

**Three Rivers Library  
System  
Annual Report**

**Fiscal Year  
2019-2020**

# From the director:

During the first eight months of the fiscal year, the Three Rivers Library System's director was Dr. Eric Jones. He was an active advocate for the system, as he developed connections with the Nebraska Department of Corrections; he explored marketing opportunities with Nebraska tourism departments; he created new informational flyers; he offered a copyright presentation at the Youth Services Retreat; he took part in an interview with the Central Community College Library students; and he actively promoted the services of the system throughout his daily interactions.

Eric provided several valuable workshops and educational opportunities to the libraries in the system. Some of these continued education training sessions were WordPress, Customer Service relationships, E-Rate, Digital Literacy, and, of course, Summer Reading workshops. He also left numerous notes detailing the ideas he was developing that he felt would provide beneficial information to the region's librarians.

He took part in some personal continued educational experiences. Eric was a participant and presenter at the Nebraska Library Association Conference. He attended the Plum Creek Literature Festival in Seward.

Much of his time was spent interacting with librarians. He offered several consultations via telephone, email, and in person. He spent time with the new directors in the region to help them with the transition. In addition to the in-depth training and communication he offered in person, he followed up with the new directors with Zoom meetings to keep the connection open. This allowed them the confidence to do the position with the knowledge that he was there to help guide them as needed.

I accepted the position starting in March of 2020 following Eric's retirement. The first two weeks started out fantastic, as I hit the ground running. I visited 13 libraries in those first two weeks, traveling over 1,000 miles. I started filling up a notebook with thoughts and ideas of how I could make a difference.

Of course, all of the physical, in-person interactions came to a screeching halt due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Everyone, myself included, was unsure of how to proceed. As schools and businesses closed, libraries followed suit to ensure the safety of staff and patrons. This stopped my travels, but it did not stop my communication.

I started a Facebook group to help build communication and interaction between the librarians of the region. There are over 60 members so far, and it has been quite active. I feel this is a great tool to enhance the camaraderie between librarians, as it is the perfect platform to ask questions, share ideas, and offer support. I am always amazed at how creative, giving, and kind librarians can be.

# More from the director:

Many hours of conversation have been conducted with my cell phone. Although this can not compare to meeting with librarians in person, this has been a delightful alternative.

It has been fun and interesting to connect with many of the librarians in the region. In spite of having been closed to the public, most have been busier than ever. As we all know, there are many behind-the-scenes tasks that often get put to the back burner in order to best serve the communities. Librarians have stepped up to take care of those tasks, such as weeding, painting, cleaning, reorganizing, and any number of chores that always need done.

The monthly Zoom meetings that I started back in May of 2018 took on new meaning. Many librarians grew to appreciate the communication, as this was a great venue to learn from one another in these uncertain times. The monthly meetings changed to weekly meetings, as attendance and communication never wavered. I intentionally altered the day of the week and time of day for these meetings in order to allow everyone the opportunity to attend as their schedules would allow. There were many positive comments about the meetings, as everyone appreciated seeing the faces and hearing the voices amidst the isolation.

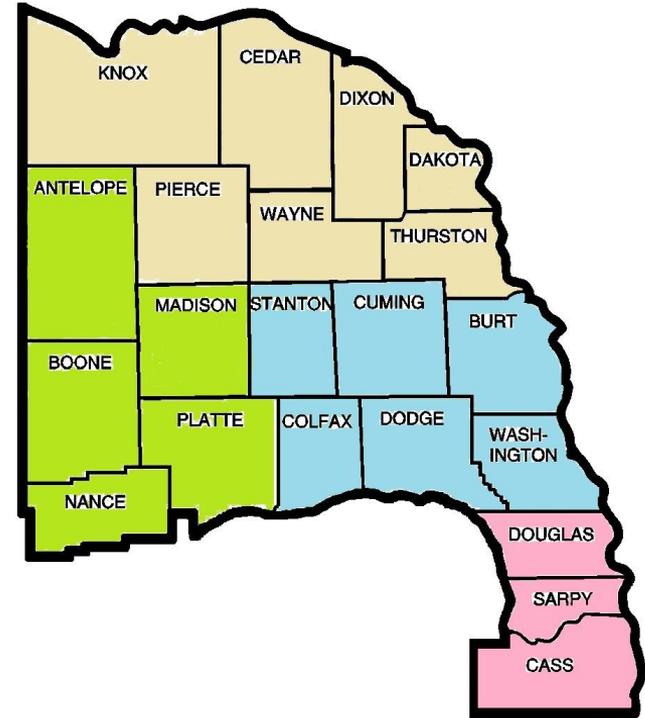
My notebooks continue to fill up with thoughts and ideas. I spent time reviewing the notes, reports, and documents of my predecessors. I watched many webinars and educational videos. I read several library-related articles. I followed many library groups on social media. I read the email interactions between librarians on various listservs. There is no end to the amount of valuable information available, and it can easily become overwhelming. Who would have guessed that the hottest topics of conversation in 2020 would be quarantining materials, hand sanitizers, masks, plexiglass shields, and social distancing?!

Ultimately, the last of the fiscal year and the position have not evolved as I had envisioned at all. However, as with nearly every situation, there are bright spots if only a person looks. Had I not been forced to stop traveling, I would have never found the time to explore the information left by my predecessors, and what a shame it would have been to have missed out on their experience, knowledge, and wisdom. Although I have not yet been able to physically visit many of the wonderful libraries in the region, I have gotten to connect with the hearts of several of the libraries -- the librarians. I value the connections that have been made, and these will make the in-person visits even more meaningful, as it will be exciting to put faces with the voices and thoughts from the numerous conversations.

In spite of the topsy-turvy world we have all been experiencing, I have to say that I absolutely love my new position so far. There are no better people in the world than librarians, and I cherish every single interaction. I hope the next fiscal year is outstanding, as I am looking forward to venturing out and about in the world again. I am eager to visit all of the libraries and librarians. I have lots of workshops, training, and continued education ideas bouncing around that are ready for an outlet. Here is to the new fiscal year, 2020-2021!

# Who We Serve:

- 95 public libraries and branches with over 480,000 registered borrowers in 85 communities
- 25 academic libraries from more than 20 postsecondary institutions
- 419 private and public-school libraries
- 48+ special and institutional libraries



# 2019-2020 TRaiLS Board of Directors

- ★ Jennifer Norton
  - Neligh Public Library
    - President
- ★ Rosa Schmidt
  - Oakland Public Library
    - Vice President
- ★ Tina Walker
  - Keene Memorial Library
    - Secretary
- ★ Dave Graber
  - Wayne State College
    - Treasurer

- ★ Megan Tomasiewicz
  - Lied Tekamah Public Library
- ★ Gretchen Long
  - Omaha Nation Public Schools
- ★ Karen Drevo
  - Norfolk Public Library
- ★ Crys Bauermeister
  - Pierce High School
- ★ Bob Parsons
  - Laurel Community Learning Center

# TRaiLS Staff

## **Tammi Thiem**

- Executive Director
- [Tammi.Thiem.TRLS@gmail.com](mailto:Tammi.Thiem.TRLS@gmail.com)

## **Chelsea Morlan**

- Library Services Assistant
- [trls.assistant@gmail.com](mailto:trls.assistant@gmail.com)

# TRaiLS System Peer Coordinators (SPCs)

SPCs host DiSPEL meetings, meet with local libraries, host periodic video sessions for idea sharing and problem solving.

## **Lisa Macke**

- Director at Creighton Public Library
- Counties Include: Knox, Cedar, Dixon, Dakota, Thurston, Wayne, Pierce

# Continuing Education Events

## Summer Reading Programs

2 face-to-face sessions; combined 26 attendees.

## STEM in the Library Workshop

1 face-to-face sessions; combined 13 attendees.

## Wordpress Skills Workshop

1 face-to-face sessions; combined 8 attendees.

## Customer Service Workshop

1 face-to-face sessions; combined 15 attendees.

E-Rate Workshop *with the Nebraska Library Commission.*

## Transforming Teen Services:

Computational Thinking, Connected Learning, and YOU! *By Laura England-Biggs and Sally Snyder.*  
2 face-to-face sessions.

The background of the slide features a bokeh effect with numerous out-of-focus light spots in shades of orange, yellow, and pink, set against a soft, light blue gradient background.

# 25

libraries were reaccredited in the 2019  
cycle.

# Scholarships

*The TRaiLS Continuing Education Scholarship Fund promotes attendance of librarians, library staff, and trustees at local, state, regional, and national continuing education and networking events.*

## \$6,270

Awarded in continuing education scholarships

## Scholarship awardees used funds to assist with attendance at:

- ❑ PLA Biannual
- ❑ Computers in Libraries
- ❑ Equity in Action Online Training
- ❑ Annual Youth Services Retreat
- ❑ YALSA's 2019 Young Adult Services Symposium

## Humanities Scholarship

TRaiLS instituted a new scholarship opportunity, which allocates money to pay the speaker's fee for the Humanities Nebraska organization at our member libraries. So far, we have awarded \$100.

# Lending Services

The Three Rivers Library System has continued to use  as our lending system.

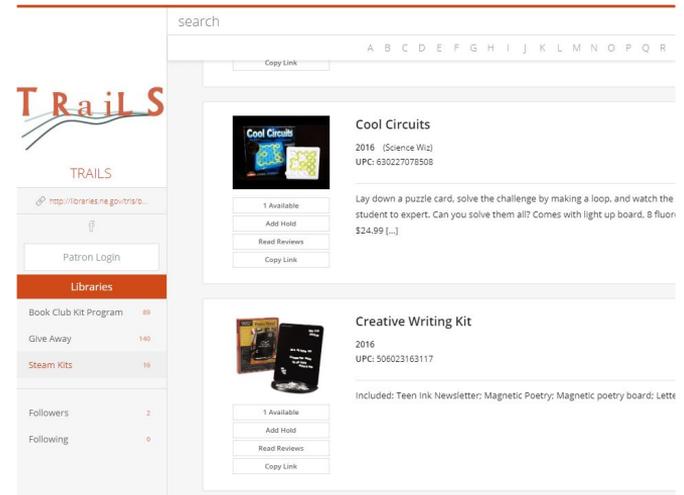
## Book Kit Program

- 90 titles available to borrow.

## STEAM Kit Program

- 16 items available to borrow

Visit [trails.libib.com](http://trails.libib.com) to view our selection.



The screenshot shows the TRAILS website interface. On the left is a navigation menu with the TRAILS logo and a list of categories: Book Club Kit Program (89), Give Away (140), Steam Kits (16), Followers (2), and Following (0). The main content area features a search bar and a list of items. Two items are visible: 'Cool Circuits' (2016 Science Wiz, UPC: 630227078508) and 'Creative Writing Kit' (2016, UPC: 506023162117). Each item has a 'Copy Link' button and a '1 Available' status. The 'Cool Circuits' item includes a description: 'Lay down a puzzle card, solve the challenge by making a loop, and watch the student to expert. Can you solve them all? Comes with light up board. 8 floor \$24.99 [...]'.

# Lending Distribution

37 system members were served in the last year spanning across the system.

573 copies from our Book Kit Program were lent out to the system members.

2 items from our STEAM Kit Program were lent out to system members.



This map shows the libraries and schools that have borrowed book kits during the fiscal year.

# Communication Presence

The newsletter, *TRaiLS*, is issued six times a year.

The current issues is always featured on our website at <http://libraries.ne.gov/trls/services/trls-newsletter/> and averages about 140 views per issue.

The website is updated with information regarding upcoming events and relevant library news. In the 2019-2020 fiscal year is was viewed 4,811 times.