LINCOLN
City Libraries

Vision: LCL: Literacy, Community, and Lifelong learning

Mission: Lincoln City Libraries provides access to information, ideas, books and lifelong learning opportunities that inform, enrich and empower every individual in our diverse community.

Priorities:
1. Maximizing Access
2. Communicating our Offerings
3. Strengthening our Potential
4. Growing our Support

Director's Report for October 2026

- We have paused the search for the Gere-South Manager, after two postings these past few months. Our plan is to resume it in mid-winter, and in the meantime, Library Services Supervisor Paden Hardy and Librarian Casey Taylor are fulfilling interim responsibilities. Assistant Director Jodene Glaesemann is also onsite 4 days a week to provide managerial help. Thanks to our G-S team for stepping up and continuing to provide great service and teamwork during this period.

- All windows at Bethany Branch have been replaced with higher efficiency windows, and with moderate disruption to service. Story times and the weekly Book Talk were moved to Anderson Branch during the installation. We're planning on a similar upgrade project for the windows at South Branch this fiscal year, too.

- The Library received our new pickup truck for the Facilities Superintendent a few weeks ago. We're using FY 2025-2026 dollars to cover that cost (approx. $51,000), and we'll budget a monthly amount to Fleet Services to cover the cost for replacement 8-10 years down the road.

- LCL is investing in a new software for managing and tracking incident reporting. As mentioned at our October Board meeting, a new professionally designed platform will allow us to save a lot of time searching and reporting, and the intent is to give better access to incident and banning information to managers. We expect to implement Incident Tracker this winter. Our Virtual Services and City Information Services teams were part of the review process.

- The One Book One Lincoln author event at Lincoln High drew 250 attendees on October 20. Special thanks to moderator Jen Jackson for her comfortable conversation with Bruce Holsinger. OBOL takes a lot of work behind the scenes every year and we couldn't do it without our talented and dedicated staff, and community volunteers who give so many hours of their time. Now, on to next year!

Central Library Update:

- The GMP has been negotiated, with the final construction price at $44,148,159. The overall project budget is currently $60.4M. Many thanks all involved to get to this point including the City

and Library teams, the Negotiating Team, Project Control, BVH, Sampson, and our City Law (Jocelyn Golden) for their steadfast work to arrive at this point. It was certainly a milestone that is timely and nice to have completed, allowing for bids to be finalized and demo/construction to begin.

- Reminder: the groundbreaking event, or "Project Kickoff and Name Unveiling" is set for this week—Thursday, November 19, 10am, at the future library site. We'll hold the news conference/celebration inside the building, in the central core area. Sampson Construction, City Comms, and LCL are jointly coordinating it. It will be livestreamed and recorded courtesy of LNKTV. Please invite others to celebrate, too. We do expect a nice crowd.

- Time lapse cameras for the project will be placed in 2-3 locations, offering different perspectives including directly north, east, and possibly in the interior, too.

- Fundraising: A good month has produced new pledges of +$500,000, pushing us to about $25M overall. I expect the Furnishings, Fixtures, and Equipment (FF&E) phase to cost higher than our original budget target of $2M, and we may raise the goal to cover that increase. Additionally, we'll seek fundraising for public art and for growing the endowment for the central library.

- The lease agreement with the Mill Coffee is completed, and both UNL and KZUM agreements are near the finish line. I'll share more at the Board meeting on where we're at with them and the project timing when we go before City Council for approval.

Examples of the Strategic Plan in action:

- Jessica S. (Walt) wrote, "A college-aged customer checking in for a reserved study room stopped by the circulation desk to ask about the whiteboards she had noticed in the study rooms. She wanted to confirm whether they were now a permanent addition to all of Walt's study rooms. I confirmed that whiteboards would be available in all study rooms, much to her delight. She shared that this was a resource she had been needing to support her studies and expressed how useful and convenient the addition would be. Her positive feedback highlights how thoughtful improvements to library spaces and amenities can directly support customers' learning needs and enhance their overall library experience."

- Lisa W. (Walt) reported, "I helped a kindergartener find books. When he said 'I can't read,' his mom said, 'Let say, I'm learning to read.' He was excited to find some first readers that had sight words that he already knew how to read."

- Jessica S. at Walt shared, "A regular customer visited the circulation desk to share how much she enjoys the library's book bundles. She expressed interest in a possible bundle featuring topics such as body positivity, how bodies work, and diversity, explaining that her twin preschoolers were beginning to ask questions about where babies come from. I introduced her to the new Custom Reading List Request Form on the library website and demonstrated how to access it. I explained that once she receives her personalized reading list, she can place holds on the titles she is interested in, allowing her to create a customized book bundle. The customer was delighted to learn about this service and expressed several times that she had no idea this option was available. She was especially excited about the ability to specify nonfiction materials, select age ranges, and include additional notes to personalize her requests. She left feeling pleased and enthusiastic, sharing that she planned to submit a request from home soon. This interaction highlighted the value of promoting library resources and providing personalized reading support to families as their children's interests and questions evolve."

- Vicki C. (Walt) shared, "On 10/9, in collaboration with Humanities Nebraska, Walt hosted a program with Dr. Tyler White of the University of Nebraska's Political Science Department. Dr White was to be the moderator of the Governor's Lecture on Humanities featuring a discussion with Nathaniel Philbrick' about his Revolutionary War Trilogy. Dr. White engaged the audience, outlining major points in Philbrick's works, and also used this forum to distill questions to be asked during the moderated program. This collaboration was very successful and it was suggested to offer a 'pre-program' at the library again next year before the Governor's lecture at the Lied Center. 27 members of the community attended."

- Megan W. (Walt) also shared, "On 10/21, a patron was checking out her books and gestured to the horror display Lisa had just put up. 'Whoever did that, let them know it's awesome! I just got three books from that display alone.' This patron also took a picture of the Halloween display behind the circ desk so she could choose more books later on."

- Several staff submitted session proposals which were accepted by the NLA/MPLA conference planning committee and presented during conference, including:

    - Wyatt P. organized a four-hour preconference titled "Advocacy in Action" and arranged for Amelia Aldred, Deputy Director of the American Library Association's State and Local Advocacy office, to speak, as well as members of NLA's Advocacy Committee and speakers from MPLA. One attendee wrote, "It was very well done, and great having the different perspectives."

    - Shannon K. presented on "LEGOs in the Library" and provided scalable options for LEGO-based programming in libraries using Walt's success as a an example.

    - Jodene G. and Wyatt P. presented "Staff Innovation Grants: An Internal Grant with External Results." One attendee wrote, "Love the idea that was shared, plus the practicalities about how they went about it, plus the lessons learned over the years. Super helpful and would love to try this at our library!"

    - Wyatt P. also organized and led a session titled "NLA Advocacy Committee Updates."

- October has traditionally been a busy month for outreach at the Northeast Service Unit, and that trend continued in 2026. NESU Librarian Karrie S. kicked off outreach for the month on October 1 with her monthly visit to Project Future. She provided a storytime session to 20 children. On October 6, NESU Manager Kim S. accompanied Adult Services Coordinator LeeAnn S. to the City-County Building. They promoted the educational database LinkedIn Learning to 20 City and County employees, and they registered several of them for library cards. Nancy E. made her monthly visit to Behaven on October 15 where she presented storytime to 14 children.

- Outreach efforts kicked into high gear later in the month with NESU staff participating in a total of six "trunk-or-treat" events. At each site, NESU employees handed out candy and bookmarks for the kids to color. To promote the library, the back side of each bookmark listed the upcoming events at Anderson Branch Library.

- Tracy B. of NESU reported: Jen J. [BMPL] and I hosted a hands-on cuneiform program in partnership with UNL's Anthropology Department (Katelyn McMullen, Bailey Barnard, and an intern). They brought thirteen original cuneiform tablets, which we displayed in a glass-and-wood case Jen borrowed from

our Heritage Room. They also brought modern replicas of tools from the period: wooden styluses and cylinder seals, the personal "signature" stamps people rolled across wet clay and often wore on a cord around the neck. There was also a cast replica tablet, similar in weight and texture, so everyone could hold and handle one. After a brief history and slide show, each attendee shaped their own tablet from air-dry clay; coloring sheets, colored pencils, and markers were also available. 24 participants, a great turnout for a Sunday afternoon downtown.

- Nancy E. wrote on 10/05/2026, "Today on her way out of the library, an elderly patron said Sara B. just saved her life. She needed to make an appointment at the DMV to update her driver's license. She said she had just sat for four hours at the DMV office to find out that she needed to visit a library to make an appointment. She came into Anderson and asked Sara for help. Sara was able to help her by scanning in all the info she needed to send and update to the DMV, and pay for the updating of her license too. The lady was so relieved and said that Sara made her stress level go down by being so helpful. She said that she was so happy she was a member of the library and said we knew what good customer service was! Kudos to Sara!"

- Karrie S. (NESU) reported: "I was on vacation for our monthly Teen Advisory Board meeting at Anderson Branch. Kolette S. led the group of 8. Together, they designed a TAB volunteer t-shirt, and Kolette is going to make each member one. They can wear these t-shirts when they volunteer at library events and maybe if they wear them to school, other kids will ask about TAB!"

- Heritage Room news: Lisa Knopp was the author for an Oct. 4 Ames Reading Series event in the HR and 18 people attended. Lunch at the Library on Oct. 7 featured Keith Ludden and 20 people attended. Curator Deb A. was on 10/11 First at Four on Oct. 21 with Leslie Huerta (of NLHA and Francie & Finch bookstore) to talk about the Heritage Room and the Adult Spelling Bee.

- From Polley Music librarian Scott S: "I met with the folks at Nanonation this month to talk about some potential hardware/software display solutions toward new ways of presenting music history resources once we move to the new Central Library. This project is still in the early stages of development, but I think we'll be able to come up with a great combination of a kiosk/website that will make Nebraska's own music history more accessible and relatable to everyone!"

- Vivian S. at Eiseley hosted a 100th Anniversary of Winnie the Pooh program that brought in 250 participants to celebrate the timeless bear and his storied friends.

- Pam C.'s (Eiseley) Family Storytime at Williams had more than 80 attendees for the month.

- Celeste W.'s Baby Storytime at Eiseley had 73 attendees. Maddie O'Malley's Wee Workouts had 106 and her Once Upon a Crime (Cornhusker Crimes) brought in 12 participants.

From Children's and Outreach:

- We are starting to see some slowdown on Bookmobile checkouts from some of our opening day collection, especially in the adult areas. A few items have been weeded so far. Items that remain popular are the OBOL nominees and titles that make the news or come recommended by media personalities. Word-of-mouth is also very influential at several of our communal-living stops.

- October included a couple special events and a lot of regular routes. October 1st was an especially busy day, with 75 visitors at Prairie Hill and 150 at Pioneers Park Movie Night.

- At Code Book Club we had 15 people who enjoyed looking through our collection. Most of them checked out a book or two.
- On October 14th we had good attendance at the Kindercare and Bennet stops, with 103 items getting checked out at Bennet that day.
- We had solid attendance at The Landing again this month, with several people picking up holds or browsing the shelves for something to check out.



Pumpkin Parade at Walt Branch

Ryan Wieber

11/16/2026