Harold Keith, "A Man For All Seasons"
A Personal Perspective

Sports media people and athletes knew Harold Keith as one of the finest sportswriters in the country. Educators and librarians knew him as a Newbery award winning author and historian. Young people knew him as someone who could paint word pictures with such vivid detail that they just wanted to read... and read ...and read his stories! Others knew him as an athlete, a top long distance runner. I had the great fortune to know him as "Uncle Harold."

One of the "perks" of returning to Oklahoma after being away much of my adult life was being able to spend time with this grand gentleman who in his 90s was still the genuine, modest caring man that I had known as a child.

I remember Uncle Harold talking to me as a youngster—just talking to me about whatever interested me, not about what interested him. I remember one occasion when my aunt and uncle were babysitting for me; they both crawled under my parent’s house to help me find "Snowball"—my imaginary puppy! Later in life, I discovered his research files included an account of this experience and his observations. Uncle Harold was extremely interested in young people and kept consummate notes on what he noticed. In Sound of Strings he wrote of Pedro, "He continued to watch the children, fascinated by their absorption in what they were doing." Uncle Harold was actually describing himself.

In his files, I discovered a vignette in which he described my cousin Kitty’s hair ribbon and its importance to a young girl. I found carefully detailed notes describing my cousin John running races as a youngster. He was proud of his own children and of the young athletes with whom he was in contact over many years.

Uncle Harold’s office was filled with notes about people in both extraordinary, as well as the most common of circumstances. He made notes on everything, including the backs of football and basketball tickets. With an insatiable curiosity and a genuine interest in people, he wove his observations and conversations into his writings, sports stories and

Harold Keith first became nationally known as a sports writer. Bill Hancock recently wrote, “Mr. Keith was a pioneer in bringing professionalism and class to sports publicity. He was among the first to encourage writers to visit the locker rooms for interviews. He set new standards for service in sports publicity”

As the first Sports Information Director (SID) for the University of Oklahoma, a position Keith held for 39 years, "...he promoted academic success for athletes by writing and praising those who achieved in the classroom as well as on the field," stated editorial writer Ed Montgomery. Long time colleague, Bud Wilkinson said it best: “Harold Keith definitely has been a part of Oklahoma’s successful program. He is dedicated to his work. He believes what he writes. I never meet with groups of sportswriters, from coast to coast, without their asking immediately about Keith and complimenting him. I know of no other man in his profession so widely known and admired.” In 1951, he received the Helms Foundation Award as the outstanding sports publicity director in the nation.

As a child and as a college student, I recall Uncle Harold working long hours, seven days a week, with never a com-
The Oklahoma Library Association is committed to a strong program of continuing education, legislative advocacy, membership services, financial stability, and organizational growth. Too many times in recent months and weeks I have heard the comment, "why do you need libraries and librarians? You can just look up whatever you want on the Web." There was even a television and radio commercial that advocated this viewpoint.

What's your response?

We are at a critical juncture in the information age where libraries and librarians will either stake their claim as the navigators and organizers of the web and all it offers or libraries and librarians will be left in the dust—not needed and not funded. The Oklahoma Library Association can assist in securing the unique role of libraries in the information age in the 21st century. How? We are over 1,000 members strong. We are a diverse organization of members that represent different types of libraries: school, public, academic and special. Within that diversity we work together to work on issues of shared concern and challenges. We are users of the technology and we are ultimately the best prepared to organize the technology so that our customers can find what they want and need.

I believe that libraries and librarians are about connecting people to information. We are based on providing customer service to the young and old, to the students from preschool to post graduates, to the entire spectrum of our communities, to the haves and have-nots in our society. Too many times I have heard customers comment: "the Library is the best kept secret in this town." Why? How well have we shared our library stories?

Our job is clear cut: to continue to develop our role as navigators and creators of information, developing our libraries as community centers within our communities and institutions where many diverse viewpoints are respected, AND to tell our success stories of how we help customers daily both on the Web and off the Web.

The purpose of the Oklahoma Library Association is to strengthen the quality of libraries, library services, and librarianship. The Association is your partner in communicating the library story to our Oklahoma communities. Recently the newsletter Oklahoma Outreach: Official Newsletter of the Oklahoma Association for Family and Community Education featured an article, Oklahoma Library Association at Legislative Day '99.

Our message of connecting people to information is important to the citizens of Oklahoma. Are there other publications where the Association could publish articles? Would you be interested in writing for the Association? Give me a call at (405) 321-1481 X143 or e-mail me at debra@pioneer.lib.ok.us with your ideas on telling the library story.

—Debra Engel

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Thanks to ...

...all members who agreed to run for 1999-2000 offices;

...the Sequoyah Reading Team chairs for quick production of the new annotated Sequoyah masterlists and reader’s theatre scripts;

...all OLA committee, division, roundtable chairs and members for organizing a terrific 1999 Annual Conference.

FOLIO awards scholarships

The two recipients of this year’s FOLIO/SSRT Scholarship are Amanda Greene from Tulsa City-County, Schusterman-Benton branch, and Sharon Fina-relli from Tulsa City-County, Downtown branch.

The scholarships were presented to the applicants at the FOLIO luncheon on March 26 during the OLA Annual Conference in Enid. Each scholarship is in the amount of $250 and may be used for enrollment in any educational institution, seminars or workshops that will further their education.

--Susan Stringer

UCD goes techno—meets via interactive video

When Tom Biggs took over as chair of the Universities and Colleges Division (UCD) of the Oklahoma Library Association, one of his goals was to pursue the possibility of conducting a meeting using the interactive video capabilities of Onenet. Tom’s goal was met when the UCD held a meeting on January 6, 1999 utilizing four sites spread out throughout the state. The sites were located at Weatherford, Altus, Tulsa, and Midwest City. The members of the UCD hope that this “trial run” of sorts can assist other divisions or committees to consider this technology when scheduling some of their meetings.

The nuts and bolts of accomplishing this were actually quite easy. Here at Southwestern, we use interactive video in the delivery of numerous courses to our branch campus and other sites across the state. Because of this, I agreed to arrange the details of the meeting. The Onenet system has the potential to reach about 150 sites throughout the state, many of which are located in libraries or Vocational Technical facilities. In consultation with Dr. Lessley Price, our Director of Distance Education, we selected five sites for our meeting. Dr. Price suggests that for a meeting, a limit of five sites is recommended, otherwise it gets difficult to manage all the different sites, and it can effectively quash discussion. We did have one site selected where no members attended. Dr. Price then looked at several dates that we suggested to him, and found one that was open for a two-hour slot in the afternoon. We selected January 6, 1999 from 3 – 5. Every event that goes out over the interactive system is scheduled and each site coordinator has access to this information. On the appointed hour, we held our meeting.

When you schedule your meeting, you need to designate an origination site. You need to plan this somewhat in advance, as finding the same time open in 4-5 different slots can be difficult. The origination site will control the way the session goes to all the receiving sites. Since I had arranged the details, Southwestern was the originating site and the other four were receiving sites. This does not mean that the Chair of the meeting needs to be at the originating site, but it could make it easier. The site coordinator can assist you with this aspect of the process. Get to know this person well, because they will assist you with the entire process, from scheduling your meeting time to running the equipment. One thing to be aware of when you schedule your sites is that some of them do charge for their rooms. If you know of a place that handles interactive video via Onenet, that site coordinator can locate sites that do not charge.

Running the meeting does take a bit of skill, especially as you switch between the sites. For this reason, I would recommend that if you are the originating site, you practice with the site coordinator so you can become proficient at pushing the right buttons. Since the technology differs from site to site, I’ll spare you the gory details. This did cause the most complaints from our meeting, as we had some sound problems as we rotated among the sites. A number of times a person had to repeat what they said because other sites did not hear them, but that was operator error, not technology error.

Naturally, there are some advantages and disadvantages to using this new technology. The advantages are:

➤ Less travel for members
➤ Utilization of new technology
➤ Way to reach out to more of the membership, and to those not participating

Disadvantages:

➤ Technology can be hard to master
➤ More difficult to have a discussion
➤ People may not be comfortable with technology, either running it or speaking to it.

The members of the UCD who attended this meeting were in agreement that interactive meetings should not replace face-to-face meetings, but should be used occasionally as a new approach to holding meetings. With careful site selection, you can minimize driving times considerably, yet still get a large number of your membership “in range” of the meeting. This was something we did not do as we omitted Stillwater as a site for our meeting. As we do more of this, people will become more familiar with this approach to meetings, and less fearful of the technology. Who knows, some of us may even learn to push the right buttons!

If you have further questions about this new and exciting way to conduct some of the Association’s business, please contact me. My phone number is (580) 774-7089 and my email address is scottd@swosu.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

—David Scott
Oklahoma librarians lauded amidst tuxedoes, chandeliers, and swirls of taffeta

Several Oklahomans were among those honored at the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom and the Freedom to Read Foundation. The gala event was held during the ALA Midwinter Conference at the Crystal Tea Room in the historic Wannamaker Building in downtown Philadelphia.

Listed in the Anniversary Roll of Honor celebrating the commitment of librarians, trustees and decision makers to the First Amendment were: Lee Brawner, Debra Engel, Cal Hobson, Aibile Beth Martin, Jan Sanders and Sharon Saulmon. Honorees were recognized at the event by Judith Krug, Director of the Office of Intellectual Freedom and Executive Director of the Freedom to Read Foundation. Lee Brawner was given special recognition for his long career as a defender of First Amendment Rights, most recently in the case of the award winning film, The Tin Drum.

Robbie Harris, author of the book It’s Perfectly Normal, was recognized as the year’s most challenged author. She spoke briefly about her experiences as an author of works targeted for censorship and noted the important role librarians have played in protecting access to her books.

ALA President Ann Symons presented three Presidential Awards honoring outstanding contributions to the pursuit of intellectual freedom and the First Amendment. Recipients of awards included Judith Krug, Director of the Office of Intellectual Freedom and Executive Director of the Freedom to Read Foundation and Eliot and Eleanor Goldstein, co-founders and owners of SIRS Manadrin, Inc. An award was given posthumously to Forrest Spaulding, author of The Library Bill of Rights.

—Karen Marrott

Copyright and interlibrary loan

How does the new copyright law affect what I do?

The New Digital Millenium Copyright Act (DCMA), recently signed into law, amends U.S. copyright law in ways that will have a significant effect on library and information services. Many of the provisions are effective immediately; others depend on development of regulations and procedures; still others involve fact-finding or studies by the Copyright Office.

A change to Section 108 of the law directly affects lending staff. At a workshop on Dec. 11 in Oklahoma City, Laura Gasaway was extremely clear in telling us that when responding to an ILL request, the lending library must copy the copyright statement from the magazine or journal. The statement may be found with the article itself or may be located at the front of the magazine. Yes, this will add another page to each article you send out! She was very adamant that the new law requires this step. A “copyright warning” stamp is appropriate only if there is no copyright notice on the article or journal.

In order to provide information and assistance to the library community, the ALA Washington Office web pages include a newly expanded section on intellectual property and copyright at http://www.ala.org/washoff/copyright.html

Contents include briefs on:
♦ Why libraries care about intellectual property law and policy
♦ Materials to help explain what the new DMCA and Copyright Term Extension laws mean to the library community
♦ Distance education and digital technology study by U.S. Copyright Office
♦ Library preservation changes; and more.

The effort to provide useful information is just beginning—watch for continuing updates to the documents.


We can’t own everything... what to do?

Go to Colorado in the spring. With the many new technologies and computer interfaces available to people today, it can be difficult to understand where the traditional library and ILL fit into the information network.

The 30th Annual Colorado Interlibrary Loan Conference, "Navigating Interlibrary Loan: A Compass for the Future," will meet at the Auraria Higher Education Center in Denver, May 13-14, 1999. ILL colleagues, not just from Colorado but from all over the United States and Canada, convene to discuss the problems, issues, and technologies that influence and affect our everyday dealings with Interlibrary Loan.

Hear Keynoter Herb White, Retired Dean of the Library School, Indiana University; Arlene Bielefield, Department of Library Science, Southern Connecticut State University, J.D., specializing in copyright and author of Technology & Copyright Law: a Guidebook for the Library, Research and Teaching Professions; and Virginia Boucher, University of Colorado at Boulder, author of the 1st and 2nd editions of Interlibrary Loan Practices Handbook. "Present at the Beginning".

Other highlights:
"Marketing for Success" (Panel) Mark Estes, Director of Library Services, Holme Roberts & Owen Law LLP; Pat Hodapp, Director of Marketing, Denver Public Library; James LaRue, Director, Douglas Public Library District.
"Using Technology to Meet Rising Expectations" (Panel) Lars Leon, University of Kansas; Judith Murray-Griffiths, Southwest Library Systems; Naomi Krym, Manager, Document Delivery, CISTI, National Research Council Canada; Peggy Jobe, Government Publications Librarian for International Documents, University of Colorado at Boulder.


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A Look at Why We Do What We Do

Imagine it's 8:45 p.m.; you've had a particularly grueling day. The library budget is due and you still don't have the capital expenditure figures you need. The Board president just called to say a favorite member has resigned due to poor health. That dull sinus headache you've been nursing all day is trying to burst forth again. You decide to check your staff mailbox one last time on your way out the door. And there it is—a 'patron request for reconsideration' (the bane of any public librarian). This time, the beef is with (of all things) A FISH CALLED WANDA, a video you have laughed at and relaxed to more than once. What's WITH these people? Don't they get it about intellectual freedom? And why do you have to give the speech just one more time? And for such a stupid request! More importantly, why do you care?

Ever find yourself in this (or a similar) situation? We all have. Why do we continue to be the (sometimes lone) voice crying in the wilderness?

At ALA Midwinter Conference in Philadelphia, I was lucky enough to be one of five Oklahomans and some 200 other individuals to be honored by the Office of Intellectual Freedom and Freedom to Read Foundation as a member of the 30th Anniversary Roll of Honor, as a person who worked for intellectual freedom. I never considered my deeds honorable or dishonorable. I just did what librarians do: tried to preserve the public's right to information.

I returned and I got a real lesson in why we do it. In my absence, the local press ran a wonderful story about the OIF event and my part in it. Results were immediate:

*I got a wonderful congratulation note from a 'grande dame' (aged 92) in our town, saying how lucky she felt to know me.
*A card came from the 'gossip' reporter for our paper, telling me again how important a free press was to her.
*A business woman sent me an extra copy of the article and let me know that our quality of life was better because people here take their jobs so seriously.
*One of the 'pillars' of our town's society and history sent 'Nice work, gal!'
*Two people with whom I'd had business dealings called to say, "nice job." Neither, to my knowledge, has ever used the library.
*Someone sent a copy of the article with the simple words "good job" in the margin. I have no idea who it was.
*The crew that cleans our building sent flowers and said, "Thanks for your work."

We continue to fight so school kids have the right to read what they want, so adults can examine any theory or doctrine they choose, so preschoolers' parents can guide their training as they wish. All these are regular reminders of the job we perform. But don't forget the others you're representing. Those voices that are most often silent. Those I was lucky enough to hear. People we don't even know, may never even see, are depending on what we do to make their community a little stronger, their lives a little brighter, a little more free. You may never hear their response, their thanks for your work, but they're depending on you.

Don't forget the silent masses. And never give up.

—Jan Sanders

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Ms. Ann is doing piggies at home—call if you need her!

Thursday mornings are a lot quieter at the Edmond Public Library's temporary location than they used to be at the old building. Happily screaming toddlers and gleeful bunches of 4-6 year olds used to pour out of the meeting rooms after storytime to show the rest of the staff and customers the crafts that Ms. Ann helped them make. Now, with no space or cozy carpet in the leased storefront space, the children are adjusting to a new venue for library storytimes, Crosstimmers Elementary School Library Media Center, two miles north of the temporary library at Danforth and Kelly.

Ann Aliotta, Librarian Specialist, a former elementary teacher and Head Start teacher in Michigan, grants that all children's librarians have trouble with space, but the situation at Edmond's temporary home is exaggerated. "Talk about no storage area," she exclaims, "...there is also no space for programs, no off-desk area to work, in fact, no on-desk area to work. Each librarian has merely two drawers of the shared reference desks." Not a person easily daunted by extreme circumstances, Aliotta focused on solutions. One solution was to beg for space from local schools. Cathy Bugg, Principal at Crosstimmers Elementary, and Donna Simmons, School Library Media Specialist, graciously offered their media center for weekly programs.

"I was so relieved that we found people so quickly who were so willing to accommodate us," Aliotta confesses. "I was impressed with Donna Simmons, the School Library Media Specialist at Crosstimmers, because when I told her that our crafts are kind of messy she just replied, 'Oh, we do mess!' I'm not sure that she was aware that we do noise too," Aliotta said with an apologetic smile. She explained that she has refrained from her loudest stories in the elementary school setting. This is quite an adjustment, as storytime presenters always want lots of audience participation.

Another solution to the space problem at the temporary library location was doing some of the work at home. Aliotta includes a craft in most of her storytimes, but the preparations are too messy, time-intensive, and require space that the temporary location doesn't have. Volunteers at work help by cutting things out, but each craft must be carefully assembled with appropriate numbers of pipe cleaners, eyes, buttons, glue sticks, crayons, etc., to prevent children becoming upset if something is missing from their bag. "This packing process is just not accurate when attempted at the library in between reference customers," Aliotta said. "It's still not fool proof at home, but I always bring extras of all materials in case a child is missing something," she explained. Aliotta's work at home led to Edmond Library staff finding a hilarious note on the bulletin board one morning which read: "Ann is doing piggies at home—call if you need her!"

Aliotta's home has been transformed into the storytime storage annex of the library. Ropes are strung across the garage ceiling supporting bags of supplies, and the attic has many boxes of craft projects. The largest flannel boards and seashells are stored in her husband, Michael's, closet. "My husband has complained, although he has been very supportive. He drilled holes in empty cat food cans for me to make Mexican maracas." Aliotta's cat, J.C., was responsible for her switch to zip-lock bags that are impenetrable to his paws.

"The weekly move-in to Crosstimmers library involves a large, rolling, plastic cart with three bins," Aliotta said. She explained that the first bin has books, nametags for that day's session, and flannel board pieces. The second bin has tape, scissors, hole punch, crayons, and other supplies. The third bin has 25 pre-packaged crafts, ready to be assembled by small hands. Aliotta also carries a flannel board that has a back pocket for any large-sized books.

"They put me in the 'amphitheater' which is a formidable name for a little, tiered corner of the library," Aliotta said. "But it would hold 40 people," she clarified. She was worried about the tiers at first: "I was afraid that if I asked them to jump like bunnies they'd fall on top of each other. But the tiers are so wide that they actually have room to move around without danger," she explained. Attendance was small at first; confusion about the library's move predominated until the word got out. Some loyal storytime patrons followed Aliotta to the new venue and were joined by some new families from the area.

The most enjoyable storytime Aliotta said she's had at Crosstimmers, so far, was "Flap Your Wings!" She wore a storytime apron with beany baby birds in the pockets for an interactive game; they did fingerplays of 2 little blackbirds and 5 little ducks. She did flannel boards of Goodnight Owl by Pat Hutchins, and Are You My Mother by Eastman, among others. After the stories and activities, the children made birds with elastic strings and wings that flapped.

Aliotta creates the sort of storytime atmosphere that tempts other library staff to take very long breaks; masquerade as a 6-year olds and participate! In fact, that's what several Edmond staff did for the last couple of years. Aliotta allowed us to write songs, poems, and skits for puppets to introduce the themes of her storytimes. The Edmond staff enjoyed performing as much or more than the children enjoyed watching. But this format didn't seem practical in an off-site location, so we're saving the puppets for the new library.

The renovated Edmond Public Library, slated to open by mid-2000, will have a room dedicated for children's programming with adequate storage space planned for children's services. When asked if she was looking forward to this, Aliotta beamed and said that "never before have I had all materials in one place! I will finally be able to discard my 3"x5" locator file that tells me that animal masks are in the front closet, lion puppet is in the staff lounge, and winter bulletin board supplies are in the meeting room closet." Aliotta will appreciate the luxuries of the new library even more in mid-2000 after carrying and pushing things around for eighteen months. But even with the difficulties of moving tons of stuff and performing at an off-site location, storytime is still the favorite part of Ms. Ann's day.

—Karen Bays
Harold Keith (cont. from p. 13)

plaint, never a weary look. When I stayed with my aunt and uncle, I remember awakening early in the mornings to the "clckety clack" of his typewriter in his basement office. He had already been up working for hours. He used every spare moment he could find to work on his books.

Writing was second nature to Uncle Harold. He began writing stories for Lone Scout Magazine as a teenager and continued writing until he became ill at age 94. The last year or so of his life he was writing a story and tribute to his wife, my Aunt Virginia. In all, he wrote 16 books and received numerous awards and countless recognitions, including the Newbery Medal, the Arrell Gibson Lifetime Achievement Award and the Wrangler Award from the Western Heritage Association.

Librarians and educators throughout the country credit Harold Keith's books for stimulating non-readers to become readers. Susan Wright wrote Uncle Harold about one of her fifth grade students who after reading Newbery winner, Rifles for Watie came to ask for "more just like it." claiming he would read more if they were all as good as Rifles. Uncle Harold developed a genuine respect and admiration for librarians because of their help through the years of research nationwide, and he was pleased when I chose to enter the field.

The letters that Uncle Harold received from educators and students would fill volumes. He tried to answer them all! Through all of the praise and recognition Uncle Harold remained a modest, dignified man. He had a winning smile and great sense of humor. And he always showed more interest in others than in himself. Sports editor, Bill Connors, recently wrote, "You never heard anyone say a bad word about this kind, modest fellow who made daily visits to his wife's grave. He oozed with dignity and was the epitome of a gentleman. But his work would have stamped him as exceptional even if he had been a jerk.

Shortly before Uncle Harold passed away, my daughter and I visited one of his offices at OU to see how much of his research and files remained intact. I discovered some of his athletic medals pinned to atattered OU banner high on the top bookshelf, out of sight. Some of the track medals dated back to 1926. Tears came to my eyes as I imagined him placing the medals out of sight so visitors would not think he a "braggart." My cousin, Jim Keith, noted that he was surprised that there were any left because Uncle Harold used to give the boy cousins his racing. A distance runner all of his life, Uncle Harold continued to run until age 90 when he fractured his leg. Even after that, if he had an open path, he could walk a darn fast pace with his walker.

Several months before his death, the Skvarlas and I arranged a visit for Uncle Harold and Dr. Leon Cross, long time friends and colleagues at the University. Their visit will always be a special memory for me, listening to two grand gentlemen in their 90s discuss the "old days" and family stories. Several years before, Dr. Cross said of Harold Keith, "My admiration for him is great. I regard him as a close personal friend and the best in his field. I've never known a more loyal person. He has a splendid ethical attitude." The respect and admiration was mutual.

There are many delightful "Harold Keith stories"... probably enough to fill a book. I once asked him if anyone had ever approached him about writing his biography. He replied, "Why, honey, would anyone want to do that?" Even with all of his awards and honors, he remained humble and dignified, even to his last day.

In all of his endeavors, Harold Keith touched the lives of many, always in a positive way, leaving us an unforgettable legacy. We are all better for having known him and the quality of his life and works.

—Lynn Ann L. McIntosh

*30-

*From Molly Griffis, ** publisher and long time friend of Harold Keith, "I put the trademark -30- at the end of my story just as Mr. Keith put it at the end of thousands of his stories. In my early journalism days (B. C.: before computers) writers put -30- after the last paragraph . . . "

**The spontaneity of Molly’s professional and personal relationship with Uncle Keith added at least 10 years to his life.

Yes, you could have!

Nearly 35 people attended the Public Libraries Division workshop "Yes, You Can! Web Page Development Made Simple" in Stillwater, Thursday, February 18. Co-sponsored by OLA’s Automation Roundtable and OASLMS, the workshop attempted to teach attendees the basics of developing a web page. OSU's Edmond Low Library provided a training room equipped with 24 PC's, and Pioneer Library System staff members Andy Peters and Anna Moore provided leadership for the group. The information from the workshop is available through OLA's homepage (http://pioneer.lib.ok.us/80/ola/) by clicking first on workshops and then on February 18 workshop.

Call Rosemary Moran (918) 596-7931 or Andy Peters for more information.
“You have to know what’s going on!”
Becoming certified in Oklahoma

Glenda Stokes, Spiro Public Library, graduated from the Institute in Public Librarianship:

“Continuing education keeps you wanting to go, to keep being informed. Being in a small town, I’ll just dry up without this. You can’t just let things slide.

Certification began nine years ago as a vision to increase skills and knowledge of library staff and improve library service in Oklahoma. After its first 2 years of classes, the Institute of Public Librarianship (IPL) is making an impact on services to people across the state.

Nina Hindelliter, director of the Boise City library, open 20 hours a week, has been in her job for 2 years and is aiming for a Level II certificate through the IPL. She says, “I’ve really, really enjoyed it and learned a lot!” Though Nina’s travel time even to a class held in Woodward is long, the classes “have helped immensely,” says Nina. “I think maybe I can try that in my library. I’m the only one here and I’m trying to automate. I didn’t know anything about cataloging; it also showed me how to do a summer reading program.”

Oklahoma now has 214 certified librarians—146 certified through completion of the Institute of Public Librarianship (IPL), and 58 certified through formal coursework, e.g. LTA program, library school courses, MLS degree, etc. Libraries with at least one certified staff member are spread across the state:

- Alva Public Library
- Anadarko Public Library
- Bartlesville Public Library
- Bristow Public Library
- Catoosa Public Library
- Central Oklahoma Juvenile Center, Shawnee
- Chickasha Public Library
- Chickasaw Regional Library System: Davis, Tishomingo, Sulphur
- Cimarron Correctional Facility, Cushing
- Coweta Public Library
- Crescent Community Library
- Duncan Public Library
- Durant – Robert L. Williams Public Library
- Eastern Oklahoma District Library System: Jay, Eufaula, Grove, Hulbert, Westville, Muldrow, Muskogee, Fort Gibson, Haskell, Sallisaw, Stillwell, Tahlequah, Warner
- Eastern State Hospital
- Elk City Carnegie Library
- Enid - Public Library of Enid and Garfield County
- Holdenville – Grace M. Pickens Public Library
- Hominy Public Library
- Inola Public Library
- Kellyville Public Library
- Lawton Public Library
- Marlow Public Library
- Maysville Public Library
- Madill City-County Library
- Metropolitan Library System: Choctaw
- Pauls Valley – Nora Sparks Warren Memorial Library
- Perkins – Thomas Wilhite Memorial Library
- Pioneer Library System: McCloud, Moore, Norman, Shawnee
- Ponca City Library
- Prague Public Library
- Pryor Public Library
- Seminole Public Library
- Southeastern Public Library System: Arkoma, Broken Bow, Poteau, Coaliga, Hartshorne, Heavener, Idabel, Wilburton, Valliant, McAlester, Spiro, Talihina, Wister
- Stillwater Public Library
- Wagoner Carnegie Library
- Woodward Public Library
- Yukon - Mabel C. Fry Memorial Library

A lot of creative effort during a lengthy gestation period gave us the certification program. Oklahoma can be proud that our program is one of few in the nation which serves all library staff. It all started in April 1990 when the OLA and ODL boards appointed people to a certification committee. After 2 ½ years of preliminary work, 8 hearings were held around Oklahoma. In summer 1996 an LSCA grant was used to develop classes for the Institute for Public Librarianship. In January 1997 the first classes were offered in the IPL, and the first graduation ceremony was an inspirational and hugely attended event held at the OLA conference in April 1998!

Peggy Cook, Pioneer Library System, current member of the Certification Board:

“I’ve worked on this from the very beginning, from the first committee to the statewide discussion forums—where people had some real concerns—all the way to fruition. A high moment in my life was attending the (certification) graduation ceremony at OLA last spring. People brought their family members and cameras. It worked out so that I got to read everyone’s name out loud. It really did overwhelm me with emotion.

What about developing the courses?

“I wrote the Adult Services class. The development committee established guidelines for courses—the people who wrote them gave them life. I deliberated, I studied and went to [University of Oklahoma’s] Bizzell Library to dig up up-to-date information. Campus was deserted. I sat up on the 4th floor of Bizzell and listened to echoing footsteps!

Tell me about teaching the classes:

“That’s been the best part. I’ve taught Philosophy of Public Library Service and Adult Services. It’s really a privilege to teach the classes. I learn so much. I get to go to those other libraries and meet an incredible variety of people from all over Oklahoma. All kinds of things happen. The city manager of Fairview made muffins! People are anxious to have information. They love to share and talk about how they handle these library issues.

Why certification?

This system of continuing education for librarians was developed from “the vision of the Oklahoma Library Association and the Oklahoma Department of Libraries that public
libraries in this state be administered and staffed by trained personnel, [who] ... increase their skills and knowledge through continuing education in order to keep abreast of developments in the information age. This, in turn, upgrades the library profession, enriches the individual librarian and promotes quality library service." The certification program is voluntary, but strongly recommended. A local library board may require certification of designated staff members.

Glenda Stokes, Spiro Public Library:

How has it been to participate?
“Fun! You get to learn about all phases of the library profession. You learn about the existence of your own library, who started it and when. I’ve learned so much. We had homework.... You’d dig into it and always learn something besides what you were looking for! In the classes you have companions. All of our situations are so different, but so much is the same. We related to each other. You learn how they do things, you learn from them. You’re with your peers, you get to know them and to know the presenters—it’s just wonderful. In a class you’ll have people from all over a region of the state—I met librarians from Muskogee, Tulsa, Durant, even Miami! The certification ceremony was really neat. It’s great to get recognition from your peers. Everybody needs to do it! If they haven’t already started their classes, they need to do it. You have to know what’s going on if you’re going to explain it to your patrons.”

Who should do it?
All library staff may apply for certification. There are seven different levels of certificate, levels not intended to be a career ladder. These range from Level I, issued to people attending and successfully completing the Institute in Public Librarianship, to Level VII. The highest, Level VII, reflects a master’s degree in library/information science from a university program accredited by the American Library Association, plus certain experience.

Institute in Public Librarianship
Classes offered in Spring 1999:
- Basic of Administration
- Computer/Connectivity Applications for Libraries
- Effective Public Service Skills
- Introduction to Computers in Libraries
- Library Administration II
- Philosophy of Public Library Service

Classes to be offered in Fall 1999:
- Adult Services
- Collection Development
- Library Services
- Reference
- Serving Your Community
- Youth Services

Who has answers?
The Certification Board is made up of two OLA appointees, two ODL appointees, and ODL’s Certification Specialist, who together approve course content, oversee the certification process, review questions, hear appeals, and report to the OLA and ODL executive boards annually. Current Certification Board members are Peggy Cook, Pioneer Library System; Glenda Lamb, Public Library of Enid and Garfield County; Mary Moroney, Eastern Oklahoma District Library System; Corby Poursaba, Mabel C. Fry Memorial Library, Yukon; and Ginny Dietrich, Certification Specialist.

For more information contact: Ginny Dietrich, Certification Specialist, Oklahoma Department of Libraries, 200 N.E. 18th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3298, 800-522-8116 or gdietrich@olt.nodl.state.ok.us

-Rachel Butler

Expand your horizons at Big Sky!

This was my first year as your MPLA rep and I have been reminded often of how different—and similar—all we librarians in other states with comparable jobs can give you a quick course in gratitude and perspective.

For those who don’t know (or remember), Mountain Plains Library Association is a regional consortium of libraries in Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma (of course), South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

Each year MPLA holds its conference with the annual meeting of a member state library association. This year’s meeting will be the Montana Library Association/Mountain Plains Library Association Joint Conference. Entitled “Making Certain It Goes On,” the event will be in Big Sky, Montana on June 13-16, 1999. The location (47 miles from Yellowstone National Park, 43 miles from Bozeman) is absolutely beautiful and probably should not be missed just for that reason alone.

Another good reason to make summer plans to attend is that after MLA/MPLA, annual conferences switch to fall dates for many years. The next MPLA jointly-sponsored conference is in Omaha, Nebraska in the fall of 2000.

To see wonderful photos and details of activities and happenings, please check out the MPLA web site at http://www.usd.edu/mlpa

Use the site to join—MPLA offers an introductory, half price rate for new members!

See you at Big Sky!

-Theresa Dickson, MPLA representative
Library automation without support is like scaling the Himalayas on a frayed rope.

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People and Places

Nineteen people working in Oklahoma libraries each got a $50 reduction on the registration fee for the OLA Annual Conference in Enid in March, thanks to funds donated to OLA upon the dissolution of two Oklahoma regional library groups: SOLO (Southeastern Oklahoma Library Organization) and POLO (Plains Oklahoma Library Organization). Winners are really excited about being able to attend Conference! The scholarships were advertised by a flyer in the January OLA bulk mailing.

LOTSEE PATTERTSON is highlighted in one of eight biographical sketches in a new book published by ALA and edited by Kathleen de la Pena entitled Women of Color. They are oral histories done about 10 years ago. The ethnic organizations of ALA—American Indian Library Association, REFORMA, the Black Caucus and the Chinese American Library Assn.—were each asked to select for the interviews two women who best represented their group.

The 22-library TULSA CITY-COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM is installing a new INNOPAC Millennium automated system, dubbed "T-cat", from Innovative Interfaces, Inc. It will go online in summer 1999, replacing the existing NOTIS system. Among the modules selected by TCCL are: Millennium base system (including database maintenance, cataloging, OPAC, and web access management), acquisitions, serials, interlibrary loan, telephone notification service, self-checkout, and telephone renewal. TCCL holds more than 1.7 million volumes, serves more than 300,000 cardholding patrons, and checks out more than 3.7 million books and materials each year.

Historical factoid: Did you know that back in the 1970s OASLMS (Oklahoma Assn. of School Library Media Specialists) was a part of the Oklahoma Education Association, then OASLMS jumped ship to join OLA and work with other librarians? It's a great thing!

On January 28, 1999 at the ALISE Conference in Philadelphia, JUNE LESTER was honored with the ALISE Service Award. The citation says in part, "June Lester has always demonstrated leadership, integrity, and a passion for quality LIS education. She has written and spoken widely on LIS education and served as an ambassador and spokesperson for the profession. Although she will undoubtedly make many more contributions to ALISE and to library and information science education, it is appropriate to recognize her at this time for her contributions to ALISE." Each year the Association for Library and Information Science Education presents the award to someone whose participation in activities has enhanced the stature, reputation, and overall strength of the association.

In late summer 1997 Wilma Mankiller, former principal chief of the Cherokee Nation, donated an extensive collection of personal papers to the UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA's WESTERN HISTORY COLLECTIONS. The documents cover the years from 1977-1995. Curator Don Dewitt says, "There are about 4-5 linear feet of documents. They're of all kinds—education, finance, governmental relations, tribal government, job training—the affairs of the Cherokee Nation." The materials have been processed and were officially opened for research at a ceremony in October 1998.

Executive Board takes action

The OLA Executive Board met January 15, 1999 at the Public Library of Enid & Garfield County and took these actions:

- The minutes of the December Executive Board meeting were corrected and approved.
- John Augelli presented a written treasurer's report. He said that a direct comparison of the first half of 98/99 OLA year versus 97/98 shows a 26% favorable increase (excluding the special grant income last year.) He noted that personal membership income is already at 99% of budget. His report showed that institutional memberships have exceeded the budgeted projection.
- Accepted the treasurer's report.
- Accepted the written treasurer's report for OASLMS submitted by Carol Fox.
- Approved Debra Engel's suggestion that OLA and Oklahoma Technology Administrators barter exhibit booths at their respective conferences.
- Authorized the OLA President to negotiate an agreement with Pegasus, community cable television of Enid, to produce a delayed broadcast of some OLA conference programs.
- Approved Tom Biggs' proposal for a workshop, "Taking Control of the Internet" slotted for April 27 at OU Health Sciences Center auditorium in Oklahoma City.
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