

Director's Report

ODL Board Meeting Schedule. Following our last ODL Board meeting, several ODL staff and Judi Knapp, ODL Board chair attended the open house at the National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) Library grand opening. It was a wonderful facility and the exhibits were both moving and powerful. As a result of this visit, Judi Knapp and I decided to explore having an ODL Board meeting in the MIPT library. The library will be able to host us on September 9th. Since parking is limited in the area, we will arrange for a ride from the ODL parking lot that day to all ODL Board members and staff who will be attending. For your convenience, I have included a schedule of all 2005 ODL Board meeting dates and locations in this packet.

Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma. Another memorable event was the November 8th event in the Blue Room of the State Capitol when the book for the 2005 Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma was announced. In attendance at the event were ODL Board members Duchess Bartmess, Betty Bass, and Judi Knapp so I hope they will share their impressions of the event with you. The program was moderated by Dr. Anita May, executive director of the Oklahoma Humanities Council. Billie Letts, author of the 2004 Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma selection, spoke about her experiences during this year. Each author or a family representative of the author who was nominated to be part of the 2005 Literary Sixpack was present and spoke about the book as well as the experience of being an Oklahoma author or writing about the Oklahoma experience. Each author was presented a governor's commendation by Secretary of State Susan Savage and a medal with the name of the book engraved on the back. Billie Letts announced the 2005 selection Walking the Choctaw Road by Tim Tingle. Tim was presented another medal recognizing the selection of his book as the 2005 Oklahoma Reads Oklahoma book. The Capitol photographer took photographs which we were able to share with the authors. A reception followed in the Governor's large conference room. It was a lovely event. We received thank you notes from several of the authors. One author who did so said that the event made us all feel like a winner which was exactly our goal. A recent press release from the governor's office about reading is included in this packet as well.

Archives Week. On November 17th and 18th, the second Archives Week celebration was held at the Oklahoma City Zoo education building. To build on last year, the Oklahoma Department of Libraries and Oklahoma Historical Society with some other partners sponsored a two day workshop on Oral History. The event was very successful. Susan Feller and Jan Davis continue to produce high quality high interest workshops that are increasing the toolkits for historical projects in the state. We are strengthening the social capital of the state by these events.

Reading Taskforce. Last legislative session Senate Resolution 70 created a Task Force on Reading Curriculum and Instruction. The legislation included me as one of the members of the Task Force. Serving as the chair of the Task Force was Dr. Paul Risser, Chancellor of the State Regents for Higher Education. Other members included Sandy

Garrett, Senator Daisy Lawler, and Senator Kathleen Wilcoxson. I found the information presented on the issues of reading instruction to be both interesting and helpful in the work that ODL does with children and adult students.

Legislative Session. Although the official start of the legislative session will not be until the first Monday in February, things have begun to start. We have new chairs and vice-chairs for the appropriations committees and some new members. We have a new House fiscal analyst with whom we'll be working although we do not yet know who it will be. There is also a new fiscal staff member in the Office of State Finance. The Senate appropriations committee had a performance review with all of its agencies beginning February 4th. We were the first agency to make a presentation and found the committee to be very interested particularly in the literacy programs offered by ODL. The House appropriations chair has contacted us to let us know that their committee will be holding meetings soon. There will be a learning curve for all of us as we get to know how the committees want to operate, what type of information they need, and who the staff will be. I predict it will be an exciting year.

Staff changes. Since our last Board member, two former and one current ODL staff members died. On Thanksgiving Day, Vince Rosenthal and Betty Phillips both died. Vince worked in the Archives division for 26 years. ODL was a second career for Vince. He didn't come to work at ODL until after his retirement as a dentist. Betty Phillips worked in the United States Government Information division for 26 years. She was 73 when she died and had worked at ODL until April of last year. Lee Conner was a current employee when she died. Lee worked in the Archives division for almost 30 years before her death at age 69. With Donna Norvell's death in early November, ODL lost four staff members within a month. All of these individuals are missed by their colleagues. We honor their contributions to our work life and to our personal life. They will be missed.