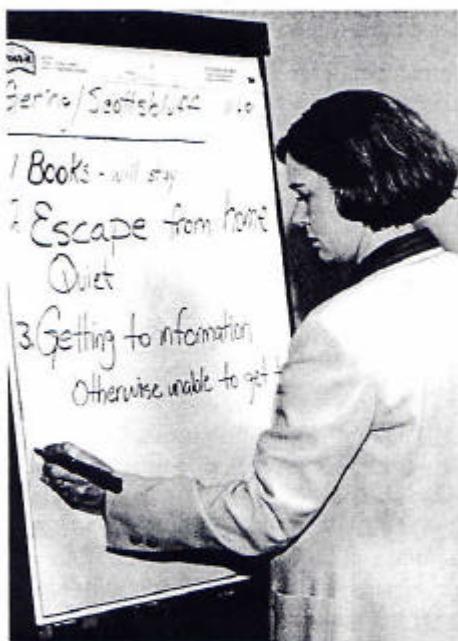


Appendix I

NE Library Commission gets M.A.D. @ your library

They're called Making a Difference @ your library visits (M.A.D. visits, for short) and the Nebraska Library Commission (NLC) is taking them very seriously.



Shannon Berhorst records comments made during the public forum at the Gering Public Library as part of the NLC Making a Difference visit on November 6.

The Commission plans to visit every Nebraska public library by late Spring 2002 and find out from staff, board, local officials and the library public what they think is needed for libraries to succeed in the changing information environment.

On November 6, Nebraska Library Commission Director Rod Wagner and two staff members, Shannon (White) Berhorst, Network Services Director, and Christa Burns, OCLC Member Services Librarian, visited the Scottsbluff and Gering Public Libraries as part of this effort.

Wagner had a face-to-face discussion with Scottsbluff Public Library staff about library issues before he visited with a local book discussion group.

In the evening, the Gering Public Library hosted a public forum attended by about a dozen participants including librarians, board members, and civic and government officials at which Wagner and Commission staff asked a series of questions concentrating on the library's strengths and direction.

Among the five questions posed to the participants at every statewide location are:

What library needs and wants will your community have in the next 5 years?

What kind of local efforts will be required to meet those needs and wants?



Scottsbluff Library Director Bev Russell (right) was on hand for the Public Forum held at the Gering Public Library as part of the Making A Difference @ Your Library visits.

Making a Difference cont'd from previous page

And, beyond the local level, what partners will you need to accomplish your goals?

Commission staff recorded comments made during the discussion and will combine those with others from similar sessions around the state. The combined record from all of these meetings will help the state see overall patterns of library development along with areas needing action and support.

"The library visits have been a great opportunity to get better acquainted with public library staff, and to meet library board members and other community residents.

"Much has been learned about library services and local issues, challenges, and future plans. The hospitality of library representatives and community members is greatly appreciated and has made the visits especially enjoyable."

Rod Wagner, Director
Nebraska Library Commission
On the Making a Difference Visits

At a recent meeting of the NLC State Advisory Council, NLC members reported on the long-term project with a mixture of pride and accomplishment.

NLC Communications Coordinator Mary Jo Ryan noted that NLC staffers have taken a personal interest in the libraries they have visited and become keenly aware of "their libraries."

She reported that the visits are expected to continue through late Spring 2002 as commission staff check off libraries from the "will visit" to "visit made" categories.

Commission staff have visited 167 public libraries since the program began in April 2001 and have 107 libraries remaining.

According to information made available from the Commission, almost every one of the 29 Panhandle public libraries have been visited with four to go: Alliance, Dalton, Minatare, and Sidney.



Rod Wagner listens to comments during the public forum held at the Gering Public Library, part of the Making a Difference visit to Gering and Scottsbluff public libraries. Christa Burns (at left) also took part in the Commission visit.