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MPLA Executive Board Meeting
November 5, 2003
North Dakota Board Report

Students from across North Dakota were recently honored at an awards ceremony for their efforts in the 2003 Letters About Literature Essay Contest. Nearly 500 students from across the state took part in this year's event co-sponsored by the North Dakota State Library, North Dakota Center for the Book, and the Weekly Reader Corporation. Fargo North Junior Abby Swegarden's essay won national honors in the 2003 Letters About Literature Level III essay competition for her letter to late poet and novelist Sylvia Plath. This is the first year that a student from North Dakota has taken national honors. Swegarden will receive a \$500 cash award from the weekly Reader Corporation for her winning entry. This is the ninth year the State Library and North Dakota Center for the book have sponsored Letters About Literature.

Co-authors John Thompson and Paula Crain-Grossinger were on hand to talk about and sign their book *Home In One Piece* at a recent North Dakota State Library sponsored open house. Thompson had been injured in a farm accident and both his arms were reattached. His ordeal is recounted in the book *Home In One Piece*. Other activities at the event included an outdoor story time and children's book giveaway provided by the North Dakota Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center. Debi Rogers and Sue Bicknell provided Celtic music and photographs by former North Dakota artist, Sarah E. Oliveira were featured in an art show. State Library staff members provided tours and explained information services.

Years of planning and persistence paid off for the Mandan Public Library and staff this summer with the dedication of a new library. The library is located in the former Northern Pacific Railway Reigh House built in 1911. Since June 2002, the library raised over \$40,000 from private donors for the building project. An additional \$150,000 was gained through the sale of land adjacent to the former library building. Customer visits have increased 100 percent over the old facility! Special collections include the Teddy Roosevelt Presidential Library, train collection emphasizing the Northern Pacific Railway, and Lawrence Welk memorabilia complete with bubble machine and musical spoons. Director Thom Hendricks notes that numerous pieces of furniture were purchased on Ebay.

Recent remodeling projects have been completed at the Lisbon and Minnewauken Public Libraries. The Lisbon Public Library added a new heating system and ADA-compliant ramps and lifts in addition to bringing the building up to fire code standards. The Minnewauken Library purchased and remodeled a building with grant money. They report that now they have windows in their library! An Internet center and a tourist information center are now located in the new facility.

Authors Cathy Langemo and JoAnn Winistorfer presented a seminar on family history writing at the Garrison Public Library. They wrote *Tracing Your Dakota Roots: A Guide to Genealogical Research in the Dakotas*. Oral interviewing techniques, approaches for writing a history, and organizing materials were discussed at the seminar. Cathy was honored as the recipient of the 2003 Communicator of Achievement Award from the North Dakota Professional Communicators. The annual award honors recipients for accomplishments in the communications field, service to the community, and contributions to the organization which is affiliated with National Federation of Press Women.

Librarian retirements include Carmae Dvorak from St. Patrick's Catholic School in Dickinson, Bertha Barbot from Little Flower Elementary School in Rugby, Betsy Porter from Bismarck Public Library, and LeaRae Espe from Bottineau Public Schools.

Mark Bowman died in Sioux Falls after a long battle with cancer. Before taking a job with Siouxland Libraries, Mark served as Head of Technical Services at the North Dakota State Library from 1988-1998 and was an active member of NDLA.

The Minot Public Library finished the seventh consecutive year of the annual Book Buddy Program. Elementary students who are recommended by local public school teachers are paired with a book buddy during the summer months in conjunction with the Summer Reading Program. Book buddies come in all shapes and sizes from teenagers to retired school teachers. Twice a week the buddies meet at the library while the student reads to their book buddy. Paulette Nelson, children's librarian says that everyone benefits. The students retain their reading skills over the summer and the volunteer book buddies have a sense of accomplishment in helping someone learn to read and retain those skills.

Bismarck, Fargo, and Minot Public Libraries were designated as members in the Foundation Center's Cooperating Collections Network. There are over 150 cooperating collections nationwide. Established in 1956, the Foundation Center is an independent national service organization with the mission to foster a public understanding of the foundation field. The Center does this by providing print, CD-Roms, and online resources to help grantseekers identify appropriate funders and develop targeted proposals. The FC Search, a CD-Rom, brings together information in one place contained in many of the directories published by the Foundation Center. This makes FC Search the best resource available on private funding sources. The FC Search CD-Rom is networked on library computers. Foundation Center librarian Erika Wittlieb demonstrated the FC Search and portions of the Foundation Center website at the three North Dakota participating libraries. The program was presented to both staff employees and the general public.

Assistant State Librarian Cynthia Larson reports that the North Dakota State Library received a 5% cut from the general operating budget for the biennium 2003-2005. Those cuts were dispersed evenly over the entire budget, but salaries and state aid took a larger cut.