Memoirs of a public library mascot

When I came to work at the Tulsa City-County Library, I never dreamed part of my job would include dressing up in a big furry suit as Buddy the Bookworm or T-cat. Among the many wonderful things about working in a public library, this certainly ranks among the top. It all started when I read an announcement in our Weekly Reader inviting staff to appear as Buddy or T-cat and thought, why not. I emailed Paula, our P.R. Event Coordinator, aka Buddy's Booking Agent, and offered to add my name to the surely long list of eager staff calling in to sign up during the open enrollment.

Buddy the Bookworm had been around for years having a big time at children's programs and other Library events. This summer, TCCL added a second mascot, T-cat, named after our new computer system, the Tulsa-Catalog. As the new kid in town, he was getting invitations from all over the region to make appearances.

My first outing was to be T-cat at Kid's Fest at Woolaroc. The temperature that June day was around 102, in the shade. With my friend Harry and his kids Rachel and Rusty as my trusted escorts, off we went. I began dripping with sweat before I could finish getting the outfit on, and once I fastened T-cat's head over my own, I realized why the list of volunteers may not have been quite as long as I first imagined. There was a mob of children just outside, so now with perspiration literally soaking me, out I went. As I took my first few steps, I felt like an astronaut in a space suit; the sound of my breathing was loud and labored inside twenty pounds of fur and plastic. His feet were huge, making it difficult to walk. Peering out through the peepholes of my dark, smelly, sweaty cat-head, I saw faces in the crowd slowly beginning to notice the huge black and white furry cat standing where my feet touched the ground. I was still adjusting to this strange new environment as my escorts began leading me down the path and straight for the crowds.

I've heard that mascots can lose up to ten pounds in a single game, and I quickly understood why. I watched from inside this alien contraption with an almost sick envy the lines of people at the sponsor's tent, cooling themselves and quenching their thirst with cool water. But I was already dressed, painfully realizing the cardinal rule of being a mascot: never take your head off in public. But before long I was having a terrific time with the kids who were so amazed and thrilled to be hugging, tugging and talking to this huge adorable cat, and I wasn't as concerned about being cooked alive inside this portable oven.

That was my first time out. I discovered what every mascot must know, just how much fun it is to not be you. To become a member of another species, larger than life, sweaty inside and silly outside, a combination of childishness and magic. After many more outings, I realized that mascots have a way of training you to be them, or rather, letting go and letting their personality take over, learning to be really big and really silly. I didn't just figure it all out the first time.

There are all these technical considerations to adjust to, like not being able to see anything below the waistline or in the outer half of your peripheral vision. Communicating without speaking, and learning that not all gestures work when you're instantly two feet taller and wider than usual. But

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A new century dawns

As I write this column today, and by the time you read it; we will have journeyed into a new millennium – a new century. One of hope and promise, new ideas and ventures and hopefully of peace and prosperity. We leave behind a century of remarkable progress and achievement, and it makes one ponder what life has been and what it holds for the future, not only personally but also professionally.

Will the libraries of the next century enjoy the prosperity we enjoy today? What will they look like? Will our users continue to find what they want and need? It is our job as librarians and library staff to insure that our customers get what they want and need from their library. And it is our job as an association to help to provide the continuing education and training that our members need in order to continue to serve our constituencies well.

The leadership of the Oklahoma Library Association (OLA) wants to play a role in helping our colleagues have the skills they need to help customers in this new era. One of the best ways that this can be done is through workshops and continuing education opportunities. OLA has consistently strived to provide a strong base of workshops for libraries and librarians of all types throughout the year. Our strong tradition of offering outstanding workshops and continuing education events continues this year with another stellar lineup of workshops for the membership.

Already held this fall were workshops on YA Programming (sponsored by CYPRT), “Taking control of the Internet” (UCD/PLD), and “Do you compute?” (TSRT). These workshops were very well attended and evaluations of the content were excellent.

Upcoming in the winter and spring months are workshops on “Licensing and Electronic Journals” (UCD, spring 2000), “Book Challenges: Success or Failure and How to Survive in either Case” (IFC, February 25, 2000), “Instructional Design for the Web” (LED, March, 2000) and “Boardmanship, Fundraising and Foundations” (PLD, May 2000). Several other divisions, committees and roundtables are looking at spring and summer workshops. What does this mean to OLA members? It means that our professional organization is looking toward the new millennium with the goal of serving our members by providing cutting edge instruction and education to librarians across the state.

The Oklahoma Library Association has also been instrumental in working with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries in co-sponsoring and working with ODL staff in their on-going certification program. Classes are held across the state in the fall and spring on a variety of library related topics. This program has enabled staff from many small and rural libraries to learn both new and traditional methods of library service to customers without having to travel long distances. It has been a huge success and one that OLA has been privileged to be a part of.

I feel confident that our association is working to provide the very best in education and instruction librarians across the state as we march into the next century. We look forward to seeing you and your staff at some of these exciting workshop opportunities!

—Donna Morris

Calendar of Events

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<td>Intellectual Freedom Committee, Norman PL - 1 pm</td>
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<td>Membership Committee - 10 am</td>
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Mascot (cont. from page 61)

not all lessons in life are hard to learn - the classroom always includes hundreds of children getting this wonderful and wide-eyed amazement when they first see you, dragging their parents in your direction to give you a big hug or a high five.

At least once in every outing, it's inevitable to encounter the kid who's absolutely terrified of you. The one who screams as if you're Godzilla, seeing your friendly advance as the attack of a wild animal. I usually de-escalate such situations by holding my hands over my eyes and hiding as if I'm the one who's afraid, which often makes the kid relax a bit and keep a safe distance without screaming any further.

Then there's the kid who once attached to your fur, absolutely won't leave. They keep an iron-grip on your tummy or leg as you spend the next half-hour hugging other kids. They end up in numerous family photos with complete strangers. Sometimes I just put them to work with me - dancing a jig or chasing them around a column. Lifting a kid for a hug is always a dangerous endeavor - as the costume continuously imposes new and interesting limitations on your normal movements and inevitably the kid won't let go once you've landed them safely on the ground. Speaking of danger - the biggest one is not stepping on or running over some little tyke who's too short to be seen. Mascots can't see anything under the waist level, and this unfortunate scene usually occurs once an outing. You learn not to attempt relocating without first doing a careful survey of your surroundings, feeling with your big furry hands for any little kid's head snuggled up to you and completely invisible. This is one of the major reasons for taking an escort along - to be the extra eyes and feet you're managing without.

It's especially fun to be out with another mascot. Appearing as T-cat at the TCCL night at Driller's Stadium, John Fancher in Public Relations joined me as Buddy. He got to fly in the Channel 6 helicopter and jump out of it onto the field. I joined him from the sidelines and gave him trouble as he threw out the first pitch. I also got a really nice hug from a gorgeous baseball player. After over an hour as T-cat on that hot and huggy evening, giving it all I had to be as big and fun and crazy as I could be, we were walking up the stairs from the field and out of the dugout, when I tripped on a really steep step. I was certain I wouldn't be able to get up. T-cat would be hauled out on a stretcher. But thankfully our escorts were near, lifting this furry fellow back to my feet. By the time John and I got out of our costumes, we were about five shades of red and eight shades of ghost white from dehydration. But it's all in a day's work, and a mascot's life is not an easy one.

The hugs are the best part of being a mascot, supercharged hugs from kids of all ages, even kids in their nineties. The young ones get a kick out of seeing mom or dad getting a big hug as well. Mascots bring out the kid in us all. I'm usually not very photogenic.

I'll never forget being Buddy at the Run to Read, where there was a big group of young (and very serious looking) uniformed military academy students in line to register. As I went down the perfectly spaced line saluting each one with my big goofy smiling worm-face, their resistance was weakening. By the end of the line we were doing the boogie-woogie. I felt like I'd gotten the guards at Buckingham to bust a move. Another high point in my mascot career was being Buddy the Bookworm at the Tulsa State Fair and taking 2nd place in a Mascot dance contest. With my escorts Paula McKay and Myles Jaeschke, driving back to work in Myles' 1966 convertible Buick Electra with the top down, there I am, Buddy the Bookworm, in the back seat, doing my best parade wave to everyone we passed along the way. We laughed the whole way watching the reactions on everyone's faces.

It's always hard the first few minutes adjusting after getting out of the mascot and back into reality - you've become accustomed to being noticed, not as you but as it, larger than life and a member of a magical species. The same hello, once the cat's back in the bag, doesn't draw much of a response, sometimes none at all. That's when you realize just how magical it is to be a mascot - and even if it's the ultimate test of physical endurance, it's worth it. If you've never tried being a mascot and aren't weak at heart, I strongly recommend it. It's really good therapy, a license to be as silly as you can be, and a whole lot of fun!

—Anna Maria White

Pat Woodrum honored by the University of Oklahoma College of Arts and Sciences

Pat Woodrum, retired Executive Director of the Tulsa City County Library and former President of both the Oklahoma Library Association and the Public Library Association, has been selected to receive the University of Oklahoma College of Arts and Sciences 2000 Distinguished Alumni Award, representing the professional schools. Pat received her MLS degree from the OU School of Library and Information Studies (SLIS) in 1966. She was honored in 1989 with the OU SLIS Distinguished Alumni Award and is the first graduate of the School to be selected for the College of Arts and Sciences award.

At 2 p.m. on February 25, Pat will give a public lecture on "The Power of Politics in the Library: Maintaining a Delicate Balance" in the Regents Room of the Oklahoma Memorial Union on the OU Norman campus. This lecture, which is part of the OU College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Alumni Award activities, will be followed at 3 p.m. by a reception honoring Pat, hosted by the OU SLIS. All OLA members and friends of Pat and of the School are invited to attend both the lecture and the reception, which will be held in the School quarters in the Bizzell Library building. For further information on the lecture and the reception call the SLIS office (405-325-3921) or access slisinfo@lists.ou.edu.
Second edition of "Taking Control of the Internet" was fresh, informative, and reassuring

Back by popular demand, "Taking Control of the Internet," a workshop offered by OLA's University and College and Public Library Divisions, was a success. Participants were treated to an all power-point presentation by knowledgeable speakers representing various library specialties.

Keynote speaker, Anne Prestamo, Coordinator of Digital Library Services at Oklahoma State University, presented a critical review of the state of the Internet, including a look back at its development and a study of what is out there now. Prestamo's lively and thought provoking presentation was chock-full of statistics and facts!

Claire McInerney, Assistant Professor at the University of Oklahoma's School of Library and Information Studies provided a critical comparison of popular search engines. McInerney's presentation clarified the elusive question of "what works, what doesn't, and why?" that plagues so many search engine users.

Many librarians are not aware of the value and usefulness of subject directories. Linda West, Technical Services Director at Northeastern State University Library demonstrated subject directories and review sources. West pointed out that, in many cases, actual human beings have already made critical decisions about what to include in subject directories as "the best" resources. Internet researchers can eliminate a vast amount of information noise by utilizing subject directories.

Ann Miller, Library Media Specialist at Truman Elementary School introduced workshop participants to The Scout Report, KIDS Report, and Trackstar. The Scout Report would be useful to anyone wanting to stay current on valuable Internet resources. KIDS report and Trackstar are resources appreciated by K-12 teachers across the country for teaching students web page development, teaching critical information-consumption skills, and helping them learn about a particular subject.

Attendees had a better understanding of the nature and the vastness of the Internet and of tools for navigation, but some of us were feeling overwhelmed with the onslaught of all this information. Not to worry! Next on the agenda was Jennifer Goodson, Head of Access Services at University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Library with tips on dealing with information overload. Goodson referred to this as "technostress." She explained that "because of our responsibilities, librarians feel this more than most people." One of Goodson's most interesting suggestions was to "vary situational cues." She explained that if we get all our information in the same chair, staring at the same computer screen, it will be harder to retrieve that information later because of the way our memories work. It was comforting to know that it is normal to forget things when assaulted with too much information.

Remarkably, although this workshop was a repeat, it wasn't the same workshop at all! The speakers updated their presentations to include new information, a reflection of the ever-changing nature of the Internet. It was a carefully constructed mix of theory and experience which was broad enough to give participants "the big picture" yet detailed enough to add many practical tools to our Internet bag of tricks. Thanks to Sheila Johnson of Oklahoma State University Library and the committee from UCD and PLD for organizing a great day! If you missed it, you can still check our the web site, complete with power point presentations at: (http://www.pioneer.lib.ok.us/ola/ucd)

—Karen Bays
Denyvetta Davis receives arts award

The Oklahoma Arts Council and Governor Frank Keating recognized librarian Denyvetta Davis with a community service award for giving the gift of art to hundreds of Oklahoma County children. Since 1984, Davis has managed the Ralph Ellison Library, a branch of the Metropolitan Library System.

"If not for the effort spearheaded by Davis on the library's behalf, the children might not otherwise be exposed on a regular basis, and on a limited budget, for artists to perform in the library," Linda Frazier, arts council chair, said during a gala awards presentation at the State Capitol early in November.

"Under her leadership the Ralph Ellison library has become the hub of the northeast community with programs and activities for all ages," Frazier added.

Governor Frank Keating congratulates Denyvetta Davis on winning Arts Award.

Governor Keating presented the beautiful medallion Community Service Award to Davis. She was one of 20 award winners to be congratulated by the governor.

Davis, a graduate of the University of Central Oklahoma and Atlanta University, is an alumna of Leadership Oklahoma City and the Oklahoma Multicultural Leadership Institute. She is listed in Who's Who in Black America and International Who's Who. She has received several community service recognitions and has been named a "Young Visionary Leader" by the American Library Association.

"Denyvetta makes the rest of us look better by association," said Linda Levy, interim director of the Metropolitan Library System. "I'm so glad the rest of the state has recognized what those of us privileged to work with Denyvetta have known for a long time."

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2000-2001 Sequoyah Children's Masterlist

* for ordering purposes only—please do not announce until February 1st, 2000 *

Auch, Mary Jane. I was a Third Grade Science Project. Holiday: 1998.
While trying to hypnotize his dog for the third grade science fair, Brian accidentally makes his friend Josh think he's a cat.

Meet Perloo, retired scholar and member of a race of jack-rabbit-like creatures called Montmers. He's the unwilling leader in an attempt to end a feud between the Montmers and their enemies, the coyote-like Felbarts.

In the summer of 1950, a con man comes to Wetumka, Oklahoma, telling about his fabulous circus, and although he swindles the townspeople, two young girls grow from the experience.

The history of cowboy hats and their many uses are explored in this colorful book.

Allie is fossil hunting on a cliff where she discovers a ghost who is seeking revenge for a murder.


Twelve-year-old Ammyrose relates her adventures with Joaquin Murieta and his band of outlaws in the California gold-mining region during the mid-1800s.

When the substitute for Mr. "Fab" Fabiano never shows up and his sixth-grade students are on their own, they set out to prove that they can run the class by themselves.

Poetry and paintings about insects and spiders.

Set in Missouri in 1938, Emily Ann Campbell learns about the power of words to "bottle moments," and is guided in writing poetry by her new teacher, Mr. Van.

In 1860, a fifteen-year-old boy attempts to herd one thousand turkeys from Missouri to Denver, Colorado, in hopes of selling them at a profit.

Gary Paulsen has owned dozens of unforgettable and amazing dogs in his lifetime. In each chapter of this wonderful book, he tells the story of one of these special animals.

Stanley Yelnats's family has a history of bad luck, so he isn't too surprised when a miscarriage of justice sends him to a boys' juvenile detention center, Camp Green Lake, where the boys must dig holes in the dry lake bed each day to help build character.

Incorporating descriptions of the glaciers and mountain ranges, facts about the natives, historic geological events, and survival techniques, here is the heart-stopping survival story of two cousins on a kayak trip battling the raw untamed Alaskan wilderness.

Gib Whitaker dreams of someday leaving the Lovell House Orphanage and living with a real family. But when that opportunity arises, Gib is soon aware of barely concealed tensions and secrets kept from him. (set in the early 1900s prairie)

In the late 1880s, thousands of pioneers, many former slaves, raced to the Oklahoma Territory to stake their claim. "I Have Heard of a Land", a hymn to liberty and unity, commemorates the strength of the African-American pioneers.

After escaping from a research laboratory, all Sherlock wants is to be an ordinary dog. But Sherlock is anything but normal: he can talk. And when he asks Amy for help, she says yes. But Amy may have bitten off more than she can chew!

In 1853, in letters to his older brother, eleven-year-old Levi describes his adventures in the Pennsylvania countryside with his black friend Jupiter and his experiences with the Underground Railroad.

Matt Barber is a new kid in school who takes a dare to hunt for a ghost.
2000-2001 Sequoyah Young Adult Masterlist

* for ordering purposes only—please do not announce until February 1, 2000 *

Jenna Boller, 16 year old champion shoe seller with driver's license in hand, learns the rules of the road... and of life, when she drives Mrs. Gladstone, the supermely-aged, tough-as-nails President of Gladstone Shoes, from Chicago to Dallas in this fast and funny road trip adventure. (Grades 6-9)

Butts, Nancy. *The door in the lake.* Front Street 1998
Two years after his disappearance from a family camping trip, Joey mysteriously returns with no signs of aging, strange bits of memories, and brain fluid leaking from his nose.

Fletcher, Ralph J. *Flying solo.* Clarion Books 1998
When the substitute teacher fails to appear, a 6th grade class decides they can have class without a teacher. (Grades 5-8)

Haddix, Margaret Peterson. *Among the hidden.* Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers 1998
In a society that only allows two children per family, illegal third children like Luke are never allowed to go outside, to make friends, or even to look out of windows for fear of being discovered by the Population Police. Luke has hidden for 12 years, but a daring meeting with Jen, another "shadow child," introduces him to secret Internet communities, the taste of freedom, and exciting but dangerous plans to change the world. (Gr. 6-9)

In 1880, after failing school, sixteen year old Daniel is sent to work for his uncle at a lifesaving station on Cape Cod where he learns about responsibility and overcomes his fear of heights. (Grades 6-9)

Just fourteen, Rick Walder is alone, on the run, and desperate. Stowing away in the back of a truck, he suddenly finds himself at a dead end, out in the middle of nowhere. The Maze. In this surreal landscape of stark redrock spires and deep sandstone canyons, Rick stumbles into the remote camp of Lon Perigrino, a bird biologist who is releasing fledgling Californian condors back into the wild.

After the death of her beloved grandmother, twelve year old Tiger Ann wants nothing more than to escape her dull and embarrassing life in rural Louisana where she lives with her mentally deficient parents; but on the way to her glamorous Aunt Doreen's, she learns of a long-concealed family secret that helps her find her own place in her world.

Kimmel, Elizabeth Cody. *In the stone circle.* Scholastic Press 1998
Fourteen year old Cristyn and her father share an old house in Wales with another family for the summer, and while the adults write books, the children help a thirteenth century ghost girl find peace as Cristyn comes to terms with her own mother's death.

Petey, a boy with a normal brain locked in a disfigured body, faces a life of sadness and misunderstanding until he befriends a boy who shares with him the joys of living which Petey had never experienced, but we all take for granted.

Charlie Goddard, who enlists at 15 years of age, does not know what a "shooting war" means, but he is eager to be a part of this great adventure. After experiencing the horrors of the Civil War, Charlie learned that "this is how it's done," and he was no longer an eager boy, but a man with a "soldier's heart."

Joe, who lives in Chicago where machine guns are known as Chicago typewriters, is matter-of-fact about the details of the St. Valentine's massacre, but real life in the big city has not prepared him for visits to an unconventional grandmother who can subdue town delinquents, stop snooping reporters, and trick banks into new mortgages.

Born into a family cursed with bad luck, Stanley Yelnats is sent to a detention camp to dig holes, after a miscarriage of justice. The past intermingles with the present as Stanley discovers why the teens are forced to dig holes. (Grades 5-8)

"Help me out" said the figure in Jeff's dream. It was his best friend Mike, missing now for three weeks. His face was oddly shadowed, and Jeff noticed bits of twigs and leaves and mud in his clothes. "Get Kirby, then come get me."

Seventeen year old David moves in with relatives to finish high school after being acquitted of killing his girlfriend. There he finds a troubled family, including an 11 year old cousin with a dark secret in her past.

Fourteen-year-old Marina and sixteen-year-old Jed accompany their parents' religious cult, the Believers, to await the end of the world atop a remote mountain, where they try to decide what they themselves believe.
Attention Amigos Members!

You have a project in need of funding.

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Amigos Library Services, Inc. 14400 Midway Road Dallas, TX 75244-3509 972-851-8000 800-843-8482 972-991-6061 (fax) www.amigos.org
SRRT helps Mulhall Elementary catalog donated books

Mulhall-Orlando students were recently surprised to find new books on their library shelves, thanks to several volunteers who helped sort and catalog approximately 600 books donated to the school after the May 3rd tornadoes.

Librarians from OLA’s Social Responsibilities Roundtable donated a Saturday to help the new Mulhall-Orlando school librarian, Jean Rollow, catalog and organize books that were donated to the school library after the May 3rd tornado destroyed Mulhall Elementary School.

Olivia Sammons, circulation clerk at the Edmond Library and new member of OLA’s Social Responsibilities Roundtable saw the previous Mulhall Elementary librarian crying on television following the devastation of the tornadoes and asked what could be done to help.

Roundtable members solicited help from the Friends of the Metropolitan Library System who graciously donated their time and 13 boxes of children’s books to the cause. President of the Friends of the Library, Rob Roddy, hauled the boxes in his pickup to a drop-off point at “Best of Books” in Edmond. The bookstore generously provided storage space over the summer for book donations. Donations came from other concerned groups and individuals all around the country to help rebuild the library.

A group of Phi Theta Kappa students from Oklahoma State University of Oklahoma City assisted tremendously by carrying books, applying bar codes, and helping to organize materials while the librarians cataloged books.

Volunteer participants from SRRT included Carolyn Mahin, University of Central Oklahoma Library; Shari Clifton, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Library; Lettie Clifton, future librarian; Cathy Van Hoy, Oklahoma Department of Libraries; Marla Roberson, Medical Library of Children’s Hospital in OKC; Rachel Butler of Oklahoma City Community College Library; Anne Moore, University of Oklahoma Bizzell Library; Olivia Sammons and Karen Bays of Edmond Public Library. Although everyone worked hard, each volunteer had a good time and enjoyed the day. It was definitely a community effort.

Workshop emphasizes technology in technical services

As the day before Halloween weekend dawned, 45 technical service librarians and staff from all types of libraries fought early morning traffic to find parking spaces at the University of Oklahoma. Their destination? The TSRT 1999 Fall Workshop, entitled “Do You Compute? Technology in Technical Services, 2000 and Beyond,” which covered the use and influence of computers in technical services.

“The workshop was successful,” said Ilia Grice Coffman, chair of Technical Services Roundtable. “Attendees went home with valuable knowledge. The speakers were well-prepared. Their willingness to share their expertise was greatly appreciated.”

Keynote speaker Pat Weaverv-Meyers, Oklahoma University, began the workshop with a review of the last ten years of technology in libraries, then ventured a prediction of the next ten years. She discussed the problems these changes will bring and will solve, suggesting ways to handle the inevitable dilemmas.

Jane Carvajal, Metropolitan Library System, conducted a Windows Basics class, covering topics such as manipulating windows and icons, troubleshooting, maintenance of the desktop, and multitasking. “People seemed to enjoy themselves and learn what they needed,” she said.

Linda West, Northeastern State University, presented “Using the Internet for Technical Services,” distributing an in-depth handout on Internet resources valuable to catalogers, selectors and technical services staff. Her finds ranged from the comprehensive to the esoteric: meta lists, vendor sites, journals and publications, ergonomics, review sources, serials, binding and preservation, classification, government publications, music, and discussion lists.

Jonathan Woltz, Southwestern State University, demonstrated “Telecommunication Basics”. Using clever graphical interfacing, he brought the world of computer networking and telecommunications to the common person’s understanding. Surfing Sally and Browsing Bob helped Woltz connect participants to the big picture.

Following Woltz were Laurie Sundborg and Charlotte Frazier, Tulsa City-County Library, who explained “Electronic Ordering”. This dynamic duo provided a guided tour through the process of developing a working relationship with vendors, helping to speed up the process of ordering.

The workshop ended with a short wrap-up and soft drinks. “The success of the workshop was directly due to the dedication and effort of the planning committee,” Coffman concluded.

—Jana Hausburg & MaryGrace Berkowitz

SRRT’s Marla Roberson and Cathy Van Hoy catalog books for Mulhall Elementary Library.
Librarian expresses opposition to the Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act

What: UCITA was passed by the National Council of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws by a vote of 43 to 6. It now goes to all States for introduction as bills in each legislature. If adopted by the states it becomes "uniform law," thus applicable to everyone in the U.S.

Who: As the American Bar Association Working Group on Consumer Protection noted, "A vendor point of view has dominated the drafting process and permeates this statute." In Oklahoma, the driving force is Professor Fred Miller, University of Oklahoma Law School. He is the Executive Director of NCCUSL and has a vested interest in UCITA and wants to see it enacted.

When: Advocates of UCITA will need to get a bill drafted and a sponsor found by December. Senator Glen Coffee has chaired the first meeting to discuss the Act and has indicated his support for it so he is a likely sponsor.

Why: The stated reason for UCITA is that, ostensibly, our laws were drafted before the advent of the Internet and are inadequate to protect electronic commerce. Also, it is repeatedly stated that the U.S. is "out of step" with the rest of the world.

Library Concerns: Current intellectual property laws, such as the U.S. Copyright Law, do indeed predate the Internet, but UCITA creates more problems than it solves. The library community believes current intellectual property laws are preferable to this Act dominated by large commercial interests and would be another deterioration of library users' "fair use" rights now guaranteed by the Copyright Law. Specifically, UCITA:

- Recognizes only licensors and licensees. It does not fit the library model. "Libraries need to be able to purchase materials and contract for access to information on behalf of their patrons." (ALA, SLA, ARL, MLA, AALL)
- "...is extremely difficult to comprehend..." (American Intellectual Property Law Association)
- permits "a party offering a mass-market license to withhold almost any contract it wishes until after a sale has occurred and provides that such terms become part of the contract if the purchaser reviews and accepts the sale after the sale.
- (Attorneys General of 25 states)
- "...would make shrinkwrap and clickwrap terms enforceable unless the purchaser could afford to police incoming deliveries for undesirable terms." (45 Professors of Contract and Commercial Law)
- "...does not require that licensees be informed of licensing restrictions in a clear and conspicuous manner prior to the consummation of the transaction." (U.S. Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection)

In sum, "...the problems with UCITA are profound and structural, they cannot be resolved by tinkering with language here and there." (American Bar Association, Working Group on Consumer Protection)

I met with Senator Glenn Coffee and others interested in the proposed legislation on September 13.

Senator Coffee began by stating his support for UCITA because it will be good for economic development in Oklahoma. Professor Miller spoke about UCITA but said nothing we have not already read and heard: it is necessary to protect electronic commerce, our laws predate the Internet, the U.S. is out of step with the rest of the world, etc. Attorney General Drew Edmondson spoke against it because he and 24 other AG's do not believe it is in the best interest of the consumer. He handed out the a document which succinctly states the flaws in UCITA. I spoke against it from the library point of view and got into quite a debate with Prof. Miller. The Motion Picture Association of America representative said his organization is opposed. The meeting ended with a promise to allow everyone enough time to gather more information and meet again.

The battle lines are well drawn. It is clear that the UCITA proponents will argue for "economic development" and accuse librarians and other critics of being misinformed or not understanding. The tone of the argument is that we are not qualified to meddle in a legal debate. UCITA is very controversial and the debate will be an extremely contentious one with very strong opinions on both sides. It is extremely important that all librarians educate themselves on this issue and be prepared to work with their local legislators in opposition to it.

--Ed Johnson (reprinted from a letter to the OLA Legislative Committee)

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September Executive Board actions
The OLA Executive Board met on September 24, 1999, at Southwestern Oklahoma State University Library in Weatherford and took these actions:

• Approved proposed fundraising activities for the Ruth Brown Award. Carolyn Mahin distributed a draft letter to Oklahoma Foundations.

• Approved the Budget and Finance Committee proposal to re-establish the rainy day fund and redistribute $10,000 in member service development.

October Executive Board actions
The lovely Adams Mark Hotel in Tulsa (the site for OLA Conference 2000) was the setting for the October 15, 1999 Board meeting during which these actions were taken:

• Approved the Legislative Committee’s proposed goals for 2000.

• Approved a motion for formal OLA Board Opposition to UCITA. If the act is submitted in the Oklahoma legislature there may be a need to move quickly.
The Chickasaw Nation in Ada received a $149,000 grant for a two-year project to develop an automated library system, digitize archival materials, and participate in an interlibrary loan consortium. The Institute of Museum and Library Services received 44 applications and made 13 awards as part of its Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant. "Of course we're all excited," said Glenda Galvan, Collection Manager of the Chickasaw Nation. "The intent is to bring the collection online—we want to connect with other libraries and make our holdings accessible to people outside our library. We're also moving things around physically and thinking about making the library more resource-rich by combining archival collections," she said. "We're still in the research stage of choosing a vendor for automation. Let's see Patterson and Kathleen Haynes from OUSLIS have been a tremendous help. They helped in the grant writing process, and continue to be involved in the implementation phase," Galvan continued. "We are so ready to expand the library and bring it to other people! This is the opportunity we've been waiting for," she exclaimed. The Native American Library Service program provides new opportunities for improved library services for an often underserved part of the nation's community of library users. Beverly Sheppard, Acting Director of the IMLS, said, "We applaud the recipients of the grants. They are strengthening tribal libraries to increase access to books and other resources."

The American Library Association/GODORT Notable Documents Panel recognized the Oklahoma Department of Libraries' website as a "notable document" on its list of 43 outstanding state and federal government sources. "It was remarkable to receive this honor," said Vicki Sullivan, head of the ODL web team. "Bill Young developed it initially," Sullivan explained, "and we all enjoy working on it. It's an ever-changing thing. We try to keep it fresh." The GODORT panel described the ODL website in glowing terms: "Designed as a gateway to information for libraries, state government, and citizens of Oklahoma, this well-organized web site provides resources on Oklahoma, current events, and the latest news.

Julia Crawford recently published an article, "The mystery of intellectual property revealed," which appeared in the latest issue of The Book Report: the Magazine for the Secondary School Library Media & Technology Specialist, v. 18, n. 3, pp. 26-27. Crawford was also featured in an international publication. Her photo and an interview was published on page 5 of the October 99 (#3) EPIDOS News. The article is "Optimistic future for patent information services."

The State Historic Preservation Office awarded five matching grants to assist in preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. The City of Ardmore won a grant to nominate the Ardmore Carnegie Library, built in 1904-05. In 1925, the building's second floor was removed after damage to a tornado. The entire building was restored in 1963.

For application and criteria, see OLA website - http://pioneer.lib.ok.us:80/ola/ - or contact Susan Movey at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries (405-521-2502).

Remember to apply for scholarships!

I am excited to be serving on the Oklahoma Library Association Scholarship committee. As a past recipient of this scholarship, I appreciate the excellent support OLA provides aspiring librarians. While attending graduate school at OU, I was a single parent with two children at home. I was a substitute teacher and Graduate Assistant for one semester—so I was very grateful for my scholarship.

Perhaps more than receiving financial aid was the thought that someone had faith in my abilities to become a librarian. Presentation of this scholarship affirms the mission of the Oklahoma Library Association. By recognizing and encouraging future librarians you are strengthening libraries, library services, and librarianship in Oklahoma.

-Sally Bratton
Norman High School Library

The Metropolitan Library System received an $8,500 grant from the Oklahoma City Community Foundation that will mean new and exciting reading opportunities for hundreds of Oklahoma County school children. The funds will underwrite "Come Read With Me," a program co-sponsored by the Oklahoma City Public Schools beginning January 12th at twelve sites including seven elementary schools, two parks and recreation centers, and three After School Options locations. Programming Coordinator for Metropolitan, Dana Morrow, and Sam Bowman of OCCF worked together to craft the "Come Read With Me" program. It will offer a designated time for children to read for pleasure in a comfortable, relaxed environment. Experienced reading teachers will be available at each participating site to guide activities.
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