

Share Your Opinion at Your Library by Jill Owens

The library is embarking on an extensive strategic planning process and we want your opinions. A professional library consultant was engaged through the financial assistance of the Columbus Library Foundation. Through this process we will gain information to help us plan for the coming years.

One goal of creating a strategic plan is to tailor library services to best serve the needs of our community. Are we not filling a need that should be addressed? Are we spending a lot of human and financial resources working on something that isn't wanted or needed? Can we do things more efficiently or in a more patron-friendly way? How can we better arrange and staff our physical spaces? What needs to be in place, or groundwork laid, before changes can be made? These questions are only a small number of things that will be considered through this process.

A strategic plan will also be a requirement for libraries to have in the future as one piece of the accreditation guidelines. A library must be accredited to qualify for state aid and any state or federal grants administered through the Nebraska Library Commission. There is also a prestige factor to being accredited, and a library our size really should have this designation/standard of service unless there are extenuating circumstances.

A strategic plan will also help with both short and long range budgeting.

As the planning goes forward there will be opportunities for the public's input through focus group meetings and surveys. Watch the library's website and other notifications through local media for your chance to be heard.

Speaking of being heard, are you aware of the information gathering survey going on right now? The City of Columbus, in partnership with the Columbus Public Library Board and Northeast Nebraska Economic Development District, is asking for citizen input through Community Attitude Surveys. Community surveys can be completed by visiting a link on the City's website, or going directly to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Columbus2012survey> . Your library has a computer lab where you can fill out the survey electronically.

Citizens may also pick up a paper copy from the City office at 2424 14th Street, at the Library, or the Senior Center. Surveys will be taken until June 1, 2012.

Be sure to give us your "two cents."

Recent memorials to the Columbus Library Foundation were given for retired employee, Eldred "Jan" Osten. There were two group memorials, one from current and retired Library and Bookmobile staff, and the other from the Friends of the Library. Individual memorials for Jan were received from Dianne Clause, Tim and Peggy Engel, Donna Thomerson, Kelly and Melody McGowan, Christine Poeffel, Jill Owens, Thomas and Shirley Boning, Harold Boning, Marvin and Lianne Charipar, Bud and Betty Dasenbrock, Rae Fulton, Sharon Leffers, Roland Rosendahl, Rob and Gwen Sander, Chuck and Pat Sindelar, Fred and Theresa Wachal, Jeanne Went, Bob and Gail Mead, Myron and Pamela Leffers, and the Osten estate. Memorials to Larry Anderson were given by Leon and Phyllis Wragge, and Dick and Patti Luebbe.

Bud and Rita Fleischer, D'Ete Kluck, and Sandra Riley memorialized Alyce Cumming. A memorial was given in honor of Jack Anderson by Leon and Phyllis Wragge.