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MPLA BOARD REPORT—NEBRASKA

APRIL 29, 2008

Submitted by Julie Beno

Spring meetings are in full swing in Nebraska:

- Para-professionals: Session I - Fitting Your Library into the Community: Speakers: Nancy Busch, Brenda Ealey, and Kathy Tooker Session II - Library is More than the Sum of its Departments: Speaker: Angela Kroeger Session III - Holding It All Together Speaker: Karla Shafer
- C&U Section Spring: Meeting the Library and Information Needs of Nebraska's Diverse Populations. The keynote speaker will be Julie Todaro, ACRL President.
- Technical Services Round Table: Spelunking or Serendipity: Discovery in the Catalog
- Public Library and Trustees Section: Memberclicks, Return on Investment, and Tweens and Teens – What makes them tick.
- New Members Round table: A panel discussion, focusing on getting that first library job, transitioning from one area of librarianship to another, social networking, and differences between public, academic, and special library employment. And a presentation on early career librarians who transition to another area of librarianship by Rachel Erb from UNO
- Diversity Committee: Serving your Spanish speaking customers 2008 Conference news: One pre-conference on “The Value of a book” has received two grants, one from McGoogan Library and one from MPLA. MPLA members will receive a reduced registration rate for the pre-conference. Dr. Berger has been an excellent person to work with in setting up this all pre-conference, and he is very interested in staying for the remainder of the conference. This conference will be paperless as was PLA's conference.

MEMBERSHIP

There are 458 NLA members who have a current 2008 membership as of 3/12/2008. The statistics for this group are C&U=96 members; PLTS= 243 members; PARAS= 54 members; S&I= 19 members; and SCYP= 67 members. The Round Table memberships are ITART= 33 members; NMRT=22 members; TSRT= 42 members, and YART= 9 members.

Intellectual Freedom Committee report:

- One of the goals for the committee is to pursue the possibility of one to multiple Nebraska attorneys attending Lawyers for Libraries – an institute sponsored by ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom. The institutes are designed to build a nationwide network of attorneys committed to the defense of the First Amendment, freedom to read and the application of constitutional law to library policies, principles, and problems.
- ACLU Nebraska brought Barbara Bailey (one of the Connecticut librarians hit with a gag order as a part of the USA Patriot Act) as the speaker for their Annual Dinner and Awards Banquet on April 12th in Omaha. Brenda Ealey and I attended. Barbara is the President of Library Connection, a consortium of 27 libraries. The FBI presented one of her libraries with a National Security Letter. They did not turn over the records. Instead they hired a lawyer and fought turning over materials. Bailey said “Do not be afraid to do what is right.” She is indebted to the ACLU for helping. The one tip she gave is that the gag order can be contested after one year. If it is still a national security issue the gag order will be upheld. The gag order prevented them from talking, from telling their boards or mayors, from entering the trial together, from sitting together, or talk to the lawyer in public. Their case is not appearing in books such as Molly Ivens Book of Wrongs.

LEGISLATIVE DAY REPORT:

We had around 146 attendees, including 33 senators and/or their staff. 7 volunteers were recognized, 5 at the luncheon by their senators. Sen. Landis did a terrific job in the afternoon session. Six postcards designed by Mike Straatmann were delivered to senators 5 days before and the day after Leg. Day

Legislature report

LB 768, introduced by Senator Cornett to permit Sanitary and Improvement Districts to contract for library service, had an excellent hearing, was advanced out of committee unanimously, advanced twice on the floor of the Legislature without opposition and now in on Final Reading.

LB 572 to permit employees of the library systems to be eligible for state health insurance benefits had an excellent hearing last year but was languishing in committee until March 4th. On March 4th committee unanimously advanced it. IT is on the Consent Calendar. The bill has advanced.

AFCON in partnership with the ACLU Nebraska has created a Students' Rights Manual, called KNOW YOUR RIGHTS, A Student's Guide to Rights in School. <http://www.aclunebraska.org/students%20rights%20manual.pdf>