are definitely enhanced.

Georgia's matching formula for library building construction is a generous one--especially

for small libraries. The state will pay a 90% share of costs up to the first \$.5 million, and 66 2/3% of costs above that, up to a ceiling of \$3 million to any system in a single fiscal year.

The state agency is all ready with proposals to put \$7.3 million into 15 buildings in 1985, a tactic which is expected to appeal to legislators whose communities are to be benefited.

Another feature of the constitutional amendment: it allows library boards and library system boards to hold title to the buildings.

Library Hotline, November 26, 1984

Volume XIII, Number 39, page 1.

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OTHER PERIODICALS ON RURAL ISSUES

The Journal of Rural Health resumes publication in January 1985 after a 3-year hiatus. The journal is being cosponsored by the American Rural Health Association and the National Rural Primary Care Association. It will start out with two issues per year for \$20.00. For more information or to subscribe, write to Raymond T. Coward, Journal of Rural Health, Center for Rural Studies, 448 Waterman Building, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT., 05405. Telephone (802) 656-2936.

Research in Rural Education is a new journal publishing results of education research relevant to rural locales. It will appear three times per year. Individual subscriptions \$15; institutional subscriptions \$40. For more information, or to subscribe, write to Walter G. McIntire, Research in Rural Education, College of Education, University of Maine--Orono, Orono, Maine 04469. Telephone (207) 581-2493.

Small Town aims to enhance citizen involvement in community planning and to that end brings together the interests, innovations, and expertise of people who live and work in small towns or have professional interest in community betterment. 6 issues per year. \$30 for individual subscription; \$35 institutional. Small Towns Institute, Third Ave. and Poplar Street, P. O. Box 517, Ellenburg, Wash. 98926.

Extension Review is the quarterly publication of the Extension Service for Extension educators in county, State, and USDA agencies. To subscribe, write to Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C.

20402. \$12 per year for domestic subscriptions; \$15 for foreign. Telephone (202) 783-3238.

Thomas McDonald, Rural Development Perspectives, October, 1984.

+++++ OTHER, OTHER PERIODICALS

Rural Development Perspectives is published three times per year October, February and June by USDA's Economic Research Service. Subscription Price is \$10.00 per year (\$12.50 for foreign addresses) single issues \$3.50 domestic, \$4.40 foreign.

Order from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C. 20402. Check or money order made out to Superintendent of Documents.

Agricultural Libraries Information Notes: is available free to domestic and foreign subscribers by asking to be placed on its mailing list. Write to National Agricultural Library, Room 203, Beltsville, Maryland 20705. This NAL publication provides a channel of communications to technical information specialists, librarians, extension workers, researchers, and scientists on agricultural information activities. It is published 10 times per year.

+++++ No comment:

Barnyard hogs kill more people every year than sharks do. L.M. Boyd, Sioux City Journal, November 5, 1984.

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SMALL LIBRARIES CARRY A BIG SHARE OF THE LOAD: Don Sager, director of the Milwaukee Public Library in a recent Iowa workshop on managing the small public library, delivered this telling statistical reminder from the most recent figures available from the National Center for Educational Statistics. "Two billion dollars is spent on libraries each year. One third of this amount goes to 52 large libraries (populations of 500,000 or more). 7.9% goes to small libraries (populations under 10,000), and yet small libraries account for 40% of the total U.S. circulation."

Library Hotline, Volume XIV-4 page 5
January 28, 1985.

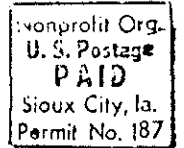


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