

**ODL Director's Report
for the ODL Board Meeting of March 28, 2003**

As you will see from the division reports, this has been a busy time for ODL staff. Many programs and workshops have been developed and delivered to our many constituents. I was particularly pleased that Judi Knapp and Duchess Bartmess of the ODL Board were able to attend the Oklahoma Center for the Book Award dinner this year. It is a wonderful occasion that ODL Public Information Office staff coordinates each year. As Kathryn Lewis, the president of the Oklahoma Library Association, told me, it's a chance to return to her roots, to nurture the deep love of books we all have. The governor's attendance was a first and much appreciated.

The fiscal situation continues to be challenging and uncertain. The Oklahoma Library Association held its Legislative Day on March 11th and the support of the ODL budget was one of its priorities. Many librarians and trustees from all types of libraries visited with their legislator to encourage them to remember libraries during these difficult times.

This week we learned that all state agency budgets would be reduced again for the current fiscal year. At this point, we have not heard what the actual dollar amount to be reduced will be. This will be the fourth budget reduction for the current fiscal year. At the ODL Board meeting, we will be able to present the latest budget reduction amounts in detail. We will discuss the areas to be reduced to meet this latest reduction. ODL has not yet had a hearing with the legislature regarding our budget picture for next year. The governor's budget was released on February 3rd following the State of the State address. In that budget, ODL was cut only \$4,444 for the fiscal year that begins on July 1, 2003. While we would welcome that scenario, it is the legislature that has the responsibility for actually writing the budget. Between when this report is written and our Board meeting, we may have a hearing with one or both legislative chamber and so have more to report to you.

In the meantime, I draw inspiration from the ODL staff that continues to provide wonderful services to children, libraries, and citizens of Oklahoma in the midst of uncertainty. From the Cat in the Hat celebrations to the Summer Reading Program workshops, ODL is in the business of improving lives. The agency that you govern is one in which you can take pride.