



# Flickertale

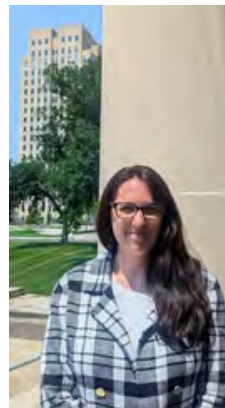
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## Library Programming Specialist Jennifer Long

Hello fellow librarians from across our beautiful state!

My name is Jennifer Long, and I am your new Library Programming Specialist as of June 29. It has been a long journey to get here, but I am incredibly excited to join the North Dakota State Library team, to learn all I can from them, and more importantly to learn from all of you.

Libraries have been my entire life. It all started when my mom would take my sister and me to the Estacada Public Library for Children's Storytime. I instantly fell in love with the children's collection, especially anything by Jan Brett, Dr. Seuss, or any classic fairytale retelling I could find. (Fun fact: while looking up my first library recently, I found out that the TV show *The Librarians* actually filmed a [fairytale-themed episode](#) there!



My first official library position was at the Sidney-Richland County Library in Sidney, Montana, where I served as the Teen & Adult Specialist Librarian. I loved building programs and supporting our patrons, whether they needed help using our computers, job searching, or just setting up an email address. Back then, I didn't even know the official term was "digital literacy"! My colleagues there quickly became my best friends, working as a tight-knit team to launch amazing Holiday and Summer Reading events. Their library wisdom was absolutely priceless to me.

From there, I served as the Assistant Library Director and later the Director for the Plains Public Library in Plains, Montana. It was a truly magical but demanding experience - one I know many of you fellow directors can relate to. Between budgeting, event planning, and keeping morale high when funds were tight, I learned what it takes to lead. The best advice I received there was simply: "Do whatever it takes to keep the lights on and the doors open for your patrons." My team helped me navigate so many new situations, and I am forever grateful for their tenacity and strength. I still check in on this special library from time to time just to see how they are doing and say hello.

In North Dakota, my time working at the Energy & Environmental Research Center at the University of North Dakota (EERC/UND) in Grand Forks changed my life. I will always be incredibly grateful to Rosemary Pleva Flynn, Tressa Graves, and Clara Chambers for sticking by my side through both my undergraduate days and the stresses of completing my Master's in Library and Information Science with a concentration on Archives and Record Management. These three ladies are my absolute heroines; I am so lucky to have had them for guidance, mentorship, and to vent to during my professional and educational journey.

Most recently, I completed an internship at the North Dakota State Archives under Meagan Steele, where I fell in love with the fascinating backstories found in probate records, wills, and homesteading history. I also worked briefly as a Reference Librarian at the University of Mary before finally finding my way to this role.

It has been a long road to get here, and I feel incredibly blessed to have been shaped by so many wonderful librarians across both Montana and North Dakota. I hope to accomplish a great deal during my time here and look forward to bringing valuable knowledge, engaging programming, and fresh trends to Academic, Special, and Tribal libraries across our amazing state.

My mom always had a wonderful saying: "Everyone has a story to tell." I can't wait to hear all of yours!

## Upcoming North Dakota State Library Webinars:

July is here and we have some great continuing education opportunities. First off, we had a speaker who, unfortunately, got ill and couldn't present at the April conference. However, we were able to reschedule his session in July!

### [Where is AI in 2026 and Where is It Headed?](#)

**July 17 (2:00 PM – 3:30 PM)**

In just the past year, AI has advanced at a pace that stunned even leading experts. These systems aren't science fiction anymore. In fact, they're reshaping work, relationships, and even crime in real time. This workshop explores where AI may be in the next 1–5 years and what that means for your daily life.

Join Andres Ramirez, Director of Partnerships for the AI Safety Awareness Project (AISAP), for this fast-paced, beginner-friendly overview of today's most powerful AI systems. It will include live demos that reveal both the breakthroughs and the risks and an interactive forecasting exercise where you'll test your own predictions about AI's impact.

Other webinars presented by staff at the North Dakota State Library include:

### [New Online Library Resources](#)

**July 16 (2:00 PM -2:30 PM)**

### [WordPress Q&A](#)

**July 20 (2:00 PM - 3:00 PM)**

### [Find Your Niche...Academy](#)

**July 23 (10:00 AM -10:30 AM)**

To check out all the great webinar opportunities available this month, click on this link at <https://www.library.nd.gov/traininglibraries>. You can also find out about webinars and events from the Events Calendar at <https://www.library.nd.gov/events-calendar>.



- The North Dakota State English Language Learner (ELL) Task Force invites you to complete the [ND Language Access Provider Survey](#) in a statewide effort to improve services for English language learners and individuals with limited English proficiency
- Public Libraries who are participating in CSLP's Summer Reading Program are invited to host an event where patrons can watch a special webinar with [Paleontologist Aki Watanabe](#) on July 15 at 12:30 PM. Dr. Watanabe will highlight exciting findings in paleontology from this past year during this live presentation and Q&A
- The NLS Patron Engagement Section will host a [Patron Corner program](#) on Monday, July 13, at 6:00 PM on Celebrating 20 Years of BARD: From Analog to Digital
- Registration is now open for [SLJTeen Live](#), a free virtual event that will spotlight the latest and greatest books for teens and tweens, on August 20
- North Dakota Health and Human Services is accepting applications for the [School-Based Wellness Equipment](#) funding opportunity through the ND Rural Health Transformation Program, providing resources to help rural and tribal schools strengthen students' physical, mental, and emotional well-being

# Library Tidbits

Local author Steve Munkeby donated his books about how to use AI in education and for personal development to the [Lisbon Public Library](#).

[New Town City Library](#) hosted Fort Berthold Diabetes Program for free blood glucose screenings on June 25

[Mayville Public Library](#) held Plant Bingo. All attendees received at least one plant, and many businesses/organizations donated prizes in support of this fundraising event.

[Fargo Public Library](#) hosted an event by Archeologist Amanda Baker from Beaver Creek Archaeology to give kids a chance to get their hands on artifacts from the past

[West Fargo Public Library](#) is hosting a library card design contest. One winner will be chosen from three age groups: youth, teen, and adult



## Graphic Novels are “Real” Reading



According to Whitney Pipkin in her article, *The Case for (Good) Graphic Novels*, graphic novels sales have doubled over the past five years in the United States and Canada. This rise may indicate that adults increasingly recognize the benefits graphic novels offer young readers, whether they are avid or struggling readers. In this article, I provide examples of the benefits graphic novels bring readers.

United Through Reading’s article titled *The Benefits of Graphic Novels: Why They Count as Reading* states this about graphic novels:

Graphic novels are underappreciated in literary circles, often dismissed as “comic books” for kids or light reading unworthy of literary consideration. However, this perception rapidly changes as educators, scholars, and readers recognize their unique and profound benefits. Far from being mere picture books, graphic novels offer a rich reading experience that engages a wide range of readers.

[Continue Reading](#)

This is a promotional graphic for NDLA (North Dakota Library Association) grants. The background is white with blue and orange diagonal stripes in the corners. At the top, 'NDLA News' is written in a blue, bubbly font. Below it, 'PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS AVAILABLE!' is written in large, bold, orange letters. A circular badge in the top right corner contains the text 'QUESTIONS CAN BE SENT TO THE PD GRANT COORDINATOR'. The main body of text, in blue, states: 'ALL 6 OF NDLA'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS ARE OPEN AND WE WANT YOU TO APPLY FOR THEM! THERE IS \$5,000 IN FUNDING AVAILABLE, AND APPLICANTS MAY REQUEST UP TO \$1,000.' Below this, the 'APPLICATION DEADLINE: JULY 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2026' is highlighted in orange. Further down, it says 'THE APPLICATION FORM FOR EACH GRANT CAN BE FOUND ON THE [NDLA WEBSITE!](#)'. The bottom section is titled 'SUMMER 2026 GRANT CYCLE' and features a flow diagram with three cloud-shaped boxes: 'OPENS: JUNE 22, 2026', 'CLOSES: JULY 10, 2026', and 'ANNOUNCED: AUGUST 7, 2026'. The NDLA logo is in the bottom left corner.

# AI Insights

Submitted by Trevor Martinson

## Will Smith Spaghetti Test

Have you ever heard of the "Will Smith Eating Spaghetti Test"? Yes, you read that correctly. The test is an informal benchmark for assessing the capabilities of generative AI video models (and the quality of their output).

The test/ benchmark references an AI-generated video from 2023 of, you guessed it, actor Will Smith eating spaghetti. This video is hilariously and horrifically bad. It is almost difficult to watch. The AI version of Smith ingests an absurd amount of spaghetti in different ways and in different scenes. Mercifully, there is no audio. A copy of the [original video](#) is available on Wikimedia Commons.

[Continue Reading](#)



## Quick Reminders

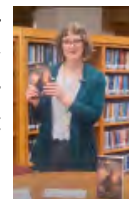
This is just a reminder that if your public library has a WordPress website through the ND State Library, we pay for your domain. If you get a letter or invoice for domain payment, please contact me right away at 701.328.4656 or [ndslpa@nd.gov](mailto:ndslpa@nd.gov).

Also, please be aware that with the discontinuation of Mango Languages and NoveList, the links may need to be deleted from your website. If you would like assistance or have any questions about your WordPress website, please contact me or book a virtual meeting at <https://bit.ly/LibraryWebsiteSupport>.



## "The Knowledge Seeker" by Rae Knightly

"I never asked to be the sole bearer of the entire Knowledge of your civilization. Yet, here I am, barely sixteen-years-old, and it has fallen upon my shoulders to save what remains of humanity from a second Dark Ages. Your civilization is gone now, lost six hundred years ago in cataclysmic wars brought on by climate change. Your virtual information vanished along with electricity. Only your ancient printed books remain, and they have been scanned into a memory device hanging around my neck, to which only I have access. For Knowledge is power, and the dreaded Wraith Lord knows this. He would keep the Knowledge for himself. He would hunt me down and force me to give it up, submitting humanity to infinite darkness and servitude. Knowledge must belong to all, or to none. I must find a way to spread Knowledge back to the world, or die trying."



Each book club kit includes 10 copies of the book, discussion questions, and a sign in sheet.

Learn more about this kit in this week's Library Kits Unboxed episode at <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1331699475129414>

[Reserve This Kit](#)



# Shelf Additions

By Kathy Cline

## Celebrating Graphic Novels in July

In 2019, *Booklist*, American Library Association's book review magazine, established July as Graphic Novels in Libraries Month. During this month, librarians highlight the wide range of genres represented in this unique storytelling format by celebrating and promoting graphic novels in the library.

In her article, *The Research Behind Graphic Novels and Young Learners*, Leslie Morrison explains that research shows the brain activity of students reading visual narratives is similar to that of students reading traditional text. Students who engage analytically with graphic novels add a depth and complexity to the reading process. Graphic novels require readers to use both text and images to make inferences and synthesize information. Both are complex, abstract and challenging reading skills. Because graphic novels use a balance of text and images to tell story, both are of equal importance; the narrative would not make sense without one or the other. Morrison goes on to explain that graphic novels challenge readers to think more deeply about storytelling elements as they analyze images for character development and plot.

[Continue Reading](#)

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Any mention of services or products in this newsletter does not constitute any endorsement or recommendation. The use of any services or products should be evaluated on an individual basis.

[www.library.nd.gov](http://www.library.nd.gov)

To submit content ideas/articles for a future issue of the Flickertale, please contact BreAnne at [ndslpa@nd.gov](mailto:ndslpa@nd.gov).

Times referenced are Central Time.

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