"Think big! Take risks! Be Positive!" – Bill Lowry shares his story

I have written this brief memoir at the request of Karen Bays, editor of the OKLAHOMA LIBRARIAN. I have been an enthusiastic member of the Oklahoma Library Association since 1954 and have returned every year since my retirement in 1987 to renew old acquaintances, make new friends and visit a great state.

I was born in Cleveland Ohio, August 27, 1921. My father was a physician and was said to have had the largest general practice in the City. My mother had been a visiting nurse. I was preceded by a sister who died at the age of three in 1920. So my birth was most welcome and my father was reported to have called home from the hospital and said, "we have a fine boy down here."

We moved to Shaker Heights in 1925, a pleasant suburb east of Cleveland. It was a wonderful place to live, uncrowded, with large homes, and spacious lawns. I especially enjoyed a huge sandbox at the school, wide natural stone sidewalks on which to roller skate and a large grassy park across the street from my home called "The Triangle" where I learned to ride my sister's bicycle.

My father died unexpectedly in the fall of 1928 soon after I entered first grade. After my father's death my mother's parents came to live with us. They died within three years.

I had a difficult time in school academically. I may have had a learning disability—perhaps attention deficit disorder. I found my dream world far more interesting than what they were trying to teach me. I was a slow reader along with my friend Sherwin Smith (of the Sherwin Williams paint family) so our principal, Mrs. McLaren took us in hand for remedial work and soon we were the best readers in the class. God bless Mrs. McLaren! She gave me the first push toward a library career. Another influence was our elementary school library. During the summer between 1st and 2nd grade two classrooms were put together and when we returned in the fall we had a school library full of books and a librarian. It made a great impression, and I needed no urging to take books home which I loved to read to my mother.

I was also becoming aware of the world. I remember Lindbergh's flight and the radio broadcast of Herbert Hoover's inauguration. The onset of the Great Depression struck close to home and made an impression on me. A neighbor girl, Carolyn Brandt (with whom I was madly in love, and thought the most beautiful girl I had ever seen) was rushed home in a family crisis resulting from great losses her father had suffered on the Stock Market. Apparently the family survived and Carolyn, who turned perfect cartwheels, became nationally known as a figure skater and eventually married one of the boys on my block. I remember, too, the sound of an ambulance rushing down the street one evening in response to the suicide of a respected neighbor who thought that his insurance would rescue his family financially. Then there were the large family Sunday dinners when, after a big meal, the family would sit around a roaring fire enjoying the sport of hating Roosevelt. My mother's health continued to deteriorate, so we moved to Youngstown Ohio to be near our mother's sister. It was the end of my golden childhood and a difficult adjustment for me. But I continued to enjoy life, assumed the responsibilities of a paper route and sang in a boys' choir. My mother died in 1936, on my birthday. My sister and I were separated. She went to live with my mother's sister, but I moved to Poland, Ohio to live with my father's parents and sister. It was a good move for us both.

Poland was small enough that you knew a great many of the residents; one of the major events of the day was walking to the post office, picking up your mail, and greeting people along the way. It was at Poland's Presbyterian Church that I learned another important lesson. My grandfather, with whom I was living, was a retired Presbyterian minister. He was a very personable and fun loving man but he had his principles. He and his friends had posted a statement of...
By the time you read this column many public libraries across the state will have received computers, software and technical training courtesy of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Library Initiative. **What a carrot for our state!** Over $2.5 million dollars in direct and indirect money has been provided to the state of Oklahoma, which will enable every public library to provide Internet access and public computing for their citizens. We owe a debt of gratitude to Bill and Melinda Gates for their contribution to improving library services and citizens' access to information.

Oklahoma is the 13th state to receive funding through this foundation for the purpose of providing hardware, technical support and library staff training to public libraries serving populations with poverty levels of 10% and higher. In our state, 168 out of 205 public libraries will receive grants.

The grant program was designed to target those libraries in communities where the need is the greatest and fewer people have access to computers and the Internet at home. One of the subsidiary goals for this funding is to serve as the impetus for other constituencies to see the need for broad-based public access to information. Oklahoma technologies and to form partnerships within the community so that we can begin "closing the digital divide" among our citizens. This broad-based public access should include every school, special, and college or university library in our state. While the grant only targeted public libraries, there is a continuing need for increased funding for school and academic libraries so that they can also provide all of their students and faculty full access to public computing and the Internet. We need to continually educate and inform state and local officials and leaders about the value of providing these services to our citizens and work towards increased funding for all types of libraries in order to support these goals.

As we work in our individual libraries throughout the year and talk to the people in our community, school or institution, keep in mind the goal to provide access to information and technology for the residents of our state. Encourage your supporters to help in "closing the gap between those who have access to the power of technology and those who do not".

—Donna Morris

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**Calendar of Events**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>November 2</td>
<td>Legislative Committee, ODL - 10 am</td>
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<td>November 5</td>
<td>Sequoyah YA Reading Team, Belle Isle PL, OKC - 10 a.m.</td>
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<td>November 9</td>
<td>Membership Committee, Western OK State College, Altus - 11 am.</td>
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<td>November 10-14</td>
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<td>November 20</td>
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<td>November 15-21</td>
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<td>Automation Roundtable, OUHSC - 10:30 am</td>
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<td>February 4</td>
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<td>February 18</td>
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<td>March 1</td>
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<td>March 17</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
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<td>April 9-15</td>
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<td>April 26-29</td>
<td>OLA Annual Conference, Adams Mark Hotel, Tulsa</td>
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faith, maybe the "Westminster Confession," in the men's Bible study classroom. The statement closed with the words that the articles of faith stated could never be changed. The pastor greatly offended my grandfather by remarking that nobody believed that old statement anymore. Without saying anything, or understanding the issues I realized that change comes whether we like it or not, and one of life's secrets is accepting this inevitability.

I graduated from high school in 1940 but spent a year of postgraduate work to improve my academic performance and enable me to enter a college of my choice. Social sciences gave me no problem—I remember taking first place in a county-wide history test without preparation—but mathematics and the applied sciences were another thing. I enrolled at the University of Michigan in the fall of 1941, but following the attack on Pearl Harbor, I was drafted in September 1942 and was sent to California for basic training.

We sailed for the Southwest Pacific in the fall of 1943 and that was a great adventure. After a stop in New Zealand and Sydney, Australia, we headed for New Guinea where there had been intense fighting. Our staging area was a small island off the northeastern tip of New Guinea, appropriately named "Goodenough." It was 20 by 12 miles with a mountain rising to 8400 feet in the center. As we disembarked an officer described it as hell, but it wasn't. It was a spectacular place and one of three islands called the "D'Entrecasteaux Islands," a part of the "Kula Ring." I spent the rest of the war in New Guinea and the Philippines. Hollandia, New Guinea, where I spent several months, has even redder soil than Oklahoma.

I returned to the University of Michigan where I graduated in 1948 and married my wife, Anne, the same day. After a brief try at social work, I entered the Library School at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. Our first child, Margaret, was born during my library school days.

An aunt who helped to rear me was a graduate of Carnegie Library School in Pittsburgh and a classmate of Alma McGlenn, long time director to the Tulsa Public Library. Miss McGlenn was older than the other students were and somewhat formidable, but she wanted to be called by her first name. My aunt had been the first to have the courage to do so and they became life long friends. So my connection with Oklahoma Libraries goes back a long way although my aunt never encouraged me to become a librarian.

I took my first position as a cataloger at the University of New Mexico—a long way from Cleveland. My wife, tired of the midwestern weather, wanted a sunny climate. My grandparents had lived in Carlsbad, New Mexico during World War I and enjoyed it. But I soon tired of the sunny days and lack of moisture and started working my way back East by securing a position as head of technical processes at the Oklahoma City Public Library. Clarence Paine was the dynamic director of the library, and they had just moved into a new library in downtown Oklahoma City.

By 1957 Oklahoma, under the leadership of Esther Mae Henke of the State Library (later the Oklahoma Department of Libraries) was developing multi-county libraries. I liked the concept of "larger units of service." The American Library Association had just published standards for library systems. I felt that we were moving into an exciting new era for public libraries. I decided, in April 1958, to leave the safe confines of the Oklahoma City Public Library to become director of the Cleveland-Garvin-McClain Multi-County Library, now the Pioneer Library System. It was a big risk both professionally and personally. I had three children: Margaret was followed by twin sons, John and Paul, who had arrived when we lived in Albuquerque.

The library was financed during the first 18 months of its operation by a grant of $75,000 of federal Library Service funds from the Oklahoma State Library. Congress had recently approved the Library Services Act. The library could only continue after that period by a 1/2-mill appropriation from the general funds of each of the three counties plus continued support from the cities and towns. The Norman Library was the only library that had been receiving county funds. We had to overcome some opposition from the existing library staffs. There also was great political opposition to any consolidation of county services. The experiment had a very cloudy future. Fortunately we had strong support from state library officials and the City of Norman.

I soon realized that it would be very difficult to secure continued support from the counties and that even if we did 1/2 mill would not provide sufficient funds. What we really needed was a designated county library levy of at least two mills and this would require an amendment in Oklahoma's constitution. So in January of 1959 several of us gathered at the State Library to plan a library amendment to the state constitution. This group included Ralph Hudson, State Librarian, Esther Mae Henke and Virginia Owens from the State Library, Beth Oliver from the Norman Public Library, Allie Beth Martin from the Tulsa Public Library, and myself. We agreed on an outline of the amendment. Ralph and a legislative aid were to write it. As Allie Beth was leaving she kept saying, "Keep it simple, keep it simple!" I don't believe she liked the multi-county requirement for all but Tulsa and Oklahoma counties. When it was drafted a few days later I took it to Ken Poyner, a recently elected representative from Norman and he promised to introduce it. Most of the legislators we talked to didn't think it would pass, but we kept working. It passed the House and was sent to the Senate. There, Senator Bob Bailey from Norman made an effective presentation late one afternoon, according to Ralph Hudson, and it was approved by the Senate and on to the people for a vote in November 1960.
Meanwhile, we kept our new multi-county Library alive by appropriations from each of the counties with the brave promise that a library levy was on the way. We began the campaign for the levy by electing Mrs. Rutledge from Tulsa as campaign chair. Ed Low secured Robert McVicar of the OSU faculty to attend our first campaign meeting. Bob told us we could win and how to do it. He also secured us a grant of $5,000 from an Oklahoma City foundation. The fact that OLA was not a 501(c)(3) organization was a problem, but ALA agreed to hold the grant for us. The State Library employed Libby Price, a journalist, as a public relations specialist to write copy, and with these resources we were ready for a statewide campaign. Thanks to Harold Keith's work at the University of Oklahoma, Bud Wilkinson endorsed the amendment. Amazingly enough, the day Kennedy was elected the amendment passed. When we went to bed that night Kennedy's election was not assured and the library amendment was behind. But by the next morning, Kennedy won the election, and our amendment was approved; it passed by a margin of 600 votes out of 600,000 cast!

Next, we had the county levies to pass. The amendment had only authorized the county vote. McClain County became the first county to approve the levy (at 1 mill) in 1961 and Cleveland County approved a 2 mill levy a few weeks later. Garvin County defeated the levy in a nasty campaign with such slogans as: "a first step in county consolidation," and "Do you want that man from Norman to select books for your children?"

We changed the name of our Library to Pioneer Multi-County Library because it was the first successful multi-county library in the state. The departure of Garvin County did not have a serious effect on the library because of the rapid growth in valuation and population. We waited another 20 years for Pottawatomie County to join our system and we had three counties again. "Multi-County" was dropped from the Library's name in 1987.

While we were developing our library system we were also building new library buildings with the cooperation of the cities. Our first new building was built in Norman in 1966 and the Moore Library was constructed a year or two later. Both libraries were enlarged in the 1980's. Other libraries were built in Newcastle, Purcell, Tecumseh, and Shawnee for a total of about 150,000 square feet. The Library's annual income has increased from the original $75,000 grant to over $3,000,000.

I have a simple but challenging librarian philosophy: Think Big, Take Risks, Hire the Best Staff You Can, Delegate, Be Active in Your State and National Associations, Be Positive and Don't be Afraid of Change!

While I miss Oklahoma, I enjoy my Belmont (Boston) home. Belmont is an attractive and historic town. Distinguished past residents include Winslow Homer, Henry Kissinger and most recently, Masako Owada, a graduate of Belmont High School and now crown princess of Japan. I enjoy the cultural opportunities here and the proximity to New York City that by next fall will be only a three-hour train ride away. I live in a beautiful home surrounded by my family and have made many friends. I especially enjoy my association with the Friends of the Belmont Public Library. I became treasurer of the Friends soon after arrival, have served two terms as president, directed the annual book sale for several years, and sort donated books every Friday with my friends. I walk a half-mile to Belmont Center on most afternoons to have coffee with my friends. I am also a member of the City-Wide Friends of the Boston Public Library and enjoyed their $1,000 plate dinner last summer celebrating the Library's 150th anniversary.

I enjoy my association with the Belmont Public Library staff and they give good library service. I try to keep my mouth shut, but I am amazed at how different it is from Oklahoma libraries. With almost $50 per capita they talk about how poor they are. With 22 full time staff equivalents for a town of 25,000 they lament about how short staffed they are. Their labor union contract limits them to a 7-hour workday with 1 1/2 pay on Saturdays and double pay for Sunday work. There is no evening service for children. Participation in state, regional, and national library associations is not a high priority. I am glad I served my library years in Oklahoma!
OU History of Science Collections receives a gift!

The History of Science Collections at the University of Oklahoma expanded its holdings recently with the dedication of the Abraham Gottlob Werner Research Collection, a gift of research materials relating to Werner (1749-1817) and the development of geology during his times.

The History of Science Collections, part of the OU Libraries, are famous for items such as books containing Galileo's handwriting and one printed in 1467. Other rare and popular items with visitors include a first edition of Copernicus' "De revolutionibus" (1543) and 433 different editions of Charles Darwin's writings. The Darwin items include a sample of all six editions of "On the Origin of the Species" in many languages.

The new collection gives OU perhaps the greatest concentration of original Werner materials anywhere except Technische Universitat Bergakademie Freiberg, where Werner gained fame as a teacher and founding figure in geology.

"No other research facility has these materials," says Steven Livesey, professor and chair of the History of Science. "If someone wants to study Werner, they can either go to Freiberg or come to Norman."

The Werner Research Collection is the gift of Alexander M. Ospovat, who in 1960 earned OU's first doctorate in the history of science.

Ospovat, professor emeritus of history at Oklahoma State University, donated the bulk of the research materials he has accumulated during a lifetime of study on Werner and Wernerian geology, beginning with his research for both his master's thesis and doctoral dissertation. The collection includes not only printed materials but a large quantity of photocopies of otherwise unique manuscript materials—correspondence, lecture notes, etc.—held in the collections at Freiberg.

Ospovat is internationally recognized as a leading historian of geology and as a pioneering researcher concerning Werner's role in early geology. Ospovat, through his research and publications, has overturned the tendency in Anglo-American historiography to portray Werner—leader of the "Neptunist" school—as a retrograde influence in geology's development.

Most historians of science now agree on Werner's central role in establishing major parts of the geological enterprise. Ospovat's distinctions include fellowships bestowed by the Fulbright Commission and the American Council of Learned Societies, the award of the Werner Medal by the Geological Society of East Germany, and an honorary doctorate conferred by the TU Bergakademie Freiberg.

Reprinted by permission from The Norman Transcript, Friday, Sept. 24, 1999

The Annual FOLIO Big Event Award

Does your Friends group have a project or event that was extremely successful? FOLIO wants to know about it! Keep your records to enter FOLIO's Big Event Contest! Projects that occurred between March 15, 1999 and March 15, 2000 will be eligible.

Actual contest entry guidelines will be coming out after the first of the year. Entries will be due in late March.

The winners will be awarded the following cash prizes at the FOLIO Annual Meeting on Friday, April 28, 2000. First Place - $250, Second Place - $150 and Third Place - $50.

Keep information that will answer these basic questions:

1. Why, where and when did you do this project?
2. How did you plan and carry out this project?
3. How did your library benefit from this project?
4. Would you recommend this project to other Friends' groups? If so, what pitfalls should they avoid?

Your entry may include photographs, newspaper articles, flyers, etc. that you used to develop your project. All entries will be returned after our annual meeting. Plan to enter this contest to share your ideas with other Friends around the state! Your successful projects and events are important to Oklahoma's libraries!

—Irene Wickham

The Annual FOLIO Big Event Award will be presented at the Annual Meeting on April 28, 1999 in Tulsa. If your Friends group is proud of a project you have completed this year, write about it. Send by March 22, 2000 to:

Irene Wickham
PO Box 1456
Tahlequah, OK 74465
(918) 456-5584

Include any documentation such as photographs and newspaper articles. Cash prizes will help with your next project.

FOLIO SEED GRANTS

FOLIO Seed Grants are available to organize Friends of the Library in Oklahoma communities. The $250 grants can be used for legal fees, promotion materials and/or office supplies.

Send for an application to: Gail Miller, 906 North Spurgeon, Altus, OK 73521 (580) 482-7694
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Encyclo-Media offers a variety and balance of programming and networking opportunities

Encyclo-Media XIX was held on September 16-17, 1999, at the Myriad Convention Center in Oklahoma City. Participants were presented with 133 programs from which to choose, 58 more than last year. Expounding the theme "Building Partnerships for Learning," program topics covered the curriculum with additional topics relating to counseling, library media specialists, technology, gifted and talented and at-risk students.

The conference opened with a welcome to attendees from Paula Walker, Director of Library Media, and greetings from The Honorable Sandy Garrett, State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The keynote speaker was Ian Jukes, the Associate Director of the Thornburg Center for Professional Development. He, along with the other featured speakers (Maura Beatty, Nancy Johnson, Carol Schreiner, Katherine Lasky, Doug Johnson, Todd Siler, Maureen White, Joe Larke, Richard Wright, and Dale Bulla) presented visions for education in the future, challenges for education in this age of technology, motivation to be the best educators for our children, and practical applications to be used in classrooms today.

Exhibitors offered participants a wide variety of products and services. The Oklahoma Library Association, the Oklahoma Association of School Library Media Specialists, and the Sequoyah Committee were instrumental in making the exhibits a success.

What did the attendees like best about Encyclo-Media XIX? In their evaluations, they listed variety and balance of programming, location of the conference, networking opportunities, exhibits, speakers, renovation of the Myriad Convention Center, and motivation.

Encyclo-Media XIX was wonderful! If you did not have an opportunity to attend this year, the Oklahoma State Department of Education encourages you to attend the 20th anniversary of Encyclo-Media, September 21-22, 2000.

—Sue Jenkins
MPLA at 8,000 Feet

Steel drums played and librarians swayed to that Calypso beat of exotic islands. Colorful books, funny stories and methods for expanding the curriculum on the Caribbean were shared with public librarians and school media specialists. Inside the Big Sky convention center were sea and sand; outside the picture windows were snowcapped mountain peaks and evergreen pines.

We encountered this setting as joint speakers at the 1999 Mountain Plains Library Association (MPLA) Annual Conference in Big Sky, Montana. Donna Norvell, Sandy Shropshire and I presented a one-hour program entitled, "Traveling the Globe: International Story Times." Not only is a MPLA conference a wonderful event to attend, but it is also a great venue for presenting a program.

MPLA is known for its relaxed, informal atmosphere. Where else can one present in khakis or jeans and feel perfectly comfortable? MPLA holds its conferences in resort-like settings; so, you feel like you are on vacation (even though you are working!)

Big Sky is mainly a winter ski area. In the summer it is a community of homes, condominiums and lodges tucked inside pristine wilderness. Many librarians brought spouses and children, creating family vacations. Horseback riding, trout fishing, hiking, shopping, and gondola rides up to Lone Peak were some of the attractions.

Sandy, Donna and I took a late afternoon Gondola ride, but opted not to hike down when told to watch out for a mother black bear and cub. If frightened bad enough, we could have run for our lives, but why end the day with adrenaline pumping through the veins. Instead we decided to take a nice dip in the pool.

After hiding our cellulite under tee shirts and towels, we made our way down the hallway with the stealth of a KGB agent. Upon arriving at the pool, however, we discovered it was full of twenty-somethings. We commented with disgust that hotels should not make children pools and adult pools, but separate swimming areas for those of us over forty and those of us under forty. We could have removed our towels and tee shirts...when frightened, young people will run for their lives, but why end their day with adrenaline pumping through their veins. They were having so much fun.

Underneath this resort-like setting, however, is a well-oiled machine. This was the third MPLA conference I had attended and the first at which I presented. Next to faithfully supporting our own Oklahoma Library Association conferences, it is a recommended conference. Everything is always organized and well planned with outstanding programs and meal functions. You have the opportunity to meet librarians from the central region of the United States.

Academic, special, public and school librarians from twelve states (Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming) comprise the MPLA membership. The conference travels from state to state, and is hosted by a state's library association. Next year the Nebraska Library Association will sponsor the conference October 25-27, 2000 in Omaha. Future conference sites are Phoenix, Fargo, and North Lake Tahoe.

Consider presenting a program at MPLA. Perhaps you are involved with youth services, or know how to research genealogical resources on the web. Think of something you are knowledgeable about or skilled at in the field of librarianship, or related disciplines. Take that adult programming you created or the training session you developed on customer service and share it. Other librarians will benefit and you will enjoy the experience of sharing with colleagues from other states.

To submit a program proposal, contact Linda Rea, Hastings Public Library, at 402-461-2348 or lrea@hastings.lib.ne.us. Our own Marilyn Hinshaw, director of the Eastern Oklahoma District Library System, is MPLA president; so, we know it will be a great conference. If you have any questions, contact Hinshaw at mhinshaw@eok.lib.ok.us or the MPLA website at http://www.usd.edu/mpla.

I look forward to seeing you in Omaha. (Maybe we can form a coalition and take over the pool.)

-Desiree Webber
In tribute to the last of the good guys

In sophomore sociology many of us were taught the characteristics of a profession. The standard leaving the most enduring impression was service-a true professional renders service to the public. Numerous vocational groups have pre-empted the label, although it is questionable that some of them deserve it. And some of the ancient and honored professions are suffering a steadily eroding sense of service. But one profession that consistently puts public service above acquisitiveness is that of the librarian. These men and women are among the indispensable foundations of an enlightened, democratic social order.

Historically their main concern has been with books. The Latin word for "book" is "liber," and the word "librarian" also comes from the Latin "librarium," meaning a place to keep books. So librarians are keepers of books—but they are much more! They acquire books, catalogue educational materials and organize systems of distribution and retrieval. The assistance they render in educating the public and in providing reference and research material is not only valuable, but also is absolutely necessary in our ever more complex, interdependent world. With the intent to serve the public, the profession has developed interlibrary loan systems and library extension systems covering ever-widening areas and a larger public. The growth of technology—efficient duplication techniques, microphotography, automation and computers—has exploded both knowledge and its availability. This puts an unrelenting demand on the technical skills of librarians and their resources.

Librarians are heirs to an ancient profession. Anthropologists have shown us that systematic and extensive collection of clay tablets among the Babylonians and Assyrians takes us back more than two millennia before Christ. One Assyrian King had a collection of some 25,000 tablets. Both Egyptians and Greeks maintained archives. Many ancient philosophers did also, although the Stoics, skeptical of the lures of this world, generally did not. Plato did. And Aristotle's collection became the booty of war, finally arriving in Rome, while earlier serving as the pattern for the great Alexandrian Library, the most extensive and famous of the ancient world. The Imperial Library of Byzantium preserved much Greek and Roman literature; our debt to the medieval monks and monasteries is unpayable.

Today most modern states maintain impressive national libraries. The British Museum, the Bibliotheque Nationale, and the Library of Congress are respected worldwide. The Lenin Library in Moscow is equally honored with holdings in excess of 25 million. Some of America's large cities maintain outstanding libraries; private and state universities often maintain large and brilliant collections. The Widener and the library at the University of Illinois are stellar collections. Even universities with modest resources sometimes maintain renowned specialized collections such as the Browning collection at Baylor and the History of Science Collection in Norman.

Reviewing the human drama three generations ago, H.G. Wells wrote provocatively on "the next stage of history." Even though his suggestions stimulate critical imagination, we cannot be sure what path history will take, but we can be sure that librarians—the custodians of the cumulative wisdom and intellectual skills of the race—will help carry us forward into the new century just as they helped us from earlier times to the present. Their services are invaluable; our indebtedness, enormous. We should never take libraries and librarians for granted, and we should always respond to their good spirited, efficient services with warm support both psychologically and financially.

"I go into my library, and all history rolls before me. I breathe the morning air of the world while the scent of Eden's roses yet lingered in it... I see the pyramids building; I hear the shoutings of the armies of Alexander... I sit as in a theatre—the stage is time, the play is the play of the world." – Alexander Smith, Dreamthorp: Books and Gardens

Start thinking about award nominations!
Remember last OLA conference when you applauded our Awards winners, and you said to yourself with a regretful sigh, "I shudda nominated so-and-so." Well, here's your chance to get rid of your guilt: A new awards year has begun. Prepare yourself for nominations time!

— Ernestine Clark, Chair of OLA Awards Committee
Jane Yolen flies across the ocean to receive Tulsa Library Trust's 1999 Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature

More than 400 children, young adults and parents packed Tulsa City-County Library's Central Library to honor author Jane Yolen as she accepted the Tulsa Library Trust's 1999 Anne V. Zarrow Award for Young Readers' Literature on August 27. "All my life I have loved stories. I have relied on stories," Yolen told the adoring crowd. "I respect and love stories—not predicates, verbs, commas or dangling participles—but stories."

Named in honor of local philanthropist Anne V. Zarrow for her lifetime commitment to children and literacy, the award consists of a $5,000 cash prize and engraved crystal book. Its purpose is to give formal recognition to nationally acclaimed authors who have made a significant contribution to the field of literature for children and young adults.

Recently, the Anne and Henry Zarrow Foundation donated $100,000 to further endow the award and deepen the Zarrows' commitment to children and reading, said Linda Saferite, TCCL executive director.

At the award presentation, Yolen said, "As a child I would crawl up in the window seat in our Manhattan apartment and read. So now when I write, I write what I'm thinking and feeling. I write when I have an aching beautiful sentence that has found its way to my mind. I must write or I feel achy, itchy, antsy and nutsy."

And write she does. Known as the Hans Christian Andersen of America, Yolen is the author of more than 200 original and retold folktales, fantasies, fairy tales, science fiction books and other works for children and young adults.

Yolen flew for more than 22 hours from her home in Scotland to Tulsa to accept the award. After the award presentation, her fans waited in line for up to three hours to get her autograph. Yolen rewarded their patience and adulation by personalizing all of their books and answering each of their questions.


Sequoyah Award Presentation changes times based on survey, and the Sequoyah Adteam needs video producers now!

Last year, the Sequoyah Young Adult Book Award presentation was moved from Friday to Wednesday during the Oklahoma Library Association annual conference in Enid. The result was an increase in attendance over the previous year's YA award presentation. More kids at the award presentations is a major Sequoyah ADTEAM goal. Unfortunately, the children's award presentation, held on Saturday as it has been for years, continued to see a decrease in attendance. Consequently, the Sequoyah ADTEAM considered moving the children's award presentation to the Wednesday of OLA conference also with both award presentations held on the same day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Schools that participate in both programs could bring students to both award presentations on the same day.

We are aware that factors such as location, time of year, availability of buses and drivers, obtaining release time, and spring sports schedules all are factors that are considered when planning field trips. The Sequoyah award presentations will always be a part of the OLA annual conference, will always move around the state and will always be in the spring.

A survey regarding the Sequoyah awards presentations was sent out in the OLA mailing to gain members' input. It appeared on the OASLMS listserv, and was handed out at Encyclomedia at the Sequoyah exhibit booth. The overwhelming response from librarians around the state was to hold both presentations on Wednesday! Thank you to everyone for your help in letting us know what works best for you.

ACTION ALERT:

The Sequoyah ADTEAM is soliciting individuals or school districts to produce the Sequoyah children's video which promotes the Sequoyah children's award nominees through booktalks, reader's theatre presentations, and/or other creative means. There is a stipend of $700. The producer would receive the masterlist of nominees at the end of November and the video must be completed by the end of March. If you are interested, please contact Mona Hatfield at 918-742-7373 or mona_hatfield@casciahall.tulsa.ok.us before the end of November. If no one volunteers to produce the video, there will be no children's video for next year's nominees.

-Mona Hatfield
OLA Board Actions

The Executive Board met July 16, 1999 at the Oklahoma Department of Libraries and took these actions:

- Approved the treasurer's report
- Moved to refer the proposed name and role of the Automation Roundtable to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee who will forward any recommendation for changes to the Executive Board for a vote
- Presented a 1999-2000 Annual Budget from the Budget & Finance Committee. Revenue is in good shape. John Augelli was given a big round of applause for his excellent work with the budget during trying times.
- Approved the renewal of a cooperative agreement with the Oklahoma Humanities Council for "Let's Talk About It Oklahoma" book discussion program
- Approved the treasurer's report. OASLMS budget will be at the next meeting.
- Approved a motion for the contract with our lobbyist. The Legislative Committee forwarded the proposed agreement for retaining Oliver Delaney, which is basically the same as last year
- Approved a motion that OLA form a partnership with a new library association in Jalisco, Mexico that has 100 members. They are very excited about having a sister relationship and sharing information about our brochures and workshops we do. Anne Prestamo, well versed in Spanish, agreed to make contact with them.
- Approved the 4th edition of ODL/OLA Levels of Library Development. Donna Skvarla said the standards have been changed so that (1) libraries in towns of 10,000 or more must submit a long range plan to ODL; (2) all persons who work more than 20 hrs a week must go to at least 1 C.E. program each year; (3) collections must be evaluated and maintained on a 5 year schedule; (4) all public libraries must have at least one public access Internet computer; and (5) performance measures must be reviewed on a 4 year rotation schedule.
- Approved Social Responsibilities Roundtable's request for $150 for printing a brochure and mailing to promote the Ruth Brown Award and to get money on the 50th anniversary. Invitations to donate were sent to many people in Bartlesville for the first solicitation.

Note of interest:
- Jan Keene said anyone can contribute articles to a national ALA chapter list on themes. October is equity of access, November is library education, and December is a look back at libraries in the 20th century.

SRRT seeks nominations for Ruth Brown Award

The Social Responsibilities Round Table of the Oklahoma Library Association offers the Ruth Brown Memorial Award to encourage and recognize programming that addresses issues of social concern as they impact libraries, library collections, and the communities served by these libraries.

The first award was presented at the 1998 OLA Annual Conference in Tulsa. Positive Tomorrows, an Oklahoma City transitional center, which provides educational and social services for homeless children, was recognized for their efforts to establish a library for the children they serve. Since these children do not have a permanent address more traditional library services are usually not available to them.

The second award, presented at the 1999 OLA annual conference in Enid, was made to the Bartlesville Allied Arts and Humanities Council and Bartlesville Public Library for programming on the First Amendment.

Because of generous donations to the Ruth Brown Memorial Award Fund, a $500 cash award and a memorial plaque were presented to these first recipients. We are anticipating the same for the 2000 award.

Information on Ruth Brown and the Ruth Brown Memorial Award, along with the application form and instructions, is available via links on the SRRT home page (www.pioneer.lib.ok.us/ola/srrt.htm). Deadline for application submissions is February 1, 2000.

- Deb Willis
Sad news: Martha Woltz, Director of the Nash Library at the University of Science and Arts in Chickasha, OK, died Friday, October 1st. She was born August 17, 1940, in Okemah, Oklahoma. She is survived by her husband, Charles Woltz; two sons, Joe Woltz of Tulsa and Jonathon Woltz, Automation Librarian at Southwestern State University in Weatherford, OK; her daughter-in-law, Barbara Woltz, and two grandsons, Ed and Jim Woltz; her sister Frances Parks and her niece Anna Parks. She taught as a Special Instructor in the Department of English at the University of Oklahoma, and received her MLS from OU. She served as Reference and Public Service Librarian at Nash Library at the University of Science and Arts in Chickasha and later as Director of the Nash Library until her retirement in June 1999 when she was made Director Emeritus.

-Reprinted in part from the Daily Oklahoman obituary 10/7/99

There were Oklahoma libraries among the winners of the national contest for A&E's Horatio Hornblower Library Display Grants! Glenda Stokes at Spiro Public Library and Will Thomas at Broken Arrow Library are the proud new winners of Tall Ship Replicas. When we walk into these libraries we will be able to taste the sting of the chill salt air and hear the cries of the first mate as he barks the order to unfurl the main sail! Congratulations to Broken Arrow and Spiro libraries for the creativity and skill that earned them this honor.

The event of the summer was Lee Brawner's retirement party! It was THE place to see and be seen. About 500 of Lee's friends, colleagues from far corners of the map, staff, and family attended the gala event to honor the career of the truly dedicated Executive Director of the Metropolitan Library System. The MLS Friends group passed out hand-held fans printed with Lee's picture that read, "I'm a FAN of Lee Brawner!" The fans were in keeping with the theme of the party—an old-fashioned ice cream social complete with sundaes, lemonade, and cookies baked by the MLS staff. The party was held inside and outside the Belle Isle Library in Oklahoma City with a festive tent, a stage for two outdoor bands (folk music in the early evening, then cool jazz for the night owls), and the excellent Putnam City Silver Strings strolling about indoors. And I thought I'd never see a marching cellist!

Highlights indoors included a poster-sized photographic retrospective of Lee's career entitled, "The Years in Hair," depicting the evolution of Lee's lustrous locks. There was a huge ream of paper where we all wrote our best wishes to Lee. Several of Lee's friends, family, and colleagues walked across the stage with a number and gave an enlightening reason why Lee Brawner chose to stick around for 27 years with the Metropolitan Library System. Lee does plan to work part-time as Facilities Planner for Metropolitan.

Lee Brawner may be retired, but he can't stay out of the news! Lee will be presented with the Angie Debo Civil Liberties award from the ACLU of Oklahoma, Sunday, November 21 in the ballroom of Oklahoma City's Clarion Hotel. The award is given each year to someone whose activities in Oklahoma during the recent year or throughout a lifetime have helped to preserve individual liberty as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. Lee will be recognized "for his commitment to intellectual freedom during his distinguished career as a library professional."

The Gates' Foundation consultants have been all around Oklahoma doing training and installations for the wonderful new computers they are donating to public libraries. Dana Cook at the Hollis Public Library says, "We love them. It's one of the best things that's ever happened to our library." Hollis Public Library has 2 Gates' computers, one in English, and one with Spanish display. They are both being well utilized. Nina Hinderliter of the Boise City Public Library reports that they also have 2 Gates' computers, also in English and Spanish interfaces since about 45% of their population in the county is Hispanic. She has been learning more Spanish since the arrival of the computers. "Sometimes I'll sit down in front of the Spanish computer and let it read a story to me. I'm definitely picking some things up," Hinderliter said. There was some snafu with the Internet connection, and Gates' consultants should be out October 18th to make sure they're hooked up to OneNet. "Business has increased 75% since we installed the computers!" Hinderliter exclaimed. "It's fantastic! It keeps you very busy when you're the only one here. People have been coming in from all over the county, not just Boise City. When they're in to use the computers, they see books they want to check out too," she explained.

The Summer Reading Program statistics are in from public libraries all over Oklahoma with terrific numbers this year! 66,000 children signed up statewide for summer reading, and 174,000 people attended a program at their local libraries during Summer 1999, according to Donna Skvarla from Oklahoma Department of Libraries.
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