Past Presidents Impart Wisdom at Leadership Retreat

Past OLA Presidents Susan McVey, Anne Masters, Jan Keene and Susan Wright made up the "Panel of Power" at Oklahoma Library Association's recent Leadership Retreat on June 10th and 11th. They took turns addressing a list of questions compiled by Debra Engel, OLA President for 1998-99. The questions were thought provoking and complex, challenging retreat attendees to examine their beliefs about participation in a professional association and about the value of libraries and librarians generally. This panel discussion was too good not to share with the OLA membership. Here—with paraphrases of the panelists' responses—are a few of the questions posed.

"Why is OLA important?" Susan McVey felt strongest about the belonging and community found within OLA. Anne Masters likes getting to know librarians from different types of libraries. Jan Keene mentioned that OLA provides opportunities for professional service and serves as a communication tool among librarians. Susan Wright said that OLA allows a place to network, and to share common problems and successes; without professional involvement, librarians can feel alone or isolated.

Responses to the question, "How is OLA important to Oklahoma librarians and libraries?" were in accord. Panelists agreed that advocacy, having the support of a greater organization beyond your institution, being able to speak with one voice, OLA's role in legislative action affecting Oklahoma libraries, and unity were OLA's most important services. Keene also mentioned that OLA provides good quality workshops that are both educational and inspirational.

"What are OLA's strengths and what could we improve?" The list of "do-betters" included: 1) we need to know what came before us so that work isn't duplicated; 2) make newcomers feel welcome; 3) change our attitudes about fundraising—it is a good thing! 4) be careful with expenses; 5) delegate tasks and involve people more fully; 6) focus on commonalities instead of differences, always asking "what makes us stronger as a group?" 7) recruitment—there are lots of people out there with skills that OLA would benefit from and we need to communicate to non-members, the benefits of OLA for them and their libraries; 8) have more fun! 9) communicate better not only with members, but also with non-members; and 10) it would be nice to have conferences in more varied locations.

Strengths of OLA include:
* The long-range plan
* The size of the organization is manageable
* Its membership comes from multi-type library settings
* Kay Boies!
* A renewed sense of ownership of OLA
* The caliber of people within the organization
* The leadership skills of members

The question, "What was the most unexpected thing that occurred during your term as OLA president?" produced a fascinating look into some of the history of OLA.

(continues on p. 46)
"The libraries of America are and must ever remain the home of free, inquiring minds. To them, our citizens -- of all ages and races, of all creeds and political persuasions -- must ever be able to turn with clear confidence that there they can freely seek the whole truth, unwarped by fashion and uncompromised by expedience. For in such whole and healthy knowledge alone are to be found and understood those majestic truths of man's nature and destiny that prove, to each succeeding generation, the validity of freedom."

* Dwight D. Eisenhower, letter to ALA's annual conference, Los Angeles, 1953

It is an honor to be elected as your President and I look forward to working with you. I've selected the theme: "Oklahoma Libraries: An American Value" for the coming year. I hope the theme will provide a forum for discussion, a tool for communication, and a focus for the 1999 Annual Conference (mark your calendar for March 24-27, 1999 in Enid).

I believe members of the Oklahoma Library Association value our libraries within their communities, institutions, and organizations. "Oklahoma Libraries: An American Value" is a reflection on ALA President Ann Symon's intellectual freedom theme. Ann was delighted when I asked if Oklahoma could 'borrow' the ALA theme and make it our own. There are intellectual freedom issues facing many of our libraries in Oklahoma today. I believe we best serve our customers and communities whether public, school, academic, or special when we talk about the issues with the community constituents that we serve.

Members of the OLA value the Oklahoma Library Association. The Association has remained vital and viable under the astute leadership of Past President Susan Wright, many dedicated Association leaders and members, supported by the savvy and skill of Executive Director Kay Boies.

It is a joy to announce that the 1998 annual conference was immensely successful both professionally with 74 programs and 510 attendees registered, as well as financially successful for the Association. We still face financial challenges. Continued financial diligence in the coming months and years is incumbent upon us.

Is there something YOU can do to help the Association today? Yes, renew your membership (if you haven't already). Encourage your colleagues to join as well. Check the inside page of the OLA directory to see if your institution is an institutional member. Can't find your membership form? Check the OLA Web Page at www.pioneer.lib.ok.us/ola and you can print it and send it to Kay Boies. Each of us has a responsibility to help the Association "grow". Our best sales force for marketing membership is each of you.

I hope you've had the opportunity to look over the OLA Long Range Program and Financial Plan (also available on the OLA Web Page). The priorities approved by the Executive Board set the tone for the work of the coming year. As a result, there are many exciting workshops planned for this fall. Watch the Web Page for announcements about the Ethics Committee workshop (Oct. 1); the Intellectual Freedom/Oklahoma Association of School Library Media Specialists workshop later in the fall; and the Technical Services Roundtable workshop on Oct. 23. I'd also like to hear your ideas on membership services and continuing education.

What makes this Association work is YOU: the members. You have actively shown that commitment in the past year. I look forward to helping to continue that positive tradition of growth in the coming year.

Debra Engel
In June I attended the ALA annual conference in Washington, DC, including all Council and two Chapter Relations Committee meetings. Following are some highlights.

* President Barbara Ford urged all Chapters to continue the "Global Reach, Local Touch" initiative, recommending an exchange of newsletters, librarian exchanges, letter-writing and photo exchange efforts—perhaps with Sister Cities in other parts of the world.

* Joey Rodger, Urban Libraries Council, announced 5 "Communications Tool Kit" workshops for public librarians. They are funded by a Kellogg grant, and are tentatively planned for Baltimore, Atlanta, Denver, California, Illinois.

* There will be a New Orleans pre-conference on Chapter recruitment and retention, which will result in a "best practices" manual.

* Council is trying to find ways to discuss substantive issues in a more streamlined format. Something is obviously needed. This conference we spent much of our time in a very unfruitful manner. One of the issues that seems key is the setting of the agenda in a more productive way.

* ALA's Washington Office reported on accomplishments in the 3 years since it was enlarged as part of Goal 2000. Staff has increased from 10 to 19.5 positions. Of the added positions, five are in the Office for Information Technology Policy. Major legislative progress was achieved in a difficult climate, including:
  --helped secure the enactment of LSTA to replace LSCA.
  --achieved increases in library program funding; e.g. $132 million to $146 million in LSCA/LSTA funding; ESEA VI a $40 million increase; and significant increases in elementary/secondary education programs.
  --instrumental in achieving the enactment of discounted telecommunications rate for schools and libraries in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.
  --became a major player in national and international intellectual property policy; still working heavily in this area.
  --continued as an active player in government information dissemination policy.
  --will continue to develop activities that promote positive library and information related legislation, policies, programs, and funding that support values of diversity and community, education and continuous learning, equity of access to information, intellectual freedom, and 21st century literacy.

* We discussed the procedure to change Council terms from 4 years to 3 years and still retain staggered term expirations. Our next election for councilor will be in 2000; it may require a change in our OLA Bylaws.

* ALA is strong financially, according to the Treasurer's report. The Fund for Americas Libraries has taken over for the previous Endowment Office. In its first year they have raised about $2 million. The original Endowment now has a balance just under $10 million.

* Betty Estes-Rickner is chairing an ALA Conference Committee looking for ways to streamline conferences. So far, the list includes: (a) optimum use of available meeting space and time; (b) scheduling of programs by track or audience; (c) all-committee meetings; (d) regular communication with program planners; (e) designation of no-conflict exhibit times by each unit. The Committee will solicit input at Mid-winter.

* Council postponed until Mid-winter the discussion about ALA's relationship with the Boy Scouts as well as the discussion about what constitutes a formal or an informal relationship.

* Council sent a strong message of concern to the ALA Committee on Accreditation concerning the number of "library schools" which are closing, combining with other schools, and/or losing the word "library" from their titles.

* There was discussion on why members do not attend Membership meetings at ALA conference, possible ways to entice them, and what the quorum should be. Many agreed that if the meetings had content of importance, people would come. The quorum for conducting meetings was left at 1% of membership.

* Legislatively, Council adopted resolutions in support of the vitality of fair use in the digital age; commending the Congress for preserving military libraries; commending the Congress for its support of the 1998 ALA annual conference; and reaffirming support of universal service and urging that school and library discounts begin without further cuts or delays.

* Bill Gordon, Executive Director, is calling a member every day just to talk about ALA, why they have joined, what they like best, what they would change, etc. He also asks about Chapter affiliation. After one year's experience, he will share what he has learned.

* The Boards of three ALA divisions—LAMA, PLA and ASCLA—have approved the pilot for a voluntary Public
1998-99 Executive Board

* = voting members

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ALA council (cont. from p. 39)
Library Administrator Certification program.

* Council narrowly declined to adopt recommendations by the Committee on Organization which would have required each ALA body to conduct an internal review at least every six years to determine relevance, overlapping responsibilities, and whether it should be continued. It was unclear to me whether there would be any follow-up or further initiatives.

* IFLA will be held in Boston in 2001. ALA annual will be in San Diego in 2004.

* A report on Continuous Learning underscores the necessity for everyone to engage in lifelong learning efforts. According to the report, libraries face a two-fold responsibility: to provide access to needed information for their customers' continued learning, through delivery mechanisms that meet customer expectations and convenience; and to assure customers that library staff are competent, current, 'in tune' with our changing environment. It is our challenge to remain timely, relevant, and competitive.

As always, it is an honor to represent Oklahoma libraries. Please let me know if there are issues you feel strongly about, improvements you would like to suggest, or questions you have concerning any of the items in this report.

Jan Keene, ALA Councilor

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What’s the Common Theme in Library Literature?

In the May issue of Computers in Libraries, one theme prevailed in the articles. See if you can guess what it is.

Newsline Report on PLA Conference says, "libraries should be a source of computer training, covering such subjects and skills as the Internet, word processing and online access to books and periodicals."

"The Reference World Expands" by Karen Schlegl reported on a survey of librarians about the use of electronic reference sources and the effect of electronic resources on their jobs. A recurring theme in the article was an increased need for instruction.

"If you teach it, will they learn?" by Katherine Furlong reported that we are in the midst of the Information Literacy Program. One lesson is that there will never be enough time to plan and train.

ALA's Library Instruction Roundtable said in 1997 that "Every Librarian is an Instructor." Even if it's not in your job description you still instruct customers, staff, students and peers all the time. Are you spending more time instructing than in the past? Or are you feeling overwhelmed with the increased responsibility to instruct? Then join the Library Education Division. LED is providing its members with the instruction they need to succeed. Remember it only costs one dollar and LED will return much more than one dollar's worth of help.

--Jane Carvajal

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Open libraries and the right to read

I'm very passionate about this. Ever since I was small, these issues of free speech, freedom to read or view, and the right of people to make up their own minds about issues and ideas have been very dear to me. Open libraries are one of the pillars on which rest these rights and our culture. Open libraries are the one institution which tries to make available information without regard to your political party, your connections, the size of your wallet, or how vocal you are. Libraries speak up for the information needs of all!

It comes down to what are our core values? And it comes down to whether we have the integrity to speak up about what we believe in. Or whether we're willing to stand by and let others remake our world into their vision.

To me, the greatness of our country rests not on big business and a growth economy, but on the willingness of individual people to stand up, speak out, and invest time and energy to improve their communities. Over time we've done many things to protect individual rights against governments and the passions of the majority.

Yet we always run so close to losing these individual freedoms. Our rights exist among fear and complacency that chip them away, bit by bit. The issues are much bigger than whether a particular item is on the shelves of the Metropolitan Library System or the video stores. Local attempts at information control go on all the time. For each story like *The Tin Drum*, 10 stories remain hidden from public view.

Why is having open libraries fundamental? 3 main points.

1. We say it all the time. Freedom of speech is a cornerstone of this society. It's based on my right and responsibility both to gather information and develop my own views. This right may not seem like a real part of daily life until you've been in a minority or taken an unpopular position. The First Amendment knows no left or right or p.c. or not p.c. Whoever you are, whatever you believe, about whatever topic, without an environment that supports free speech and the right to know, we're all at risk.

2. A community is made of interacting individuals. People have different values, needs and interests. Differences on politics, sex and religion just begin to scratch the surface! Working a library reference desk can be a real eye opener. Try it sometime and listen to the questions and ideas people bring, the conversations they start about things dear to them!

3. Libraries serve and support their communities, ALL of their communities. Not just the ideas and needs of the powerful. Not just the ideas and needs of the loudest and most articulate. Not just your ideas. Not just the ideas of that nut down the street. Libraries try to make room for the widest array of ideas, so that each person can find and use information that they choose. Libraries defend equal information access for all. Who else champions the right of the powerless or ignorant to find information they need?

To do this, libraries try to have materials that support that huge variety of needs and concerns represented by their community members. They have trained and experienced people--librarians--to help you find what you need. To support that breadth of needs, library collections need to be as diverse as possible within the mission of that library and limits of its budget.

It's like an ecosystem. Like an ecosystem, we as individuals and our society as a larger whole are strongest when full of interconnecting links and relationships. Like an ecosystem, we and society are weak and unstable when impoverished. We are greatly impoverished as people when we lack access to all the information we need to make decisions, and to grow and enrich our lives.

The open library, full of ideas, is like the soil of a strong and complex ecosystem-our democratic society.

That being said, it's not easy.

These are complex, ethical issues, where values conflict. Things in libraries are changing quickly and often uncomfortably.

There aren't any easy, black and white answers. People do have concerns. A whole variety of concerns! We have a lot of fear about values we hold very close, including our kids.

Issues of open access and right to read what you choose are things we as librarians think about all the time, and not just in public libraries. My library's main mission is to support the College's curriculum, but we have a broad collection that is heavily used by the public of all ages, not just our students.

Libraries constantly look at what we're doing. We watch the urge to self-censor, and try to balance what to buy, so that our collection is diverse. We listen to our users and make informed choices based on our knowledge of our community and our collection.

Yet we don't buy everything. We do make value judgments about information sources, about their accuracy, their currency, their usefulness, their appropriateness. Not everything is appropriate for everyone or every library or every budget.

Sometimes people think that all "good people" agree on pretty much everything, except for a few issues. Not so! As individual citizens, each of us can find in every library collection some things that are obnoxious, offend or just plain are wrong. That's an uncomfortable side effect of providing for the entire community. Values do conflict. A sanitized collection would be tiny indeed! It might not be able to include even a regular dictionary! And that impossibly tiny, sanitized collection would not have anything to stimulate new ideas and new thinking. We need new ideas to cope with this rapidly changing world!

A library is a work in progress that should be a home for ideas of all the individual people we are in that community. An open library does its best to provide equal access to information on the widest variety of topics and viewpoints possible. It seeks to serve ALL members of its community,
and defends their right to look for themselves, and make up
their own minds. It is the only place of free life long learn­
ing. It is the ONE institution which does all this. No one else
fulfills that function.

We can't afford to sit on the sidelines. What legacy do
you or I, as an individual, want to leave? Count me in for
open access for all people to the colorful spectrum of ideas.

"There's more than one way to burn a book. And the
world is full of people running about with lit matches."
-- Ray Bradbury

[Taken from a speech made by Rachel Butler at the Citizens
Supporting Open Libraries (C-SOL) meeting in Oklahoma City on
July 7, 1998. Librarians at the meeting said it ought to be printed.
It turned out to be a wonderful experience thinking and clarifying
my thoughts, standing up on stage and presenting them, and
being in the company of governor candidate Laura Boyd, Okla­
homa ACLU director Michael Canfield, and Rabbi David Packman
(from OKC), all addressing the need to keep libraries open and
uncensored, and 150 supporters. Bob Anderson, Oklahomans for
Children and Families executive director, was in the audience but
did not comment publicly.

Some background: The C-SOL group was organized in fall of
1997 to support open libraries and people's right to read. On June
25, 1997 after a local judge declared part of the award-winning
film The Tin Drum "obscene," it was confiscated from libraries,
video stores and homes in Oklahoma County. Judge Freeman
ruled at the request of the OKC Police Dept., which had received
a copy of the video from OCAF's Bob Anderson. Two OCAF
members had checked the video out of the Metropolitan Library
System and a Blockbuster store. The controversy began months
before when OCAF began attacking Metropolitan's open access
policy. Trial date is now October 1998. See the ODL website for
excellent, comprehensive updates on The Tin Drum at http://
www.state.ok.us/~odl]

Woody's "Land" includes the library!

"This is your library"

Refrain
This is your library. This is my library—
Free flowing knowledge for the American family.
For every citizen whether young or old,
This library was made for you and me.

A diverse republic that is democratic
Needs information for its body politic.
If learning is power, then the truth can keep us free.
This library was made for you and me.

Controversial ideas and traditional notions
Expressed by people from ocean to ocean
Deserve a forum in the marketplace of ideas.
This library was made for you and me.

When censors make noise about restricting
The books that others have chosen for reading,
We must oppose them and try to make them see
This library was made for you and me.

Lyrics by Michael Canfield, sung at the C-SOL meeting, July 7,
1998 to the tune of Woody Guthrie's "This Land is My Land"

Like a Canadian Mountie--in Colorado!

"ILL librarians are the unsung heroes of librarianship...
like a Canadian Mountie, they always get their book!" Do
you know how the Colorado State University Library ILL de­
partment has shown itself to be the Mountie of all
Mounties?

I found out at the 29th annual Colorado Interlibrary
Great place and a striking group of people. The 150
participants were from all types of libraries: school and
college; agency and other special libraries; and from small
publics to large public library systems. Their jobs ran from
Library Tech I to Director. Most were from Colorado, but
people came from as far away as Georgia and British
Columbia. For 29 years a group of Coloradoans interested
in resource sharing, but separate from the Colorado Library
Association, have put together an annual conference! And
they're addressing issues of interest to all libraries.

Back to CSU and the tale told by Tom Delaney, coordin­
ator of ILL services--How an academic library adapts
when it loses half its collection overnight! After unrelenting
rain, a flood burst through a wall on July 29, 1997, destroy­
ing half the book collection of the main library (500,000
vols.) and the entire collection of bound periodical volumes.
The campus bookstore was totalled. ordinarily the interli­
brary loan department does about 20,000 ILL borrowing
requests a year. In this year after the flood, they are in line
to do 150,000 borrowing requests, and with a 96% fill rate!

Many things are different. First they borrowed text­
books to cover student needs. ILL was immediately THE
access point for the library. All ILL requests have to be
submitted electronically, and many processes were set up
to work without staff intervention. The CSU library had the
best ILL cost, fill rate, turnaround time, and user satisfac­
tion of 100 research libraries even before the flood! That
was inspirational.

Some other items of interest: Nancy Bolt, Colorado's
State Librarian, kick started the group to "set statewide
goals for ILL performance and be ready to change. What
percent of ILL materials are delivered in 24 hours? Where
(cont. on p. 47)
One year ago this week, Rep. Bill Graves published a press release stating his intentions to conduct an interim study in 1997 "to find ways to restrict children's access to sexually explicit and other controversial materials." "Sexually explicit" is not defined and no attempt was made to identify "other controversial materials." Interim studies are attempts to crystallize issues for the next legislative session. His press release set the tone for what was expected to be the 1998 legislative session where libraries and librarians were concerned.

The 1997 legislative session ended on an ominous note. An attempt was made to place language in the appropriations to the Department of Libraries that required the segregation of certain materials or chance losing state funding. In effect, the proposal would have replaced local governing board authority and policy with those of the state. That effort failed.

Late in the Fall of 1997 OLA conducted a seminar for librarians and library trustees from throughout the state on how to respond to attempts to censor their collections. This seminar helped solidify OLA's response to negative legislation in 1998. When "OLA Legislative Day" came on Feb. 24, librarians and library trustees were prepared. They lobbied the Capitol with the 1998 program "Libraries, Literacy & Learning for Oklahoma," and their senators and representatives heard them. Rep. Graves did not conduct an interim study. He did, however, along with Sen. Carol Martin, introduce legislation that did not bode well for libraries and/or librarians:


* House Bill 3087, by Rep. Graves. An Act to remove the requirement that librarians and library directors have a graduate degree from a school accredited by the American Library Association (ALA). Mr. Graves lobbied hard and long at the House County/Municipal Government Committee to pass this very ominous piece of legislation that effectively deletes the value of graduate library education and opens the door to non-library administrations. Deans of library education, library trustees, the OLA leadership lobbied equally as well as Mr. Graves and prevailed. (for 1998).


Very late in the legislative session controversy arose over last year's House Bill 1815, "The Telephone Bill" and the Universal Service Fund. In recent weeks, residential telephone users began to notice a small fee added to their bills and they complained. House Res. 1058 and House Concurrent Res. 1108 were legislative expressions of interest to telecommunication carriers who are required to pay into the Oklahoma Universal Fund not to pass along these fees to their customers. HCR 1108 sits on the Governor's desk awaiting his signature.

The legislative session is over. The ominous predictions did not occur. Thank you for the opportunity to be of assistance and service as your legislative liaison.

Oklahoma library brigade visits U.S. Congressional delegation

Numbers doubled from last year, Oklahoma librarians and trustees invaded Washington, DC on May 4-6 for National Library Legislative Day. Participants included:

- Susan McVey, Oklahoma Department of Libraries
- Donna Morris, Metropolitan (OKC) Library System, co-chair OLA Legislative Committee
- Sylvia Morales, Metropolitan Library System trustee
- Debra Engel, Pioneer Library System and OLA president-elect (at that time)
- Sharon Saulmon, Metropolitan Library System trustee, Rose State College librarian, and
- Jan Sanders, Bartlesville Public Library, co-chair OLA Legislative Committee.

Now, what does "visiting the Congressional delegation" mean? It means we made calls and visited with the educational liaisons from the eight Oklahoma congressional offices, including legislative assistants Jeffrey Hampton (Rep. Wes Watkins); Thomas Murray (Sen. James Inhofe); Kourtney Spencer (Sen. Don Nickles); legislative directors Bill Duncan (Rep. Ernest Istook); Jack Homer (Rep. J.C. Watts); Mike Bertman (Frank Lucas); and Amy Sherman (Rep. Steve Largent), and the legislative assistant for Tom Coburn.

It means we walked MILES through the Russell, Cannon and Longworth buildings to find the offices of the Congressional delegation and even used the mini-subway underneath the Capitol and congressional offices!

It means we talked about how Oklahoma libraries used LSTA funds (this next year LSTA is requesting a modest increase from $146 to $160 million); the importance of statewide databases for all libraries-school, public, and academic; universal service; computer filters; postage increases; copyright and the need to balance fair use and the proprietary rights of the creators.

Highlights from the trip included meeting James Billington, Librarian of Congress; attending the Center for the Book reception where the Oklahoma Center for the Book received the 1998 Boorstin Center for the Book State Award; visiting with ALA President-elect Ann Symons; an elevator ride with Sen. Olivia Snowe (R-Maine) who invited us onto the "senators" elevator; being mistaken for "burglars" although the community branch manager did say "you guys were the noisiest break-in I've ever heard." (Actually we were peering through the windows of a library porta structure led by our gallant host for dinner, Fred Goodman), an Italian dinner in Bethesda after a driving tour of Washington through embassy row; watching the media/television vans lined up outside the U.S. Court House waiting for Starr or Monica to appear; and discovering the "Hotel George" whose ambiance is enhanced by 'minimalist chic!'
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Impact/ONLINE ILL™
- Automates initiation & tracking of interlibrary loan/tolling, minimizing staff involvement.

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From the Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City.... MPLA report

It's been a great privilege to serve as your Oklahoma state representative to the Mountain Plains Library Association Executive Board. During this time, our state library association co-sponsored our first joint M PLA conference. We produced a great conference with a terrific assortment of programs and speakers. I'd like to thank every member of the two Boards I've served with—for all of the support you've given me through these tumultuous years, as you have "good advice" us thorough pregnancy, childbirth, support while Nate recovered from his early birth, and then, miraculously, helping us celebrate the joys of parenting as our little guy heads full steam towards the "terrible twos!"

The Mountain Plains Library Association Board met May 6 and 9 during the joint Utah/MPLA Conference in Salt Lake City. New President Roann Masterson of North Dakota is an exceptionally pleasant person who also has great skills in getting things accomplished. Everyone left the board meeting with a strong sense that deadlines matter, and that their participation really was important.

Outgoing President Carol Connor thanked all of her board members and presented each of us with a beautiful marble paperweight. Not only were we thrilled with these unexpected gifts, we were delighted that Carol was willing to carry these with her to Utah in her suitcases!

Oklahomans are now an integral part of MPLA. Congratulations to Marilyn Hinshaw, EODLS director, for her election to Vice-President/President-elect. Kathleen Todd is now secretary of the board, Dan Chaney chairs the Electronic Communications Committee, and Wayne Hanway chairs the awards committee.

Past Presidents (cont. from p. 37)

Masters replied that she certainly wasn't expecting success! Lobbying for legislation brought remarkable results, such as grants for School Library Media Centers. Keene expected that OLA and libraries would be able to play a greater role in ONENET, but that wasn't the case. Wright was happily surprised by all the people who came forward in the face of financial problems with paper clips, supplies, and even grant money to assist OLA. During McVey's term, the selected conference site declared bankruptcy, and the conference date was moved up to March, but conference planning couldn't begin until the previous September. She said that this was truly unexpected, but she also was amazed and touched at how protective and supportive OLA members were of the president. McVey said that she had to learn how to receive all of that support.

Panelists considered challenges facing Oklahoma Library Association. One of the challenges discussed was reaching out to non-members to let them see that OLA can serve them. This would fulfill part of our mission to strengthen Oklahoma libraries. Keene noted the ongoing challenge of educating communities about the true value of libraries. Another major challenge is cultivating new leaders. This is accomplished through mentoring and through involving more people in the work of OLA. Challenges to individual libraries by censorship groups are something that OLA must continually address to provide support to the challenged libraries and librarians, and to proactively function as a unified voice against censorship in Oklahoma libraries.

Finally, the panelists were asked about their "personal style of cheerleading." Keene said that she likes to encourage people and to write thank you notes. "Everyone needs to be recognized," she added. McVey stated that it is important for her to be there, to participate, and to provide positive reinforcement. Wright said that her personal style of cheerleading is to let people do their jobs. Masters shared that it's very easy for her to be a cheerleader. She explained: "I love librarians! They are smart, unpretentious people who care about what they are doing."

The Panel of Power at the OLA Leadership Retreat was interesting, informative, and inspiring. It gave retreat attendees the opportunity to benefit from the experience and wisdom of those who have preceded them.

--Karen Bays

Updates:

* The Johnson County Library presented MPLA with a check for $3,000 as a gift following their reception during the recent Public Library Association conference in Kansas City.
* After discovering that the M PLA archives at the Denver Public Library may be in disarray, Roann appointed several area retired librarians to a committee to review the records and report at the next meeting. One of the committee members has an entire collection of all M PLA documents published since 1950. He has volunteered to donate these if necessary!
* Ongoing educational opportunities are an important part of MPLA. I urge Oklahoma librarians to take advantage of the professional development grants and mini-grants that are available throughout the year to MPLA members in good standing.
* Theresa Dickson is the new OLA/MPLA representative, and I am even now in the process of straightening out and transferring all the files to her as quickly as possible.

--Peggy Cook, OLA/MPLA rep.
ANN MILLER, library media specialist at Truman Elementary in Norman, went to Japan in July through the Hitachi-Norman Public Schools Teacher Exchange Program. She and 3 others went through a lengthy selection process.

LINDA SAFERITE, executive director of Tulsa City-County Library System, was recently elected to a 3-year term on AMIGOS Bibliographic Council's Board of Trustees. AMIGOS is a non-profit organization and one of the largest library resource sharing networks in the country. Over 600 libraries, mostly located in the southwest, are members, and use services including cataloging, resource sharing, preservation, consulting and training.

COLORADO (cont. from p. 43)

in the process is the holdup? It doesn't have to take 2-3 weeks to get something." She noted the beginning crossover between the reference and ILL or resource sharing librarian, and the need for accurate description of items to aid in sharing.

Colorado libraries are already working on a variety of initiatives to ease resource sharing within the state. Food for thought! One is Colorado's $1 million project with 16 libraries which use Innovative Interfaces (III) catalog software. Patrons will easily be able to directly request (unmediated by staff) items to be delivered to a nearby library using the existing courier service. The system will have realtime updating of uncirc and catalog records.

Making a dry topic great... Tony Melvin and changes in OCLC's resource sharing/ILL initiatives. ILL Fee Management, a way to avoid having to pay individual invoices, is estimated to have saved libraries $30 million since its inception. ILL Custom Holdings lets libraries set up customized lending groups ahead of time, which I can testify is a great innovation! and improves turnaround time. Two new projects are ILL Direct Request, a way to do unmediated ILL from patrons direct to the lending libraries, currently in trial in 9 libraries; and ILL Full Text, where you can have something sent directly to the patron.

I liked the half-hour Conference wrap-up session, which included brief update remarks from some individual libraries, who'd volunteered on the conference registration form.

Over at noon Friday, met my friend, and we headed up to Florissant Fossil Beds, high on the back side of Pikes Peak. It snowed, we saw giant petrified redwood stumps and perfect bugs, fossilized in a cloud of volcanic dust. What more could you want?

--Rachel Butler

"Sometimes you just can't take life lying down--you gotta play with your life!"
Dr. Joseph Michelli, ILL conference presenter and humorist
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