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CITY COUNCIL CENSORSHIP CEASED BY NLA ADVOCACY

by Cal Harman, Intellectual Freedom Round Table Chair

Along with many outspoken Fremont residents and library workers, members of the Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT) were instrumental in influencing the Fremont City Council to reverse its recent decision to amend the Keene Memorial Library policy manual.

This amendment would've allowed anyone with a child younger than 12 to relocate books from the children section to the adult section, bypassing the established policy for handling challenges. The statement IFRT leadership wrote, along with President Holli Duggan, was shared widely on social media and read by Past President Emily Nimsakont at the Fremont City Council meeting where the council ultimately voted to reconsider and remove the amendment.

At the state level, members of the Advocacy Committee and IFRT prepared testimony on LB441, a bill which would criminalize K-12 educators and public library workers. At the Capitol, Vice Chair of IFRT Wyatt Packard testified before the Judiciary Committee on behalf of NLA. Vicki Wood, president of the Academic Freedom Coalition of Nebraska and NLA member, also testified against the bill. And President Holli Duggan gave oppositional testimony on behalf of the Nebraska School Librarians Association.

Efforts to censor books and criminalize the library profession are ramping up in Nebraska, mirroring a nationwide trend. But strong coalitions remain dedicated to fighting for the professional principles that undergird our libraries. It's all hands on deck.



NLA advocates testified at the Nebraska State Capitol in opposition to LB441: Cal H., Wyatt P., Holli D., Vicki W., Deb R.



Apps
due
April 22!

Apply for the 2023

NIXON SCHOLARSHIP

Applications for NLA's Nixon Scholarship are now open! Nebraskans pursuing full- or part-time graduate-level library education are encouraged to apply.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

Applicant must be:

- accepted to an ALA-accredited graduate school in the programs of library and information science **OR** school librarianship and media
- a Nebraska resident **OR** employed by a Nebraska library for at least one year
- a member of the Nebraska Library Association **OR** Nebraska School Librarians Association at the time of application

Learn more at
nebraskalibraries.org/Nixon_Scholarship

NLA's Public Library and Trustee Section 2023 Spring Meetings

Meet the Nebraska Library Commission and The Four Nebraska Regional Library Systems

Tuesday, April 11, 10:00am -12:00pm CT

IN PERSON at the Nebraska Library Commission
in the Atrium Conference Room on the 2nd Floor
The Atrium 1200 N Street, Suite 120, Lincoln, NE

Following an introduction and overview of the Nebraska Library Commission from Rod Wagner, staff will introduce us to services they offer to public libraries. A few of the topics covered will include accreditation, NebraskAccess, tech kits, Public Library Survey and Bibliostat, basic skills courses, Talking Books, book club kits, and more!

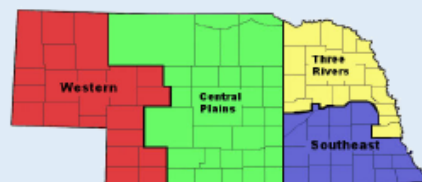


Nebraska
Library
Commission

REGISTER HERE FOR NLC DAY

Thursday, April 13, 1:00-2:30pm CT

A free, virtual panel discussion, where representatives of the four Nebraska Regional Library Systems will introduce us to the services they provide to public library staff and patrons. For those who were not able to attend the in-person meeting at the Nebraska Library Commission, there will also be a review of their services.



REGISTER HERE FOR ZOOM MEETING

Central Plains Library System
Denise Harders, Director
402-705-1409
denise.cpls@gmail.com



Southeast Library System
Scott Childers, Director
402-467-6188
scott.childers.sels@gmail.com



Three Rivers Library System
Tammi Thiem, Director
402-330-7884
tammi.thiem.trls@gmail.com



Western Library System
Cindy Osborne, Director
308-632-1350
cindy.osborne@nebraska.gov



For more information, please contact: nlaplts@nebraskalibraries.org.
Membership in NLA or PLTS is not required to join the live session.
Participants can submit 2 CE credits for the in person meeting, and 1.5 CE credits for the Zoom meeting.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The legislative session is in full swing, and the Nebraska Library Association has been heavily engaged in protecting library workers and standing up for intellectual freedom at the Nebraska State Capitol.

We are tracking seven bills this session, which can be found in the Legislative Report Card on pages 8-9 of this newsletter. The contents of these bills range from expanding broadband access to rural areas (yay!) to the unwarranted prosecution of library workers (not yay).

NLA's biggest lifts have been garnering public comments and testifying against LBs 441 and 635, both of which censor legal information and waste Nebraska taxpayer dollars in the process.

The public hearings (at which NLA testified and submitted comments in opposition) for both of these bills have passed and, as of this writing, the bills have not advanced out of committee onto the legislative floor.

To the right, you will find the testimony provided by Nebraska Library Commissioner Rod Wagner in opposition to LB441.

Thank you to everyone who testified, submitted comments against, and shared information about these harmful bills. We stand with Nebraska libraries, library workers, and minors who are targeted by this legislation.

A LETTER IN OPPOSITION TO LB 441

by Rod Wagner, Nebraska Library Commissioner

The Library Commission's state statutory mission is statewide promotion, development, and coordination of library services. It is a great pleasure to work with Nebraska's 1,000+ libraries - public, school, college/university, and special libraries - to provide library services for the people of Nebraska.

LB441 would eliminate protections for educators and librarians from prosecution for criminal offenses related to obscenity claims. This legislation would create a climate where educators and librarians are viewed as harming to children or even as criminals. They are not.

Schools and public libraries do not have obscene materials in their collections. That doesn't preclude someone from making a claim that they do. The potential legal complications that would result are a significant concern and could result in needless time, cost, and stress.

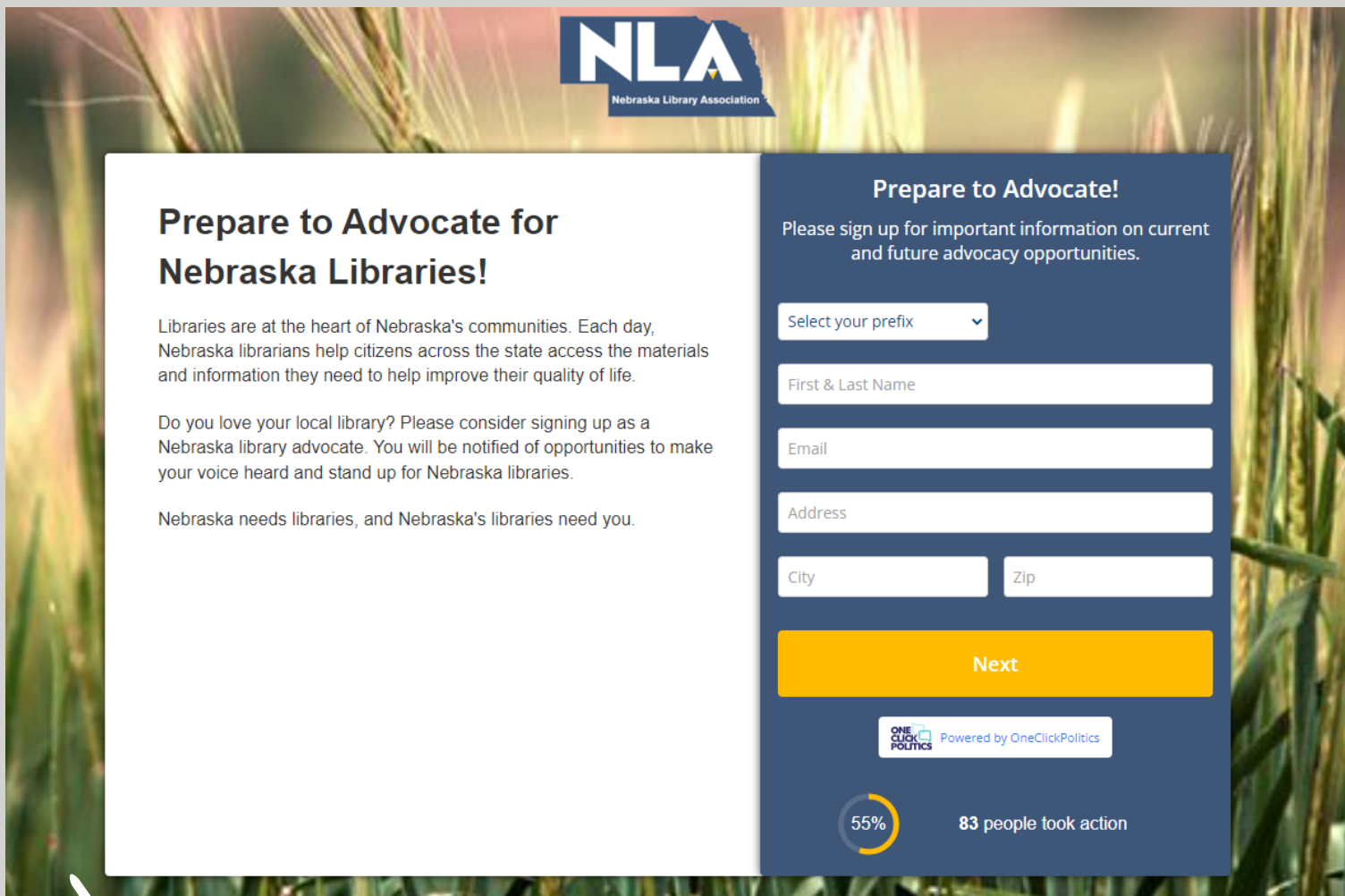
There is good reason that Nebraska's current law has been in place for decades. There is no need to escalate challenges concerning library collections to attempts to prosecute teachers and librarians on obscenity charges. Teachers and librarians serve their schools and communities within ethical and professional standards. Let's not put a target on the back of teachers, librarians, and school administrators.

Concerns about library and other educational materials can be and are addressed by the policies and procedures that schools and public libraries have in place for response to challenges. Those policies and procedures are in place where they should be - at the local level with the school and the public library. Escalating a challenge to law enforcement with the threat of criminal prosecution isn't needed or justified. *(Continued on next page)*

(Continued): In my many years working with Nebraska libraries and schools, I've come to appreciate the service, talent, and dedication of school and public librarians as well as many other educational professionals and workers. Instead of exposing teachers and librarians to the threat of criminal penalties, let's instead recognize them for their dedication and service and for the contributions they make for the education of our children. Nebraska is fortunate to have outstanding schools and libraries.

I urge the Judiciary Committee to not advance LB441.

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK ADVOCACY CHALLENGE



NLA
Nebraska Library Association

Prepare to Advocate for Nebraska Libraries!

Libraries are at the heart of Nebraska's communities. Each day, Nebraska librarians help citizens across the state access the materials and information they need to help improve their quality of life.

Do you love your local library? Please consider signing up as a Nebraska library advocate. You will be notified of opportunities to make your voice heard and stand up for Nebraska libraries.

Nebraska needs libraries, and Nebraska's libraries need you.

Prepare to Advocate!

Please sign up for important information on current and future advocacy opportunities.

Select your prefix


First & Last Name

Email

Address

City Zip

Next

 Powered by OneClickPolitics

55% **83 people took action**

Help us reach our goal of **150** Nebraska Library Advocates during **National Library Week** (April 23-29)! Our new online advocacy tool, **OneClick Politics**, keeps library advocates in the loop when it's time to stand up for libraries, library workers, and library users.

HOW IT WORKS:

- Sign up as a library advocate [here](#) or by clicking on the photo above.
- When it's crucial to contact your state or federal representative, we'll send you a message with clear instructions and easy communication (never spam).
- Encourage your neighbors to advocate, too!



VOTING ENDS ON APRIL 15!

Submit your student readers' votes for the 2022-23 nominees at goldensower.org



GOLDEN SOWER ANNOUNCEMENTS

VOTE FOR 2022-23 NOMINEES BY APRIL 15!

Educators, vote for your students' favorite 2022-23 Golden Sower titles on their behalf by April 15, 2023. The nominees and voting process can be found at goldensower.org.

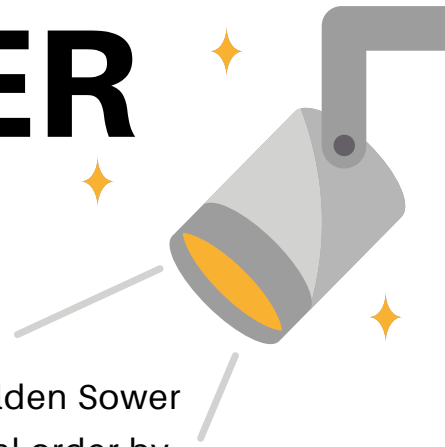


SEEKING VOLUNTEERS TO WRITE MANUAL PAGES

We're seeking volunteers to write original discussion questions, vocabulary words/definitions, and puzzles for the 2023-24 nominees. Please contact Dr. Sara Churchill to volunteer. Pages are due by July 1.

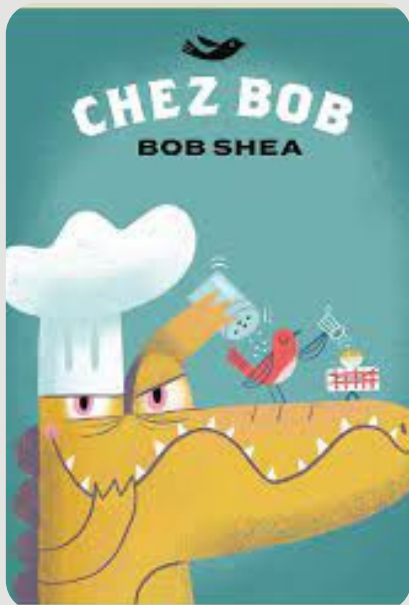


GOLDEN SOWER SPOTLIGHT



Each month, all year long, we'll spotlight a 2023-2024 Nebraska Golden Sower nominee from each category in the NLA e-newsletter! In alphabetical order by title, we'll share a synopsis of the Picture Books, Chapter Books, and Novels that Nebraska's young readers will enjoy during the 2023-24 school year.

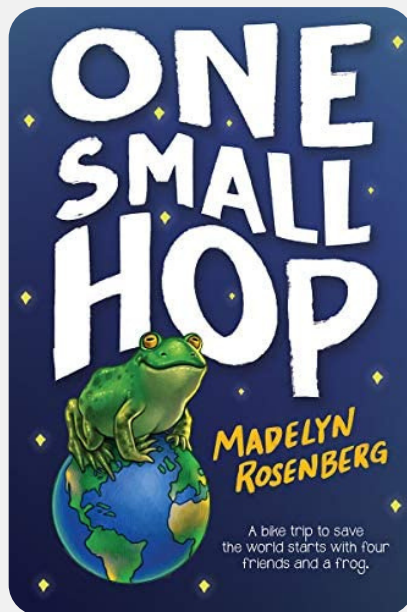
Picture Book



Chez Bob
by Bob Shea

Welcome to Chez Bob, which seems like a real restaurant... until you realize... it's on an alligator's NOSE! Comic genius Bob Shea cooks up a tasty tale that proves anyone, even hungry alligators, can have a change of heart and learn to be a good friend.

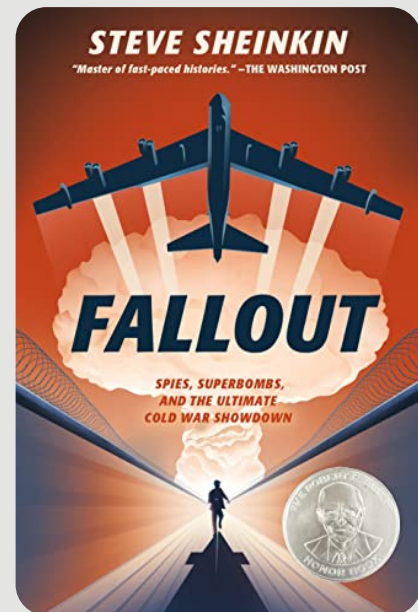
Chapter Book



One Small Hop
by Madelyn Rosenberg

Perfect for fans of Carl Hiaasen's classic *Hoot*, this humorous adventure story set in a not-so-distant future celebrates the important differences we can make with small, brave acts.

Novel



Fallout: Spies, Superbombs, and the Ultimate Cold War Showdown
by Steve Sheinkin

As WWII comes to a close, the U.S. and the Soviet Union emerge as the two greatest world powers. The Cold War game culminates in the Cuban Missile Crisis, the world's close call with the third—and final—world war.

NEBRASKA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION



2023 Legislative Report Card

Bill

Description

Stance & Status

LB71

Change provisions relating to parental involvement in and access to learning materials in schools

NLA supports the Nebraska School Librarians Association (NSLA) concerning the availability of curriculum and content to all students.



LB374

Adopt the Parents' Bill of Rights and Academic Transparency Act

Censors books and information, burdening school staff with the expectation of reviewing every material in the school library.



LB412

Provide powers for the Public Service Commission under the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Act

Allocates ARPA broadband money to unserved and underserved areas of the state, especially in rural areas of Nebraska.



Bill**Description****NLA's Stance****LB441**

Change provisions relating to obscenity

Censors legally protected information and burdens tax payers and the courts for the unwarranted prosecution of library professionals, contributing to the shortage of qualified librarians and educators who will no longer feel safe working in Nebraska.

**LB635**

Provide requirements regarding access to digital and online resources provided for students by school districts, schools, and the Nebraska Library Commission

Encourages the censorship of important academic content while wasting taxpayer and state funds by increasing technology costs to schools and the Nebraska Library Commission.

**LB683**

Create the Nebraska Broadband Office and provide duties

Improves and maintains broadband access across Nebraska.

**LB722**

Provide authority for the Public Service Commission regarding construction of broadband or other telecommunications infrastructure

Improves and maintains broadband access across Nebraska.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Host a Librarians & Libations Happy Hour in your community!

Want to host an NLA happy hour in your part of the state? Contact the Communications Committee and we will help you advertise!



Email nlacommunications@nebraskalibraries.org.

Tiny & Mighty Interest Group

Next meeting:

Tues., April 18, 2023 at 10 a.m. CDT
nlatiny&mighty@nebraskalibraries.org

Save the Date: C&U/TRST Spring Meeting

The NLA College & University Section / Technical Services Round Table Joint Spring Meeting will be held on **Friday, May 19, 2023**, at **Central Community College** in **Columbus, NE**.

The conference theme is **Open to the Challenge**: Nebraska Libraries Respond to Our Current Environment.

Registration information and more details coming soon.

Mark your calendar for the PLTS Spring Meeting!

The Public Library & Trustee Section (PLTS) presents two opportunities to meet Nebraska's regional and statewide library systems.

April 11: Meet the Nebraska Library Commission in Lincoln from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

April 11: Meet your regional library system via Zoom from 1 - 3 p.m.

Follow NLA!



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Interest Groups

Tiny & Mighty

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Diversity

Lane Gibson

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Interested in committee leadership? Contact [Holle](#).

WE'RE ALL EARS!

Email nlacommunications@nebraskalibraries.org to submit your news, announcements, action items, and stories! Submissions can be placed in the newsletter and on NLA social media.

