

**ODL Director's Report
For the Board Meeting of November 5, 2004**

On the road. I've been making a number of visits since our last Board meeting. The first was to the Literary Landmark ceremony in Stillwater honoring Angie Debo. The Special Collections and Archives at Oklahoma State University had an event to mark their receipt of the Friends of Libraries USA Literary Landmark plaque honoring Dr. Debo. As the repository for Dr. Debo's papers, OSU was selected to receive a copy of the plaque as well as Dr. Debo's hometown of Marshall. The Public Library Directors' Council met that day as did the Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma (FOLIO) so the event was well attended. In addition to me, Vicki Sullivan, Vicki Mohr, and Duchess Bartmess were present to represent ODL which was listed as a sponsoring organization. The OSU library staff, particularly Dr. Jennifer Paustenbaugh, did a tremendous job organizing and presenting this event to honor one of our outstanding citizens.

Following the event in Stillwater, I headed to Jefferson City, Missouri. I am interested in visiting the state libraries in our region and the Missouri State Library was my first visit. The Missouri State Library is a division of the Missouri Secretary of State's office which is an elected position in Missouri. The Missouri State Library is responsible for public library development, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and a research library serving state employees and the public. I spoke with the library development staff for about two hours. I brought lots of examples of our graphic materials for summer reading program, Archives Week, our early literacy grant, and other projects. Another state agency applies for e-rate on behalf of the public libraries in Missouri so their staff was surprised to learn that ODL staff spends a great deal of their time helping our libraries obtain these vital funds. I enjoyed the experience and hope to be able to visit another state library each year. Since our legislators like to compare us to other state libraries in our region, it is helpful to be well informed about our neighbors.

Another recent trip was to the dedication and re-opening of the Zarrow Regional Library. This facility was formerly named the West Regional Library but was re-named in honor of Mr. Henry Zarrow who has been a tremendous philanthropist for education in the Tulsa area. Mr. Zarrow donated funds to our summer reading program a few years ago to enable us to fund grants to smaller libraries which didn't have the book budget to buy the titles on the recommended list for the summer reading program. I was very impressed with the new facility. The building had been closed and redone completely. There were several remarkable features including a two sided fireplace with a circle of chairs which will be extremely popular I'm sure. The teen section was also terrific with a garage door providing access and a bistro area with tables. The building was packed with users who all seemed delighted with it. In attendance was Glenda Kilmer in her new role as a branch library manager in the Tulsa City-County Library System. It was great to see her again and tell her how sorry we were to lose from the ODL Board.

My most recent trip was to Rapid City, South Dakota. The Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) and the Western Council of State Libraries held their fall

conferences there this year. The COSLA meeting was first with committee and executive board meetings on Sunday afternoon. The COSLA continuing education event was Monday and featured the topic of digital government and electronic publications. The annual meeting of COSLA was all day Tuesday. The Western Council meeting met on Wednesday morning for their business meeting at the Rapid City public library. It was a busy meeting for me since I'm serving as the continuing education committee chair for COSLA and as secretary for the Western Council. The continuing education event went very well and I had lots of positive feedback about the content and the presenters. At the annual meeting of COSLA I was elected to a two year term as a director. As a committee chair, I attend the Executive Board meeting but now I will be a voting member of the Executive Board. The COSLA Executive Board meets four times a year so it is a significant commitment of time but I am pleased and honored to have been selected. I believe it is important to have the Oklahoma perspective represented in national organizations. It has been my experience that the more involved you are in an organization, the more you get out of it. I look forward to this new opportunity.

ProLiteracy Conference. The long anticipated national literacy conference was held in Oklahoma City during the early part of October. I have invited Leslie Gelders of our Literacy Resources staff to give you an overview of the conference during the director's report in our Board meeting. Leslie and her staff did an outstanding job in local arrangements for this event. I heard so many positive comments at the conference about Leslie and Oklahoma City. Billie Letts was the featured speaker at the Friday night banquet and it was my pleasure to introduce her. When you read the PIO division report about the Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma world tour, you may grasp the feeling our staff has come to have for Billie. She is truly a phenomenal writer and human being plus being a speaker that connects to her audience in a magical way.

State Aid. Each year the ODL Board approves the formula for distribution of state aid. The purpose of state aid is to reward public libraries that have met the minimum standards established through our administrative rule process. I have included a set of the rules governing state aid in this packet. I encourage you to review them before the ODL Board meeting.

The process for qualifying for state aid has many steps. The public library development staff contact the libraries in their region about issues throughout the year including discussing the requirements for state aid. Each public library or public library system completes an annual report that demonstrates the achievement of the state aid requirements plus gathers information about the activities of the public library for inclusion in federal statistics. The public library development consultant reviews the annual report for each of their libraries and approves or denies the library as qualifying for state aid based on the information provided in the annual report. If the library is denied state aid, a letter is sent to the city manager and the public library director notifying them that their community has not qualified and why. The community has two weeks to file an appeal. The appeal letter is reviewed by me and Vicki Mohr, the

Administrative Librarian for Library Development. Often appeals are granted if the community can provide additional information or reasons for the failure to comply with the state aid rules.

Once the list of qualifying communities is finalized, the formula for state aid can be calculated. Since some of the state aid formula is based on population figures, the formula will vary from year to year depending on which communities qualify and which do not. This year we do not have the final list of approved communities available to include in this Board packet. The earliness of this Board meeting means that the appeal process has not been completed at the time the packet had to be mailed. As soon as the information is available, we will send the information to you under separate cover. At the Board chair's request, we will also provide a list of the communities which have been denied and the reason. This should give you a good overall view of the process.