

## Nebraska In-Depth Evaluations

Five LSTA projects were selected for more in-depth evaluations for this report. One project per grant year was identified for in-depth evaluation and one multi-year project was selected. Three of the projects exemplify LSTA Technology related goals and two focus on LSTA Targeted Services goals.

### TECHNOLOGY:

FY1999 Saunders County Library Cooperative Automation Project  
[\$46,399 LSTA funds]

FY2000 One Library Consortium Automation System  
[\$67,000 LSTA funds]

FYs 1998-2001 HHS Library Technology Consortium Total for 5 years  
[\$83,235 LSTA funds]

### SERVICE:

FY1998 Department of Corrections Foreign Language and Cultural Studies  
materials [\$12,436 LSTA funds]

FY2001 Gibbon Getting Kids Started @ your library™  
[\$3,458 LSTA funds]

## Saunders County Library Cooperative Automation Project

This project related to Library Commission’s Long Range Plan Goal 2: New and innovative library service arrangements will be encouraged to provide efficient access to library and information services for Nebraskans.

Members of the Cooperative are: Ashland Public Library, Ceresco Community Library, Mead Public Library, Valparaiso Public Library, Wahoo Public Library, and Yutan Public Library

Ashland

Ceresco

Mead

Valparaiso

Wahoo

Yutan

**Saunders County Library Cooperative**

*This card can be used at these six libraries:*

<b>Ashland Public Library</b> 207 N. 15th Street (402) 944-7430	<b>Valparaiso Public Library</b> 300 W. 2nd Street (402) 794-6141
<b>Ceresco Library</b> 425 So. 2nd Street (402) 865-2112	<b>Wahoo Public Library</b> 627 N. Broadway (402) 443-3871
<b>Mead Public Library</b> 316 South Vine St. (402) 824-6605	<b>Yutan Public Library</b> 3rd & Vine Streets (402) 825-2111

The librarians and governing boards of the six public libraries in Saunders County recognized the advantages of joining together to share information, knowledge and to explore the future of library service. Saunders County has a population of 19,830 with 10,363 people living outside of a community supporting a public library. Working together the libraries could accomplish more, and sooner, than working individually. Prior to the project, only Wahoo Public Library had an automated catalog and circulation system. Wahoo Public Library and Ceresco Community Library were the only libraries offering Internet access for their patrons. The library director of the Wahoo Public Library stated that prior to the project she did not know how many public libraries there were in the county, let alone who the librarians were or what type of collections their buildings housed.

The “Greater Saunders County Interlocal Library Agreement” indicates the goals and direction of the Cooperative are to:

- Improve library services throughout Saunders County and the participating communities that are a part of this agreement.
- Make the most efficient use of resources and facilities that will best serve the population of the participating communities in the Greater Saunders County Area.
- Share existing and future library resources, skills, and expertise to better serve the population of participating communities in the Greater Saunders County Area.
- Make the maximum use of existing and future technologies to best assist the partnership in this agreement.
- Expand library resources and collections by providing members access to each other’s collections.
- Expand potential fund raising and technology grants by making joint application to obtain additional funds, resources, equipment, and collections.
- Explore innovative, creative, and new methods to accomplish the above stated goals.

*Accomplishments:*

Automation of the libraries’ catalog and circulation systems was a primary goal of the project. First, a Nebraska Library Commission staff member met with the six librarians to provide training in collection management. She also assisted each of the librarians in assessing their individual collections in preparation for automation. The Eastern Library System administrator attended many of the Cooperative’s meetings to assist the librarians in planning the project as well as to assist with the implementation of the steps described in the plan.

The Library Cooperative purchased computers and Follett Circ Plus and Catalog Plus software to automate the catalogs and circulation systems of five libraries. It also purchased Alliance Plus for the libraries to use in entering electronic records of their holdings.

Additionally, Internet access for the public is now available at each of the four libraries not previously offering the service.

The Saunders County Library Cooperative agreed to issue a county-wide library card that can be used at any of the six public libraries. The annual cost is \$10 per card. The funds gathered by

the libraries for the card are placed in the Saunders County Library Cooperative fund and used for maintenance of the equipment purchased through the LSTA grant. Approximately 300 cards have been sold per year, resulting in an annual income of \$3,000 for the Library Cooperative. In this way, people living outside of a community that provides funding for a library may receive library service through the purchase of a county-wide card, and have the added advantage of being able to use it at any of the six libraries. Citizens living within the town limits of the six communities are issued a county-wide card at no charge since they already provide direct tax support to their local library.

#### Library benefits:

- Valparaiso Public Library took the steps to become an accredited library. The librarian and trustees recognized the benefits accreditation, as well as the benefits of improved service provided to the community. Prior to the project, the library received no funds from the town budget. All funding came from the local Women's Club. As a result of participating in the Cooperative, the Valparaiso Public Library now has a budget from the town of \$13,755 [2000/2001 data].
- Library staff and boards have improved working relationships with others in the county, resulting in shared problem solving and a county-wide view of information needs.
- Increased county financial support to all six libraries.
- Improved access to technology.
- Improved skills, knowledge and abilities of library staff.

The Library Cooperative has a web page as a part of the overall Saunders County web page. The URL is: <<http://www.co.saunders.ne.us/saulib.htm>>

#### *Lessons Learned:*

The Library Cooperative is now a cohesive group. The librarians and board members attend monthly meetings and work together on the project, as well as on other items that are brought to the meeting by members. They share ideas and expertise, discussing possible approaches to specific situations as well as policy concepts other members may wish to introduce to their trustees. The librarians are comfortable calling each other between meetings for input and assistance as well.

The trustees are also working together with similar goals. One demonstration of this is the recent training activity provided to all the trustees of the county by Library Commission and regional library system staff.

The libraries have a new status in their communities and within the county. This project has brought publicity about the Cooperative's goals and services to the forefront of community awareness. Individuals are proud of the librarians' and trustees' forward thinking and planning and feel a sense of community pride for their accomplishments. The library local per capita income for each participating town (except Wahoo, the largest town) has increased since the Cooperative was established, indicating the increased awareness of local libraries by elected officials, especially in the five smaller communities.

Saunders county officials recognize the value of the members and the positive impact the Cooperative has had on each library. The county increased its annual funding for library service from \$900 to \$1250 for each library. While this is a relatively small amount of funds, it shows a commitment to the libraries, especially considering the current economy.

Automation of the libraries' catalogs and circulation systems allows the librarians to spend more time with their patrons as they no longer need to maintain antiquated manual systems. Community members are using the Internet terminals at the libraries, and it has become such a valued service that the librarians feel the citizens will never allow it to be taken away. This heightened awareness and use of the libraries also serves as strong arguments for the maintenance of each library's budget.

Citizens living outside of a community that provides funding for a library now have access to public library service from all six public libraries. The provision of library service to all residents of the county was one primary goal for the librarians involved in the project.

The monthly meetings helped keep everyone on task and offered an opportunity to discuss setbacks and possible solutions. Members kept an open mind and good attitude about changes needed and potential problems, due to the unique nature of the project.

Given the geographic location of the libraries, differing levels of existing hardware and expertise, and cost factors, technology solutions have been addressed through a combination of resources. These include the local Internet Service Provider, a technology consultant from Schuyler, consultation with staff from the Eastern Library System and the Nebraska Library Commission. It is a slow, sometimes painful process but one that is beginning to garner improvements.

## One Library Consortium Automation System



Norfolk (pop. 23,516) Public Library customers access information made possible by the LSTA funded **One Library** automation project

This project related to the NLC Long Range Plan Goal 2: New and innovative library service arrangements will be encouraged to provide efficient access to library and information services for Nebraskans, and Goal 3: Nebraskans will have access to information technology through library and information centers.

Consortium members: Columbus Public Library, Norfolk Public Library, Northeast Community College Library - Norfolk

Automation systems at the Consortium member's sites were at the end of their life cycles. Rather than purchasing and maintaining separate systems, the consortium saw the logic of combining effort and expense to purchase a shared system with a central server, saving each consortium member thousands of dollars.

The overall goal of the One Library project is to connect multi-type libraries making their individual holdings available online through the Internet. Serving as a model project, One Library will create an expandable infrastructure that will allow other libraries' records to be easily added to the database.

### *Accomplishments:*

After reviewing proposals submitted by library automation vendors, the Consortium selected the SIRSI automation system for the project. The libraries purchased hardware, software and peripherals to run the automation system at each of the sites.

The Columbus Public Library, Norfolk Public Library and Northeast Community College Library joined their catalogs and circulation data in May 2001. The server resides in the Norfolk Public Library, and the other two libraries connect to it using the Internet.

*Lessons Learned:*

The libraries moved from a DOS-based automated system to a Windows-based system, and patrons have noticed the improvement. The expanded searching capability of the new system is greatly appreciated and has improved service to patrons. Individuals are able to hot-link from a title search to a subject search with a click of the mouse, saving time and assuring more in-depth searching of the collections. The iBistro feature of the SIRSI Automated System allows patrons to view the book jackets of newly acquired titles and to gain bibliographical and critical review information about the new selections.

The response time and the dependability of the connection have been extremely high. Staff and patrons at the Consortium libraries are very pleased with the additional resources available to them. They are able to search the Web-based card catalog from home or office, and appreciate knowing if an item is available before traveling to the library that holds the title.

Consortium members have saved money through the project, as well. Columbus and Norfolk Public Libraries were each paying an annual system maintenance fee of about \$14,000. The libraries now each pay about \$7,000 for maintenance with the new SIRSI system.

Overlapping personnel costs have also been eliminated. Previously, each public library had a full-time staff member and whose time was dedicated to system management duties. The SIRSI automated system is housed at the Norfolk Public Library. To date, the Information Technology (IT) Department of the city of Norfolk has provided the maintenance and staff costs. The day may come when Consortium members will need to contribute an annual fee to help pay for the IT Department's time.

Soon after the implementation of SIRSI, the Norfolk and the Columbus Public Library included their newspaper obituaries on the same Website. This inclusion of similar services will eventually expand as time allows to include other features such as community resource files, local history indexes, and cemetery records.

Norfolk Community College Comments on the Project:

*Benefits of this project for Northeast Community College are – access to other librarians for assistance and discussion on services provided by the online catalog, the ability to search other libraries holdings while helping patrons in our library and offering availability of additional resources with one search -- in Norfolk, Community College patrons can easily obtain materials from Norfolk Public Library; being able to allow our patrons to search our holdings from any Internet access point has helped our library reach a long-term goal. Distance students benefit from the online catalog, because they can now search*

*for what we have in the library from their home locations. Future benefits include cooperative cataloging, continued assistance/brainstorming when necessary, expanding services through usernames and passwords for each user, Z39.50 capabilities for common database searching, resource sharing, possibly even shared collection development with other libraries in the consortium.*

*Difficulties for the Community College stem from migrating from the template driven data entry screens to full cataloging requirements. This has been resolved through staff training and cooperation between cataloging departments in the consortium. Implementation of special modules has been difficult, this is being resolved through continued support from the vendor and working together as consortia members.*

#### Norfolk Public Library Comments on the Project:

*The greatest difficulty was the realization that there was a difference between what we had been promised and what we actually received. The salesperson was selling a product that was several upgrades ahead of what the company was actually installing. Also, had it not been for the competency of the IT staff at the Norfolk Public Library, the installation would have been much more difficult because the SIRSI installation staff was not as helpful as we had expected. The staffs had to unlearn the “logic” of the old systems of software operation and relearn a new system. There were lots of, “The old way was easier!” These “problems” were especially noticeable in the initial stages. Staff was reluctant to change, but after operating in a new environment for some months, their worries have been relieved.*

#### **One Library Project Data**

Northeast Community College reported 173 hours from April to October 2001 for training, and faculty in-service sessions. These were for the Director’s time only in implementing this new service and sharing with campus groups. These numbers do not reflect staff training (formal and informal) for the Northeast Community College Library.

Information Technology (IT) staff at Norfolk Public Library put in over 790 hours of time from January 2001 to date. This included product demonstrations and evaluation, server analysis and installation, SIRSI software installation, training, meetings, support, wireless network research, firewall modifications, obituary record migration, Web page development, 3M Self Check support, installation of new peripheral equipment, etc.

A future goal of the project is to invite other libraries to join the Consortium, making even more titles easily available to patrons of all members, and to continue cost savings for member libraries.

## Health and Human Services (HHS) Library Technology Consortium



HHSS Library Technology Consortium Members

Table 23. LSTA Grants to HHS Project

Fiscal Year	LSTA Funds	Local Funds
<b>1998</b>	\$ 3,600	\$ 1,200
<b>1999</b>	\$ 26,625	\$ 8,875
<b>2000</b>	\$ 23,625	\$ 7,875
<b>2001</b>	\$ 29,385	\$ 9,797
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 83,235</b>	<b>\$ 27,747</b>

The HHS project related to Library Commission’s Long Range Plan Goal 5: All Nebraskans will have access to library and information services including persons with diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds; with disabilities; with limited functional literacy or information skills; having difficulty using a library; representing underserved urban and rural communities (including children from families with incomes below the poverty line).

Consortium members: Beatrice State Developmental Center, Grand Island Veterans Home, Hastings Regional Center, Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center – Kearney, Lincoln Regional Center, Norfolk Regional Center

The libraries of the Consortium serve persons with varied needs and challenges. The Regional Centers in Hastings, Norfolk and Lincoln provide indigent acute care and secure residential services for individuals diagnosed with mental health disabilities. The Beatrice State Developmental Center is a residential facility providing on-site intensive 24-hour rehabilitative and medical services to about 400 Nebraska citizens with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities. The Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center – Kearney houses adjudicated male juveniles committed to the Office of Juvenile Services by the juvenile courts for staff-secure residential custody. [The center] provides education and specialized treatment designed to meet the developmental needs of juveniles and to redirect their behavior. To live in the Grand Island Veterans' Home, veterans must have served in active duty during the war, lived in Nebraska at least two years, and be disabled.... Spouses of veterans and Gold Star Mothers and Fathers are eligible under similar requirements.

The Health and Human Services System (HHSS) had been challenged with providing integrated, efficient and cost effective library services to a diverse population. The changing populations served within each HHSS facility and limited funding, required that resources be shared and that innovative partnerships be formed to provide the services. The HHSS institutional libraries have an important role in improving the quality of life for persons served and in meeting their diverse and specialized needs. The project began with a planning grant which gave the librarians the opportunity to meet and work together to develop the best approach to meeting these challenges.

The goals of the Consortium, as stated in the 1999 Plan for Collaboration Through Technology were to:

- Promote communication among the libraries
- Promote resource sharing through interlibrary loan
- Reduce duplication of library materials
- Promote specialization of collections
- Improve quality of library services for special populations
- Improve quality of materials to support medical staff

*Accomplishments:*

The librarians applied for an LSTA implementation grant in 1998. Library Commission staff recommended the Consortium accept a planning grant for the first year of the project. The Consortium hired a consultant who met with them over the course of a year to assist them in appraising the libraries' current situation, needs, and potential for development and cooperation. From these meetings the Health and Human Services System Institutional Library Consortium "Plan for Collaboration Through Technology," dated April 1999, was developed. This plan has guided the Consortium through the project during the implementation years, funded with LSTA grants awarded in 1999, 2000 and 2001 (see Table 25 for funding amounts).

To help meet the goals of the Consortium, members agreed to purchase Follett Catalog Plus and Circulation Plus, and computers to run the automation systems, to acquire MARC records of the holdings of each library, and to provide Internet access for the residents or clients of each facility.

Training for staff to use the automation systems, and to train others in its use, was also a part of the project. The Consortium purchased Web Collection Plus to allow members to access each other's collections via the Internet in order to share resources.

Participating librarians hold regular meetings to update each other on the progress of the project, to discuss potential problems, and to share knowledge and expertise on other library issues. They now are a cohesive group and provide support to each other. Individually the libraries have gained status and appreciation from their agency staff and administration.

The automation of each library's catalog and circulation system has provided more accurate records of library holdings, a streamlined, automated method for collecting data and printing required reports of circulation of materials, and has reduced the amount of staff time needed for functions handled by the automation system. The librarians appreciated being able to use the system to compile bibliographies of library holdings related to particular topics. This is a quick and easy method to promote the use of library materials by producing printed lists of related titles to distribute at facility events.

The clients/patients/residents also use the computers for communication via e-mail, entertainment and creativity. The ability to maintain contact with friends and family members is greatly appreciated by residents and their loved ones. Residents often feel isolated from the world, and contact through personal messages, as well as the opportunity to visit sites on the World Wide Web, help them keep in touch with the world. Creating a greeting card may seem like a simple, unimportant task, but to many individuals in institutions it is an opportunity to create, express oneself, and to feel a connection to other people.

It was a requirement of the Consortium that to participate in the project each agency must have a staff member assigned to the library. The benefits in technology and expertise were strong incentives for each agency to retain that position in a time of budget cuts. This requirement of the Consortium encouraged Hastings Regional Center to assign a staff member to the library when the former librarian retired, and to ensure that the new librarian be certified through the Nebraska Library Commission Librarian Certification Program. The Beatrice State Developmental Center also filled the librarian position when the former staff member left, a result, at least in part, of the activities and perceived value of this HHSS Consortium.

#### *Lessons Learned:*

The 25% cash match requirement varied the timeframe for the purchase of hardware and software by the participants. Institutional support was forthcoming once the overall multiyear project approach was explained to agency directors.

A client of the Norfolk Regional Center wrote the following:

*The Internet in the library has meant so very much to me. In addition to the e-mail (my favorite) I have been cheered up, entertained, and amused by the things I've been able to get access to. The e-mail has made a total difference in my life. It has allowed me to reach out and get in touch with my children. That has made*

*a big difference in my attitude and recovery. Thank-you, library, for giving me a piece of home.*

The efforts of a resident worker at the Grand Island Veterans Home are bringing the circus to town. Through the use of the Internet connection, the resident contacted a number of different organizations that donate entertainment or other items. A circus has responded and will set up at the Veterans Home on the Fourth of July this summer at no charge to the agency or residents, a voluntary donation by the circus owners.

## Department of Corrections Foreign Language and Cultural Studies Materials

This service project related to Library Commission’s Long Range Plan Goal 5: All Nebraskans will have access to library and information services including persons with diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds; with disabilities; with limited functional literacy or information skills; having difficulty using a library; representing underserved urban and rural communities (including children from families with incomes below the poverty line).

The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services Libraries is the consortium that received and administered the LSTA grant. The Department of Corrections members include the Diagnostic and Evaluation Center in Lincoln, the Hastings Correctional Center, the Lincoln Correctional Center, the Nebraska Correctional Center for Women in York, the Nebraska Correctional Treatment Center in Lincoln, the Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility, the Nebraska State Penitentiary, and the Omaha Correctional Center

The population of the eight facilities totaled 3,109 inmates in 1998. The inmates possessed varying levels of education, represented different races and cultures, and ranged in age from thirteen to over sixty.

### Project Members and Their Service Populations:

Diagnostic and Evaluation Center - Lincoln (DEC)	297
Hastings Correctional Center (HCC)	175
Lincoln Correctional Center (LCC)	528
Nebraska Correctional Center for Women - York (NCCW)	183
Nebraska Correctional Treatment Center – Lincoln (NCTC)	88
Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility (NCYF)	80
Nebraska State Penitentiary (NSP)	1,062
Omaha Correctional Center (OCC)	696

### Reported Level of Completed Education:

0-8 years of education	12.5%
9-11 years of education	55.1%
12 years of education	28.3%
over 12 years of education	4.1%

### Race:

African American	30.5%
Asian	0.4%
Hispanic	8.6%
Native American	4.1%
White	56.3%
Other	0.03%

### Gender:

Male	93.0%
Female	7.0%

The goal of the project was to provide materials to inmates in languages other than English and to provide materials supporting cultures represented by the population of the facilities.

*Accomplishments:*

The librarians of each of the facilities conducted a foreign language survey to determine what language needs existed and which of those needs were currently being met by existing services. After meetings and discussions, the librarians created a list of recommended purchases for each facility.

The Department of Corrections acquired titles primarily in Spanish. Purchases included some self-help materials such as *Barron's Como Prepararse Para el GED* and *El GED Esencial* and other nonfiction titles such as *Grandes Momentos de la Historia de Mexico*. Fiction title purchases included sets of titles translated from the English to Spanish. Examples of sets purchased were ten titles by Stephen King, seven titles by Tom Clancy, and eleven titles by Danielle Steele.

Dictionaries and language tapes in Lakotah Sioux were purchased, as was a variety of materials about Native American people. Both fiction and nonfiction titles were purchased for each facility.

*Lessons Learned:*

The inclusion of materials in an inmate's first language, and/or about an inmate's culture, is a significant step for the Department of Correctional Services libraries. Previously, the facility libraries unintentionally excluded people due to the collections' narrower focus. One librarian stated that a major impact of the project is that the library now recognizes it is imperative to include all needs in collection management. The library must not only purchase nonfiction, fiction, and genre titles, but must also address language and cultural needs.

The librarian at the Nebraska State Penitentiary stated that the materials have all been used regularly. The westerns in Spanish have been the most popular at her library and are checked out again as soon as they are returned. The library has added titles, particularly westerns, as they are available in Spanish, and as the book budget allows. She also noted the library has begun a section of materials in Vietnamese, as requested by the inmates.

The librarian at the Lincoln Correctional Center agreed the Spanish language materials were desperately needed at the facility when they were purchased. The books met a growing need, and the library has added a limited number of titles to the collection since 1998.

The most significant problems related to this project are the ongoing need for materials in Spanish and Vietnamese and materials budgets have seen little increase in the last several years. These problems may not be addressed until the state budget difficulties have been alleviated.

The acquisition of language tapes in Spanish and in Lakotah has prompted interest in audio tapes teaching German and French. There is also interest in dictionaries and language grammar books for German and French.

Inmates from cultures other than Spanish-speaking or Native American have shown interest in a number of the materials. Individuals interested in learning more about a culture, or the language, are using the books and tapes for educational purposes.

## **Gibbon Public Library Getting Kids Started @ your library™**



Gibbon (pop. 1,759) Public Library – site of LSTA funded  
**Getting Kids Started @ your library™** project

This service project related to Library Commission's Long Range Plan Goal 5: All Nebraskans will have access to library and information services including persons with diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds; with disabilities; with limited functional literacy or information skills; having difficulty using a library; representing underserved urban and rural communities (including children from families with incomes below the poverty line).

Sub Goal 5c: Develop, maintain, and support library services to children and young adults.

Gibbon is located along Interstate 80, between Grand Island and Kearney. The town population is 1,759 a gain of 234 since the 1990 census. The library is open 29 hours a week. In 1998, at the request of the local Head Start organization, a special morning story time was started at the Gibbon Public Library. The success of this program prompted the Head Start staff and public library staff to consider a more extensive joint project. The opportunities to introduce children enrolled in Head Start to other aspects of library service, to continue their exposure to stories and story telling, and to assist in the children's development by providing education experiences via computer software were seen by both agencies as worthwhile goals. The partnership with Head Start guaranteed a regular number of children would attend the weekly sessions and learning could be ongoing because, for the most part, the same children would be involved throughout the school year.

Goals of the project were to provide all preschool children in the area with a positive library experience and to encourage them and their families to use the library and its many services. In addition the Gibbon Public Library wanted to establish a working partnership among Head Start and other preschool providers in the Gibbon community and the library.

*Accomplishments:*

In the summer of 2001, the library purchased two computers, educational software, an easel/storage cart, and Big Books for the project. Big Books are oversized copies of popular titles designed for use in the story time setting. The large size illustrations allow children a better view and keep them involved in the story.

Head Start holds a monthly “Family Night” for the entire family of the children in Head Start to get together to learn more about their children’s needs and activities. On September 1, 2001, “Family Night” was held at the public library so the family could be involved and could understand the library’s project. The computers and software were demonstrated to the parents, the Big Books were on display, and library staff presented a description of the project’s goals and activities. Parents without library cards were also encouraged to register for a card during the evening.

Following “Family Night” the public library introduced the programming aspect of the project. The Gibbon Head Start program involves 18 children. Every week a group of five of the children visits the library. One week they attend a story time session with the librarians. The next week they attend a story time, followed by a half hour of computer time. The librarians and Head Start teachers observed the children the first time they used the computers, and assigned appropriate educational software for that child to use throughout the year. Software included Reader Rabbit for Toddlers, Advanced Reader Rabbit, and other similar programs. At each computer session, two to three Head Start teachers join two to three Gibbon Public Library staff members to provide one-on-one attention for each child attending.

The first year of this project will end on May 7, 2002. The librarians have already begun planning to provide this program again next school year.

The eighteen children involved in the Head Start program in Gibbon visit the library on a rotating basis. Each child visits and receives computer and staff time about once every three weeks. The children have made good progress in learning the lessons the software is teaching. Their skills and abilities in using the computer mouse and the software have improved considerably during the course of the school year. Additionally, the experiences of visiting the library, attending story time, and having one-on-one contact with an adult during the computer time have resulted in marked progress in the children’s social skills, according to Head Start staff.

While this project was developed with the children in Head Start in mind, other groups in Gibbon benefit as well. Other preschool story times are held every week at the library, and children from the various day care centers in town attend. The Big Books may be used at this story time, and the computers have various software that provides the music for sing-alongs and

finger plays. To accommodate the additional story times and computer training sessions, the library extended its weekly hours by five, to include Thursday mornings.

This project has solidified a partnership with the Head Start staff. Weekly contact provides a valuable avenue for exchanging ideas and information about the program and about individual children's needs. The director of the Head Start program in Gibbon sends a weekly newsletter to the families of each of the eighteen children. This includes news about the library sessions, lists the children who attended each week, and talks about what they were working on during their computer time. This is also an effective way to keep the library in the parents' thoughts and encourages them to work with their children on the lesson for that week.

The computers purchased for this program are available for others to use outside story time when the library is open. The children enthusiastically enter the library every week and are eager for story time and for their computer instruction. The children see the library as an enjoyable place to be, and are likely to carry this attitude with them through life.

*Lessons Learned:*

Perhaps the biggest issue was coordination of the several projects on a weekly basis. The children's librarian started at the beginning of the project and marked a calendar throughout the school year with a schedule for visits and activities throughout the year. This allowed the planners to see how the entire project would work and ensured that each Head Start child and their families benefited as much as practicable.

This has been a very successful program with virtually no implementation problems. The children are enthusiastic each time they enter the library, and are eager to look for books as well as to use the computers. We hope the children's enthusiasm will result in their (and their families) continued use of the library's resources.

Library staff is already in the planning stages to offer this program to Head Start children for the next school year, continuing it beyond the LSTA funded time frame.