Lillian Norberg recalls the history of Friends’ groups in Tulsa and beyond

Editor's note: Lillian Norberg has been called the “Mother of the Friends of Libraries groups” in Oklahoma. Julia Ratliff, Vice President & President Elect of FOLIO, was kind enough to coordinate this interview of Lillian by Pat Woodrum, former Director of Tulsa City County Library System. TCCL videotaped, transcribed, and archived the video. I am reprinting excerpts from that transcript. Thanks to Julia Ratliff and the Friends’ Board of TCCL; and to Linda Saferite and the TCCL staff for making this discussion between two remarkable women possible.

Pat: What was the public library like in Tulsa when you arrived?
Lillian: Well, it was so tiny and it had open shelves up above. It was so crowded; there were things stacked on the steps. I wandered around, and I asked the librarian, “is this all of the books you have?” And she said “yes.”

Pat: The library at that time, if I remember right, was at 4th and Ceyenne, right? And either at that time or shortly after four branch libraries were built. Which library did you use?
Lillian: By the time we moved into a house and had our first child, I lived at 1609 E. 35th Place, then it just stood to reason that Brookside was my turf. I spent a lot of time there. They had all the encyclopedias I didn’t have. I needed dictionaries, cause I had to know from whence came those words, why they were in general usage and why I didn’t know them. I’ve always been interested in that kind of knowledge. The libraries at that time didn’t have much money! They were open only so many days. One was closed at 5 o’clock and on alternate Thursdays. It was amazing how much time it was closed. The number of people who were going there despite the empty shelves was also remarkable.

Pat: You used the library as a young wife, a young mother, and you were disillusioned with what you found. So what did you do next?
Lillian: Well, I often think about that day when Evelyn Moyer (?) called me. She served on the library board. She told them that she’d heard my complaints because I spoke loudly and to the point. And she wanted me to be sure to go to the meeting that the library board had called that day.

Pat: What year was this Lillian, do you remember?
Lillian: I’m pretty sure it was 1951. So when we came to the meeting Bonnie Read was the one who spoke most. Of course Allie Beth Martin was there; I remember she poured tea. They’d even gone to the trouble to have an elegant tea service.

Pat: Well, now Allie Beth Martin at that time was a member of the staff and James Gourley was the Director of the Library, right?
Lillian: Yes, and Mr. Gourley was there that day. Bonnie Read was such a

Cont. on p. 4
Library Advocacy – it’s never out of date

- Replace or update obsolete or inadequate public library buildings
- Cover the increased cost of statewide electronic data bases to support school, public and college/ university libraries
- Guarantee that all Oklahoma school children are given instruction in library and information technology use by certified, masters level library media specialists
- Preserve Oklahoma’s tradition of local control of school, public and college/university libraries.

One of the goals for OLA’s president is to encourage each and every member to become an effective legislative advocate for Oklahoma Libraries. Becoming an effective legislative advocate as a professional librarian doesn’t necessarily mean lobbying for specific issues, as many governmental employees are prohibited from doing so. But it does mean attending community meetings, school meetings, legislative forums; and inviting your local and state officials to the library to see the services that you offer. Providing meeting space for town hall meetings or forums, inviting a legislator to a storytime or a children’s program is also important. Invite that same legislator to see your new computers and how customers are using them and what databases are available for use. Show that legislator what materials and services are available on a statewide basis and were funded with state dollars. Show them how much those databases are used and appreciated by staff and customers.

Education, Education, Education! That is how we can be the best advocates for libraries. Make it a point to be the “information provider” for your legislator, or city councilman. Have the facts they need on issues or events. You become a valuable member of their resource network and might be the first one they call when an issue surfaces that is actually about libraries. Be honest and do your homework. Make a personal connection when possible and recognize that their time is valuable. Always remember to thank them – for their time, their interest, their support, whatever the case might be. You want them to remember you and your library in a positive way.

The OLA Legislative Committee and OLA officers will be glad to help you in any way to spread the word about advocacy in libraries. Many of our members have had special advocacy training and are eager to share their knowledge. Let us know if you have an upcoming event in which our “Libraries – Roots to the Future” legislative brochure could be of use to you.

My best advice — be involved and informed!

—Donna Morris

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The OKLAHOMA LIBRARIAN is the official bulletin of the Oklahoma Library Association. It is published bi-monthly. The inclusion of an article or advertisement does not constitute official endorsement by the Association. It is mailed to each member of the association upon payment of annual dues.

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Calendar of Events

March 1 Oklahoma Librarian Deadline
March 2 Local Arrangements Committee, Shusterman-Benson -1:30 pm
March 2 Audit Committee, OUHSC - 10 am
March 7 Legislative Committee, ODL - 10 am
March 8 Legislative Coalition 2000 - 8 am
March 9 Electronic Resources Workshop, Stillwater PL
March 10 Membership Committee, Norman - 10 am
March 10 Membership Committee, Norman - 10 am
March 17 Program Committee/Executive Board, Stillwater PL - 10 am
March 23 Web Teaching Workshop, Shawnee Public Library
Mar 28-Apr 1 PLA National Conference, Charlotte, NC
April 1 Submit Annual Report to Executive Director
The King and I...FLA: an Oklahoma librarian visits Bangkok

Immediately upon entering the International Trade and Exposition Center to register for the 65th International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Conference, and seeing the royal decorations in the lobby, I knew I was really at an international library conference. Registrations, exhibits, and meetings seemed like an ALA conference. The transportation shuttles in Bangkok, infamous for traffic snarls, were different as was the simultaneous translation service available in many of the meetings.

The royal patron of the conference was His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand who was celebrating his 72nd birthday, which is the completion time of the sixth cycle of twelve solar years, and is considered a most auspicious time. Also, IFLA is celebrating 72 years of existence.

One of the highlights was the address of Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn during the opening general session and the gala dinner banquet following. She is the royal patron of the Thai Library Association, which hosted the conference.

The conference theme was: Libraries as Gateways to an Enlightened world. The most interesting thing I learned was that libraries, the world over, basically have the same problem—lack of monetary support. In the meeting of What’s New in Bibliographic Standards the problem in Asia is that automated systems tend not to support Asian languages. The Reference Work Discussion group listened to papers discussing the changing reference culture with speakers from Sweden, the USA, and India. User Education strategies were discussed with speakers from Israel, the USA, Mexico, and Great Britain. An interesting group I visited was the mobile libraries interest group. The two most interesting were the public libraries. There was a floating library on a boat moored at the Naval Academy’s Dock and a video of a bookmobile on camels from Africa.

I attended a workshop on New Directions in User Education held at the Central Library of the King Mongkut Institute of Technology in north Bangkok. The school was established in 1959. The library primarily serves the faculties of Engineering, Technical Education, Applied Sciences, Industrial Technology, and Technology and Industrial Management. The collection of books and periodicals is mostly Thai and English arranged by subject using the Library of congress classification scheme. The OPAC is available via the campus network, PraDooDang Net.

The workshop was held in the computer lab, which was large with 40 workstations. However, the network was slow and sometimes it was impossible to connect to the Internet. Presentations were made by librarians from France, United States, and Finland. All remarked on the problems of teaching the Internet live.

At lunch the library arranged to have a huge buffet of the most delicious Thai food. We found out later that we had received such a royal welcome (with photographers everywhere) because we were the first foreign library group to have visited their library. Next year they will move into a new library building, which will triple the size of the present building.

Many of the special library tours that were scheduled in conjunction with the conference were cancelled because so many Thai librarians (over 300) attended that there was no one left to conduct tours. Through a former college roommate I was able to have a special tour of the library of the Electric Generating Authority of Thailand. The library was established in 1961. Its main collections are in science and technology but it collects in all areas, as it is both the academic and recreational library for EGAT personnel. It has a collection of 40,000 monographs with 132 periodicals in Thai and 195 periodicals in English. It also is connected to the Internet. It is very crowded and the librarians hope that a new library will be on the drawing board soon.

I flew to Chiang Mai in the northern part of Thailand. There I visited the main library of Payap University. Its collection is arranged by Dewey classification with the collection split almost in half with Thai and English titles. The library was very busy and has forty Internet terminals. Most of the students I saw were using the terminals for e-mail. As before, I noticed that the networks were extremely slow. They, too, are in a crowded situation and are in the fund raising stage of building a new library.

The libraries I saw in Thailand were heavily used and very modern. The problems that libraries have seem to be universal. The Thai people are very gracious and hospitable. The culture is unique, and I was very fortunate to have been able to attend the IFLA conference there. The world is shrinking, and I would recommend that Oklahoma librarians attend an International conference.

—Edwin Wiles

"The traveled mind is the catholic mind—educated from exclusiveness and egotism."
—Amos Bronson Alcott, 1799-1888
(Louisa May Alcott's father)
beautiful lady and had such elegant manners, her remonstrating was splendid, none-the-less it was getting nowhere. So they decided to call a meeting and organize a Friends' group. At the meeting I was there with Lucy Mae Smith, and Bentley Ferguson. The other people were on the board or part of the staff. Lucy turned to me and said, "Alright, if you'll be chairman, I'll be publicity." I said, "Okay."

**Pat:** So you agreed to be chairman and she was going to be publicity chairman.

**Lillian:** And we started from there. At first there were lots of meetings because we had to plan an organizational meeting. We couldn't meet in a group at the library--there was no place, there simply was no place. You just walked down the steps and there was the desk, you know.

**Pat:** So where did you have that first meeting?

**Lillian:** Well, we met in homes. It was very informal. We had a nominating committee; I was a part of that. Then we had to find people to work with us—to beg them to work with us. Later, we met in churches. We met more often in the Unitarian Church on Peoria.

**Pat:** Okay, All Souls, I hadn't heard that before.

**Lillian:** Oh, we met there for big groups. Well, this time we were getting 30-50 people to come. People who cared in the city came. We had to beg for places to meet.

**Pat:** Lillian, let me interrupt you just a minute, but didn't Oklahoma City have a Friends group before Tulsa, but then they kind of stopped meeting or weren't active, is that right?

**Lillian:** Oh yes, I think that they made an error... one of the cardinal sins that we've since pointed out to any group organizing Friends of the Libraries: do not get betwixt the librarian and the library board.

**Pat:** Ah... and they did.

**Lillian:** They got into trouble.

**Pat:** So when the Friends group in Tulsa was becoming active here in the later part of the fifties, the group in Oklahoma City really wasn't functioning as a Friends' group?

**Lillian:** Right. It was a slow process for our group too. It didn't happen overnight. For instance, we had hoped for one man to be our president because he was the retired president of a large oil company. He had a magnificent private library, so he had the interest, but he didn't have the health. And by that time Mr. Aaronson entered the picture.

**Pat:** Alfred Aaronson. So Alfred Aaronson then joined the Friends and began working with you at that time. And now we're probably in the late fifties? 58, 59? You started out in 1951, and the later part of the fifties is about the time that you all decided that you wanted to do something to improve the public library service in Tulsa, right?

**Lillian:** Oh yes, that's why we were organizing at the very beginning of it.

**Pat:** But it took that long to begin to move forward. So tell us a little about that. What happened then?
Lillian Norberg (cont. from p. 4)

Lillian: Well the quarrels about the idea of the county and the city going together began. So we went from Perry to Owasso to meet with them and beg them to come into the county. A lady in the city building of Owasso asked, "why should Owasso give Tulsa a library?" I'd been upstairs in a small room with encyclopedias from the 1930s, and this was a good 20 years later. I thought it was time things changed. I told her, "You'd be foolish to vote against the library, but we'll vote it together and we promise you a book budget of $100,000."

On the other side of the picture was Sand Springs. It had a beautiful library Charles Page had given them; they just didn't have any money. And they were saying, "Hurry, hurry—get this going; we're for it! We have only $30,000 for the library. It's not open on Sundays—it opens at 2:00 on Fridays and it closes at 6:00. We need help because we can't swing it... hurry!" They wanted to hurry because Mrs. Page was still alive and with one stroke of the pen she could make it possible for that city library to become a part of this. There was years of legal fighting back and forth over it. They held their breath as they watched her because she was not well. It did work out, and she did sign it just a very few days before she died. It was a blessing, and Sand Springs was delighted because there was money for all the renovation they needed to save it.

Pat: So some of these county towns had a library, but very few. I think it was Collinsville and Sand Springs. Broken Arrow had one over a fire station, but most of the rest of them had no public library at all, right?

Lillian: That's true.

Pat: One of the things I was thinking about, Lillian: had it not been for the dedication, continuity and the endurance of you and a couple of other people, the Friends wouldn't have continued to grow and to bring us to the point where you began to organize a campaign for the creation of the City-County library system. How did you go about organizing that first campaign?

Lillian: Well I think I'd best say, too, that remember there was no particular love lost betwixt the county commission and the city commission. And there would be promises but no action. It was also difficult because there was no newspaper supporting us then.

Pat: And there were two newspapers in Tulsa.

Lillian: Well, The Oklahoma Eagle, I believe was a third. The Eagle came out with some editorials for us, particularly as we got near the voting.

Pat: If I remember right, you were trying to do three things. One was to establish a city-county system and the second was to also establish the funding to support the system. And the third was to build a new Central Library.

Lillian: That latter goal was upper-most. The general public wouldn't be interested until we had something to show them for our efforts. That's why they had to have the Friends because we were the public support. About that time the County Commission had decided that they would no longer be in the Court House and that they would move. Then there was all that agitation and quarreling over the building between the City Commission and the County Commission. We thought for awhile that the old Court House was for us, but we discovered it wasn't big enough. The back alley wasn't big enough for a truck to go through. That's also when I found out that every book weighs a pound. Consequently, the library building is in a classification all its own.

Pat: So the structure didn't have load-bearing floors that would handle what was needed. ...Let's get back to 1960. The campaign is organized now. Everything is in place. You've got the three questions for the ballot. What happened?

Lillian: Well, we were quite confident this was going to pass. We had organized; we'd had several meetings and talked to citizens groups and PTAs. I was a member of two PTAs, and I was also on the citywide PTA. We voted and left town— was also a member of the Women's Association of the Tulsa Philharmonic, and we were looking for a new conductor for the orchestra who was very much sold on youth concerts. When we came back to Tulsa we had a big victory celebration for the library, but it was premature. We realized to our horror we were whipped and soundly.

Pat: All three questions failed, and that was 1961, right?

Lillian: Yes, so the next day I went to a scheduled Friends' meeting, and it was the saddest group. I remember particularly Jim Maxwell for saying, "You're not going to let a little thing like that stop you are you?" We were almost in tears; I think Eileen Baker was in tears.

Pat: And that's when James Maxwell had just been elected mayor of Tulsa.

Lillian: And I remember Lee Erhardt then chimed in, "Why no! Just because the papers were against us." (he was a newspaperman) "Why this is no cost. We'll go again." This time we organized a committee with Friends of the Library and others. We had a program then to see that everybody in Tulsa heard what we were about.

Pat: So you organized a new campaign.

Lillian: A new campaign, and John Bennet-Shaw and I talked to every PTA in Tulsa whether they wanted us or not—I had children there in school. I explained to women sitting there that the cost of books is so much; I said my son ex-
History of the Guthrie Public Library uncovered

Welcome to Guthrie's historic Carnegie Library. Constructed in 1902, it was the second Carnegie Library built in Oklahoma, and today is the oldest existing Carnegie Library building in Oklahoma.

"The problem of our age is the proper administration of wealth. There are three modes in which surplus wealth can be disposed of. It can be left to the families of the descendants, or it can be bequeathed for public purposes, or, finally, it can be administered by its possessors during their lives. In this (third) way we have the antidote for the temporary unequal distribution of wealth. The surplus wealth of the few will become in the best sense, the property of the many, because administered for the common good. The man who dies thus rich dies disgraced." —Andrew Carnegie, Gospel of Wealth, 1889

[Andrew Carnegie was] one of the first to invest in the Bessemer process of making steel. He eventually built one of the largest industrial enterprises in the United States. In 1901, at the age of 66, Carnegie sold his company to J.P. Morgan for $480,000,000. He devoted the remainder of his life to giving away his fortune through endowments to libraries, colleges, hospitals, etc. He donated, during his lifetime and beyond, a total of $56,704,199 to build 2811 libraries worldwide, with 1946 of those libraries in the United States. [Over 17 years (1899-1916), twenty-five Carnegie libraries were built in Oklahoma.]

The Acorn Reading Club, organized [in Guthrie] in 1899, had the primary objective of establishing a city library. Each member contributed one book to form a club library and more contributions of books followed from the Guthrie community. The Acorn Club then approached the City Federation of Women's Clubs for help. They took up the challenge.

On July 12, 1900, the Guthrie Public Library and Free Reading Room opened to the public two afternoons a week. Located in a downtown building, in a room provided rent-free by a Federation member, the library boasted 300 volumes, 30 memberships, and a group of dedicated club members to serve as librarians. Local businessman Robert Ramsay wrote Andrew Carnegie regarding the ladies' efforts. Carnegie responded with a contribution of $1,000 for books and the advice that 'the only true plan is for the community to maintain a library from a tax levied for that purpose.'

Ramsay once more wrote to Carnegie, in September 1901, requesting that Carnegie provide funds for a library building in Guthrie. He explained that the city council had levied one mill for the library maintenance.... Carnegie agreed to donate $20,000 for a library building to be built in Guthrie on the condition that the city agreed to designate $2000 a year to support the library. The city council agreed to do so.

Building costs were higher than expected and the lowest bid received was $23,806. Once again, an appeal was made to Carnegie. He agreed to donate an additional $5000 on the condition that the city of Guthrie increase its support to $2500 annually. Once again, the city council agreed.

Excelsior Library

Although Judge Burford's 1899 letter to Andrew Carnegie mentioned a public library that was to be open to everyone, "black or white," in reality that did not prove to be the case. The Carnegie Library was closed to people of color.

Daniel Horton, a teacher, applied to the Carnegie Library for membership in 1907, and was refused as "no provision had been made for Negroes." His wife, Judith Horton, began work to establish what she reported as the first public library for black citizens in the Southwest United States.

The story in her own words:

Our plan presupposed that in as much as our tax was being used to support a library for white people, there were many fair-minded citizens who would be willing to give us a square deal. I further reasoned that as our state constitution provided for equal, but separate facilities, for the faces it would be easy to convince the Mayor and Council that we were entitled to library facilities, hence we could induce them to pass an ordinance for the establishment and maintenance of our library.

I knew it would take time and printer's ink to bring about these results; so my next step was to draft the following circular letter:

[Donations of money, books and magazines were made. The Excelsior Club bought a 2-story frame building for $3500, and asked the City Council to establish the Excelsior Library and Industrial Institute and vote an annual appropriation of not less than $1200 for maintenance.] Only one more step was needed to complete our work—a Library Board; under the existing law we would be under the jurisdiction of the Carnegie Library board; but we were anxious that Negroes should furnish all the initiative, brains, and energy for the successful running of the library, so we requested the Mayor and Council to appoint a Colored Board, fifty per cent of who should be members of the Excelsior Club.

The Excelsior Library operated in the two-story dwelling until Guthrie citizens passed a bond issue in December 1954, which contained $50,000 for the building of a new Excelsior Library. The new Library and Community building opened, on the site of the original Excelsior Library, to the African-American community on June 14, 1956. It boasted 5,000 volumes, a large reading room, a large community meeting room, offices, and kitchen spaces.

1967 was the beginning of the end of the segregation of library facilities in Guthrie. Plans for a new library building called for the consolidation of the Excelsior and Carnegie Libraries. When a new library building was constructed in 1970, the collections of both libraries were combined and
moved to the present Guthrie Public Library.

**Programs and Events at the Carnegie Library**

Over the years, the Carnegie Library has been the site of many programs and social events for the town of Guthrie. Reportedly, Tom Mix (later to become a well-known screen star) taught exercise classes in the gymnasium of the library during 1902 to 1904.

[The inauguration of Charles N. Haskell as the first governor of the state of Oklahoma took place on a platform on the front steps of the Carnegie Library on November 16, 1907. This event included the symbolic wedding of Oklahoma and Indian Territories.]

The Guthrie Carnegie Library served the citizens of Guthrie for over 60 years, but by 1967, it was becoming clear that the building would need extensive repairs and expansion to continue to serve Guthrie's library needs. The city voted in that year to build a new building to house its municipal library. The new library would contain the collections of both the Carnegie and Excelsior Libraries. In 1970, the new building was completed and the collections moved to the Guthrie Public Library.

In 1971, the Carnegie Library was nominated and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The City of Guthrie transferred ownership of the Carnegie Library to the State of Oklahoma that same year, for the use and benefit of the Oklahoma Historical Society as a museum.

[A "Save the Carnegie" fund drive in the mid-1980s, combined with restoration plans finalized by 1991, meant that the Carnegie Library could be returned to its former glory. This included plaster and tile restoration, refinishing woodwork and furniture, repainting with original colors, and window and roof repairs.

The Stacks located north of the Rotunda was used for book storage. The room measures approximately 19' by 26'. Flooring is exposed concrete and walls and ceiling are painted plaster over concrete. Designed to be fireproof, the concrete structure also served to support the added weight of many books.

The Historic Carnegie Library is now a part of the Guthrie Museum complex, owned and operated by the Oklahoma Historical Society, an agency of the State of Oklahoma. As a part of the museum complex, the stated mission of the Carnegie Library is to collect and interpret archival and material culture, which relates to Oklahoma's statehood process, the Oklahoma historic preservation movement, Andrew Carnegie and Carnegie libraries, the territorial Federation of Women's Clubs, and architecture and preservation of the structure. The facility will also maintain regional material for public access.

--Rachel Butler

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**FOLIO President remembers Charles Ward**

*Editor's Note: Charles Ward died on December 11, 1999.*

I first became acquainted with "Charlie" Ward within a week of my first arrival in McAlester, Oklahoma. I had just assumed the position of Executive Officer of the Naval Ammunition Depot, and he called me from Speaker Carl Albert's office to inform the command that we had a large Reduction in Force (RIF) that had to take place within a month. Being new to the industrial side of the Navy I was ready to panic when he calmed me by saying this was nothing new, and he gave me the names of reliable staff members at McAlester to help me through this first crisis in my new job. That's when I first recognized that he was a man that could be relied on, and when he said something you could take it to the bank.

When he ran for the congressional seat vacated by Carl Albert I was sure that we would continue the fine relation we had established. Later on when I became a civilian I had the pleasure of continuing our relationship when he worked in Senator David Boren's office. When he returned to Oklahoma I had the pleasure of working with him when he was a member of state Chamber of Commerce, and I represented our own chamber.

Several years passed when Charles and his wonderful wife Mary were persuaded to join the board of the state Friends of the Library. He became a director of FOLIO, and when I became President in 1998 he continued to provide great support to the organization. Two specific instances involving "Charlie" come to mind. The first took place in Shangri-La at our Annual Conference of 1998. FOLIO with the OLA Legislative Committee presented a program on political advocacy. With Charles Ward bringing his insights of his many years in the Washington D.C. political arena, we were assured of success.

The second instance took place at the OLA Legislative Day in the State Capitol in 1998. When OLA and FOLIO were recognized in the gallery, the State Representatives gave "Charlie" a standing ovation when he was specifically recognized as a member of our group. Whether serving on his beloved Will Rogers Memorial Commission in Claremore, or as President of the Tulsa City-County Library System Friends of the Library, or as our own board member of FOLIO, he will surely be missed. He indeed was a model citizen.

--Bob Segal, President FOLIO
ALA announces online copyright tutorial

A newly revised and updated Online Copyright Tutorial is being offered by the American Library Association's Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP) beginning February 14. The Online Copyright Tutorial consists of approximately 35 copyright lessons delivered via e-mail to subscribers. Each message will address a specific copyright issue such as fair use, interlibrary loan, library photocopying and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Copyright specialist Carrie Russell said the messages are brief (2-3 screens of information), interesting and relevant to the work of libraries. The tutorial will run from the week of February 14 through the week of May 5. Subscribers can expect 2-3 messages each week.

Lawyer, librarian and copyright educator, Professor Kenneth D. Crews, will host the Online Copyright Tutorial. Crews is an associate professor at Indiana University School of Law-Indianapolis and at the Indiana University School of Library and Information Science. He directs Indiana University’s Copyright Management Center. Russell said Crews is well known in the library world as one of the most dynamic teachers of copyright.

ALA members can receive the Online Copyright Tutorial by subscribing to the tutorial list. To subscribe, send an e-mail message to listproc@ala.org. Leave the subject blank. In the body of the text type: subscribe tutorial (YourFirstNameYourLastName).

Non-ALA members may participate by sending a $25 check or purchase order with their name and e-mail address to the American Library Association, Office for Information Technology Policy, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Suite 403, Washington, DC 20004-1702.

For more information about the Copyright Tutorial or other copyright education activities and services, contact Russell by phone at 800-941-8478 or e-mail: crussell@alawash.org.

OITP is an office of the American Library Association located in Washington, D.C. It is charged with monitoring

Greetings for the New Year from OASLMS!

I hope your new year has gotten off to a great start and that you are not suffering from the Y2K flu! What an exciting time to be in our profession as information literacy and information skills have never been in such demand as they are now on the edge of this new millennium.

AASL in Birmingham was an exciting event for those who attended, and Oklahoma was well represented with both attendees and presenters. Congratulations to all who presented and shared their experience and expertise with their colleagues from across the nation. I’m sure all came home with exciting new ideas to implement and share.

On February 25th OASLMS co-sponsored a workshop with the Intellectual Freedom Committee. The workshop is titled BOOK CHALLENGES: Success or Failure and How to Survive in Either Case and was held in Moore. It is a topic that affects each librarian. Each participant left with an individual plan of action created for his or her library. This is an issue that is becoming more prevalent and one which we need to be prepared for.

Legislative Day has been scheduled for April 13, 2000. We are encouraging all school librarians to make an effort to attend or to send a parent representative. Our voice is much stronger if we unite in expressing our concerns and our appreciation to our legislators. Watch for more information in the future on Legislative Day at

Sequoyah committee announces winners

Winner of the 2000 Sequoyah Children’s Book Award is The Million Dollar Shot by Dan Gutman. Votes for the children’s award were cast by 44,901 students.

Winner of the 2000 Sequoyah Young Adult Award is I Have Lived a Thousand Years: Growing Up in the Holocaust by Livia Bitton-Jackson. Votes were cast by 3,192 students.

It is confirmed that Dan Gutman will attend the award presentation on Wednesday, April 26, 2000, in Tulsa at the Adams Mark Hotel as part of the OLA annual conference. Please submit your reservations as soon as possible for you and your students. Livia Bitton-Jackson will be unable to attend, but will send a message to the children. More information will follow as it becomes available. Check the OLA web page for updates.
Another Norman librarian wins Polly Clarke Award!

Ellen Lack, Wilson Elementary School’s library teacher for the past nine years, was recently named the 1999 winner of the Polly Clarke Award at an Encyclomedia luncheon of the Oklahoma Association of School Library Media Specialists, where she was given a plaque and a cash award for her school.

Lack says she enjoys working at Wilson, Norman’s “neighborhood school,” a school that is so located that no buses are required for transportation.

“Ellen has maintained an innovative, well-integrated, flexible library-media program that partners with classroom teachers to plan units of instruction,” said Cherrie Birden, principal of Wilson, who, along with Anne Masters, Director of Library Media Services for Norman Public Schools, nominated Lack.

Birden credited Lack with organizing a new library floor plan and making arrangements for a new circulation desk to be built by Moore Norman Technology Center students as well as adding other furniture. She added that Lack works on various committees for the district and her school.

“As a member of the Norman Public Schools Author Committee, she has been instrumental in bringing nationally known authors and illustrators to Norman,” noted Masters. “She combines all the personal qualities and talents needed to direct an exemplary library-media program.”

Lack has worked in Norman Public Schools for 30 years and has been in the library media field 21 years. She is involved in a variety of organizations and events throughout the year. One such event includes an upcoming American Association of School Libraries conference in Birmingham, Alabama where she will present “Literature Opens the door: Building Literature-based curriculum Units.”

“It was such an honor to have been nominated for the Polly Clarke Award by the people I work with and respect the most,” said Lack. “I am very proud of the library-media program in Norman.”

“Under the leadership of our director, Anne Masters, we have developed a program that has earned recognition on the state and national level.”

—Crystal Garvin
Lillian Norberg (cont. from p. 5)

pects to be a doctor, and the textbook is going to cost $72. Well, we didn't have ours; it was high time we had a library, and it was time we bought books. And this time when the final vote came, we passed. It was a great thing.

Pat: It was overwhelming when it passed in 1962. I came on the scene in 1964, and there was so much enthusiasm and excitement not only among the staff and Library Board, but also everybody in the community. The whole county was so excited about their new library system because the Friends had spent this time telling them what it could be if they approved it. But let's move to the '70's because you just didn't sit idly by after the questions had been passed here in Tulsa. You began to work very actively on a statewide level to help other libraries form Friends groups.

Lillian: A group of us had gone to Kansas City for ALA. That was the furthest south they had ever been. This room was full of people, and I remember a man stood up, he said, 'I'm from Tennessee. I want to know if any of you organized a Friends' group? How do you do it? What do you do?' And we all started talking to each other.

Pat: At the Oklahoma governor's conference on libraries, one of the recommendations was that a statewide Friends of Libraries be organized, and there was encouragement from the national level to do that. How did you begin?

Lillian: We took the state of Oklahoma and cut it up into quarters, and then we picked out where there were libraries and wrote them to tell them that we would come to meet with their group. Then we went to Ardmore to organize a Friends group for Oklahoma.

Pat: I think you were the first president, weren't you?

Lillian: Oh, yes.

Pat: Talk about those early organizational days.

Lillian: We'd go to any place across the state that would have us. We'd come and talk any time, anywhere, telling them this works because we've done it. It certainly has worked in our town; it will work in yours. We'll do anything to get you started.

Pat: Well, Lillian, in addition to doing all that, for many, many years you have gone with librarians and Friends and Board members from throughout the state to Legislative Day to the Capitol. And I have seen you out-last many people who are extremely active, but who wear out long before you do. And you go up and down those marble halls, from early morning until late afternoon talking to the legislators. Your dedication to libraries has never failed. I'd like to say on behalf of the people in Oklahoma and throughout the country, public libraries today would not be what they are had it not been for all of the time and effort that you've put in to helping establish libraries everywhere. Do you have any words of wisdom for those who will follow us as far as what they should do to help all kinds of libraries?

Lillian: Something has emerged in this day and age unknown to my generation: the average American woman works. When she's got a job, the Friends of the Library is out the window. So there has to be a rethinking about how to organize and proceed.

The library is needed very much now. It contains so much knowledge. We can't have it at home no matter how many books we have. We don't have the last one that tells us exactly what we are looking for. All of us need the libraries and need them more than we know. The more responsive libraries are to that need, the better the library.

Pat: Lillian, there's only one Lillian Norberg, and you are a wonderful model for many people to follow. And you have made the world a better place because of all you have done for so many people. I thank you very, very much for that and I thank you for your time this morning.

Lillian: Thank you.

OLC Executive Board Actions

November 19, 1999

The executive board met November 19, 1999 at the Enid & Garfield County Public Library.

- Approved the proposal for an Intellectual Freedom Workshop co-sponsored by IFC and OASLMS to be held Feb. 25, 2000. Titled "Book Challenges: Success or Failure & How to Survive in Either Case," it will be keynoted by Dianne McAffrey Hopkins.
- CYPRT proposed name change. Kathy Logan said Children's and Young People's Roundtable would like to change its name to CATs, for Children and Teens RT. The proposal was referred to the Constitution & Bylaws Committee.

December 17, 1999

The OLA Board met December 17th at Norman Public Library, and took these actions:

- Approved UCD's proposal for "Libraries, Electronic Resources and the Law," a workshop on March 9 at the Stillwater Public Library
- Referred a cosmetic change to one of the CE goals suggested by the Long Range Planning Committee to the Bylaws and Constitution Committee
- Approved Mona Hatfield's following up an artist contact to purchase prints of Sequoyah to be sold at OLA Conference.
People and Places

Al Stevenson, Jr., Vice-Chair of the Grace Pickens Public Library Board of Trustees, passed away Sunday, December 19, 1999. He was a long-time, ardent supporter of the library in Holdenville. Director Fran Cook said not only was he champion of the library’s mission, but that he attended many training sessions for public libraries, including the ODL-sponsored Institute in Public Librarianship. Ms. Cook said Mr. Stevenson passed away after a brief battle with cancer, and that he will be missed deeply by the staff, the board and the community.

Retha Roberts, Head Librarian of the Hartshorne Public Library since 1983, died Dec. 30, 1999 after a valiant fight against cancer. At her funeral on Jan. 4th she was remembered as “...a people person, warm, caring, gentle, and good-natured, with a fondness for telling stories on herself...” She enjoyed working in the beautiful new Hartshorne library building, opened in August 1998, for about 8 months before her illness.

Oklahoma Department of Libraries won a John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award for “Yippie Yi Yo Join the Read Stampede!!!” From 49 entries, 8 winners were announced at ALA Midwinter. Give Bill Young and the crew at ODL a pat on the back for a job well done.

The Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics in Oklahoma City received a donation of $1.7 million dollars from the Sarkey’s foundation. The funds will go toward a new $2.6 million library. The library, to be named after former state Senator Bernice Sheddick, will house 50,000 volumes of classical and science texts as well as a computer center.

Jim Wilkerson, Serials Librarian at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, retired December 1999. Jim has served in varied positions across Oklahoma and the region, including Branch Librarian at Moore Public Library; Director of the Eastern Oklahoma District Library System, Director of the Arkansas Valley Library System in Colorado, Institution Library Consultant for ODL, and Library Media Specialist for K-12 for Carnegie Public Schools (OK). Jim has been very active in the OLA. He was President of OLA from 1975-76. Much to his surprise, he received the Distinguished Librarian Award in 1978, the highest honor bestowed by OLA. He has been an asset to librarianship as a profession, a wonderful advocate for Oklahoma libraries, and a mentor and friend to many new librarians. Congratulations and best wishes Jim on your retirement.

Audrey DeFrank is the new Serials Librarian at Southwestern.

Pioneer Library System Director Mary Sherman was selected as one of the 20 most influential persons in Norman OK’s most recent 50 years. The Norman Transcript published a profile of Sherman in the December 6, 1999 issue highlighting her very active career and life filled with professional and community service, locally, nationally and internationally. Debra Engel said, “Mary is an ambassador and advocate for libraries wherever she goes.” Congratulations to Mary on achieving this high honor.

Jane Taylor, UCO Reference Department Head, interviewed U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky together with co-interviewer Mark Eaton, OCU Asst. English Professor. The thought-provoking interview was featured in the Winter 2000 issue of the Oklahoma Humanities Council journal, Humanities Interview.

Bill Cooper, Interim Director of OSU Distance Learning, wrote to announce that Anne Prestamo, OSU Digital Library Services Librarian completed a presentation about distance learning at OSU in streamed video/audio format at http://web.ets.okstate.edu/ Go to the section on <special presentation> to view. You may have to download a free plug-in "RealPlayer G2" from the <test page> at this web site if it is not already resident on your PC. The goal of Digital Library Services is to provide complete OSU library services to distance learners without regard to either location or time of day.

Kyle Dahlem is the new Director of Teacher Education and Minority Recruitment at the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. She previously worked for Moore Public Schools.

The Library of Congress is celebrating its bicentennial year and is encouraging any library to join in with special programming and promotions. A commemorative coin will be released April 24th, and a new postage stamp honoring the Library of Congress with a beautiful picture of the inside of the main building’s renovated dome. Basha Hartley and John Phillips are hatching plans to design a special second day cancellation envelope to go with the stamp to be sold in the OLA store at conference. A must-have for all you stamp collectors out there!

Here’s a fun resource for School Library Media Specialists looking for something to spice up the spring semester. This came from NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory: “Wondering where to find a good recipe for a tasty solar system snack? Contemplating a cosmic purpose for an unwanted compact disc? Trying to figure out how much yarn it would take to reach an asteroid? Then, take a look at NASA’s The Space Place web site (http://spaceplace.jpl.nasa.gov). This web site provides interesting facts, fun activities and exciting contests for students in grades K-6. The “Make Spacey Things” section, for example, tells how to cook tasty but scientific asteroid potatoes and other projects. “Dr. Marc’s Amazing Facts” explains how far spacecraft travels, how planetary data is transmitted back to Earth and how space telescopes work. The web site is updated regularly with puzzles and games, fun space facts, and scientific exercises about the latest breakthroughs and technology from current and future space missions. Check it out!
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