

Librarian's Shelf by Pat Anderson

Library is more than a word

Have you noticed how wonderfully strange your memory/perception is? For example, I purchased a Brand X car. I never before noticed how many other Brand X cars are on the road. I have that experience where ever the word library appears.

My first library experience was at the Ong Public Library in Ong, Nebraska (yes, there really is an Ong, Nebraska). Like Columbus, the local Women's Club started it. The books were probably donated. I do not remember seeing new books. It was open on Tuesday nights during the summer when free outside movies enticed the farmers to town to shop.

When I exhausted the books that appealed to me, my dad took me along to the Clay County Courthouse where the county superintendent of schools maintained a small library. Again, most of the books were probably donated. Here I acquired an interest in mythology and ancient history because those were the books available. (As a child, I thought the superintendent probably experienced those time periods in real life; she was a very authoritative older woman.)

These childhood experiences set me on the path to seek out the library wherever I go. I have prowled the New York City Public Library and those in the small towns of Nebraska with equal enjoyment and appreciation for those farsighted and dedicated people who saw the value in enhancing education. Now the Columbus Public Library Bookmobile visits county schools outside Columbus city limits and small towns to bring books to residents. How I would have loved that in my childhood!

Now my library experiences are expanding with the addition of the internet providing newer ways to access information. I can download books to my own device, borrow CDs, movies, and art, read magazines on Zinio, get technical help with my computer, participate in programs as diverse as evaluating antiques, book signings, and both student and adult book clubs. The staff amazes me with their variety of skills and willingness to help me.

I serve on the Columbus Public Library Board representing the Platte County residents outside the city limits. I see my service as small payment for all I have received from libraries. I welcome your comments.

I grew up on a farm—the only child of older parents who would plunk me, a Mason jar of water, and books in a shady spot within their view while they both worked in the field. I was told "read a book and stay out of trouble." That's still good advice today.

Director's note: The Columbus Public Library received donations in honor of retiring employees Rita Douglass, Bernie Fleischacker, Linda Kohler, Diane Nitz, Dennis Smith, and Chris Smith. Sheryl Smith and James and Jackie Krzycki donated to the library in memory of Ruby Juracek. Dick and Patty Luebbe gave in memory of Randy Buggi and Donald Cohron. Phyllis Wragge donated in memory of Larry Bray and Randy Buggi. Gifts to the library in memory of Mary Peterson were given by Bud and Rita Fleischer, Bob and Gail Mead, and Marilyn Gangel.

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