THE GREAT CERTIFICATION DEBATE

PRO

I would like to make a few comments about certification, why we began, and where the Task Force is in the process of developing the proposal.

ODL and OLA established a Certification Task Force in 1989 because of their concern that public libraries in Oklahoma be administered and staffed by well-trained personnel. They believe that our citizens are best served when their local librarians have a chance to learn about new developments in library science in this Information Age. We hope to encourage people to acquire new skills and continue learning. We also see certification as a real way to improve librarians' public image in our state. Also, the coordination and improvement of library education and workshops for continuing education is one goal of this process.

Certification of public librarians already occurs in about half of the United States. This process provides some unified training and knowledge base, and helps assure the citizenS of those states that there is some generally accepted level of public library service available state-wide.

In the widest sense our Task Force supports the concept of bringing certification to Oklahoma public librarians because we feel that the increased availability of continuing education would greatly benefit librarians.

In trying to bring together a draft document to propose to the OLA Board and the Board of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries, our Task Force on Certification has examined the regulations of almost every state involved in certification. Many are lengthy and confusing, written in “legal-ese.” Others are simply not applicable to Oklahoma's geographic needs.

We modeled our document from those of Nebraska and Iowa. Both have certification programs that are voluntary. Both states enjoy wide-spread participation in their programs and have a variety of ongoing continuing education opportunities available at various locations in their state. Our program is also proposed as voluntary.

During September the members of our Task Force conducted eight public hearings on our draft document. These were well attended in every location. You gave us many,

CON

Members of the Support Staff Round Table have expressed deep concerns regarding the proposed plan for certification of library personnel submitted by the joint OLA and ODL Certification Committee.

A major area of concern is the issue of levels of certification. As presented in the draft certification manual, Level I certification is the only level available to personnel lacking a degree or certificate in library and information science. Many SSRT members do not have this educational background; however, they hold responsible positions in their library systems. They often perform tasks which may be considered the province of degreed librarians. Through experience, they have come to possess knowledge which is often comparable to that possessed by degreed personnel in the same area.

Despite this knowledge, many SSRT members will be limited to Level I certification, due to lack of a degree in a specific field. These members feel that being limited to Level I certification degrades their knowledge and experience. SSRT members believe that knowledge gained through experience is as valuable as that gained in the classroom. They feel that the proposed certification plan fails to take this into account. It appears that years of experience and the skills and

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OLA President's Message

Long Range Planning Needs Your Input

In my first message to the membership, I indicated that I had charged the Long Range Planning Committee with developing some recommendations concerning OLA's financial future. After a few months in office, I am convinced more than ever of the need for OLA to improve its fiscal affairs. OLA has so few resources that we don't have money to spend on new programs. Until we have the recommendations of the Long Range Planning Committee and can implement them, we will continue to rely on the generosity of the membership for example, several of you have already responded to my letter soliciting donations for this year's legislative effort. Thank you! Also, even though the source of revenue is somewhat uncertain because our annual fundraiser will be devoted to legislation, we have budgeted for a few scholarships this year.

We need a financial plan so that sufficient funds are available for our programs and priorities and to provide for future growth or unexpected problems. Most not-for-profit associations, including library associations, budget in this way. The American Library Association strongly urges that each state association budget part of its resources for a reserve fund. OLA has no reserves at all.

The Long Range Planning Committee is also discussing the possibility of revising the Executive Director's job description. While this is probably overdue for review, the simple fact is that if we want her to do more: a) she will have to give up some of what she is doing, or b) we will have to hire additional help. In either case there are significant budgeting implications.

As President-Elect, Jan Keene chairs the Long Range Planning Committee. Her committee has an important and perhaps daunting task. I am sure she and her committee members would appreciate suggestions from the members concerning such matters as the legislative program, scholarships, fundraising, and dues. Please contact Jan or me with your ideas. We hope to hear from you.

— Ed Johnson

Conference '93 Preview

A great annual conference is being planned for March 31-April 3, 1993, at the Radisson Hotel in Oklahoma City. Kayce Hale, executive director, Resource and Research Center, Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles will be the keynote speaker. Will Manley, American Libraries columnist, is to be the banquet speaker. He also will be in a program presented by the Intellectual Freedom Committee.

Preconference programs include: "Internet", "Teenagers in the Library", and "Basic Reference Materials".

Mark your calendars for the annual conference. More details to come later.

OLA SCHEDULE/HOLIDAYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 17</td>
<td>Membership Committee, Guthrie - 10:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 18</td>
<td>Program Committee/Executive Board - Guthrie P.L.</td>
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<td>December 20-27</td>
<td>Hanukkah</td>
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<td>December 25</td>
<td>Christmas</td>
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<td>January 1</td>
<td>New Year's Day</td>
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<td>January 5</td>
<td>*OKLAHOMA LIBRARIAN deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 8</td>
<td>Legislative Committee - 10 a.m.</td>
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<td>January 14</td>
<td>Long Range Strategic Planning Session, Langston</td>
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<td>January 15</td>
<td>Membership Committee, Oklahoma City - 10:00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>Program Committee/Executive Board - Oklahoma City</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 22-28</td>
<td>Social Responsibilities Roundtable</td>
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<td>February 2</td>
<td>ALA Midwinter, Denver</td>
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<td>February 5</td>
<td>Legislative Committee - 10 a.m.</td>
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<td>February 6</td>
<td>Support Staff RT</td>
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<td>February 8</td>
<td>IFC Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>Legislative Day/Reception</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>Joint Sequoyah Children's YA Comm., ODL - 10 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>Membership Committee, Norman - 1:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>February 19</td>
<td>Program Committee/Executive Board - Norman</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 24</td>
<td>*Council Ballots for OLA Offices (Nom. Committee Chairs)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support Staff RT, Norman - 1:30 p.m.</td>
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*Editor’s Note: OLA SCHEDULE/HOLIDAYS is not complete.

THE OKLAHOMA LIBRARIAN is the official bulletin of the Oklahoma Library Association. It is published bi-monthly. The inclusion of an article or advertisement does not constitute official endorsement by the Association. It is mailed to each member of the Association upon payment of his annual dues.

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Circulation and Advertising Office:
THE OKLAHOMA LIBRARIAN, 300
Hardy Drive, Edmond, OK 73013.
Third class postage paid at Edmond, OK
73034. Publishers Permit No. 61.
Circulation 1000.

Editorial Office: Oklahoma State University Library, Stillwater, OK 74078-037 (405) 744-7086. Printed by Transcript Press, Norman, OK 73069. © OLA.

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AASL Conference Highlights

The American Association of School Librarians held its Sixth National Conference in Baltimore, Oct. 21-25. Attending from Oklahoma were library media personnel from Sapulpa, Norman, Putnam City, Noble, Edmond, Yukon, the OU School of Library and Information Studies, the State Department of Education Library Media Section and one recently retired state department coordinator - Betty Fillay of Fort Gibson. The theme "Challenges-Choices-Connections-Changes" provided a record number of pre-conferences, school tours and break-out sessions designed to support the continuing education needs of school library media specialists.

The Opening General Session featured Edward Fiske, author and former education correspondent of The New York Times. As he noted in his book, Smart Schools, Smart Kids, Fiske said "smart" machines are computers that can receive new information and alter their own workings accordingly. He called on teachers and administrators, parents and politicians to rethink and reshape their schools, offering both hope and positive solutions.

Restructuring and school reform was the agenda of sessions on performance-based assessment, implications of school libraries in reform, and collaborating for change. Literature-related sessions included topics on reading aloud, whole language, linking books across the curriculum, student involvement in choosing the Newbery Award, and international children's literature. Numerous technology sessions covered topics from using interactive videodiscs. Various roles of the school library media specialist as leaders in reform, as curriculum specialists and instructional leaders were explored. Library programming topics ranged from flexible scheduling to the teaching of integrated curriculum units.

The challenge school librarians face in preparing students of the 21st century to function in a global society attracted many participants to sessions on ethnic pluralism and the school library program, developing ethnic library collections, and presenting world cultures to young American readers.

American Library Association President Marilyn Miller presented information about the largest literacy project in the history of this country — asking the youth of the nation to read four billion books and as they do so, raise money for local school and public libraries. The big news from the legislative arena was a commitment from three congressmen who will reintroduce legislation to restore categorical funding for school libraries.

The plethora of activities kept attendees hopping from hotels to the conference center and hopefully provided time to participate in some of the local cuisine such as the favorite Maryland crab cakes. The nearby National Aquarium, tours to Fort McHenry and other historical sites provided opportunities to learn and appreciate this unique area of our country.

Indianapolis will host the next AASL conference, November 9-13, 1994. Put this date on your calendar now and plan to attend this wonderful opportunity for professional growth!

—Bettie Estes-Rickner
State Dept. of Education

"Democracy in America" Tecumseh Public Library

In a unique cooperative effort, the Tecumseh Business and Professional Women's Club (BPW) joined the Tecumseh Public Library (Pioneer Library System) and Tecumseh Countywide News in promoting citizen involvement in the Cable News Network (CNN) six-part series titled "Democracy in America." The series of one-hour programs aired on Sunday nights September 20 through October 25 and looked first at the major issues facing the country and then at the vice presidential and presidential candidates in the November election.

The library compiled reading lists to complement each program in the series, and with the help of the local newspaper, conducted a straw poll made up of questions based on each segment. Additionally, the library made available reading lists, copies of complete political platforms, and copies of the CNN programs (provided by BPW) for check-out at the library. In the process, librarians also registered over 300 new voters. The project culminated in a BPW sponsored forum in which candidates for local, state, and federal office answered questions. The forum was attended by 300 residents.

Libraries Change Lives

"Libraries Change Lives" is the theme for National Library Week (NLW) for 1993 and 1994. This is the first time an NLW theme has been selected for two consecutive years. Event dates are April 18-24, 1993, and April 17-23, 1994.

According to ALA's PR Activity Report, ALA will sponsor a national search for those whose lives have been changed by libraries and/or librarians. Entries will be used to demonstrate to legislators at all levels the value that people place on libraries. "Testimonies" of 75 words or less stating "how the library changed my life" will be solicited for consideration for use in a national advertising campaign. Library patrons of all ages may submit their thoughts and these may be accompanied by photos, drawings, or audio or video tapes.

"It happens everyday. Libraries and librarians change lives! That is the story we must tell those who question the value of our services, our role as educators, the future of our profession. That must be our message."

—Marilyn Miller, ALA President 1992-93

Libraries will be encouraged to honor their "Library Lives" stars during NLW activities. All entries must be forwarded to ALA headquarters for review by May 1. Those who submit the three top entries will be awarded a trip for two to the 1993 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans where they will be honored at the Opening General Session.
PRO (cont. from p. 61)

many suggestions about the document and we have already begun to revise the document based on your input. We want to make the most sensible proposal possible. Our Task Force has not yet finalized the changes we want to make — we will publicize those in the Oklahoma Librarian and the ODL Source, and then present our proposal with its changes to the appropriate boards for consideration.

As we listened to your comments at the hearings it became clear that we had not described clearly enough that you who are now working are able to be certified immediately. You only need to write in and get your certification, and then only need attend some continuing education events during the next three years to maintain your current certification status. That continuing education can be a "mix-and-match" of many different sorts of events, with forty contact hours needed in three years.

One of our major goals is to provide more locally available continuing education. Just from our visits across the state in September we learned how important that is to all librarians — from far west to southeast.

Whom is certification for? Public library directors and staff members who regularly serve the public. Other library staff will benefit, of course, and are encouraged to become certified. Our proposal includes a population profile with the suggested number of certified librarians for cities of various sizes.

We want to encourage library boards to adopt this process as a means of improving their library's status among other municipal departments, and of advancing the training and education of all library staff. Certification is working in the states where it is a voluntary program.

Please feel free to contact me or any of the public library consultants if you would like to comment on any aspect of the certification issue.

—Peggy Cook, Chair
OLA/ODL Certification Task Force

CON (cont. from p. 61)

abilities learned through that experience have effectively been wasted, as far as certification is concerned.

Many SSRT members feel that their knowledge and expertise qualify them for certification beyond Level I. They feel that they deserve the opportunity to gain certification at higher levels, based on that knowledge. They would prefer a certification plan which provides for higher level certification based on years of experience. Alternatively, they would like to be given the option of taking a proficiency test to earn higher certification.

In the current draft of the certification manual, experience is taken into account for certification at levels VI and VII. SSRT members believe that if experience can be taken into account at these levels, it can be taken into account at all levels.

It is impossible to escape the fact that Level I is the lowest level of certification in the proposed plan. It is unrealistic to believe that personnel certified at Level I will be afforded the same respect as those certified at higher levels. Several members of SSRT have expressed the opinion that they are entitled to respect due to their experience. They do not believe that they will receive this respect with Level I certification.

The members of SSRT recognize that it is possible to advance beyond Level I certification by acquiring a degree or certificate. Many support staff personnel do not find this option feasible, for various geographic, financial, and personal reasons. Many SSRT members also resent the idea of going to classes to be "taught" what they have already learned on the job. In any case, earning a degree or certificate may or may not result in a level of certification commensurate with the knowledge of the individual.

A related issue is the fact that Level I certification remains effective only as long as the certified individual remains in his/ her current position and place of employment. Should an individual relocate or seek other employment for any reason, positions requiring certification would be closed to him or her. Although the members of SSRT realize that requiring certification for a particular position is the function of the library board and not the Certification Committee, they remain concerned. They do not wish to have their future employment limited by rulings which are beyond their control.

SSRT members are also aware that the Certification Committee is not responsible for tying pay levels to certification. Again, this will be a function of individual library boards. However, it is obvious that certification levels will provide a convenient base for setting pay levels. This will inevitably result in a situation in which personnel with Level I certification are at the bottom of the pay scale—regardless of their knowledge and abilities.

The members of SSRT do not object to certification per se. They agree that it has the potential to benefit libraries and library personnel. However, SSRT believes that the concerns of support staff must be addressed if certification is to succeed in Oklahoma.

—Pauline Boyer Rodriguez, Metropolitan Library System

Medical Library Association Scholarship for Minority Students

The Medical Library Association sponsors a $2,000 scholarship for minority students who are pursuing a graduate degree in library and information science with an emphasis on health sciences librarianship. The purpose of the MLA Scholarship for minority students is to encourage candidates showing excellence in scholarship and potential for accomplishment in health sciences librarianship.

The scholarship will be granted to a Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American or Pacific Island American student entering or continuing at the master's level. The application deadline is February 1.

For application and further information, please contact the Professional Development Department at the Medical Library Association, Suite 300, Six North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60602-4005. (312) 419-9094.
Certification of Public Librarians in the U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States with Certification</th>
<th>States without Certification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Arizona (M)</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
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<td>Arkansas* (M)</td>
<td>Alaska</td>
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<td>California (M)</td>
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<td>Connecticut (P)</td>
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<td>Iowa (V)</td>
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<td>Kentucky (M)</td>
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<td>Michigan (M)</td>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
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<td>Montana* (P)</td>
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<td>Washington (M)</td>
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<td>Wisconsin (M)</td>
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(M) = Mandatory certification: certification required by law; specific penalties for failure to comply are included in the statutes and codes of some of the states.

(P) = Permissive certification: certification sanctioned by state law, but not compulsory.

(V) = Voluntary certification: certification having no legal basis, generally sponsored by a state library association.

* = inactive in 1990

Source: Data supplied by state agencies in 1990 to the American Library Association's Office for Library Personnel Resources.

Oklahoma Library Association Position Statement
Access to Public Records

The Oklahoma Library Association reaffirms its position that it is the essence of democracy that citizens shall have the right of free inquiry, and it is of utmost importance that free access for all persons to all types of information be preserved and defended. As an institution basic to a democratic society, the library is the source of information for the public.

◊ Open Records

The right of free access to information for all individuals is basic to all aspects of library service regardless of type of library. In providing free access to information, libraries support the purpose of the Oklahoma Open Records Act—"...to ensure and facilitate the public's right of access to and review of government records so they may efficiently and intelligently exercise their inherent political power."

Fees should not be used for the purpose of discouraging requests for information or as obstacles to disclosure of requested information. The Oklahoma Library Association believes the only fair charges are those involved in the recovery of the cost of reproducing the information.

◊ Confidentiality

Libraries must preserve an atmosphere in which the patron's access to information and search for knowledge are treated as matters of privacy. Information deemed confidential in nature is protected by Oklahoma law (765 O.S. s1-105) and includes circulation records, interlibrary loan requests, computerized literature searches, reference requests, and other such professional services.

The Oklahoma Library Association applauds the Oklahoma Legislature in its efforts to guarantee citizen access to public information, including records in machine readable format. The Association looks to the Legislature to ensure that inequities of obtaining information will not be created through restricted access or excessive cost.

IFC Plans Workshop

Watch for more information about the Intellectual Freedom Committee's upcoming workshop concerning the book Earth Child. The workshop will take a forum approach to discuss the pros and cons of the use of Earth Child in Oklahoma Public Schools. The workshop is currently scheduled for Saturday, February 6, 1993.

VIPs at this year's University of Oklahoma Festival of Books on October 17 were (l to r) author Patricia Lauber, retired OU Professor Mildred Laughlin, OU Professor Kathy Latrobe, and authors Jerry Pinkney and Elaine Konigsburg. Laughlin and Latrobe were co-organizers for the event.
Spring 1993 Library Education Around Oklahoma
An Informal Survey

This list of spring 1993 courses was compiled in mid-October. For more up-to-date information, try the phone numbers listed for each school. The list was prepared by OLA's Library Education Division, largely through the efforts of Lee Anne Hagwood, an MLIS student at OU/SLIS in Norman. If other programs should have been included, please send information to the LED Chair (Sydney Pierce, OU/SLIS) so that we can cover them next time.

ADA (East Central State University)
Courses for school library media certification. Two classes, both in evening:
- Materials Selection (M)
- Young Adult Literature (W)
For more information, telephone the School of Education & Psychology (Dr. Altinifer, Dean) at (405) 332-8000 ext. 348

ALVA (Northwestern State University)
Courses for school library media certification; coordinates schedule with Weatherford (SWOSU). Four classes, all in evening:
- Books and Reading for Children (T)
- Cataloging and Classification (W)
- Public Library Administration (R)
- School Library Media Center (M)
For more information, phone Ray Lau, in the Library, at (405) 327-1700 ext. 219

EDMOND (University of Central Oklahoma)
Courses for school library media certification. Five courses, days and times not given:
- Administration of School Media Centers
- Cataloging
- Books and Materials for Elementary School Children
- Public Relations
- Production of Instructional Media
For more information, phone Dr. Judith Wakefield at (405) 341-2980 ext. 5886

LAWTON (Cameron University)
Courses for school library media certification. Three courses:
- Children's Literature (MW 1:30 PM, TR 9:30 AM)
- Young Adult Literature (TR 11 AM)
- School Libraries (T, night course)
For more information, phone Dr. Diane Jackson, (405) 581-2864, or Dr. Jane Morse, (405) 581-2320

MIDWEST CITY (Rose State College)
Courses leading to a Library Technical Assistant Certificate accompanying an Associate of Arts (two-year) degree. Two classes, both in evening:
- Introduction to Library Resources & Services (T)
- Introduction to Library Technical Services (R)
For more information, talk to Kay Overton or Jim Beavers at (405) 733-7370

NORMAN (University of Oklahoma)
ALA-accredited masters program offering different specializations including school library media center certification. Due to heavy demand, enrollment priority is given to fully admitted students. Fifteen courses:
- Biomedical Bibliography (W 3-5:40 PM at Health Sciences, OKC)
- Books & Materials for Young Adults (W evening)
- Current Trends (F evening)
- Elements of Research (R morning)
- Government Publications (W evening)
- Introduction to Information Science (M morning)
- Online/Oralas Retrieval (T evening)
- Organization & Description (Cataloging) I (R evening)
- Organization & Description II (M evening)
- Planning & Evaluation of Info Services (M evening)
- Preservation (R evening)
- Reference Materials (T evening)
- School Library Media Center Admin. (T evening)
- Science & Technology Information Sources (7 Saturdays, all day)
- Selection (F evening)
- Theory of Library Administration (W evening)

For more information, phone the OU/SLIS Office at (405) 325-3921

OKMULgee (Oklahoma State University)
One course per semester. Time not given for spring course:
- Management of School Libraries
For more information, phone the OSU Education Extension Office at (405) 744-6254

TULSA (University Center at Tulsa)
A branch of the University of Oklahoma ALA-accredited masters program—see information given under NORMAN. Seven courses:
- Books & Materials for Young Adults (R evening)
- Current Trends (F evening)
- Introduction to Information Science (M morning)
- Microcomputers in Info Services (7 Saturdays, all day)
- Organization & Description (Cataloging) I (T evening)
- Reference Materials (M evening)
- Theory of Library Administration (W evening)

For more information, phone the University of Oklahoma Office at UCT, (918) 586-0760, or the OU/SLIS Office in Norman, (405) 325-3921

WEATHERFORD (Southwestern State University)
Courses for school library media certification, coordinated with offerings in Alva (NWOSU). Six courses:
- Books & Materials for Young People (M evening)
- Children's Literature (MWF, during day)
- Computer Literacy on the IBM (M evening)
- Instructional Design (M evening)
- Instructional Media (M evening)
- Selection & Acquisition of Library Material (M evening)

For more information, phone Dr. Lessly Price at (405) 774-3149; Dr. John Ludick at (405) 774-3235; or Dr. Pauline Travis at (405) 774-3146
Pioneer Library System Library Millage
Proposition Passes by Large Margin

"We are extremely pleased with the passage of the library proposition in McClain and Pottawatomie Counties to raise the support levy for public libraries to the state ceiling of four mills," said Mary Sherman, Director of the Pioneer Library System.

County voters approved the millage increase at the September 15 run-off election. A similar measure was defeated in both counties in 1990. In McClain County, the measure was approved by 69% of the electorate; Pottawatomie County voters passed the measure by 65%.

"The key to success was a strong citizens' grass roots effort from start to finish. Many people signed a petition to put the proposition to a vote and then worked very hard to spread the word about the benefits of public libraries. We must also applaud the library staff members at our branches in Blanchard, Newcastle, Purcell, McCloud, Shawnee, and Tecumseh who provide such wonderful customer service to their communities," Sherman said.

Some of the more unique aspects of the citizens' campaign included: an old-fashioned political bus tour to promote libraries; a coloring contest for school children with the theme "I Love Libraries," individually paid ads with the photograph of the individual or family and a reason for supporting their library (ads were even done by city mayors, a county commissioner, and a school cheer leading squad); and finally, a woman in one community who sat on a flag pole until the YES vote came in!

The Pioneer Library System is the first multi-county library system in Oklahoma to reach the state ceiling of four mills in each county.

--Bob Tormey, Pioneer Library System

What is Millage?

Millage is the factor usually employed as the rate of taxation in computing taxes. One mill per thousand is equal to $1 of taxes per $1000 of assessed value. The assessed value multiplied by the millage rate equals the tax rate.

Under Oklahoma law, only counties with a county-wide library system or counties that are part of a multi-county library system can levy millage for library service. Counties meeting these conditions can vote to assess up to four mills for library services. Currently 7 of 29 eligible counties are at the four mill ceiling.

Counties at the 4 Mill Level (denoted with an *)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eastern Oklahoma Library District System</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adair* (passed 8/92) Mcintosh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cherokee</td>
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<th>Pioneer Library System</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cleveland*</td>
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<td>McClain* (passed 9/92)</td>
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<td>Pottawatomie* (passed 9/92)</td>
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<th>Tulsa City-County Library System</th>
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<td>Dewey</td>
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"Window to the World: The Challenge of Change"
Joint Conference of the Wyoming Library Association and the Mountain Plains Library Association

More than 500 librarians gathered in Cheyenne, WY in late Sept. to discuss the "Challenge of Change." The program was overrun with timely topics and motivating speakers. No attempt will be made to recount all that happened, but here are a few highlights.

Keynote speaker, Kate Rand-Lloyd, editor of Working Woman, cautioned librarians about stereotyping others and especially ourselves and recounted wonderful stories from her publishing experience. Librarians, she felt, should be particularly aware of the danger in drawing unfounded conclusions and must be on guard against letting others define our relations to people and events.

Dennis Day and June Garcia presented "Morristown and Home Again"—one more update on that tricky situation. Major points included:

- the local library has the right to set local rules
- library rules should adhere to all existing laws or ordinances; existing statutes should be used by simply citing them in the policy
- rules should be stated simply, understandably, and in non-vague language
- all rules should be stated as positively as possible; consider saying, "Your library rights are...", but we need your help with...
- continue staff training to develop empathy and fairness
- the Morristown issue is not finished; the question will never be finished as we must constantly review and revise

A wonderfully useful program on developing a CD-ROM collection for reference was led by Blaine Hall of BYU, who gave tips on how to "sell" your budget-makers, and how to get the most for your dollars. He suggested thinking of the product in cost-per-search terms rather than as a total cost and noted that since the technology involved is digital, it can be updated effectively when the next innovation comes along. The life span for technology is about three to five years, plan your budgets accordingly. He also gave tips on what kind of hardware is best and what specifications will be most likely to meet current and future needs.

An especially timely program called, "Libraries and the Political Process" was given by Lisa Kinney, former librarian turned lawyer turned legislator from Wyoming, and author of Lobbying for Your Library, published 1992 by ALA. She noted how these steps in effective lobbying efforts:

1. Know what you want. Do the research, then summarize in one page.
2. Line up sponsors—both parties and houses—before bill is introduced.
3. Develop a system to track legislation and, if possible, have a lobbyist on the spot. Implement a "telephone tree."
4. Find out who makes the decisions.
5. Develop a working relationship with that person. Get personal, learn what they like, what they do, what their hobbies are. Send notes. Keep them updated on library issues and events. Invite them to be present at the library for any number of events. Attend their meetings; show an interest in what they are doing. Talk to all decision-makers, not just your own party members.
6. If asked for information by a legislator, respond quickly.
7. Communicate with your contacts throughout the process; bills can change often and quickly.
8. Testify on the bills you are pushing. Send hand-written notes, they are still the best way to communicate and will carry the most weight.
9. Be appreciative. Send thank you notes, flowers, etc. Build a bridge for your next contact.
10. Be positive and professional, even if you lose.

She suggested using common courtesy and diplomacy in working with legislators. Do not use "Dear Sir" letters; instead, make each request personal and worthwhile—if you cannot use a board member, friend, or spouse of staff who can.

Kinney also noted the importance of keeping the public informed on issues. Sponsor a candidates' forum, provide carefully-worded questionnaires on timely topics, lead candidate interviews.

Lest we forget what is really important to legislators as well as to librarians, Kinney told us that the best way to communicate together is to eat together. Meet at a neutral place and share a meal, have a legislative reception, supply home-cooked food, do something that will appeal to their palate and will transfer into positive support. (Kudos to Pioneer Library System who has practiced this effectively for several years.)

If you weren't in Cheyenne, you might want to check with one of the Oklahoma librarians who attended to see just what else you missed. The next MPLA joint conference will be in Snowmass, CO in Oct. 1993—plan now to attend. And, if you have not yet joined MPLA or renewed your membership, this is a perfect reason to do just that!

-Jan Sanders, MPLA Representative

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What would you do?

The OLA Ethics Committee has prepared a series of case studies related to the OLA Endorsement and Amplification of the American Library Association Statement on Professional Ethics. Each case study will be presented with corresponding text from the Statement. Those who would like to respond with the action that should be taken by the librarian are encouraged to do so. The Committee will prepare a "solution" using selected responses from OLA members and, when possible, a statement from a state or national library leader in ethics.

Librarians must protect each user’s right to privacy with respect to information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed or acquired.

Larry Loser and Peter Perfect are middle school students with an interest in Nazi Germany and Hitler. One night a swastika and anti-Semitic graffiti are painted on the wall of the middle school. The police and the principal approach the librarian the next morning wanting to know the names of students who have checked out materials about Nazism and Hitler.

The librarian should ....

Responses should be submitted no later than January 30, 1993, to OLA Ethics Committee Chair Bonnie Stout, Stillwater High School, 1224 N. Husband, Stillwater, OK 74075. Solutions will be printed in the March/April issue of the Oklahoma Librarian.

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People and Places

The Ponca City Library has had several recent staff changes. Adult Services Librarian Jodene Peck was married in August and has relocated to Spokane, Washington. Assuming Jodene’s position in October was Holly LaBossiere. Holly, a native of St. Paul, Minnesota, received her B.A. degree from the University of Minnesota and M.L.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in December of 1991. In a newly created position, Susan Winslow has been named Circulation Librarian. Susan has been a volunteer and a part-time employee for the Ponca City Library off and on for the past ten years. Susan has a B.A. degree from Cornell University. Loyd Bishop has joined the staff of the Ponca City Library as the Genealogy Librarian. Loyd brings over twenty years experience in the field of genealogical research.

OLA Appreciates Donors

OLA has designated funds for tax deductible donations for scholarships and legislative activities. Contributions to the OLA Scholarship Fund and/or the OLA Legislative Fund should be mailed to: Oklahoma Library Association, 300 Hardy Drive, Edmond, OK 73013.

We appreciate the following 1992-93 donors to date:

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Browsers love the “hands-on” portion of OU’s Festival of Books. Held this year on October 17, the festival is one of the most popular “library” events of the year.

OLA Welcomes New Members

Laura Bottoms, Oral Roberts University
Elaine B. Bradshaw, Student, OU
Janet S. Caruth, Student, OU
Sue Ensley, Sulphur High School
Pam Garrett, Trinity Episcopal School, OKC
Richard Gilbert, Student, OU
Cathy A. Goett, Rosary School, OKC
Debbie Hargis, Mooreland Elementary School
Mark Y. Herring, Oklahoma Baptist University
Brenda Johnson, Moore Public Library
Larry G. Johnson, University of Central Oklahoma
Shonda Koneman, Okla. School for Blind
Holly Anne LaBossiere, Ponca City Library
Jayne Mays, Chandler Public Schools
Laine McCarthy, University of Oklahoma
Kay Nichols, University of Oklahoma
Timothy G. Nutt, Student, OU
Arleen Ritcheson, Washington Elementary, Ponca City
Wynne Stowers, Madill Elementary
Lana Kay Wakefield, Madison Mid. School, Bartlesville
Susan A. Winslow, Ponca City Library

Literature Study Tour Announced

Fort Hays State University is sponsoring the 20th Literature Study Tour, July 8 to August 2, 1993, traveling to Italy and Greece, including Sicily and several Greek islands. Study sessions and excursions related to literature are being planned. Early registration is recommended. For more information write to: Donna J. Harsh, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Fort Hays State University, 600 Park Street, Hays, KS 67601-4099.
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