Planning Homeschooler Services

Rosemary Moran
Coordinator, Young Adult Services
Tulsa City-County Library, Tulsa, Oklahoma

"I wonder why so many children are in the library and not in school?"
"Why would a patron want us to get the second edition of this science book through interlibrary loan rather than use the updated fifth edition we have on the shelf?"
"Most of our books on homeschooling are checked out, but requests are coming in all the time!"
"Homeschooling groups have meeting rooms booked at nearly all of our twenty-three libraries."

These were just some of the observations made by the Tulsa City-County Library (TCCL) staff a couple of years ago. Discussions at staff meetings revealed that all locations were seeing an increase in homeschooling families, and often they were asking for materials not in our collections.

How well was the library responding to the needs of homeschooling families? How could, and should, we serve them better? The growing numbers of homeschoolers and their perceived dependence on public libraries prompted our library director to appoint a task force in October 1993 to examine these questions. The task force reviewed library literature on homeschooling, evaluated our current services, surveyed our homeschooling users, and contacted other libraries about their services to this target group. One member of the task force monitored homeschooling newsgroups on the Internet; another chatted with homeschoolers on an online service. We were surprised to learn that most libraries we surveyed were not doing anything special for homeschoolers, but they all asked for copies of our report.

Our research disclosed that an estimated one child in one hundred is schooled at home. In the Tulsa area (a population of about five hundred thousand), we found that the two largest homeschool support groups had combined mailing lists of more than one thousand families. The survey of local homeschoolers indicated heavy use of library materials to supplement standard homeschooling curricula. Many families attended library programs, and were regular users of TCCL's online catalog through our computers or by dialing in from home computers. They had high praise for the staff's helpfulness and for our juvenile nonfiction collection. But they wanted more juvenile Christian fiction and biographies, more adult books and magazines on homeschooling, and educational videos and instructional kits.

The requests for materials often mirrored the family's reasons for homeschooling—religious and philosophical beliefs, a belief that parents can provide a better education than organized schools, or a desire to avoid government interference in personal lives. A thorough review and discussion of the facts, combined with the suggestions we solicited from patrons, produced these task force findings and recommendations:

◊ Library staff need sensitivity training on the needs of homeschoolers so they will be knowledgeable and objectively supportive of homeschooling patrons, as well as able to articulate library policies in the light of homeschoolers' requests.

We have already held two workshops for staff featuring a panel of mothers who talked about their decisions to homeschool. They expressed the joys of homeschooling ("Your children are always with you"!), and the agony of homeschooling ("Your children are always with you"). They asked for organized programs on how to use the library's computer catalog and databases, and we responded by developing a training session that will be offered on a regular schedule at our central and regional libraries.

◊ Homeschoolers need better access to the collection through subject headings.

We responded by adding subject headings that are in plain English (e.g., "Homeschooling" in addition to the old "Domestic Education" heading provided by the Library of Congress). We also expanded access by including the notes fields in keyword searching of the catalog.

◊ Homeschoolers want information about the legalities of homeschooling, lists of library services for homeschoolers, better notification about library programs, and library programs offered at times convenient for homeschoolers.

We developed vertical file packets on homeschooling for

(cont. on p. 5)
Most of you know that I have recently returned from a trip to England to visit my college-aged daughter who is studying (?) there. We both had a wonderful time, saw many interesting things, and generally were able to catch up on each other’s lives. I won’t bore you with all that, but I do want to tell you a little about the three libraries I visited while in the UK. (Surprise! I actually did something constructive with my time.)

Picture a cold, rainy, windy day on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh. People are hurrying by to escape the frigid temperatures. You are surrounded by tall, garroyle-infested buildings, housing shops, pubs, residences, and offices. To your left you spot an eye-level plaque reading “National Library of Scotland.” That happened to me; I had not set out to find the library, but it found me. Partly to get warm, I wandered inside, where I was surprised to find an armed guard seated at the top of the entry stairs. Visitors, it seems, are allowed into the exhibition gallery, but not into the study areas on upper floors. Those who need to use this research facility must first submit an application stating their project and need for the materials. If approved, they may use the library, but (of course) materials are brought to them, as all stacks are closed. After explaining to the guard that I was a “fellow professional” from the States, he allowed me to confer with a librarian upstairs who gave me (limited) access.

The library is much like our Library of Congress and uses a VTLS automated catalog system. All the really “good stuff” (that is, print material from before 1600) is cataloged on microfiche. I was intrigued to find that they, too, were performing a reference usage survey. Random titles throughout the ready reference section contained printed cards tucked into their pages onto which users were to write their responses to standard survey questions: What field are you working in? Why did you choose this title? Did you find the information you needed? etc. The facility itself was very quiet and was furnished simply with long wooden tables containing individual lights. And no, it did not look like a wonderful, old book shop; it looked like a standard 1955 university library. Staff was helpful once you got past the guards, and seemed very professional in their approach. I enjoyed looking around, although I must say I felt very constrained.

Moving south through the United Kingdom, we stopped at Stratford-upon-Avon to wander around and see the Royal Shakespeare Company present “Romeo and Juliet.” Wouldn’t you know that Prince Charles attended the production the night before we did! Another glorious opportunity missed. Anyway, while we were there, touring Billy’s birthplace, walking through the world’s largest butterfly farm, and getting drenched to the skin by typical mid-December thunderstorms, we ran across—you guessed it—the Stratford Public Library. It was closed on Wednesday (no reason given), but opened at 9:00 on Thursday. I suppose the kindest description would be to call it “utilitarian.” There were no displays, no brightly-colored posters, no front-face shelving for children’s picture books. Instead you got a fairly austere collection of identical units, each one plainly and clearly labeled with the subject matter present. Staff was coolly cordial (fairly typical, I think) and the borrowing rules seemed reasonable. Again, the place made me think I had gone back a few decades to the libraries of my youth. They just didn’t seem to be having fun!

The final library was by far the best and a real inspiration: The British Library in the British Museum. Here are housed all the famous documents: the Magna Carta; original pages by Thackeray, Austen, Keats; legal documents signed by William Shakespeare; and hundreds of illuminated manuscripts. To stand in the quiet—away from the hustle of visiting school children, in that dimly lit hall, walled floor to ceiling with rare and antique volumes—and to know that the work you are gazing on was hand-lettered by a scribe or monk some seven or eight hundred years ago was awe-inspiring. My greatest “find” for the day, however, was a copy of scripture from the FOURTH CENTURY. That absolutely blew me away. It’s hard to come from a state that hasn’t even existed for a hundred years and visit a place where things have been happening for sixteen hundred years and not be impressed. As you know, I am seldom at a loss for words, but when I found this volume, I was dumbstruck.

There is much more I could say, but won’t. Many of you have also visited the Isles and you have stories of your own, far better than mine. I wanted to share these impressions with you, though, to encourage us all. We forget, sometimes, just how far libraries have come in the last 30-40 years, how much they have improved. We Americans have a right to be proud of our institutions, our profession, our efforts. So sit up a little straighter and speak out for libraries a little louder.

—Jan Sanders
Sequoyah Young Adult Book Award Committee
Chooses 1996-97 Masterlist

OLA's Sequoyah Young Adult Committee recently released the titles on its 1996-97 Sequoyah Young Adult Book Award Masterlist. To vote in January 1997, students in grades 7-9 will read three titles from the list.

Calvert, Patricia
Bigger. Scribners, 1994. (Grades 6-8)

Collier, James Lincoln
& Christopher Collier
(Grades 7-9)

Creech, Sharon
(Grades 8-10)

Cushman, Karen
(Grades 6-10)

Farmer, Nancy
The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm. Orchard, 1994.
(Grades 7-9)

Hesse, Karen
Phoenix Rising. Holt, 1994. (Grades 7-9)

Klass, David
(Grades 8-10)

Koertge, Ron
Tiger Tiger Burning Bright. Orchard, 1994. (Grades 6-9)

Lasky, Kathryn
Beyond the Burning Time. Scholastic, 1994. (Grades 7-12)

Nelson, Theresa
Earthshine. Orchard, 1994. (Grades 7-9)

Salisbury, Graham

Schur, Maxine
(Grades 6-9)

Thesman, Jean
(Grades 7-9)

Selection policies vary throughout the state. Please select those titles which meet your individual selection policy.

For more information contact: Beth DeGeer, Bartlesville Public Library, 600 S. Johnstone, Bartlesville, OK 74003 or call 918-337-5338.

Master Sequoyah Masterlists
Booklet Available

If you’re not a school librarian, you may not be aware that it’s possible to get a booklet of all previous Sequoyah Children’s Book Award Masterlists. Contact Michelle at the Library Media Section, State Department of Education, 405-521-2956. Copies are $3.00 each.

A teacher friend commented recently that identifying past Sequoyah award winning books was no problem. What she was missing, however, were the complete Masterlists from which the winners are selected, lists which seemed to disappear after each year’s voting. She wanted recommended reading for herself.

OLA Is Nearly as Old as George Burns

The 90th anniversary of OLA is coming up spring 1997!

This will also be the year of the joint OLA/MPLA Annual Conference at Shangri-La. All informants say this will be a new and wonderful experience—think of innovative ideas, bigger and broader programs, more meals, more exhibits, plus meeting and being stimulated by new people from the whole 11 state MPLA region. Plan for an invigorating celebration!

It's not too far off. And all you OLA chair-elects might want to start brainstorming early....

OLA is nearly as old as George, but has the zest of a thousand, rather than just one!
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The Homeschool Project Since Summer 1995

After studying needs and making efforts to better serve the homeschool constituency, as reported in the Public Libraries article, TCCL held the first reception for homeschoolers in October 1995 at Martin East Regional Library. The resounding success of this event resulted in plans to hold similar open houses twice a year, once at one of the big regional libraries, and once at one of the smaller libraries. The second homeschool open house will be in February 1996 at the West Regional Library.

In planning for the first open house, the goal was serving 150 people. As time drew closer, staff thought "we'll be lucky if we get 75." Immediately before the reception, 30-40 people sounded like a success. Surprise! At 1:15 p.m., the parking lot was full, with a half mile traffic jam extending back up the street. At 1:30, the announced start of the reception/Information fair, 450 people were on hand!

A resources fair in the library's auditorium provided a focus for the open house. The simultaneous, drop-in story hour for preschoolers was very popular.

Staff, including many extras pulled from other TCCL branches, were stationed around the library to demonstrate available resources, such as the OPACs and the full text CD-ROM Tulsa World newspaper database. A children's librarian in the children's reference book area handed out bibliographies and recommended books.

Helium balloons identified positions of resource staff, but turned out not to be needed. To explore other resources, people just aimed for another bottleneck! Most wanted to use the catalog. If approached most said, "oh yes, I know how to use it," but staff were almost always able to suggest and explain something new about the library's services.

The event was scheduled to run from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Since many people came expecting a program, rather than a come and go event, the next open house will be modified to include a welcome speech midway through the open house.

A very effective method for reaching a wide audience proved to be printing flyers three months ahead of time, and then notifying the approximately ten Tulsa area homeschooling organizations early enough to get the notice in newsletters to the homeschooling families.

Before the homeschooling project began, many staff had a negative or adversarial view of homeschooling parents. What seems to have made the most difference to library staff, says Rosemary Moran, have been workshops which included parents talking about their homeschooling efforts and why they do it. Conversely, Rosemary thinks, the reception has helped change the parents' view of librarians, broadening the understanding that librarians are there to help guide them through the maze and can recommend good books. She says, "this is one of the most positive things I've ever been involved in!"

--Rachel Butler

Planning Homeschooler Services (cont. from p. 1)
each of our libraries, and published a brochure to publicize library services directly to homeschoolers. We scheduled programs, especially computer training, during the daytime. We also added the homeschool support groups to our media mailing list, and we are creating a collection of publishers' catalogs for homeschoolers. In addition, we will invite homeschool families to an open house at the beginning of the school year. The event will feature displays of library materials and services, demonstrations of the catalog and other resources of particular interest to homeschoolers, and a concurrent storyline for younger children to attend while parents and older siblings learn about the library. The open house will be publicized through the mass media as well as in the newsletters of homeschooling support groups.

The library's collections of materials on homeschooling should be expanded.

We allocated thousands of dollars from our materials budget over the past two years to enhance these collections. Bibliographies and pathfinders are also being created on topics of interest to homeschoolers.

TCCL is committed to serving the growing number of homeschooling families in our community, and to doing it well. Many families already take advantage of all we offer, but we hope our outreach efforts will encourage even more homeschoolers to use the library. The lines of communication have been opened, and we will continue to monitor their needs and welcome their suggestions.

In return, homeschool families have been extremely supportive of libraries.

They gave us strong, vocal endorsement at the election polls last summer when some important permissive legislation for public libraries passed by a slim, statewide margin.

"Libraries give us and our children a place to get together, to make presentations and exchange information. And the librarians are very helpful. They never make a judgmental comment when we ask for something," said one mother.

And as a grandmother noted, "The children have regular hours in the library. It's such a wonderful resource. Young people know that libraries are where so much of their information comes from."

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Letter to the Editor

Please have an article in the Oklahoma Librarian that lists the OLA officers' email addresses and list yours in the box that appears in each issue. It would have been much quicker to send the information to you by e-mail.

Thanks for producing such an outstanding publication.

—Edith LaForge

Thank you for the letter! The new OLA directory, which everyone should have received in January, has e-mail addresses for all OLA members so equipped at the time they renewed their memberships. I remain e-mailly-impaired, though my institution is headed in that direction. Hopefully by the time of the March/April issue I will be able to add my e-mail address to the masthead. We'll do an update article on officers' e-mail addresses also.

—Rachel Butler
“Let’s Talk About It” Very Popular with Adults Around the State

Since 1985, the Oklahoma Library Association has sponsored the “Let’s Talk About It, Oklahoma” project which brings reading and discussion programs to adults around the state.

Through this project, more than 225 series of extremely popular programs have been presented at 70 different sites around the state, including public libraries, correctional institution libraries, high school and private school libraries, and college and university libraries.

Our current grant from the NEH provides funding for series at new sites and at sites that have previously presented only one “Let’s Talk About It, Oklahoma” series. We are still seeking new and one-time sites; anyone interested in hosting a series should call LTAIO director Jennifer Kidney. Eligible libraries must present series in 1996.

In addition to presenting program series, the project has also developed sixteen reading and discussion themes using the “Let’s Talk About It” format and two “National Conversation” series. We also offer eleven themes developed by the American Library Association, plus “The Gilded Age” from the Great Plains Chautauqua Society, and “Living in the Environment” from the University of Colorado at Boulder, as well as materials for presenting the poetry series “Voices and Visions” and “Poets in Person.” The project has been funded by three major grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and grants from the Oklahoma Foundation for the Humanities, the American Library Association, Phillips Petroleum Foundation, Inc., and Sarkeys Foundation.

With the NEH grant, we have developed three new themes, “The Cowboy,” “Many Trails, Many Tribes: Images of American Indians in Fiction,” and “The Oklahoma Experience: In Our Own Words,” featuring autobiographies by Oklahomans. This last theme will be introduced at a seminar at the Stillwater Public Library on March 14. If you would like to attend, call Jennifer Kidney.

“Let’s Talk About It, Oklahoma” is one of the most successful humanities projects ever offered, and it is unique to Oklahoma. Other states have similar reading and discussion projects, but Oklahoma’s has been in operation longer, offers more themes, and serves a larger audience than any other. Our Planning and Training Guide and Scholar Directory are designed especially for Oklahoma libraries, and applying for and presenting a series each consist of simple procedures.

Both humanities scholars and participants are enthusiastic about these programs. Scholars welcome opportunities to research new authors and subjects and to make presentations to informed and interested audiences, and adult participants are happy to have the opportunity to share their experiences in reading books with their peers and to hear the insights of experts. LTAIO programs are particularly popular and successful in smaller communities and have been influential in getting Friends organizations off the ground.

—Jennifer Kidney

To what your interest, here are examples of program series being offered at two libraries this spring:

| Private Investigations - McLeod            | The Big Sleep | Lewis Parkhill |
| Feb 15                                    |               |               |
| Feb 29                                    | Death in a Tenured Position | Trisha Yarbrough |
| Mar 14                                    | The Ghostway  | Linda Thornton |
| Mar 28                                    | Killing Orders| Shirley Jones  |
| The Cowboy - Hobart                       | Cowboy Life   | Lynn Muslewhte |
| Jan 25                                    | The Virginian | Harbour Winn   |
| Feb 8                                     | The Virginian | Harbour Winn   |
| Feb 22                                    | The Log of a Cowboy | Viki Pettijohn |
| Mar 7                                     | Monte Walsh   | Jennifer Kidney |
| Mar 21                                    | Lonesome Dove | Jerry Nye      |

Notice that each session is led by a different scholar. The scholars are a diverse lot, representing most of the colleges around the state as well as others unaffiliated with academia. Jennifer is always looking for new scholars to present and develop programs.

One scholar with the program is Linda Thornton, Professor of Composition & Literature at Oklahoma City Community College. Linda first participated in the program ten years ago, and greatly enjoys it—enough so that she woke up one morning late last fall to discover that she’d led seven different sessions around the state during the fall months. Linda wrote the “Coming of Age in America” program and collaborated on “The American Renaissance.” She says, “it’s a chance to meet with people in the community who like to read, and want to discuss ideas with others—outside the classroom—people who want to be there. And I get to visit places I would otherwise not get to see!”

What about the topics? Topics for new themes arise from suggestions made at programs and at the twice a year scholar seminars. Currently the most popular is “Private Investigations,” a mystery, detective fiction series. The “Oklahoma Experience” series is also quite popular, as are the “Romantic Love,” “Gilded Age,” and the “Not for Children Only” series. Jennifer would like to develop others as well, such as Oklahoma mystery authors or British authors.

How does it actually work? A librarian applies for a program series, reserving its theme in advance. The LTAIO program provides the books for all participants—it keeps enough books for each program series in stock to supply participants at two libraries at once. No matter where series are held, they tend to attract about 25 participants. People form friendships, new people are drawn into the library. “Scholars find they’ve gained the undying loyalty of the participants,” says Jennifer. “It’s really fun.”

—Rachel Butler

To receive more information or LTAIO materials, please write or call: Dr. Jennifer Kidney, Let’s Talk About It, Oklahoma, Norman Public Library, 225 N. Webster, Norman, OK 73069, 405-321-1481, ext. 127, or 405-329-3395.
Library Computer System Just for Kids

The Pioneer Library System has recently installed "Kid's Catalog," a colorful point-and-click computer catalog of library materials for children. Designed primarily for preschoolers and children through Grade 5, the system allows youngsters to search for library materials even if they cannot spell or type!

"The Kid's Catalog uses colorful graphics as search tools for younger children, but also offers a "Type Search" for older children," said project coordinator Desiree Webber.

Webber pointed out that there are four basic ways children can find information in the library:

◊ EXPLORE Icon — uses pictures to move logically through subject categories. "For example, just click on 'Nature' and see graphic icons for 'Weather,' 'Plants,' 'The Environment,' and more."

◊ FIND IT Icon — uses letters and words to find the subject, author, or series needed. Ideal for children in grades 1-3.

◊ TYPE SEARCH Icon — for children who can spell and type, just enter your search and click on "author," "title," or "subject" to begin the search.

◊ BEST STORIES Icon — a listing of favorite titles under different categories; such as Newbery and Caldecott Medal Winners, and Sequoyah award books, among others.

"Once you find a book, click on the map to find its location in the library, or the computer will prompt you to ask a Librarian for assistance," Webber said. "While designed primarily for young children, the 'Kid's Catalog' has also proved to be a popular search engine for those in grades 6-9."

In January six year old Shane and 13 year old Leah tested Kid's Catalog. It was popular with both kids. Shane enjoyed looking through the "Explore" icons, then having the titles he found read to him. Then he'd click on a title, then get the floor plan of the children's area with the correct shelf highlighted. Pointing, "fourth shelf, left side," he happily lead the way toward that book.

The new system completed a test phase in December and is now online at public libraries in Blanchard, Newcastle, Purcell, Noble, Norman, Moore, McLoud, Shawnee, and Tecumseh. Bob Tormey, Public Information Officer, adds, "Based on a quick survey of staff, we believe we are the first in the state to offer this service!"

I’d Sooner Read
Buffaloes to roam in libraries to help urge children to read
by Kim McConnell

Buffaloes will begin roaming through public and school libraries urging Oklahoma children to read 12,647,608 books by November 16, 1997. That goal — and the "goal keepers" — are part of the "I'd Sooner Read" campaign being launched Thursday on Statehood Day, said Georganne Vineyard, a Lawton coordinator for the statewide project.

I’d Sooner Read is part of a two-year, national program created by the American Association of School Librarians. The national goal is one billion books. Oklahoma’s share — 12,647,608 — is based on Oklahoma’s population, compared to that 1 billion total. Most state schools and public libraries are expected to participate.

In Lawton, the program opened at 6:15 p.m. Thursday, November 16, during a ceremony at the Special Services Center. The ceremony marked both the reading program and Statehood Day, with the "wedding" of Miss Indian Territory and Mr. Oklahoma, a reenactment of the original ceremony presented on the day Oklahoma became a state in 1907.

Molly Griffis, a member of the task force which helped create the reading program, said organizers will be refining projects throughout the two-year program. However, buffaloes will remain the centerpiece, she said. Organizers have provided stuffed buffaloes, which will "roam" through libraries armed with a "buffalo biography," a scrapbook which will document the travels and the books read, and the events which occurred during visits to Oklahoma’s school and public libraries. The buffaloes are important in history, both Oklahoman and Native American.

In Lawton, buffaloes donated by City National Bank will be stationed at Lawton Public Library and Fort Sill Library. In addition, buffaloes have been assigned to Lawton Public Schools and the Title I program. The first Title I recipient will be the Cache Public Schools, confirmed Marilyn Platt, school librarian. Cache’s involvement touches on local history: the town was the “docking” site for buffaloes shipped to the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in 1907.

Buffaloes had long been a fixture on the plains, providing food and clothing for Indian tribes. However, the buffalo had all but disappeared by the late 1800s. Shortly after the turn of the century, officials discussed the idea of restocking buffaloes at the Wichita game preserve (Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge), using stock animals from the New York Zoological Park.

The Lawton Constitution-Democrat reported in December 1905 that J. Alden Loring, Oswego, N.Y. would visit Oklahoma at the request of the Smithsonian Institution, to "learn the advisability of placing buffalo in the national game preserve in the Wichita Mountains, where climatic conditions are believed to be favorable to their propagation." The paper’s Oct. 15, 1907 edition confirmed that 15 buffaloes had been taken from the Zoological Park’s 45-member herd and loaded into two patent stock cars. The buffaloes left New York Oct. 10, riding free of charge to St. Louis courtesy of the American Express Co. and New York Central Lines, and from St. Louis to Cache courtesy of Wells Fargo.

The shipment included the 5-year old bull Comanche (herd leader), four other bulls, six breeding cows, two other cows, and two 6-month-old calves. The advance car arrived October 16, with Frank Rush, keeper of the Wichita herd. The train passed through Lawton before stopping at Cache. There, buffaloes were unloaded, but not without incident. Reports say that Comanche kicked his steel and wood crate, punching his horn through an oak board.


Look for more information later on “I’d Sooner Read.”
Irreconcilable Differences: Library Materials and Intellectual Freedom

The Occult: A History, The Joy of Sex, and Marilyn: Among Friends keep getting cut-up, defaced, stolen, checked out and never returned. This destruction of library materials takes place everywhere, in all types of libraries—public, school, academic, special. The Library of Congress reports serious levels of mutilation and theft; similar problems occur in Oklahoma libraries. And everywhere library staff asks what can be done to halt and prevent such destruction.

It is helpful to remember that library materials are damaged in a variety of ways. Words, phrases, and illustrations are obscured or excised from books and journals. Entire articles and chapters are removed. Items are checked out and never returned; some titles just disappear from the stacks.

Additionally, the use of a particular method of damage is reflects the fact that library materials are damaged for a variety of reasons. Sometimes library patrons are saving the expense of xeroxing an article or buying a book; sometimes they are illustrating a term paper or a scrapbook. Certain plates, classic articles, or scarce books are removed so they may be sold for profit. We may find the reasons pathological or unfathomable; we may even understand the reasons, but not condone the actions.

Reasons that result in one-time mutilation cause problems for physical preservation of library materials, but these can usually be dealt with by replacing titles or by xeroxing replacement pages, articles, and illustrations and tipping them into the damaged volumes. Reasons that result in the repeated destruction or removal of the same item or group of items present a much more difficult problem.

It is this latter category of destruction where the answers to the question of how to halt and prevent damage represent the greatest challenge to intellectual freedom. The cost of continually replacing these materials is usually an expense that libraries cannot bear.

Alternatives, such as not replacing, but instead relying on interlibrary loan, limit use. High risk books not replaced are simply not available to readers—even through interlibrary loan—if other libraries also choose not to replace such titles. In any case, many patrons do not go beyond looking on the shelf for an item and therefore do not utilize interlibrary loans. Placing items on reserve or in closed stack collections of one kind or another violates our intellectual freedom principles, as well as limiting use. Those books identified in the catalog as in a special restricted location or having a restricted circulation status deter all but the most determined users, because most readers don’t want to take the time to ask the librarian to retrieve the material, or are too busy to read it in the library, or are too embarrassed to ask for certain titles.

The irreconcilable differences between our desire to physically protect library materials and our wish to provide maximum freedom of access for our readers are large ones. There are no rigid rules to follow in resolving these differences. Instead we are required to exercise our professional judgment, to perform a continual balancing act, to reaffirm our commitment to intellectual freedom whenever possible, and to be painfully aware of it whenever it is not possible.

—David Snider and Judith Overmier
Intellectual Freedom Committee

Think Public Relations

One of the biggest problems any library faces is in the area of public relations. Many of you are of the "one-woman/man" library school and barely have enough time to keep the day to day routine up and running. The families you serve are harried, hurried and halved. Where is the time for taking the kids to the library? Why don't kids read as much as they used to? There are ways to get the library recognized as an integral part of the community.

Do you have a list of all the "program chairs" of the service clubs in your area? Do you communicate on a regular basis with your program chairs for all the local schools, both public and private? Are you online to help kids and their parents in the area of research? If so, are they aware of your services? Have you invited elderly residents to tape "oral history" as part of your collection? If you don't have a video camera, have you thought of oral history being a school project with the resultant tape collection being held at your library? Do you have an outside wall that the local kids could paint a mural on? Did you invite the local business men/women to the library to read to kids lately and talk about their favorite books? How about the school janitor? Every kid in school LOVES their school janitor! He/she needs to be in your corner. What about the cooks at school? Underneath those plastic gloves are some fabulous grandmas who just might enjoy reading to your younger patrons.

Try to think of your job as one of administration and organization. There are other who can have story hour. There are debate teams that might enjoy practicing in your library in front of a local group instead of those same old classrooms. There are scouts looking for projects who can do some of the manual and housekeeping jobs you find yourself doing. What does it take from you? Time to sit down and list some of the things that might help Public Relations in your own library. Time to believe that there are many in your community that are ready to help.

First they have to know that you are there. Be visible. Be viable. BELIEVE!!

—Mary E. Anderson

Ms. Anderson was Media Director for 23 years at the Westside Community Schools in Omaha, Nebraska. She now spends her time travelling and working as a consultant for PBS Video in this four state area. This article came forth while she was trapped at home by a blizzard last month.
FOLIO Votes to Oppose SQ 669

The Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma (FOLIO) Board, chaired by Gail Miller, met in Muskogee on December 1, 1995. At that time the Board voted to oppose SQ 669.

The next meeting of FOLIO will be on Legislative Day at the State Capitol.

Above upper left: Betty Hardin
Above lower left: Beverly Dieterlen
Above right: FOLIO Board members discuss upcoming Annual Conference program.

Left: FOLIO Board members (l-r) Betty Hardin, Beverly Dieterlen, Carolyn Purvine, Gail Miller (President), and Irene Wickham.

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Do You Know This Person?

Parts of Fabulous Life Unveiled

For two years, this Hooker resident has been referring to herself as "the two-headed librarian." This condition comes from her being the Guymon Public Library director for the past 2 1/2 years, plus spending the last 4 1/2 years working part time at Olive Warner Memorial Library in Hooker.

Driving by the Hooker Library after the mid-January blizzard only to see that the front of the library had been blown off, she rejoiced doubly that only two weeks remained in her time as "the two-headed librarian." Since the end of January she’s been relaxing as the Guymon PL director and being a board member for Hooker’s library.

Rachel Sides, OLA’s western-most member, is a Panhandle native whose great grandparents and grandparents homesteaded in the Guymon area. Even though she’s lived in the Panhandle most of her life, Rachel was impressed by the mid-January blizzard, saying, "going home that night I drove through snow, then dirt, then snow. I've never seen such dirty snow." And, "it snowed in my house!" The wind made it snow in a closet and around the windows. She admits that if she’d put up the Christmas tree before now, she wouldn’t have noticed the snow in the closet.

Rachel graduated from Panhandle State University in Goodwell, and worked in Enid, Weatherford, and Cheyenne before moving back to the Panhandle. She has since worked in the libraries at PSU, and Liberal, Kansas, as well as Hooker and Guymon.

The big news in Guymon is a multimillion dollar hog processing facility which had its grand opening January 6th. No one in Guymon is unaffected by this operation—1160 new jobs created at the plant, 950 new jobs at Seaboard Farms. This is in what has been a stable community of 7800 people.

Some people have changed from cattle ranching to hog farming. A new feed mill runs 24 hours a day, producing the hogs’ special diet. When Rachel drives home at night about 50 trucks are waiting to be loaded. Since unemployment had been only 4.5 percent, most of the new workers are outsiders. There was no excess housing before, and the ensuing construction boom has affected the entire region. Guymon itself has built a small short term homeless shelter, and areas of town are designated for trailer parks. It has a new elementary school, hospital expansion, and a health department doubled in size.

The Guymon Public Library is into literacy and ESL in a huge way. Last year it got one of the two $3000 Viburnum grants awarded by the American Library Association. Because she’d just been working on yet another grant proposal, Rachel had the numbers at her fingertips—in the 1990 census, Guymon included 1317 people with no English language skills, and 700 with only poor English; these numbers are projected to double with the influx of workers. Seaboard is running ESL classes for employees; the library is trying to take care of the families.

Because it’s such a long distance to meetings in Oklahoma, Rachel has been to just two OLA annual conferences, but is involved in comparable professional activities in other states as well—two trainings in the Texas panhandle, as well as many in southwest Kansas. Two years ago she was a founding member of the Tri-State Library Consortium, created by interested librarians in southwest Kansas, the Texas & Oklahoma Panhandles, and President for a two year term. Look for her at the April meetings at the Kansas/MPLA Joint Conference in Wichita.

Rachel has two daughters, 9 and 14 years old. She could think of no infamous relatives, but as far as “family fame,” it seems that a mother’s cousin married a (previous) Denver Broncos’ quarterback.

Asked what she likes to do for fun, Rachel says, “I’m a wannabe writer, though the only thing I write anymore besides personal checks is grant applications, and a column for the weekly Hooker Advance.” She has two novels finished but not yet published, and invites any interested parties to inquire!

Meet RACHEL SIDES, OLA’s western-most member, very fun to talk with about her “fabulous life in the Panhandle.” We ought to plan some more OLA meetings out West soon.

The people we work with and who lead us are MUCH more interesting than just their titles, library types, and towns. People found in this column have been chosen mostly randomly (a statistical term), and are here so that we can share a little in the delight of knowing them.

Ethics Case Study

Selection Online

With OneNet becoming a reality throughout the state, school librarians are faced with decisions of how to manage the information available to the students. How will parents, teachers, and librarians be responsible for the quality of information accessible to the young people of Oklahoma?

A middle school (6th and 7th grade) library is in the process of automation. The students and librarian are very excited about the possibility of the information available on CD-ROM. An Infotrac, “Tom Junior” has been selected for periodical information. The students are searching “sunken treasures” and “mythology” as the librarian steps out of the library. When she returns six or seven students are at one computer searching with great interest. The librarian is drawn to the group wondering what could be so interesting. The search is on sexual nudity.

You are the librarian. What do you do?

—Dixie King

Ask your colleagues what they think about the situation. The OLA Ethics Committee hopes to promote thinking and stimulate discussion with these case studies written by committee members.
People and Places

SHELLEY ALMGREN, former "farthest west OLA member" and Assistant Librarian at Oklahoma Panhandle State University, is now Director of Technical Services at Texas Wesleyan University.

MIKE BRUNO retired as Institutional Consultant at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. He is replaced by Eric Halverson.

MICHAEL HAVENER and KATHY LATROBE are working on assessment of school library reference service. They also have written a chapter on "Affective Support for Intellectual Access: Preventing Accidents on the On-Ramp," for the School Library Media Annual, 1995.


JEANIE JOHNSON, has replaced LETTY WATT as Library Media Specialist at Truman Elementary School in Norman. Jeanie was formerly Director, Library Media Section, State Department of Education. Letty is moving to Hutchinson, Kansas after 18 years in the Norman School District.

EDITH LaFORGE, Library Media Specialist at Hamilton Middle School in Tulsa, and another Tulsa teacher were two of 15 teachers recently selected to serve on the Scholastic Network's Web Advisory Board. They will be developing resource lists of sites on the WWW for various curriculum projects of Scholastic Network. Soon the Scholastic Network's homepage on America Online will have short biographies of board members, who are technology directors for school districts, classroom teachers, computer lab teachers, and library media specialists from 13 states. Edith taught elementary computer skills for four years in the past, but returned to library media work and has been at Hamilton Middle School for the past two years. She also is active as a member of the TCTA Board of Directors, Middle School Restructuring Oversight Committee, and Year-Round Schools Study Committee for her district. Edith is a past chairperson of OASLMS. For more information: School homepage URL... http://www.tulsa.k12.ok.us/~hamilton

Email... laforge@merck.utulsa.edu

Executive Board Takes Action

The OLA Executive Board, serving your Association as its current set of guiding lights, has been making decisions, just as it is supposed to do. In its last two meetings, the following actions were taken:

November 17, 1995

--Approved the 1996 legislative goals.
--Approved a $1,000.00 contribution to the Taxpayers for Fairness Committee. This committee has been created to oppose the passage of State Question 669.
--Approved the Public Library Division proposal for a workshop entitled "Quality Customer Service: Improving Public Contact Skills and Exploring Customer Diversity" which will be held on January 30, 1996 at the Stillwater Public Library.
--Approved the "Oklahoma Certification Manual for Public Librarians" and the "Oklahoma Program Approval Manual for Certification."

December 15, 1995

--Approved the design for the 1996 conference logo.
--Approved Intellectual Freedom Committee/Support Staff Roundtable proposal for a workshop entitled, "To Inform and Serve" scheduled for February 23, 1996 at the Moore Public Library.
--Approved Automation Roundtable proposal for a workshop entitled "Logged On and Lost" scheduled for March 8, 1996 at the Norman Public Library.

—John Augelli, Secretary

CORRECTION: The Joint Kansas Library Association/MPLA Conference will be April 10-12, 1996, NOT May, 1996 as reported in the MPLA/NDLA/SDLA article in the Nov/Dec 1995 issue of this newsletter.

Has your library received a written complaint?

REMEMBER—If your library has a book or other material questioned by a patron, and that concern progresses to a written complaint, please let the Intellectual Freedom Committee know.

The committee is trying to compile an ongoing picture of materials challenges in Oklahoma. Contact Theresa Dickson, chair, at the Norman Public Library, 405-321-1481.

Librarians Talk to Vendors

When you talk to vendors about their products, ask them whether or not they will have a booth at the OLA Annual Conference. Many librarians mention that they like to do business with those vendors who do support libraries in Oklahoma by coming to the Conference. Another way a vendor might want to provide support is by advertising in the Oklahoma Librarian.

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