



#110 Rivkah Sass

February 2007

Executive director of the Omaha Public Library, Rivkah Sass made national news in 2006 when she was selected as the nation's Librarian of the Year by *Library Journal* magazine. The magazine wrote: "She's a risk taker, a change agent and a library true believer. Sass has labored with passion, joy and a heavy dose of courage to begin to push the Omaha Public Library toward greatness." In the "Face" drawing, Omaha's downtown library is constructed of books. Sass is holding a book by her favorite author, Jane Austen. Her coat, made up of author's names and book titles, was actually featured in a *Library Journal* magazine photo. Mayor Mike Fahey, a roaster, warned the crowd not to drink too much at the Press Club event, saying, "I don't want to see a headline in the *World-Herald* tomorrow, 'Librarians Go Wild.'" Other roasters were novelist Timothy Schaffert, raconteur Rick Dooling and Lyn Wallin Ziegenbein, executive director of the Peter Kiewit Foundation. In a letter read that night, Sen. Ben Nelson wrote that she has "given Omaha a positive new attitude toward its libraries. Sass worked for four library systems before a headhunter lured her to Omaha in 2003. She grew up on a dairy farm in California and received a Master in Library Science degree from the University of Washington in Seattle. Sass has since moved on.