

## **Oklahoma Department of Libraries**

### **Director's Report for the Board Meeting of June 21, 2002**

**“On the road again. . . .”** would be a good theme song for me recently. Every Friday in May was a hearing in a different public library on the proposed new five-year plan for the use of federal Library Services and Technology Act funds in Oklahoma. A summary of the comments made at those hearings is included in tab e of this packet. Attendance at the meetings was small but those present contributed helpful comments. Since the hearings were widely advertised, I believe the low attendance shows that the library community is satisfied both with the proposed five-year plan as well as the current services provided by ODL. Every one of the hearings had librarians say to us that they felt we were doing a good job and how important the services they receive from ODL are to their operation.

In addition to the LSTA hearings, I attended the National Library Legislative Day in Washington, D.C. on May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. The Oklahoma delegation again had an excellent group. The group consisted of Marilyn Hinshaw, director of the Eastern Oklahoma District Library System, Pat Acebo, trustee for the EODLS library system, Sandra Austin, school librarian from Tinker Elementary School, Donna Morris, Deputy Director of the Metropolitan Library System in Oklahoma county, myself, and Bill Young from ODL. Bill attended the Idea Exchange event at the Library of Congress, which is at the same time as the National Library Legislative Day. I also attended the meeting of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, which was held on Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>.

I attended the opening of the [\*library@51st\*](#) in Tulsa on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. This is a neighborhood library that is in temporary quarters while the Nathan Hale Library is remodeled. Once the Nathan Hale Library reopens, the Tulsa Library Commission will begin looking for permanent quarters for the [\*library@51st\*](#) and a full-time staff. The opening was very festive with the Tulsa Community Band playing and lots of representatives from the city to welcome library users to the new library. After I toured the library, I drove over to see the Martin Library, which is nearby. The Martin Library had been significantly expanded so I wanted to get a chance to see the new facilities. The grand opening for the Martin Library had occurred earlier during one of our LSTA hearings so I could not attend it. I was very impressed with the size and appearance of the Martin Library. It is a regional library for the Tulsa Library so it is a busy branch. It may be a busman's holiday but I really enjoy the opportunity to see new or remodeled libraries going up in Oklahoma. It means so much for the communities they serve to have warm, welcoming facilities to foster learning and the life of the mind.

Another road trip was attending the Southeastern Public Library System Board meeting in McAlester on May 14<sup>th</sup>. I'm still working away on visiting each library system board as time allows. The board meeting was very interesting with a good attendance. I informed the board about the legislative session and how proposed budget cuts would affect them. The hospitality in McAlester was wonderful as always and the food was outstanding. I took the opportunity the next morning to visit with Clyde and Imogene Petete while I was in town, which was also very pleasant.

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**New cooperative ventures.** ODL has been making some new partnerships this year. As you may remember, one of our goals in our strategic plan was to increase our partnerships and collaborations. I have been meeting with a public-private group on early childhood initiatives this year. From those meetings has come a new relationship with the statewide Parent Teachers Association. The state PTA leaders came to ODL in May to discuss a cooperative project to promote library cards for all school children. The project is just in the beginning phases but I think it has a lot of promise. The next step is to bring the idea to the Public Library Directors' Council on June 20<sup>th</sup> for their review and involvement. You'll be hearing more about this project as it unfolds.

Another partner with whom we are discussing a cooperative project is the Oklahoma Humanities Council. The director, Anita May, contacted me with an idea for a centennial project based on selecting books for the entire state or a community to read together. We have had one preliminary meeting and are due to reassemble on June 24<sup>th</sup>. We are involving the Oklahoma Center for the Book and the Let's Talk About It program in this upcoming meeting. Although ODL has worked with the Oklahoma Humanities Council before on projects, this is my first involvement and I'm really enjoying the people and the collaboration.

**Legislation.** The best news of all is that the legislature adjourned on May 24<sup>th</sup>. The ODL appropriations were reduced 5% from the original FY02 appropriation. Following our last ODL Board meeting, there continued to be presentations to the legislature on how we intended to reduce our budget. The legislature was able to finish its work early and I believe we are all relieved to have the legislative session behind us. We will continue to be cautious going into the new fiscal year since revenue collections may still be problematic. I want to commend Vicki Sullivan and the fiscal division staff on managing our operations so that we have not had to furlough staff or cut direct services to constituents in either the current or the coming fiscal year.

The legislature has also finally resolved the membership of boards such as ours that are based on Congressional districts. The bill has been passed by the legislature and signed by the governor. Here is the language affecting the ODL Board:

“SECTION 14. AMENDATORY 65 O.S. 2001, Section 2-101, is amended to read as follows:

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Section 2-101. The Oklahoma Department of Libraries Board is hereby created. The Board shall consist of seven (7) appointive members, and the Director, who shall be an ex officio nonvoting member. The Governor shall appoint, with the advice and consent of the Senate, one member from each congressional district and one member-at-large any remaining members shall be appointed from the state at large. However, when congressional districts are redrawn each member appointed prior to July 1 of the year in which such modification becomes effective shall complete the current term of office and appointments made after July 1 of the year in which such modification becomes effective shall be based on the redrawn districts. Appointments made after July 1 of the year in

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which such modification becomes effective shall be from any redrawn districts which are not represented by a board member until such time as each of the modified congressional districts are represented by a board member. No appointments may be made after July 1 of the year in which such modification becomes effective if such appointment would result in more than two members serving from the same modified district. No appointive member shall be a librarian in active practice. Appointments shall be made on the basis of ability, sound understanding of the total responsibilities and objectives of a state library agency and active interest in the attainment of these goals. “

As you can see, the language changed from the introduced version that I shared with you last year. The burden of implementing this new law will fall on the governor's office since they are the source of the appointments to the ODL Board. I just wanted you to be aware of what the new law contains. When the governor takes action on the bill, I will notify you.

On the appointment front, I have good news: Judi Knapp has been appointed to a full term on the ODL Board. The Oklahoma State Senate right before adjournment confirmed her. Judi had been completing a term of a board member who resigned so we are delighted to welcome her to the ODL Board again.

**CIPA.** The first court decision on the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) was handed down on Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>. The federal court found as follows: “We are sympathetic to the position of the government, believing that it would be desirable if there were a means to ensure that public library patrons could share in the informational bonanza of the Internet while being insulated from materials that meet CIPA's definitions, that is, visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or in the case of minors, harmful to minors. Unfortunately this outcome, devoutly to be wished, is not available in this less than best of all possible worlds. No category definition used by the blocking programs is identical to the legal definitions of obscenity, child pornography, or material harmful to minors, and, at all events, filtering programs fail to block access to a substantial amount of content on the Internet that falls into the categories defined by CIPA. In view of the limitations inherent in the filtering technology mandated by CIPA, any public library that adheres to CIPA's conditions will necessarily restrict patrons' access to a substantial amount of protected speech, in violation of the First Amendment.”

The court decision is available at:

<http://www.paed.uscourts.gov/documents/opinions/02D0415P.HTM>

If the decision is appealed, the United States Supreme Court will hear it. No announcement has been made at this point as to whether the case will be appealed.

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The decision only invalidated the sections requiring the use of filtering technology. Public libraries are still required to have an Internet safety policy and a public hearing to discuss that policy.

**[The Director's Report to the ODL Board is provided by Susan McVey]**