Congratulations to Edmon Low and Pioneer Library System!

2004 John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award winners announced

Seven libraries, including two Oklahoma libraries, are winners of the John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award, which recognizes and honors outstanding achievement in library public relations. This award, jointly sponsored by The H. W. Wilson Company, Bronx, N.Y., and the Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), has been awarded continuously since 1946.

"The quality of the applications received this year represented the full spectrum of library public relations activities, and, without exception, the entrants deserve praise for their commitment of time and effort in their individual public relations operations and the resulting entries," said Peter Deekle, award committee chair.

"The award recipients represent creative and effective public relations campaigns that responded to real community needs and produced real results in terms of improving public awareness and use of libraries, their programs and collections. The John Cotton Dana Award is the most prestigious of all library awards in the public relations field and is important not only to the winning library, but also to the communities so positively impacted by these outstanding programs."

Winning entries will be displayed at the John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award booth in the exhibit area during the 2004 ALA Annual Conference in June, in Orlando. Conference participants also will be able to view the winners Sunday, June 27, from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the "Best of Show/Swap and Shop" program sponsored by LAMA.

2004 Winners

Halifax Public Libraries, (Dartmouth, Nova Scotia) for its complex and layered “Summer Reading Quest,” featuring seven fantasy characters in an original, interactive adventure and a dynamic Web site designed to attract the reluctant reader.

The Orange County Public Library, (Santa Ana, Calif.) for the imaginative Egyptology Lecture Series - - a program of scholars and other luminaries that was developed from a unique partnership with the American Research Center in Egypt.

The Edmon Low Library, Oklahoma State University (Stillwater, Okla.), for a stellar commemorative celebration entitled “That was Then … This is Now,” focusing on the successes and challenges marking 50 years of building pride.

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library, (San Jose, Calif.) for a building dedication campaign, highlighting a groundbreaking partnership between the San Jose State University and the city's public library.

The Pioneer Library System, (Norman, Okla.) for an intriguing and visually appealing campaign that promoted libraries as prominent cultural agents. The Red Dirt Book Festival celebrated the Oklahoma literary experience.

The Las Vegas - Clark County Library District, (Las Vegas) for Reading Las Vegas, Books: A Sure Bet! -- a catchy public relations and branding campaign using casino imagery to promote the library's second annual adult reading program.

Barrington Area Library, (Barrington, Ill.) for “Simple Living,” a series of lifestyle programs featuring the concept of paring down, making choices and staying focused designed in response to the changing economic climate.
President’s Page

Have you marked your calendars? The Adams Mark in Tulsa is definitely the place to be on April 14-16. Your OLA Program Committee has put together an exciting, jam-packed agenda with events and programs that is sure to enlighten and entertain. You’ll have an opportunity to meet and hear librarians from near and far Telling Library Stories.

The Conference kicks off on Wednesday, April 14 with two Preconferences and the Sequoyah Book Award programs. Do you need to know the ins and outs of the new edition of Dewey Decimal Classification? Then the Technical Services Roundtable Preconference featuring Dr. Joanna Fountain is for you. The Marketing Library Services and Resources Preconference will provide great ideas for all types of libraries. The Sequoyah Book Award programs are always inspiring. Of course it’s a chance to meet the winning authors, but even more exciting is watching a ballroom full of young readers that love books and reading. Looking for opportunities to network and socialize with your colleagues? If you’re a golfer you won’t want to miss the Ruth Brown Memorial Golf Classic. Proceeds from the tournament support the Ruth Brown Memorial Fund.

The pace really picks up on Thursday morning. Be sure to start your day on Thursday and Friday with continental breakfast in the Exhibit Hall. I encourage you to visit the Exhibits early and often – the support that we receive from vendors is critical to the success of the Conference. Please take time to not only visit the vendors, but to also thank them for their support of OLA and the Conference.

If you’ll be attending Conference for the first time be sure to attend the First Timers Orientation. You’ll get tips and tricks for getting the most out of Conference, you’ll meet instant new friends and colleagues, AND you’ll be eligible to win goodies ONLY available to first timers.

Our Keynote Speaker for the Opening General Session is Carol Brey-Casiano. Carol is President-Elect of the American Library Association and many of you will remember her from her days in Muskogee. I had a chance to hear her speak at ALA Midwinter and I know that her message will resonate with OLA’s membership. She will speak about her Presidential theme and initiatives, which will focus on grassroots advocacy. A number of awards will be presented during the opening session and DOOR PRIZES will be awarded, so don’t miss your chance to win. Again, we are grateful for the generosity of our exhibitors that make the door prizes possible. Carol will also be gathering input for ALA’s Long Range Planning process during the ALA Forum on Thursday afternoon. This is your opportunity to speak with ALA’s leadership. Our other Thursday luncheon will feature the winning Sequoyah YA Author, so if you missed the award program you have another chance to hear the winning author. If you prefer more time to network with your colleagues you may want to order a box lunch and join on of the Table Talks over the lunch hour.

We are extremely fortunate to have another ALA speaker this year. Miriam Nisbet from ALA’s Washington Office will speak at the Legislative Luncheon on Thursday, and in another session that afternoon. Miriam is no stranger to Oklahoma. Having made several trips to the state during the fight against UCITA. At the luncheon she will update us on the status of legislation effecting information access – the battles we’ve won and those on the horizon. During her afternoon session Miriam will speak on possible threats on to individuals’ rights to access information.

Now in between those major sessions there are up to seven concurrent sessions. Your OLA Program Committee has put together an agenda with something for everyone. We have absolutely outstanding speakers and authors from in and out of state. We’ve got sessions for public, academic, K-12, and special librarians. We’ve got sessions for public services and technical services, and even the hardcore geeks among you. And of course, sessions for our Friends and Trustees. The Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma will once again be sponsoring the information booth near the Registration Area, so if you have any questions about the Tulsa area head for the FOLIO Information Booth.

Thursday night features the All-Conference Event. We’ve had some absolutely winning events the past few years, but this year’s promises to be a real delight. Rita Howell is leading the team that has planned the “Spirit of Aloha”. So bring your Aloha clothes and join us for a Hawaiian feast and a delightful evening of Telling Library Stories in the language of the islands. OLA Divisions, Committees, and Roundtables have been busy planning their baskets for this year’s Basket Auction, so don’t forget to bid!

Our Friday lunch hour again offers Table Talks. The FOLIO Luncheon speaker will be award winning Oklahoma author Michael Wallis. A number of awards and scholarships will also be presented. The OASLMS Author Luncheon will feature storyteller Barbara McBride-Smith.

Don’t miss the Membership Meeting on Friday afternoon. The Local Arrangements Committee has been rounding up some outstanding door prizes. But most importantly we need your vote! There will be several proposed changes to the OLA Constitution & Bylaws to reflect the growth of the organization and we ALL OF YOU to be there.

Finally, the Conference wraps up with the Annual Conference Banquet. Our featured speaker will be Jack Frank, chronicler of all things Tulsa. His remarks should be particularly interesting as Tulsa plans an exciting and revitalized future.

I personally want to thank Suanne Wymer and the Program Committee, the Local Arrangements Committee co-chaired by Kathy Huber and Charlotte Frazier. The people on these committees make the conference the action-packed, informative experience that it is and their behind the scenes work is invaluable to OLA.

So pack your bags and join us at the Adams Mark in Tulsa on April 14-16. You’ll go home with plenty of new library stories to tell.

Anne Prestamo
Tell Us Your Story

The theme for the Oklahoma Library Association this year is “Telling Library Stories.” Librarians are very dedicated people. Many of you have mentors who encouraged you to dedicate your lives to promoting such ideals as intellectual freedom, information literacy, and a love of reading. You may not have started out in the fourth grade by using your mother’s recipe cards as checkout cards and forcing your playmates to check out your personal book collection and read. (At least I knew enough not to charge fines.) You may not have piled your bike basket with library books and pedaled your way miles to the public library to experience vicarious adventures, but I imagine your love of reading played a part in your vocation. You may have been more adept with library resources than I was when I helped my son gather primary sources for his master’s dissertation in the special library on the University of Texas campus. I pretended to know nothing about libraries when the microfilm whipped ferociously around the spindle. If you choose not to disclose secrets about yourself, you must have stories to tell from your experiences in the various libraries around Oklahoma. Please share.

Being an active member of the Oklahoma Library Association has provided many valuable networking opportunities both personally and professionally for me. As a school library media specialist I was a member of the Continuing Education committee, hoping to broaden the opportunities for school library media specialists. Meeting other school library media specialists at workshops energized me. Serving in various capacities for local arrangement committees helped me put names to faces and get acquainted with many dedicated librarians. As a library educator my ties in the Oklahoma Library Association enable me to connect my students with the resources they need to support their students and teachers. At a time when many believe we do not need libraries because we have the Internet, it is even more important to share what we do with others. Contrary to popular opinion, we do not just sit behind the desk and read all day. Share your stories with us! The membership committee is asking for librarians from all divisions to send us their stories. There is a site on the OLA web page (http://www.oklibs.org/stories) for you to write your story and send it to the membership committee.

Barbara Ray
Membership committee

Social Responsibilities Roundtable
Poetry Reading and Social Event

Wednesday, April 14 from 7:30 to 10 PM

Presidential Suite of the Adams Mark Hotel

Featured Poet: Francine Ringold
Editor of
Nimrod: international journal of prose and poetry
2004 Oklahoma poet laureate

Attendees are welcome to bring poetry to share.
Please join us for an evening of poetry and socializing.
You need not be enrolled in the OLA conference to attend.
Refreshments will be served.
OLA 2004 Conference Events

The Topic of Teens!
We’re offering a number of programs on the topic of teens at this year’s conference. If teenagers fall within your purview you might be interesting in attending Teen Summer Reading Activities on a Shoestring, Not Quite YA Sequoyah and the YA Sequoyah 2005 Sampler, Getting Teens Involved in the Library and from the Federal Depository Library of the Year Librarian College & Career Help from the Government: Resources for Teens!

Table Talks are…
Fun, interactive discussion groups intended to stimulate conversation and allow discussion among all of those attending. Participants are encouraged to bring a sandwich, come to the room, eat their lunch and enjoy visiting with all those attending while participating in these informal discussions centered on topics of current interest to our profession, sharing ideas, concerns, best practices, and questions they may have.

This year you can talk about the 2004 Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma book; learn about getting involved with the Mountain Plains Library Association; spend some time getting to know our OLA divisions, committees and roundtables (DROCs!) from our in-coming OLA President and team members; discuss the latest news on Internet pop-ups and spyware; learn about the Library Leadership Institute; and chat about attracting new types of users into your library.

Creating a Buzz @ Your Library
If marketing and promotion activities are a novelty at your library have we got a round of programs to jump start your activities! Start things off right by attending our preconference marketing program; learn about a project sponsored by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries to ‘Get the Word Out’; learn how to get your library involved with radio and newspaper publicity; find out how to breath some life into your volunteer program; and decide you’re no shrinking violet when it comes to aggressively promoting your library services, materials and programs!

April in Tulsa! More specifically April 14-16!
You can:
✓ Attend the 2004 OLA Conference being held at the Adams Mark Hotel in downtown Tulsa.
✓ Meet up with your library friends from around the state and network with a whole new crowd of library-lovers.
✓ Hit some fun dining spots around town at the Wednesday night Dine-Around.
✓ Hear from a group of Oklahoma authors.
✓ Have face-to-face meetings with the vendors you’ve only ever met on the phone or via e-mail.
✓ Learn to hula at the Thursday night All Conference Event.
✓ Talk with in-coming ALA President Carol Brey-Casiano.
✓ Learn how to facilitate art activities for the very young.
✓ Hear from librarians serving as information specialists in unique settings.
✓ Take a closer look at cooperative library instruction efforts.
✓ Explore some ethnic/cultural and literary treasure buried in Tulsa area libraries.

Whew! For more information about these conference programs and others visit http://www.oklibs.org/ola2004/conf.htm.

Suanne Wymer
Nearly 800 Fans Packed TCCL to Meet “Civil War” Author Shelby Foote

“They say there are computers now where you can hit a button and the information is right there. My kind of research is to wade through historical documents and spend a lot of time in the library,” said Shelby Foote at a free public presentation on Dec. 6 at Tulsa City-County Library’s Central Library.

Nearly 800 fans packed two floors of the library to listen to the 87-year-old author and historian speak about his life and works. Foote was in Tulsa to accept the Tulsa Library Trust’s 2003 Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award, which consists of a $25,000 cash prize and an engraved crystal book.

The previous evening, Foote received the Helmerich award at a black-tie dinner at the Central Library. At the gala, the scent of magnolias filled the air as Foote captivated the audience of nearly 450 with his sweet Southern charm while reading an excerpt from one of his books.

Linda Saferite, chief executive officer, Tulsa City-County Library, said the dinner is a “friend-raiser” and a fund-raiser, with proceeds going toward projects such as the library’s bookmobile, which helps some of Tulsa’s most underserved children by bringing books to them.

At the Saturday public presentation, Foote told the crowd that he likes to do all of his own research and that he’s a slow writer who composes each page with pen and paper. That’s the reason, in part, why it took him more than 20 years to complete his masterpiece, “The Civil War: A Narrative,” a monumental project consisting of three volumes, 2,934 pages, and a million and a half words. The books were the primary reference for Ken Burns’ PBS documentary on the Civil War for which Foote served as a commentator.

The Helmerich award is given annually to an internationally acclaimed author who has written a distinguished body of work and made a major contribution to the field of literature and letters. Past winners are Joyce Carol Oates, William Kennedy, William Manchester, Margaret Atwood, E.L. Doctorow, John Hope Franklin, Neil Simon, David McCullough, Ray Bradbury, Peter Matthiessen, Norman Mailer, Eudora Welty, John le Carré, Saul Bellow, Toni Morrison, John Updike, Larry McMurtry and Norman Cousins.

For more information about the award, call Larry Bartley, Tulsa Library Trust manager, at (918) 596-7985.

Jackie Hill

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

The next Off-Campus Library Services Conference will be held in the high Sonoran Desert foothills just north of Scottsdale, Arizona, in a resort of classic western design called the Carefree Conference Resort. The conference will be held May 5-7, 2004.

The Off-Campus Library Services Conference is held every other year and has been in existence since 1982. The conference is sponsored by the Central Michigan University Libraries and the CMU College of Extended Learning. This international conference brings together librarians, administrators, and educators to discuss, study, demonstrate, and champion the technology, techniques and theories of providing library services for students not pursuing their education on a campus.

For more information about the conference, please contact Conference Coordinator, Connie Hildebrand, by calling 989-774-6080 or connie.hildebrand@cmich.edu. Also, please visit the Conference Web site at http://ocls.cmich.edu/oclsc2004news.htm.

Cindy Worley, CMU
After nearly 17 years of dedicated service to both Oklahoma State University and the state of Oklahoma, Dr. Edward R. Johnson, Dean of Libraries, is retiring. His staff, as well as the Friends of the OSU Library, honored Johnson at a reception on February 19.

Johnson accomplished much in his time at OSU. He is most proud of his founding of the Friends of the OSU Library, his work with the Oklahoma Library Association (OLA), including a term as president, and his time as the Oklahoma Chapter Councilor for the American Library Association (ALA), which he described as "very rewarding."

One of his more recent accomplishments is also a career highlight. Working with OLA and ALA, Johnson led a small, vocal, and well organized national fight against UCITA (the Uniform Computer Information Technology Act). This effort included the publication of his article "The Law Against Sharing Knowledge" in The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Johnson believes, "Were it not for what we did in Oklahoma and the tremendous response from libraries, UCITA may not have been stopped nationally."

Johnson and his wife Benita are retiring to New Mexico. If you ask him about his plans, he'll respond, "Fishing, fishing, and fishing." He also plans to take up a few winter sports, cross-country skiing and snow shoeing, and pursue his lifelong interest in the Southwest.

The Johnsons have established a library endowment to support the purchase of materials for Library and Information Science. In lieu of gifts, friends may make donations to the Edward R. Johnson Endowment by contacting Suzanne Thompson at (405) 744-6323 or 216 Library, Stillwater, OK 74078-1071.

Bonnie Ann Cain, OSU

Double Honor for OSU Documents Librarian

John Phillips, Head of OSU Library Government Documents Department, is a leader in the state and the nation. At Friday's meeting of Oklahoma Depository Libraries Phillips was recognized both for his election to the national position as Chair of the Depository Library Council and for his role locally in the selection of this year's Depository Library of the Year.

The OSU Library is one of only two regional depository libraries in Oklahoma. A Regional Depository Library is an extension of the Government Printing Office (GPO). They are charged with archiving government publications and making them available to citizens locally.

As Head of the OSU Government Documents Department, Phillips oversees the activity of the regional depository, as well as, the selective depositories. Selective Depositories receive only those publications in the highest demand by their users. Phillips coordinates the efforts of the depositories in his region and ensures the quality of collections and service. Tulsa County Library, one of Phillips' selectives, was chosen as the Depository Library of the Year.

This year, Phillips was appointed to a three-year term of the Depository Library Council. This national council provides advice on policy matters dealing with the Depository Library Program (DLP). Primarily, it advises the Public Printer, the Superintendent of Documents, and appropriate members of Government Printing Office on practical options for the efficient management and operation of the DLP.

Phillips was recently elected chair of the Depository Library Council. As chair, he will represent the Depository Library Council to congressional committees and other organizations.

OSU Press Release
ODL BIDS FAREWELL TO RETIRING LIBRARIAN

Donna J. Skvarla, Administrator of the Office of Library Development in the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL), officially retires March 1 after twenty-nine years as a librarian in the information community. Her retirement ends a nineteen-year tenure at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. She leaves ODL as a solid and dynamic leader in the field of librarianship, dedicated to the advancement of information professionals throughout the state.

Skvarla, a native of Austin, Texas, earned a B.A. in English in 1964, from The University of Texas, in Austin. She also possesses a Master's degree in library science from the University of Oklahoma, which she earned in 1975.

Skvarla established her career as a librarian from 1975 to 1981 working in the Norman Public Library as a Children’s Librarian. She served as Head of Children’s Services for the Norman Library from 1981 to 1985. From 1985 through 1989 she was a Public Library Consultant for the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. While working for the State of Oklahoma, Skvarla was also an instructor of library and information studies at the University of Oklahoma (OU), as well as an instructor for Independent Study at OU’s Center for Continuing Education.

In 1989, Skvarla became Administrator of ODL’s Office of Library Development. “I feel very fortunate to have a staff that is dedicated, flexible and easy to work with. Yes, I was just the catalyst; they made things happen!” Skvarla said.

Under her leadership, ODL took dynamic steps to lead public libraries through many changes that resulted from evolving technology, and to prepare librarians to meet the information challenges of the 21st Century. Under her direction, ODL’s Office of Library Development enabled public libraries across the state – from the smallest to the largest – to evolve into globally-oriented institutions for gathering information, incorporating the latest technological innovations in the information field and developing professional library competencies for use as a standard for Oklahoma and the industry. During her tenure she oversaw the librarian certification program. “Not all public librarians in Oklahoma are graduates of a formal school of information science,” she said. “This program gives rural librarians in the state a solid knowledge-base to work from – through training – networking at workshops, and conference grants to OLA, ALA and PLA.

Another accomplishment of ODL’s Office of Library Development during Skvarla’s tenure involves regions that were set up for ODL’s public library consultants. “That’s something we didn’t have before. Now we have regional consultants that can help their librarians with their particular needs. Because of our consultants, who I think are some of the best in the country, rural libraries have made monumental strides in service to their communities, especially in the area of technology. And ODL always provided public libraries with a Summer Reading Program but now we have the best in the nation,” she added.

Skvarla remained very active in numerous professional organizations, including holding memberships in the Oklahoma Library Association (OLA), the American Library Association (ALA) the Public Library Association (PLA), the Oklahoma Cultural Coalition, the “Let’s Talk About It, Oklahoma” Executive Board, the Oklahoma Association on Children Under Six, the University Women’s Association at OU, the Central Oklahoma Quilter’s Guild, the Norman Area Quilter’s Guild and the American Quilt Society.

Skvarla’s contributions to OLA over the past twenty years include serving as Chair of the Membership Committee, the Sequoyah Committee and the Nominating Committee. She was the OLA Liaison to FOLIO from 1997 to the present and also served as Federal Relations Coordinator from 1989 to the present. She served as Secretary of OLA in 1984 and as President of the Association in 1987. In 2002, Skvarla was awarded the OLA Distinguished Service Award for her leadership, dedication to the profession, and her contributions to Oklahoma libraries. The Distinguished Service Award is the highest honor OLA bestows on members.

Skvarla’s colleagues and ODL’s director reflected on the impact she has had on the Agency and library profession. “Donna’s impact on the information profession cannot be measured. She will be missed by all who have worked with her throughout the years.” said ODL staff member, Pat Williams.

“Donna has had a profound effect on this organization, Her leadership, intelligence, and commitment have been instrumental in advancing the services of public libraries throughout the state. She has left us well prepared for the next stage of library development across the state,” said ODL director, Susan C. McVey. “Donna has accomplished so much and turned challenges into opportunities with her attitude. She puts one hand on your arm and says ‘This is going to be fun’ and because of her, it is.” she added.

Skvarla says the future for libraries in Oklahoma is bright and wonderful and that technology will continue to expand the role of librarians and the way people use libraries. During her years as a librarian she has seen her profession move from card catalogs to real-time information. She is sorry she’ll miss out on being a part of the great things that will happen for libraries in the near future. “For thirty years I have had the privilege to work with some of the most vibrant and passionate individuals in the profession. I’ve been fortunate to work with a staff whose focus was to help make improvements in the lives of Oklahomans.”

ODL Press Release
**MPLA Report**

**MPLA Conference:** Oklahoma was well represented at the annual joint conference of the Mountain Plains Library Association, meeting this year with the state library association of Nevada and REFORMA, the national association to promote library services to Latinos and the Spanish-speaking. The conference was Nov. 5 – 8 at the Hyatt Regency Lake Tahoe, at Incline Village, Nevada. Over 20 Oklahoma librarians were present, as presenters, officers, and attendees looking for a valuable continuing education experience in an enjoyable setting.

As usual with MPLA, it was an excellent conference, with first-rate programs and presenters, a exhibit hall full of vendors, visiting with new acquaintances and old friends, and some added special events (driving over Mount Rose to get there, a stern-wheeler cruise on Lake Tahoe, and seeing Oklahoma’s Marilyn Hinshaw, director of the Eastern Oklahoma District Library System, from Muskogee, receive MPLA’s Distinguished Service Award).

A few highlights from the conference programs I attended included the following.

**Author Festival** – 27 authors were present. I enjoyed visiting with several, including Brian Crane, who does the *Pickles* comic strip in the Tulsa World.

**Library Buildings – What Works?** – Architects Thomas Findley and Jeff Klippenstein, along with two Nevada librarians, presented a review of five library building projects the Leo A. Daly firm has been involved in. They stressed the importance of staff and community involvement in the planning and designing of a new library building. Other key points were the importance of lighting, establishing the library’s presence through appropriate design, and providing space for different kinds of use, from quiet study space to group study rooms and commons areas, including coffee shops. The space needs of computers and other technology have disproved earlier assumptions that computers would reduce library space needs.

**Communications Processes in Public Libraries** – Mary Bushing, a library consultant and retired librarian from Montana, presented a lively exploration of the elements of successful communication in public libraries, both with staff and with the public. Besides individual differences, there may be organizational barriers, cultural differences, problems because of the building and furnishings, and non-verbal messages to consider. One key point is that library staff, no matter how busy, must learn to scan their environment to be alert for people needing assistance.

**The Rising** – Ron Rodriguez, Associate Dean of Libraries at Chapman University (CA), discussed various trials and difficulties that confront new library managers today. He explored management styles, survival skills, budget and other funding requirements (fund raising of one kind or another is part of every manager’s job), determining responsibilities and delegating, networking, keeping records, teamwork, and advocacy. A key point was the need to learn the library’s culture: while all libraries have a lot in common, people and local circumstances make each one unique. Good managers learn and remain sensitive to both the library’s culture and the culture of the larger community that it serves.

**Leading in Turbulent Times** – Luis Herrera, Director of the Pasadena (CA) library and current president of the Public Library Association, explored internal and external challenges facing libraries today. Funding problems, digital information rights, staffing, legislators and other bosses who don’t understand how libraries have changed, and changing community expectations of library service were some areas he discussed. A key point: library staff must not be slaves to or hide behind policies and standard procedures. Empowering staff to deliver the right service for the particular situation is vital. This implies high quality staff training and accountability. A quote worth remembering: “In a crisis, being optimistic is necessary.”

The 2004 MPLA annual joint conference will be in Denver, with the Colorado Association of Libraries, October 20th – 23rd, at the Denver Marriott Technical Center, with the theme “Libraries and All That Jazz.” It looks like another really good one.

MPLA will be using a new system called Memberclicks in 2004. It will replace the old paper membership directory, and will be updateable by members, so it will be more current. It also has some communication features that should be helpful.

Wayne Hanway
Ghost Ranch, OK and MPLA

According to the Mountain Plains Library Association website (http://www.usd.edu/mpla/welcome.html) overnight successes are years in the making. MPLA developed the Leadership Institute to help this process gain momentum. 2003 marked the second year of the Institute that has been underwritten by EBSCO Information Services for a 3-year period. Located at Ghost Ranch, Abiquiu, NM, (http://www.ghostranch.org/) the attendees bask in the solitude that Georgia O’Keefe painted.

Peggy Kaney, NSU, Cylinda Richardson-Martin, Pioneer Public Library System, and Marla Roberson, UCO, were selected from the Oklahoma applicants to attend the November, 2003, week long intensive. Lola Todd, Tulsa City-County Library System, was selected to be one of the 6 mentors. All total there were 38 participants and leaders from the 12 states represented by MPLA. The facilitator, Maureen Sullivan, has many years experience in presenting to various libraries and library associations on leadership topics. The coordinator, Mary Bushing, saw that all the participants had the reading material necessary to explore our leadership potential but just as importantly, she made sure that our snacks were plentiful and available. At that high of an altitude, food is a necessity if you are going to continue to delve into your inner Donald Trump!

Topics covered during the week include: leadership, interpersonal communication, managing differences, risk taking, power and influence, leading change, commitment, groups and teams, and personal planning. Each of these topics included a variety of articles and group exercises. These exercises brought into focus how we as individuals lead. The exercises also gave us ideas on how to handle interpersonal problems that occur in the library settings.

Marla Roberson felt that the communication skills and risk taking components were highlights of the week. Communication is a two-way street that one needs to learn to negotiate if the term “leader” is going to be thought of when that person comes to ones mind. It involves being able to communicate your ideas and thoughts but just as importantly it involves being able to listen and receive the others communicated ideas. In the Institute we were reminded that risk taking is making a choice to gain a desired outcome under conditions of uncertainty with the possibility of losing something you value. As a personal expression of physical risk taking, Marla climbed Chimney Rock while she was there.

Peggy Kaney appreciated the time away from daily responsibilities to provide an opportunity to focus on the topics that were presented. As library professionals we are trained to put our focus on the public that we serve, and it is all too easy to get caught up in the busyness of our work lives and to neglect our own professional growth. Because of the remote geographic location at Ghost Ranch, it was possible to turn inward without the outward pull from other obligations. As a result, we were able to contemplate the leadership topics and create specific action plans to implement upon our return. We were encouraged to share these plans with others attending the Institute, as well as with one of the mentors, to give us a sense of accountability as well as encouragement as we pursue our individual goals.

Cylinda Richardson-Martin learned that commitment to librarianship and to one’s plan for growth in personal and professional life are paramount importance for success in any profession, especially librarianship. In the Ghost Ranch simple surroundings and deafening silence combined with time away from technology and everyday responsibilities allowed for serious introspection and analysis of the present and for planning future commitment to our profession and to the development of a plan for action in personal growth with possible steps to toward achieving goals set at the institute.

But overall, the networking with the other librarians was the most positive experience of the Leadership Institute. Being able to bounce ideas and work situations off of others that have the similar experiences was quite valuable. We met such a variety of wonderful people that are in a variety of positions. The best part is that they are all librarians and speak with the same vocabulary. We continue to maintain a relationship via an e-mail list and will have a reunion at the Mountain Plains Library Association meeting in October, 2004.

Plans are already underway for the 2004 MPLA Leadership Institute. Applications will be accepted in the spring, and it is hoped that Oklahoma will have another strong pool of applicants from which to select representatives. Any of this year’s attendants will be more than happy to share their stories and experiences (even the ones that don’t make it into the official presentation at the OLA conference), but be warned, the allure of New Mexico may tempt you to hit the road and head for Ghost Ranch yourself!

Peggy Kaney, Cylinda Richardson-Martin & Marla Roberson
Encourage Future Information Specialists

The Career Recruitment and Retention Committee has planned these great sessions at the OLA conference to share the need for more librarians. Find out ways that you can encourage those with whom you come in contact to consider library careers as a viable option.

Recruiting New Librarians -- Eva Poole, director of the Denton Public Library and current president of the Texas Library Association, will be the featured speaker in the Career Recruitment and Retention Committee and Social Responsibilities Roundtable session on "Recruiting for Diversity. How can we attract minority students and library employees to the profession? Poole will provide an overview of national, state, and institutional level recruitment ideas.

Getting Teens Involved -- Most public and academic librarians worked or volunteered in a library during their high school or college career. Find out how to get teens involved in your library. Young adult librarians and school media specialists will share their success stories and want to hear from the participants, too.

Unusual Library Careers -- When the public thinks of librarians, they normally think of public or school librarians. You’ll find a lot of other options are available. The potential options are enormous. Come and visit with librarians in the Tulsa area with unusual library careers. They’ll discuss their distinctive materials, reference questions, daily activities, unique databases and other interesting aspects of their jobs.

Grassroots Advocacy from the Ground Up -- Whether you need to build advocates in your community for a bond issue, need a raise or just want more respect, you will find this session on "Grassroots Advocacy" helpful. Pauline Boyer-Rodriguez will share information on becoming a great library advocate everywhere.

Sharon Saulmon

Support Supporters

Remember in high school when you just weren’t sure where you fit in? Are you feeling that same way today in your job? Support staff are an intricate part to any library or organization’s success. Come lunch and learn and find out how a non-degreed professional can get the most out of their OLA experience. Involvement means action, and action means better jobs, better pay and more recognition. Come to the Support Staff Roundtable’s Table Talk "How does Support Staff Roundtable fit into OLA?" to be held at OLA Conference. Lend your support and your knowledge.

Jill Vessels, SSRT

OLA Board Actions

October
- Approved GODORT Legal Resources Workshop: Be Your Own Legal Beagle
- Approved letter of agreement with Oliver Delaney regarding payment for lobbying on behalf of OLA
- Referred to Constitution and Bylaws Committee a petition to create a Digitization Discussion Group
- Directed OLA webmaster, Charles Brooks to obtain the domain name (sequoyahbookaward.com) at a cost of $9.95 annually. Charles is to move the website to the OLA server.
- Social Responsibilities Roundtable proposal approved to solicit funds outside OLA for the Ruth Brown Award. Letters (on OLA stationary) and brochures will be produced and sent out.

November
- Approved workshop of Administration Roundtable on Conflict Management to be held at two locations (Lawton and Tulsa).
- Approved Legislative Goals submitted by Legislative Committee
- Approved Awards Committee handling the Library Champion Award with the Legislative Committee making the decision of the recipient.
- Recommended to the Constitution and ByLaws Committee to make the Leadership Institute Committee and standing committee

December
- Legislative Committee asked to table the Library Champion Award. It was forwarded on to the Constitution and ByLaws Committee.
- Approved the Public Library Division’s request for a Graphic Novels workshop.
- Accepted the recommendation of the ad hoc committee regarding Long Term Care Insurance Proposal. The committee recommended not to endorse the policy as it was not that good of a deal for the members and it was felt it should not be endorsed by OLA as an organization.
State Library Debuts Online Public Library Salary Survey

Oklahoma’s first statewide public librarian salary survey gives city officials and library trustees a new tool to use when considering local library budgets.

The survey project was conducted by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL), and is the first in the nation to provide officials and citizens with an interactive database to compare librarian salaries with other selected municipal positions.

The results should prove useful for all types of library positions according to Cathy Van Hoy, the ODL staff member who coordinated the survey. “In the past, the only salary information we had was for library directors in the state. Now we have salary figures for other types of library positions, as well.”

The survey gathered Oklahoma public library salary data for 13 select library positions and 29 select municipal positions. The two sets of position data will assist officials in determining fair market value by comparing similar public sector jobs.

Van Hoy said ODL frequently gets calls asking for salary information when cities are looking to hire a new library director or when directors are looking to hire or promote staff.

“There is a national shortage of librarians, and some speculation is because the job is underpaid for the complexity of the work done,” Van Hoy said.

“Oklahoma librarians have to fill a variety of roles today,” Van Hoy said. “They’re budget analysts, public relations managers, childhood enrichment specialists, information experts, systems administrators, web page developers, grant writers, fundraisers, data analysts, personnel managers and, most of all, community leaders.”

In order to help communities with their salary questions, ODL needed “concrete, impartial data on local librarian salaries,” Van Hoy said.

More than 200 public library sites responded to the survey – an 88% response rate. Responses included seven of the eight county and multi-county library systems that are funded with ad valorem tax dollars, and 77 unaffiliated libraries that are funded with city tax dollars.

Once the library salary data was submitted, information from the Oklahoma Municipal League’s 2002 research report was added in order to provide comparisons with other types of municipal positions.

Van Hoy said some findings confirm the fact that librarians are paid less than other municipal positions. “On average, a library director working in an Oklahoma public library makes 26% less than other city department heads,” she said. “However, the size of the city and its geographic location in the state are determining factors in pay for all municipal positions.”

Some other findings of the survey are:

- every category of library employee is better paid on average if they are employed by one of the state’s county or multi-county library systems;
- some Oklahoma public library directors only make the minimum wage of $5.15 per hour; and,
- the average pay for a library clerk is $6.87 per hour, while the average pay for a city general clerk is $9.92 per hour.

The survey results and interactive database are accessible through the ODL website at www.odl.state.ok.us/salary/coverpage.asp.

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The Oklahoma Department of Libraries (ODL) is the official state library of Oklahoma. It serves the information and records management needs of state government, assists with public library development, coordinates library and information technology projects for the state, and serves the general public through its specialized collections.
Golf: Not Just for Librarians Anymore

You’re in Tulsa. You know someone who’s not going to the OLA conference or you’re getting there early and you know someone who plays golf. Oh, what to do? Play golf for a good cause, silly!

Wednesday, 1:00 pm, Battle Creek Golf Course, April 14. The 3rd Annual Ruth Brown Memorial Golf Tournament will be played to raise money for our annual award. $50 pays for your cart, nine holes of great golf on a challenging yet fun course and practice balls to warm your skills. Two member teams will be accepted or if you’re alone, we’ll find you a partner. Pre-register at gteague@lunet.edu or sign up between twelve and one the day of the tournament. This is one day you shouldn’t miss.

Library Board Members...This is for You!

Plan to be part of the “Board/Director Teams: What’s Your Score?” sessions at OLA on Friday, April 16, from 8:30 am to 10:45 am. Discover how you and your director, working together, can better serve the community, develop new revenues and partnerships, and be advocates for the library.

Find out five steps to improve your team’s effectiveness. Get your Team Effectiveness Checklist for use back home.

These will be highly participative sessions, conducted by Ellen Miller. Her experience includes eight years as a local trustee at Johnson County (KS) Library and founding president of the 500+ member Kansas Library Trustee Association. She was named to the ALA-ALTA National Advocacy Honor Roll in 2000. An active author and speaker, she’s conducted recent trustee workshops in Georgia, Indiana, Texas, Missouri and Alabama. Miller is very enthusiastic about trustees and encourages you to bring your questions and learn from other trustees around the state.

Other programs at conference on Friday will also be of interest to library board members. Sessions on serving seniors, using volunteers, having public policy forums, visiting with authors, and fundraising are also planned for Friday. TRUSTEES, please plan to attend the Oklahoma Library Association Conference. For more information see the conference overview at http://www.oklibs.org.  

Sharon Saulmon